

SYNODAL NEWS

BULLETIN OF THE SYRO-MALABAR MAJOR ARCHIEPISCOPAL CHURCH

XXXII SYNOD (2024)

SESSION I, II, SPECIAL ONLINE SESSION & III

SPEECHES

REPORTS

DECISIONS

DECREES

CIRCULARS

PASTORAL LETTERS

Vol. 32 December 2024

SYRO-MALABAR CHURCH



SYNODAL NEWS

BULLETIN OF THE SYRO-MALABAR MAJOR ARCHIEPISCOPAL CHURCH

Vol. 32 **December 2024**

MAJOR ARCHIEPISCOPAL CURIA

MOUNT ST. THOMAS, KAKKANAD

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EDITORIAL

The First Session of the XXXII Synod of Bishops held at the Major Archiepiscopal Curia, Mount St. Thomas, Kakkanad, from 08 to 10 January 2024, elected Mar Raphael Thattil, the fourth Major Archbishop of the Syro-Malabar Church. Pope Francis, the Successor of Peter, granted the confirmation to the election of the new Father and Head of our Church, which traces its origin back to the preaching of the Good News by St. Thomas the Apostle. Mar Raphael Thattil assumed the Office of the Major Archbishop of the Syro-Malabar Church on 11 January 2024 in a simple and spirit-filled ceremony held at the Major Archiepiscopal Curia and officiated by Mar Sebastian Vaniyapurackal, the Administrator.

The election of Mar Raphael Thattil as the Major Archbishop of the Syro-Malabar Church marks a moment of grace and promise for this ancient Church. Known for his pastoral zeal, cordiality in relationships, synodal approach and unwavering commitment to the mission of the Gospel, Mar Raphael Thattil brings with him a wealth of experience and a heart attuned to the needs of the faithful. The Syro-Malabar Church is at a pivotal moment in its history. It is called to navigate the challenges of the modern era while remaining faithful to its traditions. With Mar Raphael Thattil at the helm, the Church is well-positioned to embrace this journey of renewal, walking in the footsteps of Christ and guided by the Holy Spirit. May he be granted wisdom, strength, and grace to lead the Church with courage and compassion! May his example inspire the faithful to live the faith authentically and to shine as witnesses of Christ's love in the world!

On 7 December 2023, Holy Father Pope Francis accepted the resignation of His Beatitude Cardinal Mar George Alencherry from the Office of the Major Archbishop of the Syro-Malabar Church. Cardinal Mar George Alencherry is the first elected Major Archbishop of the Church, who assumed the Office on 29 May 2011, succeeding His Beatitude Cardinal Mar Varkey Vithayathil. The developments that took place after Cardinal Alencherry became the Major Archbishop was spectacular in the history of the Church. He focused mainly on strengthening and enlarging the evangelization ministry of the Syro-Malabar Church. The leadership that Cardinal Alencherry gave for the revising of the liturgy of the Syro-Malabar Church, implementing a uniform mode of celebration, revising the Liturgy of the Hours, and the innovative steps he has taken in revitalizing the organizations of the Church will be recorded in golden letters in the history of the Syro-Malabar Church.

Accepting the resignation of Cardinal Alencherry from the Office of the Major Archbishop, what Pope Francis wrote to him regarding his resignation is worth mentioning: "I consider your resignation not as the conclusion, but the fulfillment of your service. Indeed, this step represents a further witness of fidelity to the Gospel and a new way of serving the Church, above all through contemplative and intercessory prayer…". Major Archbishop *Emeritus*, Cardinal Mar George Alencherry leaves behind a legacy of faith, unity, and service. May the Lord reward him abundantly for his service and bless him with health, strength, and the comfort of His presence.

13 May 2024 was a day of great significance for the Syro-Malabar Church. The Successor of Peter, receiving officially the new Major Archbishop of our Church, acclaimed the Syro-Malabar Church in these words: "Your faith is of an ancient origin, as it is rooted in the witness to the point of martyrdom of Saint Thomas, the Apostle of India. You are all custodians and heirs of his apostolic preaching. You have had many challenges over the course of your long and difficult history, which has also seen some members of the faith commit unfortunate acts against you because of their

insensitivity to the particular nature of your flourishing Church. Yet, you have remained faithful to the Successor of Peter". On this historic moment, Pope Francis orally granted pastoral jurisdiction to the Syro-Malabar Church over its faithful in the Gulf countries. It was fulfilling a long cherished dream and relentless demand of the faithful down the decades. Let us hope that the Apostolic See will create adequate ecclesiastical structures without delay in the Gulf for the pastoral care of the Syro-Malabar faithful.

In this issue of the Synodal News (Vol. 32, December 2024), the readers will find documents related to the Four Sessions of the Synod in 2024. While the First Session from 08 to 10 January elected the new Major Archbishop, the Second Session, held from 12 to 13 January was convened by the new Major Archbishop immediately after the assumption of Office of the Major Archbishop, which lasted only for two days. An online Special Session of the Synod was held on 14 & 19 June, exclusively to discuss the issues related to the implementation of the uniform mode of celebration of the Holy *Qurbana* in the Archeparchy of Ernakulam-Angamaly. The Third Session of the Synod was from 19 to 31 August, during which the Fifth Major Archiepiscopal Assembly of the Church was conducted at Alphonsian Pastoral Institute, Palai, from 23 to 25 August. This volume includes documentation related to the election and enthronement of the Major Archbishop, as well as other customary items.

Pope Francis has articulated a profound and spiritually rich vision for the upcoming Jubilee Year 2025. Rooted in the theme "Pilgrims of Hope", the Jubilee invites the entire Church to rediscover and live out the theological virtue of hope, a gift that sustains and guides us amidst life's trials and uncertainties. Let us be a Church that listens deeply, loves generously, and hopes unceasingly. May the Holy Spirit guide us in this pilgrimage, uniting us as one body and inspiring us to proclaim with boldness and joy that hope does not disappoint (*spes non confundit*)!

Chief Editor

XXXII SYNOD (2024)
SESSION I
08-10 JANUARY 2024

XXXII SYNOD (2024) SESSION I
08-10 JANUARY 2024

INAUGURAL ADDRESS OF THE ADMINISTRATOR OF THE SYRO-MALABAR CHURCH

Your Beatitude, Graces and Excellencies,

Praise be to Jesus Christ, Our Lord!

After prayerful recollection, celebration of the Holy *Qurbana*, adoration of the Blessed Sacrament and recitation of the holy Rosary, we have solemnly entered the Synod Hall to start the First Session of the XXXII Synod (2024). The talk given by Bishop Mar Jose Porunnedom has helped us reflect on the highly responsible ministry that we are exercising as individuals and as a Synod. Basing his reflections on the Gospel of Luke 13: 1-9, Bishop Mar Porunnedom said that it is through the Word of God that individuals are moved to repentance and conversion. God cautions people that their failure to repent the straying away from His commandments will result in their demise. History demonstrates that whenever the people of God deviated from these precepts, their downfall invariably followed. Hence, drawing inspiration from the Holy Scriptures, it is urged to return to the path the Lord has illuminated. Let us thank Bishop Mar Jose Porunnedom for his inspiring thoughts that set the right tone to begin this Session of the Synod.

As you know, this Session of the Synod was formally convoked on 8 October 2023 as an ordinary Session of the Synod by the Major Archbishop His Beatitude Cardinal Mar George Alencherry, the Father and Head of our Church. Now, with his resignation from Office, this Session has become a special one in the sense that the procedure of the election of the new Major Archbishop will take place, as has already been communicated. At the very outset, let me welcome each and every one of you to this Holy Synod.

The 12 year term of Office of Cardinal Mar George Alencherry as the third Major Archbishop of the Syro-Malabar Church will ever be remembered in the annals of the history of our Church in golden letters. In our onward move, blessed marvelously by the Providence of God that surpasses our comprehension, we cannot forget the past of our spiritual gains and evangelical moves, especially the indomitable leadership given by our beloved Cardinal. Anyone who had the chance of a personal encounter with him would have experienced for themselves, the enormity of his zeal for the Syro-Malabar Church and his unwavering commitment to preserving its distinctiveness. In his thoughts and aspirations, he held our Church in great esteem and worked relentlessly for the growth and expansion of this Church in all aspects.

His Beatitude's affability, his willingness to go to the farthest ends of his capacity to help the people who approach him, and his respect and sensitivity for the feelings of others have always touched the minds and hearts of the faithful. He has carried the torch of faith with passion, confidence, compassion, and humility. He led a life of simplicity, making himself available to all who sought his help.

The leadership Cardinal Mar George Alencherry gave in implementing and renovating the unfinished aspects of the liturgy, the sufferings he endured for the unity in our Church and the innovative steps he initiated in revitalizing the different organizations of the Church will never be forgotten. He was at home with the poor and the handicapped as well as with the elite and the literati. His bold and unwavering decisions, the effectiveness of his administration, and his spiritual vision have left a deep impression on the lives of the faithful. A lot of people felt empowered by his conversations with them. His scriptural reflections and homilies were very inspirational.

The evangelist in His Beatitude knew no bounds. The extension of the pastoral jurisdiction of the Church to the whole of India through the establishment of the Eparchies of Shamshabad and Hosur happened because of his undaunted support and perseverance.

The establishment of the Eparchies of Faridabad, Melbourne, Mississauga, Great Britain, and the Apostolic Visitation in Europe happened under his watch, prayer, and unwavering and persistent support. It is after a very strenuous and painstaking, non-stop active spiritual engagement for the good of the Church, that he bade goodbye to the august Office of the Major Archbishop of the Syro-Malabar Church on 7 December 2023.

There is no retirement in life, thought, and deed for a priest or a bishop. They are always on call for the Lord. Your Beatitude, your work for the Church is unforgettable and historical. We are deeply grateful to you for testifying to us the fullness of the life of a Pastor. The lamp that you lit on the pedestal of our Faith will never be dimmed. May the Lord walk with you every step of your journey as the faithful son of the Church!

Bishop Mar Mathew Nellikunnel CST, the newly consecrated Bishop of the Eparchy of Gorakhpur, is attending this Synod as a full member for the first time. His Episcopal Ordination took place in Gorakhpur on 5 November 2023. Dear Bishop Mathew Nellikunnel, most hearty welcome to the Synod! On this occasion let us gratefully remember Bishop Mar Thomas Thuruthimattam CST, who as the second Bishop of Gorakhpur led the Eparchy to its present heights. He was a very gifted and committed Bishop who toiled hard and as a faithful servant multiplied his God given talents manifold in the mission land. Trusting fully in the Divine Providence he exercised the Episcopal ministry courageously overcoming all the difficulties he had to confront. In the name of the Synod I thank Bishop Mar Thomas Thuruthimattam CST.

It is a matter of special joy for us that Archbishop Claudio Gugerotti, the Prefect of the Dicastery for the Eastern Churches was elevated to the rank of Cardinal. Cardinal George Alencherry, the Major Archbishop *emeritus* was part of the ceremony in Rome on 30 September 2023. Let us congratulate Cardinal Gugerotti for being elevated to cardinalate and gratefully acknowledge his decisive interventions in favour of our Church, after assuming the office of the Prefect of the Dicastery for the Eastern Churches.

His Grace Archbishop Mar Andrews Thazhath, owing to his tremendous responsibilities as the Archbishop of Trichur and the President of CBCI, repeatedly requested the Holy Father to be relieved of the Office of the Apostolic Administrator of the Archeparchy of Ernakulam-Angamaly. The Holy Father accepted his request on 7 December 2023 and on the same day appointed Bishop Mar Bosco Puthur, Bishop *emeritus* of the Eparchy of Melbourne to the Office of the Apostolic Administrator. In the name of the Synod, I would like to express our deep sense of gratitude to Archbishop Mar Andrews Thazhath for the sufferings and sacrifices which he undertook with courage and determination to be loyal to his ministry as the Apostolic Administrator. Let us offer our best wishes and prayers to Bishop Bosco Puthur for having accepted this new and delicate mission assigned by the Holy Father! As we know, Archbishop Cyril Vasil, the Pontifical Delegate for the Archeparchy of Ernakulam-Angamaly, visited the Archeparchy a second time from 13 to 22 December.

As we know, the centenary celebrations of the establishment of the Syro-Malabar Hierarchy concluded on 21 December 2023. The Permanent Synod held on 5 December 2023 decided to have a modest but meaningful celebration on the conclusion of the centenary year in all the Eparchies and at the Major Archiepiscopal Curia. Thus the Bishops were requested to celebrate a Holy *Qurbana* on 21 December 2023 in the Cathedrals. On that same day at 3.00pm there was a solemn celebration in the Major Archiepiscopal Curia with the participation of representatives from our eparchies. Six Bishops of our Church along with Archbishop Cyril Vasil, the Pontifical Delegate for the Archeparchy of Ernakulam-Angamaly were present for the celebration.

Venerable Fathers, this Session of the Synod is being opened with a special invocation to the Holy Spirit to illumine us to elect the most suitable person to lead our Church as the Father and Head. Our Church which was born in first century itself through the apostolate of St Thomas, the Apostle, has now become a global Church having around 50,000,00 faithful spread all over the

world, 35 eparchies, one apostolic visitation. Our youth and young families are migrating to countries geographically distant from their motherland in search of better living conditions and a secure future for their children. We need to develop more efficient and adequate pastoral structures to cater to the needs of our faithful who build their lives abroad. The challenges are so many. We need a Father and Head who is a visionary to address all the concerns of our Church.

Providentially our Church was blessed to have eminent spiritual leaders to guide us, especially when it was raised to the status of a Major Archiepiscopal Church. I particularly remember Cardinal Mar Antony Padiyara, the First Major Archbishop, Archbishop Mar Abraham Kattumana, the Pontifical Delegate, Cardinal Mar Varkey Vithayathil, the Second Major Archbishop and Cardinal Mar George Alencherry, the third Major Archbishop. Holy Father Pope Francis, in his letter accepting the resignation of Cardinal Mar George Alencherry, has praised the magnanimity of the charismatic leadership of His Beatitude. The Church needs continuity. Hence we need a leadership which is capable of sensing the signs of the times, responding to the needs and challenges in a Synodal way, always adhering to the will of God, and never seeking to fulfil human desires which will ultimately corrupt us and alienate us from the Divine. During the conclave which elected Pope Francis, before the voting the Cardinals shared their views and expectations about the kind of person the next pope should be. During that sharing Cardinal Bergoglio had said: “He must be a man who, from the contemplation and adoration of Jesus Christ, helps the Church to go out to the existential peripheries, that helps her to be the fruitful mother, who gains life from “the sweet and comforting joy of evangelizing.”

Pope Benedict XVI, after having announced his resignation from the Office of the Supreme Pontiff, said in the farewell message to the Cardinals present in Rome about the election of his successor this way: “May the Lord show you the one whom He wants”. In the Acts of the Apostles before Mathias was elected to the group

of Apostles, they prayed: “Lord, who knows the hearts of all men, show which one of these two, you have chosen to take the place in this ministry and apostleship” (Acts 1:25). Now, as we are gathered in Synod to elect the new Major Archbishop, let us pray ardently, like the Apostles, to grant us the grace and openness to the Spirit to elect our Father and Head according to the heart of the Good Shepherd.

I would like to quote a beautiful prayer, originally written for the election of a new Pope, adapting it to our context for the election of the new Major Archbishop.

> O God, who in your wondrous love watches over your Church, fill the Bishop-electors gathered in this Synod hall, with your Holy Spirit to strengthen and inspire us as we choose a new Major Archbishop to lead us. May we choose a shepherd for our Church who will please you in his holiness and guide his flock with love and watchful care, especially for the sick, the poor and the vulnerable. We pray that your Holy Spirit will hover over the one who is chosen to strengthen him to be a messenger of love, peace and unity in our world. We offer our prayer through our Lord, Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever.

With these words, imploring the intercession of Holy Mother Mary, who was present with the Apostles in the Upper Room, St. Thomas, our Father in Faith and all the Saints and Blesseds of the Church, I declare the First Session of the XXXII Synod 2024 open.

Bishop Sebastian Vaniyapurackal
Administrator of the Syro-Malabar Church

REQUEST OF THE MAJOR ARCHBISHOP-ELECT TO THE HOLY FATHER POPE FRANCIS

FOR GRANTING CONFIRMATION TO HIS ELECTION TO THE OFFICE OF THE MAJOR ARCHBISHOP OF THE SYRO-MALABAR CHURCH

Mount St. Thomas
Kakkanad
09. 01. 2024

His Holiness
Pope Francis
Vatican Palace
Vatican city

Most Holy Father,

The Synod of Bishops of the Syro-Malabar Church, convoked for the election of the Major Archbishop, at the Major Archiepiscopal Curia at Mount St. Thomas, Kakkanad, Kochi to be held from 08-13 January 2024, has elected me the Major Archbishop of the Syro-Malabar Church on 09 January 2024.

Submitting myself to Divine Providence, I, Bishop Raphael Thattil, a humble Servant of the Lord and the Church, accept the decision of the Synod as per CCEO c. 153 # 2 and request your Holiness to benevolently grant confirmation to my election to the Office of the Major Archbishop of the Syro-Malabar Church.

Declaring my Obedience and loyality to the Apostolic See, I promise to fulfill faithfully this ministry of being the Father and Head of the Syro-Malabar Church in communion with the Bishops.

Trusting in the prayers of the Church and invoking Your Apostolic Blessings,

Yours most devotedly in the Lord,

+ [signature]

Bishop Raphael Thattil
Major Archbishop-Elect
Presently Bishop of Thamarassery

LETTER OF HOLY FATHER POPE FRANCIS GRANTING CONFIRMATION TO THE NEW MAJOR ARCHBISHOP



To His Beatitude
Mar Raphael Thattil
Major Archbishop of Ernakulam-Angamaly

I have received the letter with which, according to canon 153 §2 of the *Codex Canonum Ecclesiarum Orientalium*, you petitioned the Roman Pontiff to confirm your canonical election by the Synod of Bishops of the Syro-Malabar Church as Major Archbishop of Ernakulam-Angamaly, Father and Head of this beloved Church *sui iuris*.

Please know that I willingly grant the confirmation you have requested and express my fraternal good wishes in Jesus Christ, our Lord and God. I pray that, after the example of your venerable predecessors, you may strive to offer a generous and fruitful pastoral ministry to the flock now entrusted to your care. I likewise urge you especially to remember the poor and those most in need. May the Holy Spirit foster the unity, fidelity and mission of the Syro-Malabar Church, so that it may grow and flourish under your paternal guidance.

In extending my cordial greetings to the Brother Members of the Synod, to the clergy, men and women religious, seminarians and candidates for consecrated life, and to the lay faithful of the Syro-Malabar Church, I invoke the intercession of the Holy Mother of God, the Holy Patriarch Saint Joseph and the Apostle Saint Thomas. To all of you, I impart my Blessing, as I assure you of my spiritual closeness and ask that you, please, pray for me.

Rome, from Saint John Lateran, 9 January 2024

Franciscus

FELICITATION FROM THE PREFECT OF THE DICASTERY FOR THE EASTERN CHURCHES

CONGREGATIO
PRO ECCLESIIS ORIENTALIBUS

Dicasterium a die 5 Iunii 2022

00193 Roma
Via della Conciliazione, 34
Indirizzo postale: 00120 Città del Vaticano

January 11, 2024

Prot. N. 2/2024

Your Beatitude,

His Holiness Pope Francis has already expressed the prayerful best wishes of the Apostolic See, in the Letter of confirmation addressed to Your Beatitude. Now I too have the pleasure of extending my most cordial congratulations upon your election as Major Archbishop of the Syro-Malabar Church.

It would have been a great joy to participate in your enthronement ceremony and convey my fervent good wishes in person, however I look forward to receiving Your Beatitude at this Dicastery, of which the Major Archbishop is an *ex officio* member (cf. Apostolic Constitution *Praedicate Evangelium*, art. 83 § 1).

Your Beatitude has a vast experience of priestly and episcopal ministry, in particular in the area of clerical formation, which will certainly enhance the exercise of your duties of *caput et pater*, as a sign and instrument of communion within the Syro-Malabar Church and with the universal Church.

I assure Your Beatitude of the full support of this Dicastery in this important mission, especially at this delicate time, as together with the Secretary, Undersecretary and all the collaborators of this Dicastery, I remain,

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Claudio Card. Gugerotti
Prefect

Fr. Michel Jalakh, oam
Secretary

His Beatitude
Mar Raphael THATTIL
Major Archbishop of Ernakulam-Angamaly
The Syro-Malabar Major Archiepiscopal Curia
Mount St. Thomas - Post Box N. 3110
KAKKANAD, KOCHI - 682 030, India

XXXII SYNOD SESSION I
08-10 JANUARY 2024

ACTS OF THE ELECTION, ANNOUNCEMENT AND ENTHRONEMENT OF THE FOURTH MAJOR ARCHBISHOP OF THE SYRO-MALABAR CHURCH

The See of the Major Archbishop of the Syro-Malabar Church became vacant as the Holy Father Pope Francis accepted the resignation submitted by His Beatitude Cardinal Mar George Alencherry from the Office of the Major Archbishop, which was announced at the Major Archiepiscopal Curia, Mount St. Thomas, Kakkanad on 07 December 2023 at 4.30 pm in the afternoon. In the press conference convened for the occasion, Cardinal Mar George Alencherry announced the acceptance of his resignation by Pope Francis and informed that as per the Canon Law for the Eastern Churches, the Curia Bishop Sebastian Vaniyapurackal will be the Administrator of the Church.

Bishop Mar Sebastian Vaniyapurackal, who assumed the Office of the Administrator in accordance with the provisions of CCEO cc. 151-153 and 63-76 and the provisions of the Particular Law of the Syro-Malabar Church, decreed that the I Session of the XXXII Synod already convoked by Cardinal Mar George Alencherry, the Major Archbishop *Emeritus*, to be held from 8 to 13 January 2024, would be the Session for the election of the new Major Archbishop.

The Session of the Synod began at 10 am on 8 January 2024 at the Syro-Malabar Major Archiepiscopal Curia, Mount St. Thomas, Kakkanad, with the recollection talk in the chapel preached by Bishop Mar Jose Porunnedom, Bishop of Mananthavady. Bishop Mar Sebastian Vaniyapurackal presided over the solemn concelebrated Holy *Qurbana*. Archbishop Mar Mathew Moolakkatt OSB preached the homily. The Fathers of the Synod spent their time in the afternoon for personal prayer, confession and rosary. Solemn *Ramsa* was celebrated at 6.00 pm in the chapel, which was

followed by the procession of the Synod Fathers, holding lighted candles to the Synod hall and singing the litany of the Blessed Mother Mary. The formal sitting began at 7.15 pm. After the prayer in the Synod hall, the Administrator proceeded with counting the number of the participants to declare the canonicity of the Session. It was verified that out of the 65 Bishops of the Synod, 55 were present in the Synod hall. Of the 55 participants, 44 Bishops are in active ministry and therefore obliged to be present for the Session while seven Bishops *Emeriti*, who had the right to vote and four Bishops *Emeriti*, above 80 years without the right to vote, were also present. The number of participants required for the canonicity of the Session was 30. Having verified the numbers, the Administrator declared the Session canonical. After the inauguration of the Synod by lighting the lamp, the Administrator delivered his formal inaugural address and declared the I Session of the XXXII Synod open.

The following members were present for the Session I of the XXXII Synod: Bishop Mar Sebastian Vaniyapurackal (Administrator of the Syro-Malabar Church and Curia Bishop), Major Archbishop *Emeritus* Cardinal Mar George Alencherry, Archbishop Mar Mathew Moolakkatt OSB (Kottayam), Archbishop Mar Andrews Thazhath (Trichur), Archbishop Mar Joseph Perumthottam (Changanacherry), Archbishop Mar Joseph Pamplany (Tellicherry), Archbishop Mar Kuriakose Bharanikulangara (Faridabad), Bishop Mar Thomas Elavanal MCBS (Kalyan), Bishop Mar Sebastian Vadakel MST (Ujjain), Bishop Mar Lawrence Mukkuzhy (Belthangady), Bishop Mar Sebastian Adayanthrath (Mandya), Bishop Mar Joseph Kallarangatt (Palai), Bishop Mar Jose Porunnedom (Mananthavady), Bishop Mar Joseph Pandarasseril (Auxiliary, Kottayam), Bishop Mar Joseph Arumachadath MCBS (Bhadravathi), Bishop Mar Bosco Puthur (Apostolic Administrator, Ernakulam-Angamaly), Bishop Mar Remigiose Inchananiyil (Thamarassery), Bishop Mar Raphael Thattil (Shamshabad), Bishop Mar Paul Alappatt (Ramanathapuram), Bishop Mar Pauly Kannookadan (Irinjalakuda), Bishop Mar Jose Chittooparambil CMI (Rajkot), Bishop Mar George Rajendran SDB (Thuckalay), Bishop Mar George Madathikandathil (Kothamangalam), Bishop Mar Joseph Kollamparampil CMI

(Jagdalpur), Bishop Mar Jose Puthenveettil (Auxiliary, Faridabad), Bishop Mar Joy Alappat (Chicago), Bishop Mar Ephrem Nariculam (Chanda), Bishop Mar Joseph Kodakallil (Satna), Bishop Mar Jose Kalluvelil (Mississauga), Bishop Mar Prince Antony Panengaden (Adilabad), Bishop Mar Jose Pulickal (Kanjirapally), Bishop Mar Stephen Chirappanath (Apostolic Visitator, Europe), Bishop Mar Joseph Srampickal (Great Britain), Bishop Mar Thomas Tharayil (Auxiliary, Changanacherry), Bishop Mar Tony Neelankavil (Auxiliary, Trichur), Bishop Mar Sebastian Pozholiparambil (Hosur), Bishop Mar John Nellikunnel (Idukki), Bishop Mar James Athikalam MST (Sagar), Bishop Mar Vincent Nellaiparambil (Bijnor), Bishop Mar Peter Kochupurackal (Palghat), Bishop Mar Joseph Kollamparampil (Auxiliary, Shamshabad), Bishop Mar Thomas Padiyath (Auxiliary, Shamshabad), Bishop Mar Alex Tharamangalam (Auxiliary, Manan-thavady), Bishop Mar John Panamthottathil CMI (Melbourne), Bishop Mar Mathew Nellikunnel CST (Gorakhpur), Archbishop Mar George Valiamattam (*Emeritus*, Tellicherry), Archbishop Mar George Njaralakattu (*Emeritus*, Tellicherry), Bishop Mar Jacob Manathodath (*Emeritus*, Palghat) Bishop Mar Joseph Kunnath CMI (*Emeritus*, Adilabad), Bishop Mar Mathew Vaniakizhakel VC (*Emeritus*, Satna), Bishop Mar Chirayath Anthony (*Emeritus*, Sagar), Bishop Mar John Vadakel CMI (*Emeritus*, Bijnor), Bishop Mar Mathew Arackal (*Emeritus*, Kanjirapally), Bishop Mar Jacob Angadiath (*Emeritus*, Chicago) and Bishop Mar Thomas Thuruthimattam CST (*Emeritus*, Gorakhpur).

Bishop Mar Sebastian Vaniyapurackal then read out the English translation of the letter he received from the Dicastery for the Eastern Churches (Prot. N. 2/2024, dated 3 January 2024), in reply to his letter dated 21 December 2023, on conducting the Election Session of the Synod. Then, the Synod proceeded with the election of the President of the Session for Election. Accordingly the Synod elected by secret voting Archbishop Mar Mathew Moolakkatt OSB the President of the Session. After the election, Archbishop Mathew Moolakkatt chaired the Session.

The President sought the mind of the Synod regarding the tellers. He reminded the Synod Fathers of the proper custom of nominating three junior most Bishops as tellers in the elections.

Accordingly, the Synod decided to designate Bishop Mar Alex Tharamangalam, Bishop Mar John Panamthottathil CMI and Bishop Mar Mathew Nellikunnel CST to be the tellers for the election of the new Major Archbishop. The Synod also decided Fr. Abraham Kavilpurayidathil, the Major Archiepiscopal Chancellor, to be the notary in the Session.

Archbishop Mar Mathew Moolakkatt OSB exhorted the members to keep an atmosphere of prayer during the whole election process, until its successful completion. In order to maintain the confidentiality enjoined on everyone, the members are not to bring mobile phones and laptops to the Synod hall. Absolute secrecy should be maintained regarding the election procedure. All Synod Fathers are to remain in the Curia until the election process is completed with the announcement of the election, after receiving the confirmation from Rome and not to go out in between. The President specified that no guests would be allowed to the Curia premises during the days of the Synod until the completion of the election process. The sitting came to an end at 8.10 pm. All the Synod Fathers, with the exception of those taking medicines, fasted that evening.

On 9 January the second day of the Session, the Synod Fathers gathered in the Synod hall at 9.00 am and invoked the help of the Holy Spirit for the successful conduct of the election of the new Major Archbishop. The Synod Fathers then spent some time for free deliberations on the priorities and challenges that await the Syro-Malabar Church and the profile of the new Major Archbishop who will have the mission to face them. The election of the new Major Archbishop was successfully completed on the second day itself. When the election was conclusive, Archbishop Mathew Moolakkatt OSB, the President of the Session, formally sought the consent of the Major Archbishop-elect in the Synod hall, following a written format. The Major Archbishop-elect, after a few moments of prayerful deliberation, gave his consent to his election to the Office of the Major Archbishop. Then, the Synodal Letter on the election of the new Major Archbishop signed by all Fathers and the request of the Major Archbishop-elect requesting the confirmation

for his election to the Office of the Major Archbishop were sent to Rome through the Apostolic Nunciature. The Synod Fathers, after the completion of the election, engaged in informal discussion on various topics.

On 10 January, at 3.30 pm, the Apostolic Nunciature transmitted the Letter of the Holy Father Pope Francis to the Major Archiepiscopal Curia by email, granting the confirmation for the new Major Archbishop of the Syro-Malabar Church. Upon the reception of the confirmation, the newly elected Major Archbishop Mar Raphael Thattil made a solemn Profession of Faith and the Oath of Office in the Synod hall and signed the document. The Synod Fathers decided to conduct the enthronement ceremony of the new Major Archbishop in St. Thomas Auditorium of the Curia on the following day, since the Cathedral Basilica was remaining closed. It was also decided to invite ecclesiastical dignitaries, Major Superiors and five (lay, religious and priest) representatives from each Archeparchy/ Eparchy. After the discussion, the President made his concluding speech and declared XXXII Synod, Session I, convened to elect the fourth Major Archbishop of the Church, closed. Then the members of the Synod proceeded to the auditorium for the public announcement of the election of the Major Archbishop.

At 4.30 pm all the Synod Fathers and the members of the Major Archiepiscopal Curia gathered in the main auditorium. Archbishop Mar Mathew Moolakkatt OSB, the President of the Election Session, formally announced that Bishop Raphael Thattil, currently the Bishop of Shamshabad, was elected the fourth Major Archbishop of the Syro-Malabar Church. Then, the new Major Archbishop, dressed in cream cassock, entered the auditorium accompanied by Bishop Mar Sebastian Vaniyapurackal, the Administrator and Archbishop Mar Joseph Pamplany, the Secretary of the Synod. Bishop Mar Sebastian Vaniyapurackal congratulated the Major Archbishop-elect by giving a bouquet. Cardinal Mar George Alencherry, the Major Archbishop *Emeritus*, delivered his address felicitating the new Major Archbishop. In his words of reply, Mar Raphael Thattil thanked God for His ineffable grace bestowed on him. He expressed his gratitude to the Holy Father and the Synod of Bishops for having placed trust in him. Then all

the Bishops present in the hall greeted the Major Archbishop. The meeting concluded with a prayer and the blessing of the Major Archbishop-elect at 5.00 pm. While the announcement ceremony was reported live in all the channels in the State of Kerala, the national channels also gave wide coverage to the election of the new Major Archbishop.

The Enthronement ceremony of the Major Archbishop-elect began at 2.30 pm on 11 January with a procession starting from the chapel of the Curia. The priests lined up first in the procession followed by the Synod Fathers and other Bishops who came to participate in the ceremony. Once the procession reached the specially prepared sanctuary in the auditorium, all were seated as Bishop Mar Sebastian Vaniyapurackal, the Administrator, welcomed the guests and invited everybody to prayerfully participate in the ceremony. Then Fr. Abraham Kavilpurayidathil, the Chancellor of the Major Archiepiscopal Curia, read out the letter of the Holy Father Pope Francis granting confirmation and expressing his paternal solicitude to the Major Archbishop-elect. The Administrator was the main celebrant of the enthronement ceremony, assisted by Archbishops Mar Mathew Moolakkatt OSB, Mar Andrews Thazhath, Mar Joseph Perumthottam and Mar Joseph Pamplany. The liturgical function of the enthronement began with the Profession of Faith made by the Major Archbishop-elect. During the ceremony, the Administrator gave the insignia of the Major Archbishop to Mar Raphael Thattil and led him to the special seat of the Major Archbishop. The ceremony concluded with the blessing of the new Major Archbishop. Then the Administrator, Cardinal Mar George Alencherry, Major Archbishop *Emeritus*, the members of the Permanent Synod and all the Bishops present paid respects to the Major Archbishop. Then the Major Archbishop continued the Holy *Qurbana*.

After the conclusion of the Holy *Qurbana*, a number of dignitaries were invited to felicitate His Beatitude Mar Raphael Thattil, the new Major Archbishop. His Beatitude Cardinal Baselios Mar Cleemis, the Father and Head of the Syro-Malankara Church, Archbishop Andrews Thazhath, the President of the CBCI, Mar Awgin Kuriakose, the Metropolitan of the Church of

the East and the Secretary of the Inter Church Council, Bishop Alex Vadakumthala, Bishop of the Latin Diocese of Kannur and the Apostolic Administrator of the Diocese of Kottappuram and Fr. Varghese Pottackal, the Protosyncellus of the Archeparchy of Ernakulam-Angamaly, felicitated the Major Archbishop. Fr. Joseph Mattathil, the Major Archiepiscopal Vice Chancellor read the message of His Eminence Claudio Cardinal Gugerotti, the Prefect of the Dicastery or the Eastern Churches. Most Rev. Dr. Joseph Kalathiparambil, Archbishop of Verapoly, Bishop Bishop Yoohanon Mar Theodosius of the Syro-Malankara Eparchy of Muvattupuzha and Joseph Mor Gregorios, the Metropolitan Trustee of the Jacobite Church wished the Major Archbishop by giving bouquets. Fr. Thomas Chathamparampil CMI, Prior General, Sr. Grace Therese CMC, Superior General, Bro. Varghese Manjaly CST, Superior General, Adv. Biju Parayanilam, President of *Catholica* Congress, Mrs. Ancy Mathew, Secretary of Global *Mathruvedi* and Adv. Sam Sunny, the SMYM Global President also felicitated the new Major Archbishop with bouquets, representing different groups. Major Archbishop Mar Raphael Thattil, in his reply, thanked God the Almighty for His providence. He placed on record his ineffable gratitude to His Holiness Pope Francis, His Eminence Claudio Cardinal Gugerotti, Archbishop Leopoldo Girelli, the Apostolic Nuncio, the Bishops, priests, religious and lay faithful who participated in the ceremony and those who watched the event online. He requested everybody to pray for his ministry. Following the words of reply of the Major Archbishop, the choir sang the Syro-Malabar Anthem. After the meeting, the Bishops and priests returned to the chapel in procession, while the Major Archbishop remained in the auditorium to greet the hundreds of guests including political leaders, religious superiors, media persons and faithful from various Eparchies. Refreshments were served to all the participants.

Bishop Sebastian Vaniyapurackal
Administrator

Fr. Abraham Kavilpurayidathil
Major Archiepiscopal Chancellor

XXXII SYNOD (2024) SESSION I
08-10 JANUARY 2024

CONCLUDING ADDRESS OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE ELECTION SESSION

Dear Major Archbishop-elect Bishop Raphael Thattil, Cardinal George Alencherry, Archbishops and Bishops,

Praise be to Jesus Christ!

The XXXII Synod (2024) Session I, convened to elect the new Major Archbishop is about to conclude. After the acceptance of the resignation of Cardinal George Alencherry from the Office of the Major Archbishop on 7 December 2023, the whole Church was praying for the election of the next Major Archbishop.

The Synod convoked for the election of the Major Archbishop started at the appointed time. Let us thank God that we completed the whole process of the election of the new Major Archbishop in a very spiritual atmosphere, having enough time for personal and community prayers. I thank the Synod for the trust in electing me the President of this historic Session of the Synod.

Before starting the election of the new Major Archbishop, we set apart a sitting for free sharing among us on the challenges being faced by the Syro-Malabar Church today and the profile of the new Major Archbishop to address all the issues for the good of the faithful and the society at large. In his never failing Providence, the Lord has blessed our Church in the person of Bishop Raphael Thattil, the Major Archbishop-elect. After the conclusive round of election, after having completed the canonical formalities, we sent the synodal letter to the Holy Father communicating the election of the new Major Archbishop of the Syro-Malabar Church and the Major Archbishop-elect requested for the confirmation of his election to the Holy Father. After receiving the conformation, the new Major Archbishop made the profession of faith and the oath

of fidelity in the Synod. Now, after concluding this Session, we are proceeding to the auditorium to make announcement of the election. Tomorrow when the new Major Archbishop is enthroned in the presence of the Bishops, the procedures prescribed by the Sacred Canons will be completed.

The Apostolic Nuncio in India had sent his envoy with a letter from His Eminence Cardinal Claudio Gugerotti, the Prefect of the Dicastery for the Eastern Churches to be read out before the commencement of the election of the Major Archbishop. In this letter the Cardinal Prefect urged the Synod to make an open and sincere discussion on the ecclesial and canonical consequences of the current situation in the Archeparchy of Ernakulam-Angamaly. This discussion will definitely take place once the Major Archbishop has taken canonical possession of his Office.

Let us thank the Lord for all the blessings He has showered on us during these days, especially for the gift of the new Major Archbishop. Answering to our prayers, God the Father sent His Holy Spirit strengthening and inspiring us in this wondrous spiritual event. We are happy that in Bishop Thattil, we see many qualities we spoke about before the election. With our incessant prayers and fraternal support, he will be a good *pater et caput* of our Church and will lead our Church to further growth and expansion. Let us continue to pray to God that the same Holy Spirit will hover over the one who is chosen and strengthen him to be a messenger of love, peace and unity in our world.

I express my sincere gratitude to Bishop Sebastian Vaniyapurackal, the Administrator, who has meticulously arranged everything for the smooth functioning of this Session of the Synod. I thank sincerely each and every member of the Synod for the wholehearted cooperation you have given me and for the active participation in the Synod.

With these words, I declare XXXII Synod, Session I, convened to elect the fourth Major Archbishop of our Church, closed.

Archbishop Mathew Moolakkatt OSB
President of the Election Session

XXXII SYNOD (2024)
SESSION II
12-13 JANUARY 2024

XXXII SYNOD (2024) SESSION II
12-13 JANUARY 2024

INAUGURAL ADDRESS OF THE MAJOR ARCHBISHOP

Your Beatitude Cardinal George Alencherry, my dear Brother Archbishops and Bishops,

Praise be to Jesus Christ!

This is my first formal address in the Synod after assuming the Office of the Major Archbishop yesterday afternoon in a simple but solemn celebration conducted at the Major Archiepiscopal Curia. I thank you very much for the confidence and trust you have placed in electing me the Major Archbishop of the Syro-Malabar Church. I would like to express my gratitude to the Holy Father Pope Francis for granting confirmation to my election to the Office of the Major Archbishop, offering his blessings and prayers for my new ministry. My gratefulness is due to His Eminence Claudio Cardinal Gugerotti, the Prefect of the Dicastery for the Eastern Churches and His Excellency Bishop Leopoldo Girelli, for their guidance and fraternal solicitude.

The announcement function and the enthronement ceremony were well organized and I appreciate the dedicated service of everyone involved in it. I am deeply grateful to you for the fraternal affection being expressed towards me, especially after my election as Major Archbishop. The reassuring support extended to me by the faithful from all over the world and their prayers are really a source of strength. Trusting fully in the Divine Providence I begin to exercise the duties entrusted to me for the good of the Church.

The First Session of the XXXII Synod (2024) was solely dedicated for the election of the Major Archbishop. I sincerely thank Bishop Sebastian Vaniyapurackal, who being the interim Administrator, convoked the Election Session of the Synod and prepared everything meticulously for its smooth conducting. Archbishop

Mar Mathew Moolakatt OSB, the President of the Election Session, moderated the election process with canonical expertise and precision. The single person permitted to be present in the Synod Hall other than the Bishops for this gracious moment was Fr. Abraham Kavilpurayidathil, the Chancellor. I appreciate his dedicated service and thank him in the name of the Synod for the faultless arrangements of all the acts. Now we are entering into the Second Session of the same Synod. The first document on which I put my signature as Major Archbishop is the Decree of Convocation of this Session of the Synod which commences today.

The enthronement ceremony was indeed a memorable spiritual event and a moment of grace. Although organized in a very short span of time, the ceremony was well planned and painstakingly organized. It was an expression of the community spirit and collaboration of the inmates of the Major Archiepiscopal Curia under the guidance of the Curia Bishop Mar Sebastian Vaniyapurackal. I thank each and every one who toiled hard to make it an event fitting to the nature of this Major Archiepiscopal Church.

For this current Session of the Synod, we have only two days at our disposal and there are a few important items in the agenda to be discussed and decisions to be taken. As it is our norm, we can suggest relevant items to the agenda in the first sitting. Some of the items in the agenda given to you are already discussed in an informal way and if anyone would like to revisit them in order to get the mind of the Synod in the form of a decision, we will take up that item again.

I willingly take this occasion to acknowledge and place on record the unforgettable and decisive leadership of Major Archbishop *Emeritus* Cardinal Mar George Alencherry in the last 12 and half years as the Father and Head of this Church. The development that took place after Cardinal Alencherry became the Major Archbishop was stupendous in the history of the Church. Through the erection of the Eparchies of Shamshabad and Hosur, and the extension of the territories of the Eparchies of Ramanathapuram and Thuckalay, the Holy Father Pope Francis extended the pastoral jurisdiction of the Syro-Malabar Church to the whole of India. It is the All India Jurisdiction itself, as explicitly mentioned by Pope Francis in his

letter addressed to Cardinal George Alencherry, accepting his resignation from the Office. Similarly, the establishment of the Eparchies of Faridabad, Melbourne, Mississauga, Great Britain, and the Apostolic Visitation in Rome enlarged the ministry of the Church in India and around the world. Under his leadership, a new house of the *Procura* for our Church was established in Rome. In addition to all these, Cardinal Alencherry paid special attention to strengthening and widening the evangelization ministry of the Syro-Malabar Church. In order to preserve and transmit the proper traditions of our Church, he started the construction of the Heritage and Research Centre in the campus of the Curia. The office section of the Centre is already blessed and started functioning. These and so many other contributions of Cardinal George Alencherry will be recorded in golden letters in the history of the Syro-Malabar Church.

Dear Brother Bishops, let us try to imbibe the spirit of true synodality in our presence and participation in the Sessions of the Synod. We need to listen more to understand and get into the world of the other. Only by knowing the others and understanding them in all their successes and struggles, we may be able to walk together, which is the core of synodality.

The XVI ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops is underway and the First Session was over in the month of October last year. In the inaugural speech of the Synod Holy Father Pope Francis said that the protagonist of the Synod is not us, but the Holy Spirit. He added that if the Spirit is in charge, it is a good synod, and if He is not, it is not. The protagonist of our Synod also is always the Holy Spirit. May the Holy Spirit of the Lord enlighten our hearts and minds to hold meaningful and creative discussions and interactions in every Session of our Synod! May Holy Mary, Mother of Christ, St. Thomas, our Father in Faith and all our Saints and Blesseds of our Church intercede for us!

With these words I declare the Second Session of the XXXII Synod 2024 open.

Mar Raphael Thattil
Major Archbishop of the Syro-Malabar Church

XXXII SYNOD (2024), SESSION II
JANUARY 12-13, 2024

REPORT

The XXXII Synod (2024), Session II, began with the prayer led by Major Archbishop His Beatitude Mar Raphael Thattil. The formal sittings of the Synod began at 09.30 am with the lighting of the lamp by the Major Archbishop.

Formal Inauguration of the Synod: His Beatitude Mar Raphael Thattil delivered his first formal inaugural address in the Synod after assuming the Office of the Major Archbishop. He thanked everyone for the confidence and trust they have placed in electing him the Major Archbishop of the Syro-Malabar Church. He expressed his gratitude to the Holy Father Pope Francis for granting confirmation to his election to the Office, offering blessings and prayers for the new ministry. The Major Archbishop expressed his gratefulness to His Eminence Claudio Cardinal Gugerotti, the Prefect of the Dicastery for the Eastern Churches and His Excellency Archbishop Leopoldo Girelli, the Apostolic Nuncio to India for their guidance and fraternal solicitude.

The Major Archbishop appreciated everyone involved in the well organized announcement function and the enthronement ceremony. The reassuring support extended to him by the faithful from all over the world and their prayers are really a source of strength. The Major Archbishop thanked sincerely Bishop Mar Sebastian Vaniyapurackal, who being the Administrator of the Church, convoked the Election Session of the Synod and prepared everything meticulously for its smooth conducting. He also thanked Archbishop Mar Mathew Moolakatt OSB, the President of the Election Session, who moderated the election process with canonical expertise and precision. He appreciated

Fr. Abraham Kavilpurayidathil, the Chancellor, for his dedicated service and thanked him in the name of the Synod for the faultless arrangements of all the acts.

The Major Archbishop made a special mention on the enthronement ceremony which was indeed a memorable spiritual event and a moment of grace. Although organized in a very short span of time, the ceremony was well planned and painstakingly organized. It was an expression of the community spirit and collaboration of the members of the Major Archiepiscopal Curia under the guidance of the Curia Bishop Mar Sebastian Vaniyapurackal. He thanked each and every one who toiled hard to make it an event fitting to the nature of this Major Archiepiscopal Church.

The Major Archbishop welcomed the Synod members to the current Session of the Synod, which is dedicated only for two days. His Beatitude said that some of the items in the agenda are already discussed in an informal way and if anyone would like to revisit them in order to get the mind of the Synod in the form of a decision, the Synod will take up that item again.

The Major Archbishop acknowledged and placed on record the unforgettable and decisive leadership of Major Archbishop *Emeritus* Cardinal Mar George Alencherry in the last twelve and half years as the Father and Head of the Church. He said that the development that took place after Cardinal Mar Alencherry became the Major Archbishop was stupendous in the history of the Church. The establishment of the Eparchies of Faridabad, Melbourne, Mississauga, Great Britain, and the Apostolic Visitation in Europe enlarged the ministry of the Church in India and around the world. Through the erection of the Eparchies of Shamshabad and Hosur, and the extension of the territories of the Eparchies of Ramanathapuram and Thuckalay, the Holy Father Pope Francis extended the pastoral jurisdiction of the Syro-Malabar Church to the whole of India. Under his leadership, a new house of the *Procura* of our Church was established in Rome. In order to preserve and transmit the proper traditions of our Church, he started the construction of the Heritage and Research Centre in the campus

of the Curia. The Major Archbishop underlined that these and so many other contributions of Cardinal Mar George Alencherry will be recorded in golden letters in the history of the Syro-Malabar Church.

The Major Archbishop invoked the Synod members to imbibe the spirit of true synodality in our presence and participation in the Sessions of the Synod. He said that everyone needs to listen more to understand and get into the world of the other. Only by knowing others and understanding them in all their successes and struggles, we may be able to walk together, which is the core of synodality. He recollected the words of Holy Father Pope Francis that 'the protagonist of the Synod is not us, but the Holy Spirit.'

Invoking God's blessing, the Major Archbishop declared the II Session of the XXXII Synod 2024 open.

Participants: The following members were present for the current Session of the Synod: Major Archbishop Mar Raphael Thattil, Archbishop Mar Mathew Moolakkatt OSB (Kottayam), Archbishop Mar Andrews Thazhath (Trichur), Archbishop Mar Joseph Perumthottam (Changanacherry), Archbishop Mar Joseph Pamplany (Tellicherry), Archbishop Mar Kuriakose Bharanikulangara (Faridabad), Bishop Mar Thomas Elavanal MCBS (Kalyan), Bishop Mar Sebastian Vadakel MST (Ujjain), Bishop Mar Lawrence Mukkuzhy (Belthangady), Bishop Mar Sebastian Adayanthrath (Mandya), Bishop Mar Joseph Kallarangatt (Palai), Bishop Mar Jose Porunnedom (Mananthavady), Bishop Mar Joseph Pandarasseril (Auxiliary, Kottayam), Bishop Mar Joseph Arumachadath MCBS (Bhadravathi), Bishop Mar Bosco Puthur (Apostolic Administrator, Ernakulam-Angamaly), Bishop Mar Remigiose Inchananiyil (Thamarassery), Bishop Mar Paul Alappatt (Ramanathapuram), Bishop Mar Pauly Kannookadan (Irinjalakuda), Bishop Mar Jose Chittooparambil CMI (Rajkot), Bishop Mar George Rajendran SDB (Thuckalay), Bishop Mar George Madathikandathil (Kothamangalam), Bishop Mar Joseph Kollamparampil CMI (Jagdalpur), Bishop Mar Jose Puthenveettil (Auxiliary, Faridabad), Bishop Mar Joy Alappat (Chicago), Bishop Mar Ephrem Nariculam (Chanda), Bishop Mar

Joseph Kodakallil (Satna), Bishop Mar Jose Kalluvelil (Mississauga), Bishop Mar Prince Antony Panengadan (Adilabad), Bishop Mar Jose Pulickal (Kanjirapally), Bishop Mar Stephen Chirappanath (Apostolic Visitator, Europe), Bishop Mar Joseph Srampickal (Great Britain), Bishop Mar Thomas Tharayil (Auxiliary, Changanacherry), Bishop Mar Sebastian Vaniyapurackal (Curia Bishop), Bishop Mar Tony Neelankavil (Auxiliary, Trichur), Bishop Mar Sebastian Pozholiparambil (Hosur), Bishop Mar John Nellikunnel (Idukki), Bishop Mar James Athikalam MST (Sagar), Bishop Mar Vincent Nellaiparambil (Bijnor), Bishop Mar Peter Kochupurackal (Palghat), Bishop Mar Joseph Kollamparampil (Auxiliary, Shamshabad), Bishop Mar Thomas Padiyath (Auxiliary, Shamshabad), Bishop Mar Alex Tharamangalam (Auxiliary, Mananthavady), Bishop Mar John Panamthottathil CMI (Melbourne), Bishop Mar Mathew Nellikunnel CST (Gorakhpur), Archbishop Mar George Njaralakatt (*Emeritus*, Tellicherry), Bishop Mar Jacob Manathodath (*Emeritus*, Palghat) Bishop Mar Joseph Kunnath CMI (*Emeritus* Adilabad), Bishop Mar Mathew Vaniakizhakel VC (*Emeritus*, Satna), Bishop Mar Chirayath Anthony (*Emeritus*, Sagar), Bishop Mar John Vadakel CMI (*Emeritus*, Bijnor), Bishop Mar Mathew Arackal (*Emeritus*, Kanjirapally), Bishop Mar Jacob Angadiath (*Emeritus*, Chicago) and Bishop Mar Thomas Thuruthimattam CST (*Emeritus*, Gorakhpur).

Moderator: Archbishop Mar Kuriakose Bharanikulangara moderated the sittings of the synod.

Finalization of the Agenda: The Secretary of the Synod read out the provisional agenda approved by the Permanent Synod. A few more items were proposed to be included in the agenda and it was finalized as follows:

1. Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith - Change of specific aspects of protocol for marriage cases in *favorem fidei*
2. A Study on the proposals given by J.B. Koshy Commission
3. Presentation of the Report on the Study regarding the Principles of translation of liturgical texts in our Church
4. Presentation of the Draft of the *QurbanaTaksa* in English

5. Presentation of the Draft of the 'One Volume Edition' of the *Yamaprarthanakal*
6. Presentation of the Draft of the separate books of *Ramsa* and *Sapra* for the use of the faithful
7. Briefing on the work on the *Propria* Text for *Qurbana* of Feasts and other special occasions in 'One Volume', which are not included in the Taksa of *Qurbana*
8. Updates of the activities of Syro-Malabar Commission for Youth and the progress of the scientific study of Syro-Malabar youth under PAROC
9. Matters of Internet mission and Syro-Malabar Matrimonial site.
10. Studying a particular issue/theme, which really concerns our people at every Synod, with the help of two experts on that particular theme and come out with directions on that theme in the Post-Synodal circular
11. Providing some measure of discretionary power to Eparchies outside Kerala about the catechetical programme since the ground reality is very different in those Eparchies
12. Regarding the need for revising the official book on mystagogical catechesis in the Syro-Malabar Church, given the fact that the revised Holy Qurbana Taksa in Malayalam of 2021 approved by the Holy See is the 'new *Editiotypica*' of the Holy Qurbana in the Syro-Malabar Church.
13. Updates on LRC: a) Presentation of the draft for revising the Statutes of the Liturgical Research Centre of the Syro-Malabar Church; b) updates regarding the publication of the book on St. Thomas the Apostle; c) updates regarding the construction of the Heritage and Research Centre of the Syro-Malabar Church.
14. Syro-Malabar Commission for Doctrine: Regarding the Revising of the Theology Forum of the Syro-Malabar Church.
15. Evaluation of the present situation of the Archeparchy of Ernakulam-Angamaly
16. Approval of the final draft of the catechism text of XI Standard
17. A paradigm shift in the pastoral care of the Migrants

18. The letter from the Dicastery for the Eastern Churches (Prot.N.2/2024 dated January 4, 2023) asking to submit a detailed analysis of the situation in the Archeparchy of Ernakulam-Angamaly.
19. Launching a charitable educational project in the Syro-Malabar Church
20. Information from CBCI
21. Mission Sharing
22. Briefing by the participants in the Synod of Bishops on Synodality
23. Issues involved in the Vatican declaration *Fiducia Supplicans* to bless the same sex partners
24. Defining the competence of the Synod of Bishops and the Permanent Synod
25. Deciding on the proposal to invite the representatives of the religious and laity to the Synod
26. The celebration of the Jubilee year in 2025 announced by Pope Francis in our Church

The Letter of the Prefect of the Dicastery for the Eastern Churches: The Major Archbishop invited the attention of the Synod towards the urgency of discussing the letter of the Prefect of the Dicastery for the Eastern Churches (Prot. N.2/2024 dated January 4, 2024), which was directly handed over to the Synod through the second secretary of the Apostolic Nunciature, New Delhi. After narrating the various steps taken by the Dicastery in solving the issues in the Archeparchy of Ernakulam-Angamaly regarding the implementation of the uniform mode of celebration of the Holy *Qurbana*, the letter clearly points out the grave indiscipline involved in the violent opposition and intimidation to the video message addressed to the Archeparchy by the Holy Father.

The letter reads: "The nomination by the Holy Father of a Pontifical Delegate came about, and then to guarantee the will of the Pope beyond all doubt, His Holiness addressed a video message to your Church and in particular to the Archeparchy of Ernakulam-

Angamaly. While making the mind of the Pontiff, especially incontrovertible, this initiative did not achieve its goal, even if it did create amongst the faithful a sense of awareness of the grave situation in which that portion of the Syro-Malabar Church- and perhaps, not only that portion- finds itself. The Holy See has been the recipient of a large number of messages expressing shame and disappointment for behaviour that, under the appearance of opposing a liturgical rubric, has caused violence extending even to disrespect for the Eucharistic Species, the desecration of the Cathedral of the Archeparchy in question, and the exertion of intolerable pressure on the Pontifical Delegate and others. There is an ever increasing demand for disciplinary measures to be taken against such conduct. The picture emerges of a portion of the Church that has in fact taken the path of schismatic attitudes, ignoring the instructions of the Bishops and the Roman Pontiff, contesting their authority and assuming comportment incompatible with ecclesial communion. Even the Holy Father risks, being the object of disrespect and open disobedience."

Thus, the letter reminds the Synod that there is an ever increasing demand for disciplinary measures to be taken against the misconduct of certain priests and laity of the Archeparchy. Those who ignore the instructions of the Bishops and the Roman Pontiff by contesting their authority and assuming comportment incompatible to the ecclesial communion, in fact have taken the path of schismatic attitudes. The letter instructs the Synod to discuss openly and freely the gravity of the current situation of grave indiscipline which could lead even to a schism with their ecclesial and canonical consequences as well as the scandal involved in it. The letter asked the Synod to prepare a detailed analysis of the situation and the measures identified of adoption in this regard, to be sent to the Dicastery, as early as possible. The Synod dedicated almost the whole day for discussing the letter with due attention.

Several Bishops intervened in the discussions and the following are the major points emerged:

- The letter invites our attention to the gravity of the indiscipline existing in the Archeparchy of Ernakulam-Angamaly. No Church can survive without taking adequate disciplinary actions against those who seriously violate the Papal instructions.
- Deliberate disobedience to the Holy See is a schism in itself, what is waiting is only the official declaration of excommunication.
- Show-cause notices must be issued to the priests who did not obey the Papal instruction to celebrate the uniform mode of Holy *Qurbana* on December 25, 2023 and afterwards.
- We must make an apology to the Holy Father, as his repeated instructions are disobeyed by some of our clergy.

The following observations were made in the Synod.

1. A common letter signed by all the members of the Synod appealing to the clergy, religious and the laity of the Archeparchy of Ernakulam-Angamaly, to obey the Papal Exhortation on the uniform mode of celebration of the Holy *Qurbana* may be published.
2. The decision of the Synod on the uniform mode of celebration of the Holy *Qurbana* must remain intact all throughout the Syro-Malabar Church. Any failure to uphold this decision may adversely affect the *sui iuris* nature of our Church.
3. What is being asked to the Synod in the letter is a detailed analysis of the situation and the measures identified for adoption. It means that the actions will be taken by the Dicastery through the Pontifical Delegate and executed by the Apostolic Administrator.
4. In the oriental tradition liturgy is the way to dogmatic, therefore without safeguarding the profundity of our liturgical tradition, we cannot safeguard our faith and dogma. Therefore the issue in dispute is not merely an issue of a liturgical rubric.
5. A breathing space must be given to the new Major Archbishop for addressing the issues in depth, before taking any disciplinary action.
6. A tribunal may be constituted to handle the cases of deliberate disobedience and clerical misconduct. If it is not possible

within the Curia of the Archeparchy, the tribunal may be constituted with the help of the experts from outside of the Archeparchy.

7. If the consensus arrived at in the discussion of the Pontifical Delegate with the representatives of the Archeparchy is still considered to be acceptable to the Apostolic See, one member suggested that the Synod could even think of solving the stalemate determining a specific date to implement the uniform mode of celebration in the Archeparchy.
8. We have to find out means to clarify the position of the Synod by effectively responding to the false propaganda made by dissident groups.
9. Communion with the Church means communion with the Holy Father, Major Archbishop and the Synod. Disobedience to the Holy Father makes one out of this communion.
10. With regard to the Eucharistic celebration, we have to follow the example of Jesus as explained in the Gospel of John (6:62-65). When there arose a dispute on the most important reality of the bread of life, Jesus took a radical stance and asked his disciples to depart him, if they are not ready to believe in the essence of the bread of life. We cannot go on endlessly being passive to the dissident groups.
11. We have to explain to the Holy See, what steps we had taken to safeguard the rights of the priests who are ready to abide with the synodal decision to celebrate the Holy *Qurbana* in the uniform mode.
12. We have to call for fasting and prayer in the whole of Syro-Malabar Church in this crisis situation.
13. Pastoral programmes such as Home Mission and Popular Mission retreats could be used as effective means to conscientise our people directly.
14. Cathedral Basilica may be opened for prayers and Bible convention. The efforts to start the celebration of the uniform mode of Holy *Qurbana* in the Cathedral Basilica should be continued.

Bishop Mar Bosco Puthur, the Apostolic Administrator, after having given a detailed account of the current scenario, informed the Synod that what invites urgency in the Archeparchy are the opening of the minor seminary, opening of the Cathedral Basilica, ordination of eight deacons and reconstitution of the canonical bodies such as pastoral council, presbyteral council, etc. He pointed out that through his ministry he is trying to ensure an Episcopal presence in the Archeparchy, which is often welcomed. He pointed out that the clergy of the Archeparchy of Ernakulam-Angamaly are of the opinion that their voices are not heard in the Synod as the Archeparchy is not adequately represented in the Synod in the recent years.

After the discussions, the Synod suggested the following action plan to be included in the reply to the Dicastery for Eastern Churches:

Measures Identified for Adoption: To issue a common letter signed by all Bishops of the Synod, making an appeal to the priests, religious and lay faithful of the Archeparchy of Ernakulam-Angamaly to obey the instruction of the Holy Father to implement the uniform mode of celebration of the Holy *Qurbana*.

1. To constitute a special tribunal to initiate canonical procedure against the dissident priests and laity in the Archeparchy of Ernakulam-Angamaly in the Archeparchial Curia itself. If that is not possible, the tribunal could be constituted at the Major Archiepiscopal Curia, Mount St. Thomas with the help of priests from outside the Archeparchy of Ernakulam-Angamaly.
2. To organize spiritual events of prayer and reconciliation throughout the Church, imploring the Mercy of the Lord.
3. To organize renewal programmes in the parishes of Archeparchy of Ernakulam-Angamaly like Home Mission and Popular Mission to make the faithful aware of the need to obey the Holy Father and the Synod and to remain in the communion of the Church.
4. To open the Cathedral Basilica at the earliest, without the celebration the Holy *Qurbana* in it and to organize Bible conventions, adoration to the Blessed Sacrament, confessions, rosary etc.

5. To take steps to open the minor seminary at the earliest, instructing to celebrate the uniform mode of celebration.
6. To explain to the Apostolic See the steps taken to safeguard the rights of the priests who desires to abide with the synodal decision to celebrate the Holy *Qurbana* in the uniform mode.

At the end of the discussions, it was decided to constitute a Committee of Three Bishops: Archbishop Joseph Pamplany, the Secretary of the Synod, Bishop Bosco Puthur, the Apostolic Administrator of the Archeparchy of Ernakulam-Angamaly and Bishop Sebastian Vadakel MST, Bishop of Ujjain, to prepare a detailed analysis of the situation and the measures identified of adoption in this regard, to be sent to the Dicastery explaining the precarious situation of indiscipline and disobedience in the Archeparchy of Ernakulam-Angamaly.

Sharing of the Apostolic Administrator of Ernakulam-Angamaly: Bishop Mar Bosco Puthur, the Apostolic Administrator, gave a brief account of the current situation in the Archeparchy of Ernakulam-Angamaly regarding the implementation of the uniform mode of celebration of the Holy *Qurbana*. He observed that the second visit of Archbishop Cyril Vasil SJ, the Pontifical Delegate for the Archeparchy of Ernakulam-Angamaly opened a door for dialogue with various groups of the Archeparchy. The Apostolic Administrator informed the Synod that he had sent a detailed report of the current situation to the Dicastery for the Eastern Churches.

Archbishop Mar Mathew Moolakkatt, the Moderator of the Session, opened the Synodal floor for continuing the discussions on the sharing of Bishop Mar Bosco Puthur, the Apostolic Administrator, on the current situation in the Archeparchy of Ernakulam-Angamaly regarding the implementation of the uniform mode of celebration of the Holy *Qurbana*. Several Bishops intervened in the discussions and the following observations were made by various members:

1. The dissident groups often accuse that the Synod added the rubric of facing the altar during the *anaphora* to the text

approved by the Holy See. Bishop Thomas Elavanal MCBS, the Chairman of the Commission for Liturgy, made the following clarification: As per the *Taksa* of 1986 and 1989, the rubrics presuppose that the celebrant faces the Altar during the celebration of *Qurbana*. It is specifically mentioned that "the celebrant turns to the community" at the Prayer Request and at the greeting of "Peace be with you", and again the Celebrant turns to the Altar. The same rubrics are given in the Draft Text submitted to the Dicastery for Oriental Churches on 10 July 2020. Though, in most of the Eparchies the Liturgy of the Word was celebrated facing the people and the anaphora part facing the Altar, the rubric of the Liturgy of the Word facing the people was not given in the *Taksa* submitted to Rome. We got the letter from the Dicastery (Prot. No 248 /2004, dated 9 November 2020) in which they insisted that "clear rubrical instructions should certainly be included in the new liturgical book". The letter of approval from the Dicastery (Prot. No. 248 / 2004, dated 9 June 2021) gave the specific direction that the "celebrant shall face the faithful at the Bema during the Liturgy of the Word, turn towards 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 the Holy Communion". In the Synod of Bishops (16 – 27, August 2021) it was decided "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 the Holy Communion". Accordingly this directive was clearly given in the General instructions (no. 7) and in the appropriate places in the *Taksa* published on 8 September 2021.

2. Separate instructions of rubrics for the most solemn, solemn and simple forms must be explicitly given to avoid confusions in celebrations.

3. Proper liturgical catechesis explaining the meaning of the rubrics must be given in the catechetical classes. The text of the mystagogical catechesis may be revised in view of this end according to the *editio typica*.
4. We need to pay sufficient attention to the various documents published by the Apostolic See regarding the liturgical celebrations in the Eastern Churches.
5. The dynamism and vitality of Tradition must be properly understood and incorporated in the liturgical revisions.

At this juncture respecting the suggestion of some Bishops, the Moderator intervened and observed that these discussions could be done in a later stage more systematically.

Common Appeal of Synod of Bishops to the Archeparchy of Ernakulam – Angamaly to implement the Uniform Mode of Celebration of Holy *Qurbana*: Evaluating the current impasse in the Archeparchy of Ernakulam-Angamaly regarding the implementation of the uniform mode of celebration of the Holy *Qurbana*, there emerged a proposal to send a collective appeal of the Synod addressed to the priests, religious and lay faithful of the Archeparchy inviting them to generously implement the decision of the Synod in celebrating the Holy *Qurbana*. The Holy Father intervened decisively and unequivocally through the video message given to the Archeparchy, asking to implement the synodal decision. Some members were of the opinion that the Synod also should make an appeal in the line of the Holy Father, while a few others were skeptical regarding the fruitfulness of such a common appeal in the context of disobedience to the Apostolic Administrator, the Pontifical Delegate and the Holy Father. The Major Archbishop made it clear that if such an appeal is made by the Synod, the members who sign the letter should stand by the decision. At the end of the discussions, it was decided to make a collective appeal through a letter signed by the Synod Fathers addressed to the priests, religious and lay faithful of the Archeparchy of Ernakulam-Angamaly, inviting them to implement the uniform mode of celebration of the Holy *Qurbana*, respecting the ultimate

instruction of the Holy Father Pope Francis given by a video message on 7 December 2023. Archbishop Mar Joseph Pamplany, the Secretary of the Synod, prepared a draft and presented it in the Synod. The draft was approved after certain modifications. The letter was signed by all the 49 Bishops present in the Synod hall on 13 January when the decision was taken. The Synod directed Bishop Mar Bosco Puthur, the Apostolic Administrator, to forward the collective appeal of the Synod to all the members of the Archeparchy. The Synod also directed the Chancery to send the hard copy of the letter to all parishes, convents and institutions of the Archeparchy of Ernakulam-Angamaly, after getting the postal addresses from the Archeparchial Curia.

Reply Letter to the Dicastery for the Eastern Churches: In continuation of the previous day's discussion on the letter to the Dicastery for the Eastern Churches (Prot.N.2/2024 dated January 4, 2023) regarding the situation in the Archeparchy of Ernakulam-Angamaly, Archbishop Mar Joseph Pamplany presented a draft of the reply to the Dicastery prepared by the Committee of three Bishops. With a few modifications, the Synod decided to approve the draft of the letter to be sent to the Dicastery for the Eastern Churches in reply to the letter seeking the proposals of the Synod to solve the crisis in the Archeparchy of Ernakulam-Angamaly. It was further decided to send a detailed report later by the same Committee of three Bishops.

Catechism Text Book for Class XI: The Major Archbishop welcomed Fr. Thomas Melvettath, the Secretary to the Commission for Catechesis, to present the revised final draft of the textbook for Class XI. Bishop Mar Jose Pulickal, the Chairman for the Commission for Catechesis introduced the topic. Fr. Thomas presented the salient features of the revised text saying that it is formulated after model of YOUCAT. The lessons are prepared with the help of expert pedagogysts and educationalists. Wide range discussions among the catechism teachers and students have helped to select the relevant topics. The various suggestions of the Synod members on the draft presented in the January

session of the 2023 Synod are adequately incorporated in the text. The Synod members appreciated the style and content of the text. It was suggested to give English equivalent words in bracket for difficult Malayalam words. The theme that Jesus is the unique savior must emphatically be taught in the lessons. After a brief discussion, the Synod decided to grant permission to the commission for Catechism to print and publish the revised catechism textbook for Class XI.

Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith (DDF) - Change of Specific Aspects of Protocol for Marriage Cases in *favorem fidei:* Archbishop Mar Mathew Moolakatt OSB presented the changes to specific aspects of the protocol for marriage cases in *favorem fidei* that came into effect from January 1, 2024. As a partial amendment to art. 25§1 of the Norms of 2001 given by DDF, in marriage cases in *favorem fidei*, it will henceforth be sufficient to submit a *single* authenticated copy of the file, instead of the three copies prescribed earlier. A renewed version of *Summarium*, which is to be included in the Acts is to be downloaded from the website of the Dicastery for the Doctrine of Faith. Due to current economic situation there is an increase in the fees to pay for these cases in the Dicastery.The fees are to be transferred through a bank and preferably not by cheque. Archbishop Mar Moolakatt requested the Bishops to bring the changes indicated above to the attention of the Judicial Vicars.

Revision of Particular Law: Archbishop Mar Mathew Moolakkatt OSB informed the Synod of the progress of the revision of the Code of Particular Law of the Syro-Malabar Church. He said that a draft was sent to all Bishops seeking their suggestions/proposals, after making a serious study with the help of canonists in each Eparchy. He pointed out that not many Eparchies have responded yet. The Major Archbishop requested all the members to give a serious effort to go through the draft and to make proposals to make the work perfect. The draft will be sent once again to all Bishops as a reminder to conduct a study and to send the feedback to the Curia.

Listening the Representatives of the various Groups in the Synodal Session: In continuation of the discussion on the matter in the previous Session of the Synod, some bishops observed that provision must be made in the schedule of the Synod to meet annually the representatives of priests, religious, laity and youth in one of the Sessions of the Synod every year. Concluding the discussion, it was decided to invite representatives of priests, religious, laity and youth to the synodal Sessions for specific sittings annually.

Christmas Gathering with the Prime Minister: Archbishop Mar Kuriakose Bharanikulangara gave a brief report on the Christmas gathering of the Christian leaders in the residence of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. In the meeting the PM praised the various contributions of Christianity to the nation. He also recollected the lovely experience he had at Vatican when he met the Holy Father Pope Francis. Archbishop Bharanikulangara observed that such cordial interactions with the central government are effective for the smooth functioning of the Church in India.

Attacks against Christians: Archbishop Mar Andrews Thazhath invited the attention of the Synod towards the growing antagonism against Christianity in several parts of North India. Bishops of the mission eparchies shared the various thorny experiences they had encountered from the part of the government officials. They pointed out that our charitable institutions like orphanages, boarding centres, schools are continuously targeted. The priests and nuns in charge of these institutions are arrested on the basis of fabricated allegations and kept in prison under the pretext of violating anti-conversion law and Child Welfare Committee norms. As they are charged with non-bailable offences, many are still kept in prison. Organized oppositions against the Christians are obvious. Even the Christmas celebrations are banned in many parts of the country. In the village centres non-Christians are often prohibited by local authorities to enter into the premises of Christian institutions.

One member observed that we shall leave no room for suspecting our patriotism. We should prove through our activities that

a Christian can be a better patriot and a better Indian. The constitutional right to opt a religion according to one's own choice cannot be surrendered to the fundamentalists. It was suggested that the LRC and Theology Forum can organize national level seminars in the mission eparchies to formulate the mission strategy of our Church conducive to each region.

Participation of Syro-Malabar Youth Movement in Indian Catholic Youth Movement: One member invited the attention of the Synod to a serious anomaly existing with regard to the functioning of ICYM, in view of raising the issue in the forthcoming plenary assembly of the CBCI. It was observed that ICYM, Women and Laity Commissions are functioning in the national level exclusively for the faithful of the Latin Church, against the declared norms of the CBCI. The CBCI president informed the Synod that this issue was discussed in the last standing committee meeting and agreed to follow the proclaimed norms of the CBCI.

One member observed that in order to ensure greater number of participation from our Church in the CBCI Standing Committee, the Commission chairmanship allotted to our Church must be given to Bishops other than Archbishops, as all Archbishops are already members of the Standing Committee.

Pastoral Problems of the Migrants: Bishops of the migrant eparchies, especially outside India, raised certain alarming and dangerous pastoral problems confronted by the migrant students. Due to the huge influx of students, job opportunities and accommodation facilities are becoming very low. The attractive courses offered to the students by the recruiting agencies are not made available as they reach abroad. The Bishops of the migrant eparchies urged the bishops of Kerala to have concerted effort for conscientizing the faithful of the social, moral, spiritual and financial dangers involved in the migration of teenagers after Plus Two. Migration must be promoted only after graduation seeking job visas rather than student visas.

Major Archiepiscopal Assembly: Bishop Mar Pauly Kannookadan gave a brief account of the hitherto preparations for the forthcoming

Major Archiepiscopal Assembly which is scheduled to be held from August 23 to 25, 2024 at St. Alphonsian Pastoral Institute, Palai. Bishop Mar Pauly Kannookadan urged the members to send the eparchial level reports as early as possible for the effective preparation of the *lineamenta*. He sought the mind of the Synod, regarding the special guests both in the ecclesiastical and civil level to be invited for the inaugural and concluding sessions. The suggested names include the dignitaries like the Secretary of the State, Prefect of the Dicastery for the Eastern Churches, the CCBI President, Syro-Malankara Major Archbishop and the Head of the Orthodox Church Bishop Kannookadan informed the Synod that a study seminar for the mission eparchies on the themes of the assembly will be held in Ujjain on 16 February, 2024.

Justice JB Koshy Commission Report: Archbishop Mar Andrews Thazhath, the Chairman of the Public Affairs Commission thanked the Bishops who organized the preparation of memoranda in the eparchial level to the Commission led by Justice J B Koshy. He remembered with gratitude the systematic and expert guidance given by PAROC. Bishop Mar Thomas Tharayil explained the various aspects of the reports of the commission. He observed certain reservations regarding the suggestion of implementing welfare schemes (*Kshemanidhi*) for the sacristans and catechism teachers after the model of *Devaswom* and *Waqaf* boards. It was suggested to study this issue in detail in collaboration with other Christian denominations.

Study of a Specific Theme in Every Synod with the Help of Experts: Presenting the theme Bishop Mar Sebastian Adayanthrath observed that in order to facilitate our deeper understanding of the topics discussed in the Synod a presentation with the help of experts is necessary. The Synod welcomed this suggestion. Intervening in the discussions that followed, some Bishops observed that provision must be made in the schedule of the Synod to meet annually the representatives of priests, religious, laity and youth.

Provision for Adapting Local Themes of Mission Contexts in Catechism Text Books: Bishop Mar Sebastian Adayanthrath

invited the attention of the Synod towards the necessity of making provisions in the catechism text books for adapting themes that are specific to the mission contexts by the mission eparchies. As the present textbooks require the entire time of catechism, nothing contextual could be taught in the classes. Bishop Mar Jose Pulickal, Chairman of the Commission for Catechesis observed that it would be better to prepare additional text books in the eparchial level, with the consent of the Catechetical Commission, rather than reorganizing the text books, which might end up in losing the integrity and unity of Catechetical formation in our Church.

Commission for Youth and the Progress of the Scientific Study under PAROC: Bishop Mar Joseph Pandarasseril, the Chairman of the Commission for Youth, presented the progress of the scientific study of the Syro-Malabar youth under PAROC. He said that the initial work of the study is in progress. The four objectives of the study were finalized after online and offline consultations with youth directors, leaders of the 35 eparchies and the Apostolic Visitation in Europe. The objectives are: 1. to capture the socio-cultural status of the Syro-Malabar youth 2. to ascertain the pastoral needs of Syro-Malabar Youth 3. to identify the pastoral challenges corresponding to pastoral needs, and 4. to indicate effective proposals for the ministry of Syro-Malabar youth. Mar Pandarasseril said that the survey will be conducted from February to April 2024. He added that an interim report would be submitted during the August Session of the Synod 2024. The members expressed satisfaction on the progress of the study.

Launching a Charitable Educational Project in the Syro-Malabar Church: Bishop Mar Pauly Kannookadan presented the topic. The aim of the project is to support students from the mission areas who do not have facilities for higher education. He said that there are many qualified students in the mission areas and it is a necessity of the time to give them free education in our institutions. This project could be undertaken by Syro-Malabar Mission or SPANDAN or the Department of Higher Education or even by forming a new trust. In the discussion that followed, several members participated. It was pointed out that it was not financially viable to give students free

education in the unaided educational institutions. One member said that there could be a chance of friction among students due to cultural and social differences. Another member said that it was ideal to raise a fund and support these students, where they are. Another member suggested to convene the Managers of unaided educational institutions and to discuss the viability of this project. At the conclusion of the discussion, Bishop Mar Pauly Kannookadan was requested to present a detailed project after holding consultations with Managers of the institutions and experts in the field of education and to present it in the August 2024 Session of the Synod.

The Administrator for the Eparchy of Shamshabad: Bishop Mar Sebastian Vaniyapurackal informed the Synod of the appointment of Bishop Mar Joseph Kollamparampil to the Office of the Administrator of the Eparchy of Shamshabad, who is currently the *Protosyncellus* of the Eparchy. The See of Shamshabad became vacant as Bishop Mar Raphael Thattil assumed the Office of the Major Archbishop. He said that Major Archbishop Mar Raphael Thattil made this appointment after consulting the Curia Bishop and the Permanent Synod convened on 12 January. The Administrator is entrusted with the ordinary administration of the Eparchy until the assumption of Office of the new Bishop of the Eparchy of Shamshabad. Bishop Mar Joseph Kollamparampil made the Profession of Faith before the Major Archbishop in the Synod hall and assumed the Office of the Administrator.

Updates from the Commission for Liturgy: At the beginning of the discussion on matters related to the Commission for Liturgy, the Major Archbishop welcomed Fr. Jiphy Mekkattukulam, the Secretary of the Commission to the Synod. Bishop Mar Thomas Elavanal MCBS, the Chairman of the Commission, gave a short introduction about the works of the Commission which are completed and those underway. He thanked Cardinal Mar George Alencherry, the Major Archbishop *Emeritus* for his inimitable support to the Commission during his tenure of Major Archbishop. Fr. Jiphy Mekkattukulam made a presentation of the completed projects and those are in the process of completion.

a. Lectionary of the Second Set of Readings: Presenting the Lectionary of the Gospels of the Second Set of Readings, it was pointed out that the text is prepared using the revised POC translation of the New Testament, adapting certain words as done for the First Set of Readings. The Scriptural texts are printed in one column on one page. The text of each day is presented in the same page so that the celebrant need not turn the page, except for very few texts that are too long to fit on the same page. This Lectionary is ready for distribution. The Synod Fathers were given a copy for their use. It was informed that the Lectionary of the Epistles and the Old Testament are in the process of publication, hoping to make them available from May 2024.

b. Short Form and Complete Text of the Liturgy of the Hours: The Short Form of the *Yamaprarthanakal* in Malayalam, printed as per the decision of the Synod, was presented. The Short Form is also ready for distribution. The Synod Fathers were given a copy of the Short Version for their use. The project of printing the complete text of the *Yamaprarthanakal* in one volume is being done. A model of the book was presented in the Synod hall and the members made some observations. The Synod decided to authorize the Commission for Liturgy to print the *Yamaprarthanakal* in one volume as per the order received.

c. Separate Books of *Ramsa* and *Sapra*: A model was presented to show the size of the book of *Ramsa* to be printed in one volume. The hymns of the *propria* are given in two columns in a page which helps to reduce the number of pages. In the same way, a separate Book of *Sapra* will be printed. Both of them will be made available in the August 2024 Synod.

d. Place of Lord's Prayer when Baptism is administered with Holy *Qurbana*: A report on the suitable place of recitation of the Lord's Prayer before the Holy Communion when the Sacrament of Baptism is administered with Holy *Qurbana* was presented by the Secretary of the Commission. The Commission for Liturgy convened a meeting of the Central Liturgical Committee at Mount St. Thomas Kakkanad on 10 and 11 October 2023 and discussed

the topic. There were different opinions in the CLC regarding the question whether we should pray the Lord's Prayer, as per the present ritual, immediately after the crowning of the baptized and the hymn, if there is *Qurbana*.

Although in some manuscripts of the Ritual of Baptism, the Lord's Prayer is found, it is absent in the *Taksa* of Baptism in other East Syrian Churches. In this context, the CLC members came to the conclusion either to keep the *status quo* or to leave the option to the celebrant to recite it or not, immediately after the crowning and the hymn. If the Lord's Prayer is not recited there, it is recited, as per in the *Taksa* of *Qurbana*, before the Holy Communion with the introduction: "Together with this child, who has become a son (daughter) of God, let us implore God, calling Him Father". Concluding the discussion, it was decided either to keep the status quo or to leave the option to the celebrant not to recite 'Our Father' immediately after the crowning and the hymn, but to recite it before the Communion, as per in the *Taksa* of *Qurbana*, with the introduction: "Together with this child, who has become a son (daughter) of God, let us implore God, calling Him Father". This indication is to be included in the general instructions given at the beginning of the *Taksa* of the Order of Baptism.

e. Brief Note on the East Syrian Saints in the Liturgical Calendar: It was brought to the attention of the Synod that brief notes on Mar Aprem, Mar Jacob of Nisibis, Mar Mari, Marth Shmoni and her Seven Sons and Mar Simeon Barsaba and the co-martyrs are included in the Malayalam version of *Panchangam* (Liturgical Calendar). Appreciating this, some members observed that the same could be done for the saints of our Church and other saints venerated in our Church.

f. *Qurbana Taksa* in English: The Commission gave a briefing on the progress of the English Translation of *Qurbana Taksa*. The Psalms are taken from the available English translation of *Peshita* with necessary modifications to assure faithfulness to the original text. With the help of English language experts, the Commission is going through the prayers of the English translation to verify its

faithfulness to the original text. A final draft of the *Qurbana Taksa* in English will be presented in August 2024 Session of the Synod.

Syro-Malabar Matrimony: Bishop Mar Joseph Pandarasseril invited Fr. Seby Kolangara, the Executive Director of Syro-Malabar Church Internet Mission (SMCIM), to make a presentation on the activities of Internet Mission with a special reference to the Syro-Malabar Matrimonial Site. Fr. Seby Kolangara explained that the Syro-Malabar Matrimony Network is operated by the Internet Mission of the Church. With the launching of the new website of the Syro-Malabar Matrimony, all the eparchial matrimonial websites got merged under the new branded name of Syro-Malabar Matrimony. The revamped website, as well as Android and IOS applications were launched on July 3, 2023, during the *Sabhadhinam* celebrations at Mount St. Thomas. The website was revamped with the expert help of the Web and Craft Company at Koratty Info Park. Fr. Kolangara explained the partnership of the different eparchies and the mode of profit sharing. He presented the increase in the revenue after the revamping of the site. The presentation was concluded by thanking the Bishops for their support and requesting their continued help in promoting it in the Archeparchies and Eparchies.

Revising the Format of Application and Affidavit to be submitted by Deacons: Bishop Mar George Madathikandathil presented the revised format of the application and affidavit to be submitted by the deacons to the eparchial Bishops before ordination, incorporating ecclesiastical and disciplinary aspects of priestly ministry. The draft was revised by the Commission for Clergy, incorporating the suggestions proposed by the XXXI Synod Session III in August 2023. After a short discussion, it was decided to approve the revised format of the application and affidavit to be submitted by the deacons to the eparchial Bishops before ordination to priesthood. The approved application and affidavit should be used in all Synodal Major Seminaries.

Issues Involved in the Declaration *Fiducia Supplicans* by DDF: Bishop Mar Tony Neelankavil, the Chairman of the Commission for Doctrine, made a presentation on the Declaration of the Dicastery

for the Doctrine of the Faith, *Fiducia Supplicans*, on the pastoral meaning of blessings. This document provides clarification on the Catholic Church's treatment of "irregular relationships" of those who establish a monogamous and emotional bond that lasts over time and have not contracted a Catholic marriage. Bishop Neelankavil said that there is confusion among the faithful regarding the term 'blessing by a priest' of same-sex couples. This blessing could be confused with the sacramental marriage. In this context, it is opportune to clarify what this declaration implies to the faithful. Blessing by a priest means that it is a spontaneous blessing by him for the persons who approach him. It is in no way liturgical or semi-liturgical. It is not given in the context of the liturgy. It's a spontaneous action of a priest showing compassion and the maternal nature of the Church. On January 4, 2024, the Dicastery for the Doctrine of Faith gave clarification through a press release. In this press release, DDF clarified that a blessing by a priest given to two persons is not comparable to the sacrament of marriage. During the discussion on this theme, several bishops intervened. It was observed that the blessing given to same-sex couples could be misinterpreted as a sacramental blessing in the context of Oriental rite of marriage, as the blessing of a priest is inevitable for the validity of the sacrament of marriage. So, a simple blessing can be misinterpreted as a sacramental blessing in the Oriental Churches. There emerged a proposal that the Synod of the Syro-Malabar Church should give an explanation to the faithful in order to clear confusion regarding this declaration. The collective mind of the Synod was not in favour of issuing an explanation, as the pastoral situation in the eparchies does not demand it so urgently. It was agreed upon that a clarification could be given at a later stage if the confusion persists among the faithful.

Briefing by the Participants of the Synod of Bishops on Synodality: Archbishop Andrews Thazhath gave a briefing on the First Session of the XVI General Ordinary Assembly of the Synod of Bishops held in Rome from 4-29 October 2023. The Synod on Synodality was fruitful on account of the active participation of Pope Francis and the way it was conducted. The event has been

an unprecedented experience for participants in many ways. Men and women were invited, in virtue of their baptism, to sit at the same table and participate, not only in discussions but also in the voting process of this Assembly of the Synod of Bishops, for the first time at the invitation of Pope Francis. The importance of fostering mutual exchanges and collaboration between the Latin and Oriental traditions was highlighted. The participation of delegates from other non Catholic Churches and Ecclesial Communities deeply enriched the interactions. Archbishop Mar Joseph Pamplany added that the Church absolutely needs to listen to everyone, starting with the poorest and those who have been denied the right to speak in society or who feel excluded, even by the Church. The outcome of the discussions has been published, and the same participants will be convened again for the Second Session in October 2024.

Updates on the Liturgical Research Centre: Bishop Mar Tony Neelankavil, Chairman of the Liturgical Research Centre, said that a revised draft of the Statutes of the Liturgical Research Centre of the Syro-Malabar Church will be presented in the August 2024 Session of the Synod. He informed that the LRC is currently preparing a three-volume book called, 'History of St. Thomas Christians'. The first volume titled, "Apostolate of St. Thomas in India", is scheduled to be released on July 3, 2024, during the *Sabhadinam* celebrations. Bishop Mar Neelankavil gave an overview of the progress of the construction work of the Heritage and Research Centre of the Syro-Malabar Church. He thanked Major Archbishop *Emeritus* Cardinal Mar George Alencherry for his efforts to materialize the project. He said that the office section of the Centre was blessed by Cardinal Mar George Alencherry on January 7, 2024.

Reconstituting of the Theology Forum of the Syro-Malabar Church: Bishop Mar Tony Neelankavil, the Chairman of the Commission for Doctrine, explained the process of reconstituting the Theology Forum of the Church. As per the indications given by the Commission, all bishops have submitted a list of three eligible candidates from their eparchies. One person is selected from

among the three from each eparchy considering the expertise in various theological subjects. The list will be submitted to the Major Archbishop for his approval. With the approval, the reconstituted Theological Forum of the Syro-Malabar Church will start its functions.

Jubilee Year 2025 Announced by Pope Francis: Bishop Mar George Rajendran SDB pointed out the need to discuss the mode of celebrating the Jubilee Year 2025 announced by Holy Father Pope Francis. The members were of the opinion that celebrations such as this are to be planned and executed by organs like KCBC at the regional level. After a brief discussion, it was decided to include the item, 'Celebration of Jubilee Year 2025 in the Syro-Malabar Church' in the agenda of the August 2024 Session of the Synod.

Ongoing Formation of Priests: Bishop Mar George Madathikandathil, the Chairman of the Commission for Clergy, announced that the two batches of the ongoing formation programme for junior priests are scheduled from 10 to 20 June and from 16 to 20 September 2024. He thanked the Bishops for sending priests for the ongoing formation conducted in the year 2023. He made an appeal to the Bishops to help the Commission to conduct the programme in a viable manner by sending priests from every eparchy. He informed the Synod of the Major Seminary Professors' Refreshing Course scheduled from 17 to 21 March, 2024.

Sharing of the Bishops *Emeriti:* Archbishop Mar Kuriakose Bharanikulangara, the Moderator, invited the Bishops *Emeriti* to share their experiences. Bishop Mar John Vadakel CMI, Bishop Mar Mathew Arackal, Bishop Mar Thomas Thuruthimattam CST, Bishop Mar Anthony Chirayath and Bishop Mar Jacob Angadiath made personal sharing.

Scrutiny of the Decisions: The Synod made a scrutiny of the decisions of the XXXII Synod (2024) Session II and gave its approval.

Conclusion of the Synod: Major Archbishop Mar Raphael Thattil sought the consent of the members to conclude the Second Session of the XXXII Synod, and proceeded with the concluding

address. The Major Archbishop, in his concluding address, said that the Second Session of the XXXII Synod is characterized by the brevity of its duration. He thanked God for the abundant graces bestowed on the Synod in these two days. He made a special reference to the fruitful discussions on the letter of the Prefect of the Dicastery for the Eastern Churches. The Dicastery has asked the Synod to give a considered evaluation of the unprecedented situation existing in the Archeparchy of Ernakulam-Angamaly and the proposals for finding a solution to the impasse. He said that the Synod will present a detailed report without delay.

The Major Archbishop firmly affirmed that the decision of the Synod on the uniform mode of celebration of the Holy *Qurbana* remains intact. He reminded the members about the three interventions of the Holy Father Pope Francis for the implementation of the decision of the Synod on the uniform mode of Holy *Qurbana* - two letters and one video message - especially in the Archeparchy of Ernakulam-Angamaly. The Major Archbishop underlined the fact that the administration of the Archeparchy of Ernakulam-Angamaly is entrusted to the Apostolic Administrator, who has to act under the guidance of the Pontifical Delegate for the Archeparchy. He added that the Major Archbishop and the Synod are not supposed to be directly involved in the administration of the Archeparchy. He exhorted the Synod Fathers to accompany the Archeparchy with prayers and penance in order to overcome the current situation of uncertainty and chaos. The Major Archbishop thanked everyone, especially the members of the Synod, who helped in one way or the other to make the Synodal Session fruitful. Entrusting the whole Church to the protection of the Holy Mary, Mother of God, St. Thomas, the Father in Faith, and all the Saints and Blesseds of the Church, the Major Archbishop formally declared the Second Session of the XXXII Synod of the Bishops of the Syro-Malabar Church closed.

Archbishop Joseph Pamplany
Secretary, Synod of Bishops

Fr. Abraham Kavilpurayidathil
Major Archiepiscopal Chancellor

XXXII SYNOD (2024), SESSION II
JANUARY 12-13, 2024

DECISIONS

1. To constitute a Committee of three Bishops: Archbishop Joseph Pamplany (Convener), the Secretary of the Synod, Bishop Bosco Puthur, the Apostolic Administrator of the Archeparchy of Ernakulam-Angamaly and Bishop Sebastian Vadakel MST, Bishop of Ujjain, to prepare a detailed analysis of the situation and the measures identified of adoption in this regard, to be sent to the Dicastery explaining the precarious situation of indiscipline and disobedience in the Archeparchy of Ernakulam-Angamaly.
2. To grant permission to the Commission for Catechesis to print and publish the revised catechism textbook for Class XI.
3. To invite representatives of priests, religious, laity and youth to the synodal Sessions for specific sittings annually.
4. To authorize the Commission for Liturgy to print the *Yamaprarthanakal* in one volume as per the order received.
5. To keep either the *status quo* or to leave the option to the celebrant not to recite 'Our Father' immediately after the crowning and the hymn, but to recite it before the Communion, as per in the *Taksa* of *Qurbana*, with the introduction: "Together with this child, who has become a son (daughter) of God, let us implore God, calling Him Father". This indication is to be included in the general instructions given at the beginning of the *Taksa* of the Order of Baptism.
6. To make a collective appeal through a letter signed by the Synod Fathers addressed to the priests, religious and lay faithful of the Archeparchy of Ernakulam-Angamaly, inviting

them to implement the uniform mode of celebration of the Holy *Qurbana*, respecting the ultimate appeal of the Holy Father Pope Francis given by a video message on 7 December 2023.

7. To approve the revised format of application and affidavit to be submitted by the deacons to the eparchial Bishops before ordination to priesthood. The approved application and affidavit should be used in all Synodal Major Seminaries.

8. To approve the draft of the letter to be sent to the Dicastery for the Eastern Churches in reply to the letter seeking the proposals of the Synod to solve the crisis in the Archeparchy of Ernakulam-Angamaly. It was further decided to send a detailed report later by the same Committee of three Bishops.

9. To include the item, 'Celebration of Jubilee Year 2025 in the Syro-Malabar Church' in the agenda of the August 2024 Session of the Synod.

Archbishop Joseph Pamplany
Secretary, Synod of Bishops

Fr. Abraham Kavilpurayidathil
Major Archiepiscopal Chancellor

XXXII SYNOD (2024) SESSION II
12-13 JANUARY 2024

CONCLUDING ADDRESS OF THE MAJOR ARCHBISHOP

My dear Brother Archbishops and Bishops,

Praise be to Jesus Christ!

We are coming to the concluding moment of the second Synodal Session in January 2024. This Session is characterized by brevity of its duration. We started yesterday morning and this evening we are already at the conclusion. As we know, this Session was convened after my assumption to the Office of the Major Archbishop. At the outset, I thank God for the abundant graces bestowed on us in these two days. I thank you, my Brother Bishops, for your presence and active participation in the sittings.

On these two days, we discussed very important matters that affect our Church. We discussed the letter of the Prefect of the Dicastery for the Eastern Churches with due seriousness it deserves. The Dicastery has asked the Synod to give a considered evaluation of the unprecedented situation existing in the Archeparchy of Ernakulam-Angamaly and the proposals towards finding a solution to the impasse. As we have already decided, we will present a detailed report without delay. The serious approach we have given to the matter should be continued until we find a lasting solution.

I would like to make it clear that the decision of our Synod on the uniform mode of celebration of the Holy *Qurbana* remains intact. There will be no change in our position. Holy Father Pope Francis has endorsed the decision of the Synod and magnanimously made three interventions - two letters and one video message - for its

implementation in our Church, especially in the Archeparchy of Ernakulam-Angamaly. Now, as it is clear by this time, dialogue without openness and charity will yield no results. As the administration of the Archeparchy of Ernakulam-Angamaly is entrusted to Apostolic Administrator who has to act under the guidance of Pontifical Delegate for the Archeparchy. The Major Archbishop and the Synod are not supposed to be directly involved in the administration of the Archeparchy. At the same time, we have to accompany the Archeparchy in our paternal solicitude. Moreover, as we discussed, we have to help the Archeparchy with our prayers and penance, in order to overcome the current situation of uncertainty and chaos.

I take this occasion to appreciate the enormous works undertaken by the Commission for Liturgy under the Chairmanship of Bishop Mar Thomas Elavanal MCBS. The Commission has presented in the Synod final text of the Shorter Version of the *Yamaprarthanakal* and the Second Set of Lectionary. There are many other works underway with the Commission. Likewise, the Commission for Catechesis also deserves our gratitude for having prepared the Class XI catechism text book, which was revised incorporating the suggestions of the Synod Fathers, making it more attractive to the students, without compromising fundamental concepts of faith. All other matters we discussed were also important and need follow up.

As we are to conclude this Session, I take this occasion to express my thanks to Archbishop Mar Joseph Pamplany, the Secretary of the Synod for the preparation of the minutes, Bishop Mar Sebastian Vaniyapurackal, the Curia Bishop, Fr. Abraham Kavilpurayidathil, the Chancellor and Fr. Joseph Mattathil, the Vice Chancellor,for thecareful arrangements made for the successful conduct of the Synod.I thank also Archbishop Kuriakose Bharanikulangara for efficiently moderating the sittings of this Session.The dedicated

service of Fr. Joseph Tholanickal, the Finance Officer, the priests, the sisters and all other staff of the Curia deserve special mention.

Once again, I express my sincere gratitude to each and every member of the Synod for the wholehearted cooperation and active participation in the Synod. Entrusting 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, I formally declare the Second Session of the XXXII Synod of the Bishops of the Syro-Malabar Church closed.

Mar Raphael Thattil
Major Archbishop of the Syro-Malabar Church

SPECIAL ONLINE SESSION OF XXXII SYNOD (2024)

14 & 19 JUNE 2024

SPECIAL ONLINE SESSION OF XXXII SYNOD (2024)
14 & 19 JUNE 2024

INAUGURAL ADDRESS OF THE MAJOR ARCHBISHOP

Your Beatitude, Dear Archbishops and Bishops,

This Special Session of the XXXII Synod of Bishops of the Syro-Malabar Church is convened online today to brief you the decisions taken in the high level meeting held on 15 May 2024, with regard to the crisis situation existing in the Archeparchy of Ernakulam-Angamaly during my first visit to the Vatican after assuming the Office of the Major Archbishop. My visit to the Holy Father, the Secretariat of State and the various Dicasteries of the Roman Curia, accompanied by the members of the Permanent Synod, the Curia Bishop and the Procurator of the Major Archbishop in Rome was fruitful and beneficial to our Church. I would like to thank all those who have worked hard to organize this visit, in a very special way Bishop Mar Stephen Chirappanath.

The Address of the Holy Father Pope Francis on 13 May 2024 delivered in the Consistory Hall of the Vatican Palace was indeed a public recognition to our Church. The Successor of Peter encouraged the descendents of the Apostle Thomas with these words: "It is, therefore, good for me, as Bishop of Rome, to encourage you, the Syro-Malabar Catholic faithful, wherever you are, to cultivate the sense of belonging you have to your Church *sui iuris*, so that your great liturgical, theological, spiritual and cultural heritage may shine ever more brightly". Following these, the Holy Father announced the granting of jurisdiction over the Syro-Malabar faithful in the Gulf Region to the Major Archbishop. It means very clearly that wherever we are, we have the bounden duty to preserve and transmit the glorious legacy that we have

received and which we carry forward, as Pope Francis said in his address.

Making a very clear reference to the situation of indiscipline in the Archeparchy of Ernakulam-Angamaly with regard to the implementation of the uniform mode of celebration of the Holy *Qurbana*, the Holy Father spoke about the letters and video message sent to the faithful of the Archeparchy, "warning them of the dangerous temptation to focus on one detail, and an unwillingness to let it go, even to the detriment of the good of the Church". He reminded that "guarding unity is not a pious exhortation but a duty, and it is especially so when it concerns priests who have promised obedience and from whom the faithful expect the example of charity and meekness". The Holy Father reminded us of our responsibility in these words: "because the nature of your Church *sui iuris* empowers you not only to examine carefully the situations and challenges that you face, but also to take appropriate steps to address them, with responsibility and evangelical courage, remaining faithful to the guidance of the Major Archbishop and the Synod. This is what the Church wants, for apart from Peter, apart from the Major Archbishop, there is no Church".

On 15 May in Rome, there was a high level meeting at the Dicastery for the Eastern Churches to discuss the matters related to the Archeparchy of Ernakulam-Angamaly in which His Eminence Cardinal Pietro Parolin, His Eminence Cardinal Claudio Gugerotti, His Grace Archbishop Cyril Vasil' SJ, the members of the Permanent Synod and Bishop Bosco Puthur, the Apostolic Administrator, participated. The decisions of that high level meeting are already known to you through the joint circular issued by Bishop Mar Bosco Puthur, the Apostolic Administrator and me as the Major Archbishop and Metropolitan Archbishop of Ernakulam-Angamaly, as per the decision of the Permanent Synod

You might very well remember that after the repeated appeals from the part of the Synod to obey the decision on the uniform mode

of celebration of the Holy *Qurbana*, we made a collective appeal to the priests, religious and laity of the Archeparchy on 13 January this year, signed by 49 Synod Fathers. That too was rejected. Before leaving for Rome, from my part I made a final attempt by requesting Bishop Mar Bosco Puthur to prepare an action plan for the implementation of the decision of the Synod in the Archeparchy to be submitted in the meeting at the Dicastery. I held a series of meetings with the Archeparchial Curia. As requested, I met the members of the Archeparchial Curia, the College of Consulters and the Forane Vicars in the presence of Bishop Bosco Puthur at Mount St. Thomas. But at the end of many meetings, the presbyterium rejected all the proposals as usual leaving no space for further interventions. However, Bishop Mar Bosco Puthur presented an action plan for gradual implementation with limited provisions, suggested by the priests of the Archeparchy, which was not accepted by the Apostolic See.

Dear Brother Archbishops and Bishops, as I mentioned at the beginning, this Session of the Synod is convened to inform the members of the Synod of the decisions taken while we were in Rome with regard to the final step of implementation of the uniform mode of celebration in the Archeparchy. I invite you all to participate in this short Session of the Synod, trusting in the Providence which guided our Church through the rough roads of history. I conclude with the words of Pope Francis: "You have had many challenges over the course of your long and difficult history… Yet, you have remained faithful to the Successor of Peter". May Holy Mary, Mother of Christ, St. Thomas, our Father in Faith and all our Saints and Blesseds of our Church intercede for us!

With these words I declare the Special Session of the XXXII Synod 2024 open.

Mar Raphael Thattil
Major Archbishop of the Syro-Malabar Church

SPECIAL ONLINE SESSION OF XXXII SYNOD (2024)
JUNE 14 & JUNE 19, 2024

REPORT

The Special Session of the XXXII Synod (2024), convened online and hosted from the Major Archiepiscopal Curia at Mount St. Thomas, began at 05pm IST on 14 June 2024.

Formal Inauguration of the Synod: The formal sitting of the Synod began with a prayer led by His Beatitude Mar Raphael Thattil, the Major Archbishop. After the prayer, the Major Archbishop proceeded to the inaugural address. In his address, the Major Archbishop said that this Special Session of the XXXII Synod of Bishops of the Syro-Malabar Church was convened online to brief everyone on the decisions taken in the high-level meeting held in Rome on 15 May 2024 with regard to the crisis situation existing in the Archeparchy of Ernakulam-Angamaly.

Regarding the first visit of Mar Raphael Thattil to the Vatican after assuming the Office of the Major Archbishop, he said that the visit to the Holy Father, the Secretariat of State, and the various Dicasteries of the Roman Curia, accompanied by the members of the Permanent Synod, the Curia Bishop, and the Procurator of the Major Archbishop in Rome, was fruitful and beneficial to the Church. The Address of the Holy Father Pope Francis on 13 May 2024, delivered in the Consistory Hall of the Vatican Palace, was indeed a public recognition of our Church. He quoted the encouraging words of the Successor of Peter to the descendants of the Apostle Thomas: "It is, therefore, good for me, as Bishop of Rome, to encourage you, the Syro-Malabar Catholic faithful, wherever you are, to cultivate the sense of belonging you have to your Church *sui iuris*, so that your great liturgical, theological, spiritual and cultural heritage may shine ever more brightly."

Then, the Major Archbishop cherished the historic announcement made by the Holy Father granting orally the jurisdiction over the Syro-Malabar faithful in the Gulf Region to the Major Archbishop. Making a reference to the situation in the Archeparchy of Ernakulam-Angamaly, Holy Father spoke about the letters and video message he sent to the faithful of the Archeparchy, warning them of the dangerous temptation to focus on one detail, and unwillingness to let it go, even to the detriment of the good of the Church. The Major Archbishop quoted the Holy Father: "guarding unity is not a pious exhortation but a duty, and it is especially so when it concerns priests who have promised obedience and from whom the faithful expect the example of charity and meekness."

Major Archbishop spoke about the high-level meeting held at the Dicastery for the Eastern Churches on 15 May to discuss the matters related to the Archeparchy of Ernakulam-Angamaly in which His Eminence Cardinal Pietro Parolin, His Eminence Cardinal Claudio Gugerotti, His Grace Archbishop Cyril Vasil SJ, the members of the Permanent Synod and Bishop Mar Bosco Puthur, the Apostolic Administrator, participated. He said that the decisions of that high-level meeting were published through the joint Circular issued by him as the Major Archbishop and the Metropolitan Archbishop of Ernakulam-Angamaly, and Bishop Mar Bosco Puthur, the Apostolic Administrator as per the decision of the Permanent Synod.

Then, the Major Archbishop explained the background of giving the ultimatum to the priests of Ernakulam-Angamaly in the Circular. The Synod made repeated appeals to obey the decision on the uniform mode of celebration of the Holy *Qurbana*. The Session II of the XXXII Synod made a collective appeal to the priests, religious and laity of the Archeparchy to obey the decision of the Synod on 13 January this year, signed by 49 Synod Fathers. That, too, was rejected. Before leaving for Rome, the Major Archbishop made a final attempt by requesting Bishop Mar Bosco Puthur to prepare an action plan for the implementation of the decision of the Synod in the Archeparchy to be submitted in the meeting

at the Dicastery. As requested, the Major Archbishop met the members of the Archeparchial Curia, the College of Consultors, and the Forane Vicars in the presence of Bishop Mar Bosco Puthur at Mount St. Thomas. But at the end of many meetings, the Presbyterium rejected all the proposals as usual, leaving no space for further interventions. However, Bishop Mar Bosco Puthur presented an action plan for gradual implementation with limited provisions, suggested by the priests of the Archeparchy, which was not accepted by the Apostolic See.

Having narrated the background of the Circular, the Major Archbishop invited members of the Synod to participate effectively in the discussions with regard to the final step of implementation of the uniform mode of celebration in the Archeparchy. Invoking God's blessing, the Major Archbishop declared the Special Session of the XXXII Synod 2024 open.

Participants: The following members were present for the Special Session of the Synod: Major Archbishop Mar Raphael Thattil, Mar George Alencherry (Major Archbishop *Emeritus*), Archbishop Mar Mathew Moolakkatt OSB (Kottayam), Archbishop Mar Andrews Thazhath (Trichur), Archbishop Mar Joseph Perumthottam (Changanacherry), Archbishop Mar Joseph Pamplany (Tellicherry), Archbishop Mar Kuriakose Bharanikulangara (Faridabad), Bishop Mar Thomas Elavanal MCBS (Kalyan), Bishop Mar Sebastian Vadakel MST (Ujjain), Bishop Mar Lawrence Mukkuzhy (Belthangady), Bishop Mar Sebastian Adayanthrath (Mandya), Bishop Mar Joseph Kallarangatt (Palai), Bishop Mar Jose Porunnedom (Mananthavady), Bishop Mar Joseph Pandarasseril (Auxiliary, Kottayam), Bishop Mar Joseph Arumachadath MCBS (Bhadravathi), Bishop Mar Bosco Puthur (Apostolic Administrator, Ernakulam-Angamaly), Bishop Mar Remigiose Inchananiyil (Thamarassery), Bishop Mar Paul Alappatt (Ramanathapuram), Bishop Mar Pauly Kannookadan (Irinjalakuda), Bishop Mar Jose Chittooparambil CMI (Rajkot), Bishop Mar George Rajendran SDB (Thuckalay), Bishop Mar George Madathikandathil (Kothamangalam), Bishop Mar Joseph Kollamparampil CMI (Jagdalpur), Bishop Mar Jose Puthenveettil (Auxiliary, Faridabad), Bishop Mar Joy Alappat (Chicago), Bishop

Mar Ephrem Nariculam (Chanda), Bishop Mar Joseph Kodakallil (Satna), Bishop Mar Jose Kalluvelil (Mississauga), Bishop Mar Prince Antony Panengadan (Adilabad), Bishop Mar Jose Pulickal (Kanjirapally), Bishop Mar Stephen Chirappanath (Apostolic Visitator, Europe), Bishop Mar Joseph Srampickal (Great Britain), Bishop Mar Thomas Tharayil (Auxiliary, Changanacherry), Bishop Mar Sebastian Vaniyapurackal (Curia Bishop), Bishop Mar Tony Neelankavil (Auxiliary, Trichur), Bishop Mar Sebastian Pozholiparambil (Hosur), Bishop Mar John Nellikunnel (Idukki), Bishop Mar James Athikalam MST (Sagar), Bishop Mar Vincent Nellaiparambil (Bijnor), Bishop Mar Peter Kochupurackal (Palghat), Bishop Mar Joseph Kollamparampil (Administrator, Shamshabad), Bishop Mar Thomas Padiyath (Auxiliary, Shamshabad), Bishop Mar Alex Tharamangalam (Auxiliary, Mananthavady), Bishop Mar John Panamthottathil CMI (Melbourne), Bishop Mar Mathew Nellikunnel CST (Gorakhpur), Archbishop Mar George Valiamattam (*Emeritus*, Tellicherry), Archbishop Mar George Njaralakattu (*Emeritus*, Tellicherry), Bishop Mar George Punnakottil (*Emeritus* Kothamangalam), Bishop Mar Thomas Chakiath (Auxiliary *Emeritus* Ernakulam-Angamaly), Bishop Mar Jacob Manathodath (*Emeritus*, Palghat) Bishop Mar Joseph Kunnath CMI (*Emeritus* Adilabad), Bishop Mar Mathew Vaniakizhakel VC (*Emeritus*, Satna), Bishop Mar John Vadakel CMI (*Emeritus*, Bijnor), Bishop Mar Mathew Arackal (*Emeritus*, Kanjirapally) and Bishop Mar Jacob Angadiath (*Emeritus*, Chicago).

Moderator: Archbishop Mar Joseph Pamplany moderated the online sitting.

Minutes of the Joint Meeting with High Officials in Rome: At the invitation of the Major Archbishop, Archbishop Mar Joseph Pamplany presented the minutes of the high level meeting held at the Dicastery for the Eastern Churches on 15 May 2024 to discuss the matters related to the Archeparchy of Ernakulam-Angamaly in which His Eminence Cardinal Pietro Parolin, His Eminence Cardinal Claudio Gugerotti, His Grace Archbishop Cyril Vasil SJ, the members of the Permanent Synod and Bishop Mar Bosco Puthur, the Apostolic Administrator, participated. The

minutes were displayed on the screen. Archbishop Mar Joseph Pamplany said that the circular published by the Major Archbishop and the Apostolic Administrator and the decisions regarding the final implementation of the uniform mode of celebration of the Holy *Qurbana* in the Archeparchy of Ernakulam-Angamaly was the decision of this meeting.

Intervention by Bishop Mar Bosco Puthur: The Moderator invited Bishop Mar Bosco Puthur to present the pastoral situation in the Archeparchy after publishing the circular. Bishop Mar Puthur said that he was committed to implementing the decisions of the Synod and requested the support of all Synodal Fathers. The Apostolic Administrator shared his difficulties in the Archeparchy. The leaders of the dissident priests have already declared their refusal of the circular. The lay dissidents have declared in a Press Conference that they would block the priests who celebrate Holy *Qurbana* in the uniform mode. He concluded his intervention stating that a very careful planning is required to meet the eventualities emerging from the disobedience of the priests after 3 July.

Interventions by Synod Members: The Moderator invited the members to express their views regarding the implementation of the uniform mode of celebration in the Archeparchy and the punitive measures determined to address the non obedience to the directions given in the joint circular. The Bishops hailing from the Archeparchy of Ernakulam-Angamaly shared their worries and anxieties that are happening in their Archeparchy. The Major Archbishop made an intervention to clarify the following: The decisions given in the joint circular are taken in the meeting held at the Dicastery in the presence of high level authority, the Permanent Synod and the Apostolic Administrator. The Holy Father first with two letters and then extraordinarily through a video message asked the priests to implement decision of the Synod. We cannot disobey the Holy Father. We have no other way than to implement it at the earliest. All the Bishops who participated in the Synod on 13 January 2024 signed a collective appeal addressed to the Archeparchy of Ernakulam-Angamaly to implement the uniform mode at the earliest. The Major Archbishop added that

he even made a last attempt before leaving for Rome by asking the Apostolic Administrator to give an action plan of gradual implementation to present to the high level meeting. But this request was also rejected by the Presbyterium of the Archeparchy of Ernakulam-Angamaly. He said that met various groups - the Archeparchial Curia, Eparchial Consulters and Forane Vicars - at Mount St. Thomas to request them to prepare the action plan. In one of such meetings, one priest repeatedly told that they need 99 years to implement the decisions. He concluded stating that such irrational and highly emotional approaches of certain priests have complicated the situation to the present crisis.

Archbishop Mar Joseph Pamplany intervened to say that the minutes of the high level meeting held at the Dicastery on 15 May were prepared at the direction of His Eminence Claudio Cardinal Gugerotti. In the discussion that followed, several other members also expressed their views. Following are the main points emerged from the discussion:

- Holy Father insisted many times on the virtue of obedience. In the discussions, no one highlighted the instructions of the Holy Father to obey the decisions of the Synod. It must be highlighted the words of Holy Father that "without obedience there is no communion."
- The circular does not speak about excommunication of the priests of Ernakulam-Angamaly. It clearly mentions the imposition of suspension if not falling in line. Therefore, the canonical punishments are invited by the priests through their disobedience.
- The punitive measures against the disobedient priests should be taken following canonical procedure. Individual warnings should be given to the priests by the Apostolic Administrator prior to the act of suspending them from exercising priestly ministry. The automatic suspension does not exist in the Eastern Churches.
- There is no room for discussions again. Several times, the Synodal Committee of Bishops had discussions with the representatives of the Archeparchy of Ernakulam–Angamaly.

Sometimes the representatives agree with the action plan and later they have withdrawn from the decisions after discussing it with members of the Presbyterium or with other lay faithful.

- The problems in the Archeparchy of Ernakulam-Angamaly are not mere problems of obeying a particular rubric. Rather, it has become a problem of obedience to the Holy Father, the Synod and the Major Archbishop. Thus the violation of the direction to celebrate the uniform mode entails breaking away from the communion, as Pope has rightly said.
- It is not fair to say that the entire Catholic population in the Archeparchy of Ernakulam-Angamaly are against the implementation of the synodal decision. There is a group in almost every parish, nurtured by the disobedient priests who oppose to the decision of the Synod by even resorting to violent means.
- The uniform mode of celebration was evolved in 1999 when Fr. Antony Nariculam was the Secretary of the Commission for Liturgy. He himself had a decisive role in formulating this compromise formula and giving it theological explanations.

At 7.00 pm, the Major Archbishop sought the mind of the Synod on continuing the Special Online Session of the Synod to another day, since many Bishops had raised their hands to intervene. The members were in favour of continuing the discussion and therefore the Synod decided to resume the current Session of the XXXII Synod at 5 pm IST on Wednesday, 19 June, 2024.

The Second Day of the Special Session: The second day of the Special Session of the XXXII Synod (2024), began at 05 pm IST on Wednesday, 19 June 2024. Bishop Mar Sebastian Vaniyapurackal, Curia Bishop, led the prayer. The Secretary read out the minutes of the previous day and the Synod approved it with a few modifications. Archbishop Mar Joseph Pamplany moderated the sitting of the day.

Archbishop Mar Joseph Pamplany informed the Synod of some discussions that took place after the first day of the online Synod, in the background of the dissent letter written to the Major

Archbishop by five Bishops hailing from Ernakulam-Angamaly. In the discussions, the Bishops expressed their willingness to help out, if necessary, in this process of dialogue with the priests in view of solving the present issues amicably. In this context, the Permanent Synod asked the Bishops to present an action plan from their part to find a solution to the difficult situation in the Archeparchy, in the light of the directives given so far. The Bishops held various meetings with the leaders of the disobedient priests and laity and presented a few proposals to the Permanent Synod for a gradual implementation of the decision in the Archeparchy to avoid a schism. Then Archbishop Pamplany presented these proposals made by the five Bishops and requested the members to focus on the practical aspects in the light of the proposals:

1. The circular 4/2024 issued on 9 June 2024 shall remain valid. All are bound to implement the uniform mode of celebration of the Holy *Qurbana* in the entire Syro-Malabar Church starting from 3 July 2024.
2. A vast majority of the priests of the Archeparchy have expressed their willingness to celebrate at least one Holy *Qurbana* in the uniform mode in all the churches on all Sundays and days of obligation, starting from 3 July 2024, in view of implementing the synodal decision completely in the Archeparchy. In this case, canonical punitive measures stipulated in circular 4/2024 dated 9 June 2024 should not be initiated against those priests who start celebrating at least one Holy *Qurbana* in the uniform mode as decided by the Synod on Sundays and other days of obligation in all churches and institutions from 3 July 2024, until a final date decided by the Synod for the full implementation of the uniform mode in the Archeparchy.
3. *Bema* will be used in all churches.
4. Major Archbishop and Bishops will have the possibility to celebrate the Holy *Qurbana* in the uniform mode as they visit any church in the Archeparchy.

5. Holy Qurbana in the uniform mode will be celebrated in the religious houses.
6. Synodal *Qurbana* will be celebrated in Malayattoor *Kurishumudi* and other Pilgrim Centres.

After presenting these proposals, Archbishop Mar Pamplany clarified that nobody will be automatically excommunicated after 3 July in case of non compliance with the directives given in the circular. The canonical punishment will be preceded by the procedures given in the CCEO. At the same time, canonical actions will be initiated immediately against those who do not celebrate even one Holy *Qurbana* starting from 3 July. The final date for the full implementation of the uniform mode in the Archeparchy could be decided in the August 2024 Session of the Synod, after holding discussions with the representatives of the Archeparchy. He also said that if the Synod approved the proposals, they should be published after the conclusion of the Synodal Session and steps should be taken under the leadership of the Major Archbishop and Apostolic Administrator to hold dialogue to bring the priests to obedience by celebrating at least one Holy *Qurbana*, for the time being. All Bishops are expected to join this process of dialogue in all the ways possible.

The Major Archbishop intervened to clarify that all these steps are to be seen in view of full implementation of the uniform mode of celebration of the Holy *Qurbana* in the Archeparchy of Ernakulam-Angamaly. To a query, Archbishop Mar Pamplany made it clear that the proposals presented by the five Bishops and placed by the Permanent Synod for the discussion and discernment of the Synod Fathers are not fully approved by all the priests of the Archeparchy. He said that the Synod, as a last chance, should try to make it acceptable to the priests of the Archeparchy.

In the discussion that followed, several Bishops intervened and the salient points emerged are the following:

- The Holy Father, through his interventions by letters and video message made his mind very clear regarding the matter. The circular is issued in the context of the decision taken in

the meeting of the higher officials held at the Dicastery for the Eastern Churches on 15 May 2024.

- The meeting of the Permanent Synod and the five Bishops from Ernakulam-Angamaly Bishops was fruitful and it created a positive atmosphere among them to solve this problem gradually. The deadline for the full implementation is to be fixed only after one or two Sessions of the Synod in order to release tensions in the Archeparchy. The Synod should give enough time to the Archeparchy to implement the Holy *Qurbana* in the uniform mode gradually.
- The proposals presented by the Permanent Synod are positive in the process of implementation. The Major Archbishop should be given a space to find a solution to the problem already existing when he assumed the Office.
- There should be a shift of focus in the discussions of the Synod. Several Sessions are already spent exclusively for discussing the liturgical issue in the Archeparchy of Ernakulam-Angamaly. The focus should be shifted from liturgy to evangelization.
- The intervention of the Permanent Synod, Apostolic Administrator and the Bishops hailing from the Archeparchy of Ernakulam-Angamaly is welcoming. It is the synodal way of functioning. The proposal of not initiating canonical punitive measures mentioned in the circular dated 9 June, 2024 against those priests who start celebrating at least one *Qurbana* in the uniform mode as decided by the Synod on Sundays and other days of obligation in all churches and institutions from 3 July 2024 is a positive step.
- Bishop Mar Bosco Puthur could communicate in his circular the options existing in the Archeparchy of Ernakulam-Angamaly regarding the celebration of the Holy *Qurbana*, in order to clarify the misconceptions and false propaganda. It should be made known to the people of God.
- The proposals are positive and they are welcome. Every decision is to be taken after having done sufficient homework. The next Session of the Synod could discuss more on the topic.

- The Major Archbishop, Bishop Mar Bosco Puthur and Archbishop Joseph Pamplany could take leadership in the further execution of the decision of the Synod. There is no need that all are involved in the process as the decision is already taken.
- There is confusion among the faithful. The Major Archbishop should address this issue by giving a video message, clarifying the decision and explanations for the same. The media could be used more for explaining the official position of the Church. If needed, a press conference could be held.
- The proposals could be accepted. At the same time, steps should be taken to stop the protest activities. Freedom should be given to all those who want to celebrate more than one Holy *Qurbana* in the uniform mode and nobody should obstruct them. Public statements against the decisions of the Synod are to be controlled.
- There are many priests who would like to celebrate the uniform mode on all days. They should have freedom for that.
- Disciplinary actions are to be initiated against those who have reacted negatively on the circular published on 9 June 2024.
- The priests who celebrate the Holy *Qurbana* in the uniform mode are to be encouraged.
- It is to be remembered that the decision was originally taken in 1999. There is no point in giving further time for catechesis. There are many other aspects of liturgical life which are not implemented in the Archeparchy of Ernakulam-Angamaly. The sacraments of initiation are not administered together and the Liturgy of the Hours is not generally followed in the Archeparchy.
- It is to be mentioned clearly that the circular dated 9 June 2024 remains without any modification, while communicating the proposals.
- There is no need to change the decision of the Synod regarding the illicit nature of the celebration of the Holy *Qurbana* facing the people. There is only one form of valid and licit celebration, which is the uniform mode of celebration.

The Moderator intervened to make the following clarifications: the one Holy *Qurbana* is directed to be celebrated in every church and not by every priest, as of now. Disciplinary actions will be initiated against those priests who do not comply with the direction to celebrate at least one Holy *Qurbana* starting from 3 July 2024.

The Major Archbishop, making an intervention, made it clear that the proposals do not deviate from the basic principles of the decision of the Synod. The proposals are to be seen as a crisis management. The decision on the uniform mode is to be implemented slowly and gradually, taking into account the crisis in the pastoral situation.

At the direction of the Major Archbishop, Archbishop Mar Joseph Pamplany presented the understanding reached in the discussions, which would be the content of the notification given after the conclusion of the online Synod. The Moderator sought the mind of the members regarding the mode of communicating the decisions after the conclusion of the Synodal Session. There emerged an understanding not to issue new circular, but in the form of a notification signed jointly by the Major Archbishop and the Apostolic Administrator. Concluding the discussion, the Synod decided to issue a Post-Synodal Notification jointly signed by Major Archbishop and the Apostolic Administrator regarding the implementation of the uniform mode of celebration of the Holy *Qurbana* in the Archeparchy of Ernakulam-Angamaly, including the following points:

1. The circular issued on 9 June 2024, as per the directive of the meeting of the high level committee in Rome, shall remain valid. Therefore, from 3 July 2024 onwards, all the priests celebrating the Syro-Malabar *Qurbana* shall do so only in the uniform mode as directed in the Taksa that came into effect on 28 November 2021.
2. However, canonical punitive measures mentioned in the 9 June, 2024 circular will not be initiated against those priests who start celebrating at least one *Qurbana* in the uniform mode as decided by the Synod on Sundays and other days of

obligation in all churches and institutions from 3 July 2024. In his letter dated 25 March 2022 addressed to the Archeparchy, Holy Father Pope Francis indicated that time could be permitted for familiarization and catechesis on the uniform mode of celebration of the Holy *Qurbana* (catechetical purpose), considering pastoral needs. The date, when this period will end and when only the uniform mode of celebration of Holy *Qurbana* is permissible in the Archeparchy, shall be decided and communicated in the forthcoming Session of the Synod.

3. Canonical punitive measures as indicated in the circular given on 9 June 2024 will be taken against those priests who refuse or obstruct the celebration of at least one Holy *Qurbana* in the uniform mode on all Sundays and other days of obligation in the churches and institutions after July 3, 2024. We ask all priests in God's name to avoid this situation, which is very painful for the Church.
4. All should consciously ensure that no obstacles or difficulties are created for those priests who are currently celebrating Holy *Qurbana* only in the uniform mode and for those who wish to celebrate Holy *Qurbana* in the uniform mode from July 3, 2024, as per the circular dated 9 June 2024.
5. In all religious houses, seminaries and formation centres, Holy *Qurbana* shall be celebrated only in the uniform mode as directed in the Taksa that came into effect on 28 November 2021, starting from July 3, 2024.
6. The Bema should be used for all Holy *Qurbana* celebrations in all the churches, institutions, and religious houses of the Archeparchy.
7. When the Bishops of the Syro-Malabar Church and priests from other Eparchies visit parishes of the Archeparchy for pastoral needs, arrangements should be made for them to celebrate Holy *Qurbana* in the uniform mode.
8. All priests, consecrated persons, and laity should refrain from making public statements that damage the unity of the Church. The voice of division and separation does not befit

those who love the Church. Appropriate measures will be taken against those who fail in this matter. Everyone should consciously exercise restraint and vigilance during this period of crisis.

The Synod Fathers approved the points presented by the Moderator. In the discussion that followed, the main points emerged are the following:

- The Major Archbishop should give a clear video message to the priests, religious and laity of the Archeparchy of Ernakulam-Angamaly regarding the implementation of the uniform mode of celebration in the Archeparchy. It should also serve to remove the confusion existing in the general public in this regard.
- If necessary, a press conference should be convened at Mount St. Thomas to explain to the media the decisions of the Synod.
- Dialogue should be continued regarding the implementation of the uniform mode in the Archeparchy. The Bishops from Ernakulam-Angamaly could also contribute to this dialogue process.

Conclusion of the Synod: The Major Archbishop, concluding the Special Session of the Synod, thanked everyone for active participation and open sharing. He said that we are amidst a crisis, which is keenly observed by all around the globe. He expressed gratefulness to all who helped to arrive at the proposals. This is an extra mile to keep the priests of the Archeparchy together in the communion. At the same time, we have not deviated from the basic principles. He expressed his hope that the priests of the Archeparchy would understand the generosity of the Synod and the paternal attitude of the Major Archbishop in formulating these proposals. He asked for the collaboration of the Bishops hailing from Ernakulam-Angamaly to implement the proposals, as they have deep roots among the clergy, being the members of the Archeparchy. The Major Archbishop thanked in a special way Archbishop Joseph Pamplany, who moderated the sittings on both days.

Thanking the God Almighty for his never failing Providence and entrusting the decisions and desires of the Synod to the intercession of Blessed Mother Mary, St. Thomas, the Father in faith, and all the Saints and Blesseds of the Church, the Major Archbishop formally declared the Special Online Session of the XXXII Synod of the Bishops of the Syro-Malabar Church closed.

Archbishop Joseph Pamplany
Secretary of the Synod

Fr. Abraham Kavilpurayidathil
Major Archiepiscopal Chancellor

XXXII SYNOD (2024), SPECIAL ONLINE SESSION
JUNE 14 & JUNE 19, 2024 - 5 PM TO 7 PM IST

DECISION

To issue a Post-Synodal Notification jointly signed by Major Archbishop and the Apostolic Administrator regarding the implementation of the uniform mode of celebration of the Holy *Qurbana* in the Archeparchy of Ernakulam-Angamaly, including the following points:

1. The circular issued on 9 June 2024, as per the directive of the meeting of the high level committee in Rome, shall remain valid. Therefore, from 3 July 2024 onwards, all the priests celebrating the Syro-Malabar *Qurbana* shall do so only in the uniform mode as directed in the *Taksa* that came into effect on 28 November 2021.
2. However, canonical punitive measures mentioned in the 9 June, 2024 circular will not be initiated against those priests who start celebrating at least one *Qurbana* in the uniform mode as decided by the Synod on Sundays and other days of obligation in all churches and institutions from 3 July 2024. In his letter dated 25 March 2022 addressed to the Archeparchy, Holy Father Pope Francis indicated that time could be permitted for familiarization and catechesis on the uniform mode of celebration of the Holy *Qurbana* (catechetical purpose), considering pastoral needs. The date, when this period will end and when only the uniform mode of celebration of Holy *Qurbana* is permissible in the Archeparchy, shall be decided and communicated in the forthcoming Session of the Synod.
3. Canonical punitive measures as indicated in the circular given on 9 June 2024 will be taken against those priests who refuse or obstruct the celebration of at least one Holy *Qurbana* in

the uniform mode on all Sundays and other days of obligation in the churches and institutions after July 3, 2024. We ask all priests in God's name to avoid this situation, which is very painful for the Church.

4. All should consciously ensure that no obstacles or difficulties are created for those priests who are currently celebrating Holy *Qurbana* only in the uniform mode and for those who wish to celebrate Holy *Qurbana* in the uniform mode from July 3, 2024, as per the circular dated 9 June 2024.
5. In all religious houses, seminaries and formation centres, Holy *Qurbana* shall be celebrated only in the uniform mode as directed in the Taksa that came into effect on 28 November 2021, starting from July 3, 2024.
6. The Bema should be used for all Holy *Qurbana* celebrations in all the churches, institutions, and religious houses of the Archeparchy.
7. When the Bishops of the Syro-Malabar Church and priests from other Eparchies visit parishes of the Archeparchy for pastoral needs, arrangements should be made for them to celebrate Holy *Qurbana* in the uniform mode.
8. All priests, consecrated persons, and laity should refrain from making public statements that damage the unity of the Church. The voice of division and separation does not befit those who love the Church. Appropriate measures will be taken against those who fail in this matter. Everyone should consciously exercise restraint and vigilance during this period of crisis.

Archbishop Joseph Pamplany
Secretary, Synod of Bishops

Fr. Abraham Kavilpurayidathil
Major Archiepiscopal Chancellor

SPECIAL ONLINE SESSION OF XXXII SYNOD (2024)
JUNE 14 & JUNE 19, 2024

CONCLUDING ADDRESS OF THE MAJOR ARCHBISHOP

My dear Brother Archbishops and Bishops,

We are about to conclude this online Special Session of the Synod which was convened to discussed the issues related to the implementation of the uniform mode of celebration of the Holy *Qurbana* in the Archeparchy of Ernakulam-Angamaly. This Special Session was convoked only for the evening on 14 June, but as per our collective decision, it was held on this evening also.

We are amidst a crisis, which is keenly observed by all around the globe. We are happy that we could arrive at a point, from where we can build up to implement the uniform mode of celebration in the entire Archeparchy of Ernakulam-Angamaly. I express my appreciation and gratitude to all who helped to arrive at the proposals. This is an extra mile to keep the priests of the Archeparchy together in the communion. At the same time, I would like to make it very clear that we have not deviated from the basic principles. We have decided not to initiate canonical punitive measures mentioned in the 9 June, 2024 circular against those priests who start celebrating at least one Holy *Qurbana* in the uniform mode on Sundays and other days of obligation in all churches and institutions from 3 July 2024. This provision is a temporary exception given for a period of time. The forthcoming Session of the Synod would decide up to what time this provision could be followed. After that date, the Holy *Qurbana* will be celebrated only in the uniform mode in the Archeparchy of Ernakulam-Angamaly. I hope that the priests of the Archeparchy would understand the generosity and the paternal attitude of the Synod and the Major Archbishop in formulating these proposals.

I ask for the collaboration of all Bishops hailing from Ernakulam-Angamaly to implement the proposals, as they have deep roots among the clergy, being the members of the Archeparchy.

I thank each and every one who worked for the successful conducting of the Special online Session of the Synod. I thank in a very special way Archbishop Mar Joseph Pamplany, the Secretary of the Synod, who moderated the sittings on both the days. I express my sincere gratitude to all members of the Synod for their wholehearted cooperation and active participation. Entrusting our Church, all our Eparchies, in a very special way the Archeparchy of Ernakulam-Angamaly, to the protection of Holy Mary, our Mother, St. Thomas, our Father in faith, all the Saints and Blesseds of our Church, I formally declare the Special Online Session of the XXXII Synod of the Bishops of the Syro-Malabar Church closed.

Mar Raphael Thattil
Major Archbishop of the Syro-Malabar Church

XXXII SYNOD (2024)
SESSION III
19-31 AUGUST 2024

XXXII SYNOD (2024) SESSION III
19-31 AUGUST 2024

INAUGURAL ADDRESS OF THE MAJOR ARCHBISHOP

Your Beatitude Cardinal George Alencherry, my dear Brother Archbishops and Bishops,

Praise be to Jesus Christ!

This is the Third Session of the Synod in the year 2024. I welcome you wholeheartedly and fraternally to this Session of the Synod. We have many important things before us. I wish and hope that we all participate in this Session of the Synod in the true spirit of Synodality and fraternal commitment, all for the good of our beloved Syro-Malabar Church!

Our day started with the spiritual talk given by Bishop Jose Pulickal. Based on Peter's declaration of faith given in the Gospel of Mark, (8:27-30), the preacher helped us to reflect on the questions which pertain to our episcopal ministry. Going through the pages of the history of our Church, the preacher established that glorious history of our Church is the Galilee experience of Jesus. The way forward leads to Jerusalem, as it was for Jesus, so for our Church. It is the way on which there is the shade of the cross. There is a divine secular conflict in the Church. The temptation to flee from the cross does not help us as a Church to give the witness of the cross and resurrection. In the context of Caesarea Philippi where polytheism was the order of the day, Peter confessed his faith in Jesus, affirming his unique role as Saviour. Bishop Pulickal reminded us of our responsibility to take firm stand like Peter in the present day context, for Christ, for Gospel and for Church. I thank Bishop Jose Pulickal for having helped us to reflect and pray, through his inspiring and thought provoking words, in preparation for the Synodal Session.

Soon after my assumption of Office, I convened the II Session of the XXXII Synod, which was only for two days. Then on 14 and 19 of June, a Special Session of the Synod was convened online in the background of the high Interdicasterial level meeting held at the Dicastery for the Eastern Churches on 15 May 2024, which deliberated seriously on the implementation of the uniform mode of celebration of the Holy *Qurbana* in the Archeparchy of Ernakulam-Angamaly and emphasized the need to take the disciplinary actions against those who do not fall in line with the decision of the Synod. As decided by the online Synod, we gave a temporary provision to the priests of the Archeparchy of Ernakulam-Angamaly to start with a partial implementation of the uniform mode of celebration, in view of a full implementation of the decision of the Synod in the Archeparchy of Ernakulam-Angamaly. In many churches of the Archeparchy, the Holy *Qurbana* was celebrated in the uniform mode, using this provision, even though the response on the whole is not satisfactory. The Synod will have to find some time to think collectively to find the way forward, while care must be taken that this issue does not undermine other important concerns in the Church as a whole.

The Fifth Major Archiepiscopal Assembly of our Church is taking place during this Session of the Synod. The last Assembly was held in 2016. The uncertainty created by the Covid-19 pandemic delayed the conducting of the Assembly earlier. We will be moving to Pala Alphonsian Pastoral Institute in the afternoon on Thursday, 22 August and will come back to Mount St. Thomas on Sunday, 25 August, after concluding the Assembly. Then we will continue the Session till 31 August, as already planned. The preparations for the effective and smooth conducting of the Assembly are complete. We will have a short deliberation on the certain aspects of the conducting of the Assembly in the first days of this Session of the Synod.

It is with heavy heart we heard about the landslides caused by torrential rain at Mundakkai, Chooralmala, and Meppadi in the district of Wayanad and at Vilangad in the district of Kozhikode on July 30. The landslides took away the lives of more than 500

people, destroying houses and cultivation, shattering the hopes of many families. The Catholic Church in Kerala have joined hands together to rebuild the affected areas of Wayanad and Vilangad. The Eparchies of Mananthavady and Thamarassery under the pastoral leadership of the Bishops were in the forefront to provide immediate assistance to the victims. Now what is needed is a long term plan for their rehabilitation, making sure that the funds provided from various corners are utilized fruitfully and timely in the affected areas. I express my sincere condolences on the demise of our brethren in the landslides and declare our unwavering commitment to rebuild the hopes of those families shattered by the landslides. We pray for the eternal repose of the departed souls and join the sorrow of those who lost their dear and near ones.

Bishop Lawrence Mukkuzhy has just completed the Silver Jubilee of the Episcopal Ordination on 4 August and the Eparchy of Belthangady the silver jubilee of its erection. I congratulate His Excellency Mar Lawrence Mukkuzhy and offer our prayerful wishes for his 25 years of shepherding the Eparchy of Belthangady with apostolic zeal and pastoral farsightedness as its first Bishop.

The Syro-Malabar Church is happy that the new Bishop of Indore, His Excellency Msgr. Mathew Kuttimackal hails from Kalloorkad in the Eparchy of Kothamangalam and the new Bishop of Khandwa, His Excellency Msgr. Augustine Madathikunnel hails from Koolivayal, in the Eparchy of Mananthavady. Let us thank the Lord for having blessed our Church by elevating them to the Episcopate. We wish them God's abundant blessings in their episcopal ministry to shepherd the flock entrusted to their care.

In this Session of the Synod, we have elections to the Episcopal Offices as well as to many other Offices. Priestly formation is one of our main concerns. The PAROC has undertaken a study in the KCBC, revealing the urgency of careful and continuous accompaniment in the whole process of formation. We will have time to listen to the findings and observations of this study,

especially in the context of our Church.

Dear Brother Bishops, every Session of the Second Vatican Council began with the prayer *Adsumus Sancte Spiritus* which means, "We stand before You, Holy Spirit,". This has been historically used at Councils, Synods and other Church gatherings for hundreds of years, being attributed to Saint Isidore of Seville. As we are gathered in the Synod, this prayer invites the Holy Spirit to operate within us so that we may be a community and a people of grace. I would like to conclude this inaugural address by reciting the prayer of St. Isidore:

We stand before You, Holy Spirit, as we gather together in Your name. With You alone to guide us, make Yourself at home in our hearts; Teach us the way we must go and how we are to pursue it. We are weak and sinful; do not let us promote disorder. Do not let ignorance lead us down the wrong path nor partiality influence our actions. Let us find in You our unity so that we may journey together to eternal life and not stray from the way of truth and what is right. All this we ask of You, who are at work in every place and time, in the communion of the Father and the Son, forever and ever. Amen.

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

With these words I declare the Third Session of the XXXII Synod 2024 open.

Mar Raphael Thattil
Major Archbishop of the Syro-Malabar Church

XXXII SYNOD (2024) SESSION III
19-31 AUGUST 2024

REPORT

The XXXII Synod (2024), Session III, began at 10.00 am on Monday, 19 August 2024 with a recollection talk in the Chapel preached by Bishop Mar Jose Pulickal. After the talk and personal prayer, all the Bishops concelebrated the Holy *Qurbana* the Major Archbishop His Beatitude Mar Raphael Thattil being the main celebrant. The formal sitting of the Synod began at 02.30 pm with the prayer led by the Major Archbishop. Then, at the invitation of the Major Archbishop, all members stood up in silent prayer for the departed in the natural calamities and for those who have lost everything.

Formal Inauguration of the Synod: After the lighting of the lamp, the Major Archbishop delivered his inaugural address. He welcomed all the members wholeheartedly and fraternally to the Synodal Session. He encouraged the Synod members to participate in the spirit of Synodality and fraternal commitment for the good of the Syro-Malabar Church. The Major Archbishop thanked Bishop Mar Jose Pulickal for his reflections preached at the beginning of the Synod on Peter's declaration of faith (Mk 8:31-38) and its relevance to the Episcopal ministry.

Referring to the Special Session of the XXXII Synod held online on 14 & 19 June 2024, the Major Archbishop recalled the discussions held in view of the implementation of the uniform mode of celebration of the Holy *Qurbana* in the Archeparchy of Ernakulam-Angamaly. He highlighted the need for disciplinary actions against those who do not adhere to the Synodal decision. He made a reference to the temporary provision given to the priests to begin partial implementation of the uniform mode and the challenges faced in achieving its full compliance. The Major Archbishop

urged the Synod to collectively address these challenges without neglecting other important concerns in the Church. The Major Archbishop informed the Synod of the preparations taken so far for the Fifth Major Archiepiscopal Assembly taking place during this Session of the Synod at Alphonsian Pastoral Institute Pala from August 22 to August 25.

The Major Archbishop mentioned the devastating landslides caused by torrential rain at some places in the district of Wayanad and at Vilangad in the district of Kozhikode on July 30. He said that the landslides took away the lives of over hundreds of people, destroying houses and cultivation and shattering the hopes of many families. He appreciated everyone, especially the Eparchies of Mananthavady and Thamarassery, who were at the forefront for providing immediate assistance to the victims. He pointed out the need for a long-term plan for their rehabilitation.

The Major Archbishop remembered with gratitude the ineffable service of Bishop Mar Lawrence Mukkuzhy, who completed his Episcopal Silver Jubilee on 4 August 2024. He offered prayerful wishes for the Silver Jubilarian for his 25 years of shepherding the Eparchy of Belthangady with apostolic zeal and pastoral farsightedness as its first Bishop. The Major Archbishop congratulated the new Bishop of Indore, His Excellency Most Rev. Mathew Kuttimackal, hailing from the Eparchy of Kothamangalam and the new Bishop of Khandwa, His Excellency Most Rev. Augustine Madathikunnel from the Eparchy of Mananthavady.

The Major Archbishop concluded the inaugural address by recalling the prayer of St. Isidore to the Holy Spirit, *Adsumus Sancte Spiritus*, recited at every Session of the Second Vatican Council, seeking the promptings and guidance of the Holy Spirit throughout the Synod. Invoking God's blessing, the Major Archbishop declared the III Session of the XXXII Synod 2024 open.

Participants: The following members were present for the current Session of the Synod: Major Archbishop Mar Raphael Thattil, Cardinal Mar George Alencherry (Major Archbishop *Emeritus*), Archbishop Mar Andrews Thazhath (Trichur), Archbishop Mar

Joseph Perumthottam (Changanacherry), Archbishop Mar Joseph Pamplany (Tellicherry), Archbishop Mar Kuriakose Bharanikulangara (Faridabad), Bishop Mar Thomas Elavanal MCBS (Kalyan), Bishop Mar Sebastian Vadakel MST (Ujjain), Bishop Mar Lawrence Mukkuzhy (Belthangady), Bishop Mar Sebastian Adayanthrath (Mandya), Bishop Mar Joseph Kallarangatt (Palai), Bishop Mar Jose Porunnedom (Mananthavady), Bishop Mar Joseph Pandarasseril (Auxiliary, Kottayam), Bishop Mar Joseph Arumachadath MCBS (Bhadravathi), Bishop Mar Bosco Puthur (Apostolic Administrator, Ernakulam-Angamaly), Bishop Mar Remigiose Inchananiyil (Thamarassery), Bishop Mar Paul Alappatt (Ramanathapuram), Bishop Mar Pauly Kannookadan (Irinjalakuda), Bishop Mar Jose Chittooparambil CMI (Rajkot), Bishop Mar George Rajendran SDB (Thuckalay), Bishop Mar George Madathikandathil (Kothamangalam), Bishop Mar Joseph Kollamparampil CMI (Jagdalpur), Bishop Mar Jose Puthenveettil (Auxiliary, Faridabad), Bishop Mar Joy Alappatt (Chicago), Bishop Mar Ephrem Nariculam (Chanda), Bishop Mar Joseph Kodakallil (Satna), Bishop Mar Jose Kalluvelil (Mississauga), Bishop Mar Prince Antony Panengadan (Adilabad), Bishop Mar Jose Pulickal (Kanjirapally), Bishop Mar Joseph Srampickal (Great Britain), Bishop Mar Stephen Chirappanath (Apostolic Visitator, Europe), Bishop Mar Thomas Tharayil (Auxiliary, Changanacherry), Bishop Mar Sebastian Vaniyapurackal (Curia Bishop), Bishop Mar Tony Neelankavil (Auxiliary, Trichur), Bishop Mar Sebastian Pozholiparambil (Hosur), Bishop Mar John Nellikunnel (Idukki), Bishop Mar James Athikalam MST (Sagar), Bishop Mar Vincent Nellaiparambil (Bijnor), Bishop Mar Peter Kochupurackal (Palghat), Bishop Mar Joseph Kollamparampil (Administrator, Shamshabad), Bishop Mar Thomas Padiyath (Auxiliary, Shamshabad), Bishop Mar Alex Tharamangalam (Auxiliary, Mananthavady), Bishop Mar John Panamthottathil CMI (Melbourne), Bishop Mar Mathew Nellikunnel CST (Gorakhpur), Archbishop Mar George Njaralakatt (*Emeritus*, Tellicherry), Bishop Mar Joseph Kunnath CMI (*Emeritus*, Adilabad), Bishop Mar Mathew Arackal (*Emeritus*, Kanjirapally), Bishop Mar Jacob Angadiath (*Emeritus*, Chicago), Bishop Mar Thomas Thuruthimattam CST (*Emeritus*, Gorakhpur) Bishop Mar

John Vadakel CMI (*Emeritus*, Bijnor). Bishop Geevarghese Mar Aphrem (Auxiliary, Kottayam) was a special invitee.

Office Bearers: The Synod approved the designation of the following persons for the effective conducting of the present Session:

- **Moderators:** Bishop Mar Jose Porunnedom and Bishop Mar Joseph Arumachadath MCBS
- **Tellers:** Bishop Mar Alex Tharamangalam, Bishop Mar John Panamthottathil CMI and Bishop Mar Mathew Nellikunnel CST

Information by the Major Archbishop: At the direction of the Major Archbishop, Bishop Mar Sebastian Vaniyapurackal informed the following:

1. Fr. Thomas Adoppillil concluded his five years of service at the Major Archiepiscopal Curia as the President of the Major Archiepiscopal Ordinary Tribunal, Postulator General, and Chairman of the Safe Environment Appellate Committee.
2. Fr. Siju Azhakath MST concluded his six years of service at the Major Archiepiscopal Curia as Secretary of the Syro-Malabar Mission and *Dalit Vikas* Society. He was also the secretary of the Commission for Evangelization and Pastoral care of Migrants for more than one year.
3. Fr. Francis Eluvathingal from the Eparchy of Kalyan is appointed President of the Major Archiepiscopal Ordinary Tribunal, Postulator General, Secretary of the Syro-Malabar Mission, *Dalit Vikas* Society, and Secretary of the Commission for Evangelization and Pastoral Care of Migrants.
4. Fr. George Thekkekara from the Eparchy of Kothamangalam, who is a faculty at the Oriental Institute of Canon law at Vadavathoor, is appointed the Chairman of the Safe Environment Appellate Committee.
5. Fr. Thomas Melvettath, who is currently the Secretary of the Commission for Catechesis, is given the additional charge of the Secretary of the Commission for Vocations.
6. The Blessing of *Shalom Bhavan*, residence of the Major Archbishop *Emeritus* will be held at 6.15 pm immediately after the last sitting of the day.

Review of the Decisions of the Previous Sessions of the Synod: Archbishop Mar Joseph Pamplany, the Secretary of the Synod, read out the decisions of the three previous Sessions of the Synod held in August 2023 January 2024 and June 2024. Bishop Mar Sebastian Vaniyapurackal, the Curia Bishop, presented the action taken report.

Finalization of the Agenda: The Secretary of the Synod read out the provisional agenda approved by the Permanent Synod. A few more items were proposed to be included in the agenda and it was finalized as follows:

1. Confidential – Election of the Archbishop of Changanacherry
2. Confidential – Election of the Bishop of Shamshabad
3. Election of the Permanent Synod
4. Election of the Synodal Tribunal
5. Election of the Synodal Commission for Vadavathoor Seminary
6. Election of the Synodal Commission for Alwaye Seminary
7. Election of Rector, Mangalapuzha
8. Election of Rector, Vadavathoor
9. Election of Rector, Kunnoth
10. 'Celebration of Jubilee Year 2025' in the Syro-Malabar Church
11. Appointment of Vice Rectors in Synodal Major Seminaries
12. Family Prayer, Bible reading in families, uniform mode for family prayers
13. The need for a collective effort to have a centre for the Syro-Malabar Church at Mylapore
14. Appointment of a PRO in the person of the Vicar of Lourdes Forane Church, Trivandrum
15. Favourable opinion for affiliating of Alpha Institute to DVK. Report of the Mangalapuzha Seminary Commission
16. Syro-Malabar Vision: Requesting Bishops' support for finding sponsors
17. Dynamics of group discussion in the Major Archiepiscopal Assembly
18. The relevance of *Catholica* Congress functioning under the Commission for Public Affairs

19. Extension of the jurisdiction of the Archbishop of Kottayam over all Knanaya faithful in India
20. Update of the scientific study of Syro-Malabar youth under PAROC
21. Report on the translation work of the *Peshitta* version of the Bible
22. Presentation of the Report on the Study regarding the "Principles of translation of liturgical texts in our Church"
23. Presentation of the Report on the Study regarding the "Mysteries of Promise"
24. Permission to reprint *Taksa* of Sacraments (Malayalam and English) with necessary corrections or changes
25. Permission to reprint the *Syriac Taksa* of Qurbana or/and to print the *Syriac Taksa* of Qurbana incorporating the *Anaphorae* of Mar Theodore and Mar Nestorius
26. Copyright of the liturgical books reserved to the Syro-Malabar Bishop's Synod and the publication of the liturgical books entrusted only to the Syro-Malabar Commission for Liturgy, Major Archiepiscopal Curia.
27. Presentation of the Drafts:
    i. Integrated Holy Week *Taksa*, incorporating the *Yamaprarthanakal*
    ii. 'One Volume' of the *Propria* Text for *Qurbana* of Feasts and other special occasions, which are not included in the *Taksa* of *Qurbana*
    iii. the "Ministries of *Msamsana*, *Heupadiakona* and *Karoya*" in view of the revision of the Particular Law of the Syro-Malabar Church.
    iv. *Qurbana Taksa* in English
28. Presentation of the Liturgical Texts:
    i. The *Lectionary-Engartha* (Epistle) and the *Lectionary-Keriyana* (Old Testament) of the 2nd set of Readings
    ii. Book of *Ramsa* and the Book of *Sapra* for the use of the faithful.
    iii. the 'One Volume Edition' of the *Yamaprarthanakal* (Liturgy of the Hours).

29. Report on the Visitation to the Damascene College, Rome
30. Presenting the Report of the research survey on Seminary Formation done by the PAROC
31. Regarding the increase of the annual Eparchial Contribution to the Major Archiepiscopal Curia
32. Ecclesiastical Structures in the Gulf
33. Regarding the parish membership of the divorced but not obtained the declaration of nullity
35. Some Concerns of the Commission for Evangelization and Pastoral Care of Migrants
36. Discussion on *the Guidelines for the Pastoral Ministry to the Faithful of the Latin and Eastern Catholics Churches sui iuris in India*
37. Marathi translation of the *Holy Qurbana Taksa*
38. *In Camera* Session
39. Evaluating the Situation in the Archeparchy of Ernakulam-Angamaly
40. Evaluating the issues related to Mullaperiyar dam
41. Issue of Farmers in Wayanad
42. Statistical Analysis of the growth of Catholic Population in Kerala
43. Request to establish units of *Pithurvedi* in all parishes of the Syro-Malabar Church

Leave of Absence: The Synod granted leave of absence to a few Bishops on various days for serious reasons from the sittings of the Session.

Election of the Archbishop of Changanacherry: The Synod took appropriate decision on the election to the Office of the Archbishop of Changanacherry

Election of the Bishop of Shamshabad: The Synod took appropriate decision on the election to the Office of the Bishop of Shamshabad.

Election of the Permanent Synod Members: As the term of the members of the current Permanent Synod was completed, the Synod elected the following three members to the Permanent

Synod: Bishop Mar Joseph Kallarangatt, Archbishop Mar Andrews Thazhath and Archbishop Mar Joseph Pamplany. Major Archbishop informed the Synod that his nominee to the Permanent Synod is Archbishop Mar Mathew Moolakatt OSB. Bishop Mar Thomas Tharayil, Bishop Mar George Madathikandathil and Bishop Mar Pauly Kannookadan were elected the substitute members of the Permanent Synod. Major Archbishop nominated Bishop Mar Remigiose Inchananiyil as a substitute member to the Permanent Synod. The Major Archbishop congratulated the newly elected members of the Permanent Synod.

Regarding the Election of the Rector of St. Thomas Apostolic Seminary Vadavathoor: Bishop Mar Joseph Kallarangatt, member of the Synodal Commission for St. Thomas Apostolic Seminary, Vadavathoor, presented the report of the Seminary Commission regarding the election of the new Rector after seeking the mind of the of the existing faculty members of the seminary. The Commission proposed that the new Rector could be selected in the January Session of the Synod.

Regarding the Election of the Rector of Kunnoth Seminary: Archbishop Mar Joseph Pamplany, the Chairman of the Synodal Commission for Good Shepherd Major Seminary, Kunnoth presented the report of the Commission regarding the election of the new Rector after seeking the mind of the of the existing faculty members of the Seminary. The Commission proposed that the new Rector could be selected in the January Session of the Synod.

Election for the Synodal Tribunal: As the prescribed term for the members of the Synodal Tribunal expired, the Synod elected Archbishop Mar Mathew Moolakkatt OSB, the General Moderator for the Administration of Justice and the President of the Synodal Tribunal. Bishop Mar Remigiose Inchananiyil and Bishop Mar Sebastian Vaniyapurackal were elected judges of the Synodal Tribunal.

Appointment of Commissions/Committees: The Major Archbishop informed the Synod that the following Commissions/Committees are reconstituted with effect from 01 September 2024 as follows:

Commission for St. Joseph's Pontifical Seminary, Mangalapuzha

Bishop Mar Tony Neelankavil (Chairman)
Bishop Mar Joseph Kallarangatt (member)
Bishop Mar John Nellikunnel (member)

Commission for St. Thomas Apostolic Seminary, Vadavathoor

Bishop Mar Thomas Tharayil (Chairman)
Bishop Mar George Madathikandathil (Member)
Bishop Mar Jose Pulickal (Member)

Commission for Catechesis

Bishop Mar Jose Pulickal (Chairman)
Bishop Mar Paul Alappatt (Member)
Bishop Mar Prince Antony Panengadan (Member)

Commission for Clergy

Bishop Mar Tony Neelankavil (Chairman)
Bishop Mar Alex Tharamangalam (Member)
Bishop Mar James Athikalam MST (Member)

Commission for Doctrine

Archbishop Mar Joseph Pamplany (Chairman)
Bishop Mar Jose Porunnedom (Member)
Bishop Mar Thomas Padiyath (Member)

Commission for Ecumenism

Bishop Mar Joseph Kallarangatt (Chairman)
Archbishop Mar Mathew Moolakkatt OSB (Member)
Bishop Mar George Rajendran SDB (Member)

Commission for Family, Laity and Life

Mar George Madathikandathil (Chairman)
In charge of Laity Forum
Mar John Nellikunnel (Member) -
In charge of Family Apostolate & *Kudumbakoottayma*
Mar Peter Kochupurackal (Member)
In charge of *Matruvedi* & Pro Life
Mar Remigiose Inchananiyil (Member)
Bishop Legate of *Catholica* Congress

Commission for Liturgy

Bishop Mar Pauly Kannookadan (Chairman)
Bishop Mar Joseph Kodakallil (Member)
Bishop Mar Thomas Tharayil (Member)

Commission for Media

Bishop Mar Thomas Tharayil (Chairman)
Bishop Mar Remigiose Inchananiyil (Member)
Bishop Mar Jose Pulickal (Member)

Commission for Vocation

Bishop Mar Joseph Arumachadath MCBS (Chairman)
Bishop Mar Vincent Nellaiparambil (Member)
Bishop Mar Mathew Nellikunnel CST (Member)

Editorial Board - Synodal News

Bishop Mar Paul Alappatt (Chief Editor)
Bishop Mar Sebastian Vaniyapurackal (Member)
Bishop Mar Peter Kochupurackal (Member)
Fr. Abraham Kavilpurayidathil (Editor)
Fr. Joseph Mattathil (Priest Member)

The Major Archbishop thanked the Chairmen and members of the various Commissions/Committees who completed their term with dedication and commitment.

Appointment of Commission Member of St. Ephrem's Theological College Satna: Bishop Mar Sebastian Vaniyapurackal informed the Synod about a vacancy for an Episcopal Commission member at St. Ephrem's Theological College, Satna. This vacancy arose as the former Commission member, Mar Raphael Thattil, was elected the Major Archbishop of the Syro-Malabar Church. As a result, the Synod elected Bishop Mar Mathew Nellikunnel CST to serve as a member of the Commission at St. Ephrem's Theological College, Satna.

Appointment of a Liaison Officer of the Syro-Malabar Church in Trivandrum: Bishop Mar Sebastian Vaniyapurackal sought the mind of the Synod regarding the suggestion of appointing the Vicar of Lourdes Forane Church, Trivandrum as the PRO of

the Syro-Malabar Church in the capital city of the State. In the discussion, it was suggested that the title 'Liaison Officer' is more suitable than the title PRO for the proposed mission. Some members observed that the provision for a Syro-Malabar Eparchy in Trivandrum may be thought of in due course of time. At the conclusion of the discussions, it was decided to appoint the Vicar of the Lourdes Forane Church, Trivandrum of the Archeparchy of Changanacherry, the Liaison Officer of the Syro-Malabar Church for coordinating the civil administration needs of the Church related to the Government of Kerala, until other provisions are made.

Update of the Scientific Study of Syro-Malabar Youth under PAROC: Making a reference to a decision of the January 2023 Session of the Synod, regarding a scientific study to be conducted in every eparchy to find out the changing trends of the youth and to address them pastorally and socially, Bishop Mar Joseph Pandarasseril, the Chairman for the Commission for Youth, gave a briefing to the Synod on the progress of the study. He said that the study is being done with the help of the PAROC Research Centre. The study is in the phase of collecting some basic data. Although the conducting of the study requires time and hard work, he expressed the hope of completing it without much delay. He invited the collaboration of all for the same. In the short discussion that followed, it was observed that the youth are mainly activity oriented and not study oriented. Therefore, all possible help need to be given to them for the completion of the study.

Favourable Opinion for the Erection of Alpha Higher Institute of Religious Science: Bishop Mar Sebastian Vaniyapurackal presented the topic. Archbishop Mar Joseph Pamplany wrote to the Major Archbishop for the favourable opinion of the Synod for the erection of Alpha Institute of Religious Science and its affiliation with the Faculty of Theology of *Dharmaram Vidya Kshetram*. Following the praxis in the similar cases, the Synodal Commission for Alwaye Seminary was directed to make an evaluation on the Alpha Institute. Bishop Mar Vaniyapurackal read out the study report on the matter submitted by the Seminary Commission, which asked

for certain clarifications. Archbishop Mar Joseph Pamplany read out the report of the President of the *Dharmaram Vidya Kshetram* addressed to the Major Archbishop recommending Alpha Institute for the approval of the Dicastery for Culture and Education for its erection as a Higher Institute for Religious Sciences (HIRS), affiliating it to the DVK. In the discussions that followed, many members sought clarifications on the nature of degrees conferred so far by the Institute. Having clarified all the queries, the Synod decided to give a favourable opinion to the Dicastery for Culture and Education for the erection of Alpha Higher Institute for Religious Sciences (AHIRS) and its affiliation to the faculty of theology of *Dharmaram Vidya Kshetram*, Bengaluru.

Pilgrim Centre for the Syro-Malabar Church at Mylapore: The Moderator invited Bishop Mar Sebastian Pozholiparambil, the Bishop of Hosur, to present the current status of the project for buying a piece of land to construct a Syro-Malabar Pilgrim Centre at Mylapore, near to the tomb of St. Thomas, the Apostle. Mar Pozholiparambil informed the Synod that he could collect three crores of rupees after a year-long dedicated effort of visiting more than 40 parishes in Kerala. Assessing the market value of land at Mylapore, it is calculated that at least 15 crores are needed to buy 10 cents of land. As the project is very much important for the Syro-Malabar Church, Bishop Mar Pozholiparambil presented his proposal that the property could be purchased by the Syro-Malabar Church under the leadership of the Major Archbishop and all the Eparchies could join in this collective effort of the Church. Mar Pozholiparambil expressed his helplessness to purchase the required land by the Eparchy of Hosur alone.

Many members of the Synod encouraged Bishop Mar Pozholiparambil to proceed with the project and offered financial support. After the discussions it was decided to request the Major Archbishop to write a letter to all Bishops asking to get sponsors for at least one square foot of land (Rs. 25000) from all possible parishes of all the eparchies for constructing a Syro-Malabar Pilgrim Centre at Mylapore.

Report on the Translation Work of the *Peshitta* Version of the Bible: The Moderator invited Mar Sebastian Vaniyapurackal to present the topic. Bishop Mar Vaniyapurackal read out the report submitted by Fr. Andrews Mekkattukunnel, the Coordinator of the translation Committee of the *Peshitta* Version of the Bible. The report stated that the translation of the four gospels is complete. The Committee read and verified the new translation, checking it against the original Syriac. The help of other Bible scholars and Syriac experts was sought when necessary. The newly prepared translation was compared with the recent English translation by Kiraz and with existing Malayalam translations of the *Peshitta* like that of Manikathanar, Kayyalaparampil Thomas, Uppani Mathew and Kaniyamparampil Kuriakose Cor-Episcopa. The POC translation was also considered insofar as it did not contradict the Syriac style. The scrutinized text was once again reviewed to confirm that the suggestions made by the language expert were consistent with the original language and style. After the discussions on the report, the Synod decided to authorize the Committee for Translation of *Peshitta* version to distribute draft copies of the texts of the newly prepared *Peshitta* translation of the four gospels to all the Bishops and experts in Sacred Scripture and the Syriac language for thorough scrutiny.

In another sitting of the Session, Bishop Mar Sebastian Vaniyapurackal sought the mind of the Synod regarding the expense of the printing of the draft copy of the new translation of the Peshitta version of the four Gospels. It was decided to entrust the Commission for Liturgy to meet the expense of the printing of the draft copy of the new translation of the *Peshitta* version of the four Gospels.

Collaboration of Eparchies in the Publication of Syro-Malabar Vision: Presenting the topic, Bishop Mar Sebastian Vaniyapurackal, the Curia Bishop, pointed out the difficulty of finding monthly sponsors for the publication of Syro-Malabar Vision, the bulletin of the Major Archiepiscopal Curia, for bringing out both digital and printed versions. The expense of the bulletin is now met by finding individual sponsors by the members of the Curia, which

has become practically non viable. In the interaction on the topic, many members appreciated the new style and quality of the content of the Syro-Malabar Vision and offered financial support for the publication of the same. There was a proposal to prepare the bulletin without advertisements, as the nature of the bulletin does not permit it. There was another proposal that each eparchy could contribute the expense of one month each, by taking turns. One or two pages of the bulletin will be set apart for the news and other reporting from the Eparchy which meet the expense of that month. After the discussions, it was decided to meet the expense of the publication of Syro-Malabar Vision by the collaboration of each Eparchy of the Syro-Malabar Church every month, taking turns. It was also decided to publish the Syro-Malabar Vision in English language as well in digital format.

The Relevance of *Catholica* Congress Functioning as a Part of the Commission for Public Affairs: Archbishop Mar Andrews Thazhath, the Chairman of the Commission for Public Affairs and Bishop Mar Thomas Tharayil, the Convener of the Commission sought the mind of the Synod on the possibility of bringing *Catholica* Congress as a part of the Public Affairs Commission, which is now functioning, being a part of the Commission for Family, Laity and Life. Many members observed that *Catholica* Congress is an independent organization having more than a century-long history and therefore the autonomy should be respected. One member observed that an office bearer of *Catholica* Congress be made a member of the Public Affairs Commission, so as to enhance the collaborative work. After the discussions, it was decided to direct the Commissions for Public Affairs and Family, Laity and Life to study the viability of bringing *Catholica* Congress part of Public Affairs Commission in consultation with the Episcopal Delegate and the leaders of the Catholica Congress and present the report in the coming Session of the Synod.

Constituting the Units of *Catholica* Congress: Bishop Mar Remigiose Inchananiyil, the Bishop Legate of *Catholica* Congress, presented the statistics of the units of *Catholica* Congress in each

eparchy. He requested the support of all the Bishops to establish the units of *Catholica* Congress in the parishes of the eparchies. He highlighted the need to strengthen the *Catholica* Congress to make its voce heard in the society. To a query regarding the relevance of *Catholica* Congress outside Kerala, Bishop Inchananiyil said that it could function very well, even in another name suitable to the place, in agreement with the global leadership of *Catholica* Congress, for the social organizing and well being of the community members. The Major Archbishop requested all the members to promote *Catholica* Congress in all the Eparchies of the Church.

Report on the Visit to the Damascene College in May 2024: Bishop Mar Sebastian Vaniyapurackal, the Episcopal Delegate to the Damascene College, presented the report of his first visit to the College from 7 to 12 May 2024. He said that there are altogether 40 priest students: 30 eparchial and 10 religious who receive scholarship from the Dicastery for the Eastern Churches for higher studies in Rome. Among them 32 are staying in Damascene College, 4 in *Russicum* College and 4 in *Collegio Pio Romeno*. The Episcopal Delegate met all of the priests individually and in common. Following were the proposals and observations evolved in the meetings with the priests:

- To make arrangement for Italian language course as it was done earlier. There is no course in Kerala which has the B2 level standard.
- For those who study in *Salesianum*, journey from Damascene College is very tiresome.
- Sisters in *Patroncino* College shall also be visited by the Delegate as they too receive scholarship from the Dicastery for the Eastern Churches
- Other student priests of Church studying in Rome who receive scholarship/study provision apart from the Dicastery for the Oriental Churches are to be visited by the Delegate.
- Many priests find it difficult to get parishes for pastoral ministry.

- All have requested the possibility to have a papal audience. It would be highly appreciated if the Major Archbishop writes a letter in this regard.
- Students are to be selected for higher studies after thorough evaluation by the respective Bishops/Superiors, on their intellectual capacity and moral integrity.
- In the Roman Seminaries, courses on oriental subjects are missing.
- It is highly desirable that the information on the Scholarship for the coming year be given to the candidates concerned by the month of March.

As per the directive of the Major Archbishop Mar Vaniyapurackal also visited the three Major Seminaries: *Mater Ecclesiae*, *Sedes Sapientiae* and *Collegio Urbano*. There are altogether 55 seminarians from the Syro-Malabar Church studying in these colleges. The members expressed satisfaction on the report presented by the Delegate.

One member invited the attention of the Synod towards the suggestion in the minutes presented on the report of the visit to the Damascene College, Rome, regarding a request from the priests of the Damascene College, Rome, to organize B2 level Italian language course, before they leave for Rome. It was pointed out that as B2 level Italian courses are offered by certain Language Institutes and it was not necessary to organize the said language course only for those who avail the scholarship of the Dicastery for the Eastern Churches. Another point was regarding the desire of the priests of the Damascene College to get a special audience of the Holy Father. In order to make it possible, they wanted that the Major Archbishop places a request for the same. It was observed by one member that such an audience could be requested for all the priests and seminarians of our Church. Concluding the discussion, the Synod decided to request the Major Archbishop to write a letter to the Holy Father for a special audience for the seminarians and priests of our Church who pursue their studies in Rome.

Importance of Promoting Family Prayer: Presenting the topic, the Major Archbishop invited the attention of the Synod towards the importance of promoting the traditional family prayer. It is observed that the practice of daily family prayer is getting diminished. The influence of social media as well as the modern changed family situation, where family members are working at different time schedule, makes it difficult to conduct the family prayer on a regular time. The Holy Rosary is the traditional family prayers of the common faithful. There is also the practice of reciting and *Yamaprarthanakal* in some areas. Many Bishops intervened in the discussions and the following are the major points emerged:

- The importance of family prayer may be discussed in detail in the family units.
- The importance of family prayer may be included in the post-synodal circular.
- There is no need of a uniform mode for family prayer; it must be left to the discretion of the family.
- The practice of reciting Rosary together in the online platform by members of the family residing in different countries is an exemplary practice followed by certain families.

After the discussions, it was decided to request to the Major Archbishop to include an exhortation in the post-synodal circular highlighting the importance of family prayer.

Parish Membership of the Divorced but without the Declaration of the Nullity of their Marriage: Bishop Mar Paul Alappatt invited the attention of the Synod towards the pastoral difficulty confronted regarding the parish membership of the divorced parties who have not obtained the declaration of the nullity of marriage and not remarried. He observed that proper guidelines may be given to the parish priests regarding the sacramental and pastoral care of these people. They are often denied of parish membership in the home parish of the separated partner. Intervening in the discussions, some members observed that the name of such people may be entered in the *Athmasthithi* register of a parish with special reference in the remark column, if they lived in that parish

more than five years. It was pointed out that the parish priests may be empowered to give proper guidance to accompany the people who live in difficult marital situations and help them find unity.

Starting Units of *Pithruvedi* in Parishes: Archbishop Mar Joseph Perumthottam invited the attention of the Synod towards the importance of starting *Pithruvedi* units in every parish. *Catholica* Congress cannot substitute *Pithruvedi* as their goals are different. Pastoral care for married men and orientation for parenting are the defined goals of *Pithruvedi*. Bishop Mar Sebastian Vaniyapurackal read out the petition submitted to the Synod of Bishops by *Pithruvedi* leaders of the Archeparchy of Changanacherry. According to them, *Pithruvedi* has been very active in the Archeparchy along with *Mathruvedi* in family oriented activities. The main thrusts for the *Pithruvedi* are giving faith formation for fathers, formation for young couples, active participation in the family units, leadership in pro-life movements, charity programs, palliative care, etc. Their request is to recognize *Pithruvedi* by the Synod of Bishops and bring them under the Commission for Family, Laity and Life. They also requested the Synodal Fathers to introduce *Pithruvedi* in all Eparchies of the Syro-Malabar Church where it has not been functioning till now.

In the discussion that followed on this topic, some bishops shared that *Pithruvedi* is an active organization in their eparchies and observed that this organization is helpful in giving spiritual and family oriented formation for married men. However, some Bishops were of the opinion that multiplication of organizations will only weaken their effective functioning. They expressed their anxiety that the *Pithruvedi* in the Syro-Malabar level will be overlapping the functions of *Catholica* Congress and will affect the relevance of the latter. Concluding the discussions, the Synod proposed the Commission for Family, Laity and Life to organize a discussion with the *Pithruvedi* leaders and seek the possibility of starting its units in the Eparchies where they are not yet started.

Discussion of Migration Based on KMS Survey: Bishop Mar Thomas Tharayil, Convenor of the Commission for Public Affairs,

presented the comparison of the census data based on the Kerala Migration Survey. According to the statistics, it is obvious that the population of the Christians has decreased from 18.38% in 2011 to 16.9% in 2023. The Syro-Malabar Christians constitute 8% of the population. The male and female ratio in Kerala among 0-14 age group is 100:88. This reality will cause to increase the number of unmarried men in our community. The Survey also reveals that although the migration for job purposes is diminishing, the migration for education purpose is increasing. Of the international migrants from Kerala, 22.3% are from Christian communities who constitute only 16.9% of total population.

Many Bishops intervened in the discussion that followed and observed that this statistical data is eye opening. The following suggestions were made by the members:

- *Pravasi* Apostolate may be promoted in every eparchy.
- Mission *ad gentes* must be a serious concern for our Church.
- The pastoral care of the migrants, especially the youth in abroad must be seriously taken into account.
- Serious study must be done in view of exploring the consequence of the population erosion of our community.
- PAROC study on youth as well the discussion in the Major Archiepiscopal Assembly on the theme of community empowerment may shed more light on this topic.
- Priests should address the pastoral needs of migrant workers from other states

Concluding the discussions, the Moderator informed the Synod that this topic will be revisited in one of the sittings of this Session of the Synod after the Major Archiepiscopal Assembly.

Final Preparations for the Fifth Syro-Malabar Major Archiepiscopal Assembly: Bishop Mar Pauly Kannookadan, the Convener of the Synodal Committee for the Fifth Major Archiepiscopal Assembly informed the Synod of the various steps of preparation made so far for the effective conducting of the Fifth Major Archiepiscopal Assembly. Fr. Joji Kallingal, the Secretary of the Major Archiepiscopal

Assembly, was invited to this part of the discussions. The Secretary presented the details of hitherto preparations as well as the modus operandi of the Assembly. He stated the Synod that the Fifth Syro-Malabar Major Archiepiscopal Assembly has a history of two years of intense preparations at various levels and aspects. The Major Archbishop, on 18 January 2019, reappointed the then existing Synodal Committee for the Fifth Major Archiepiscopal Assembly with Bishop Mar Pauly Kannookadan as the Convener and Bishop Mar Sebastian Adayanthrath and Bishop Mar George Rajendran SDB as its members for a period of five years. Later, the Second Session of the XXVII Synod, held from 19-30 August 2019, decided to convene the Fifth Major Archiepiscopal Assembly in January 2022. However due to the Covid pandemic, the First Session of the XXX Synod, held from 7-15 January 2022 decided to convene the Major Archiepiscopal Assembly in August 2024 on the theme "Mission and Life of the Syro-Malabar Church in response to the needs of the time." The Synod extended the existing Committee including Bishop Mar Thomas Tharayil and Bishop Mar Prince Panengadan as Episcopal members.

The Major Archbishop promulgated the *Lineamenta* for the Fifth Major Archiepiscopal Assembly 2024 on 14 January 2023 and it was sent out to the Eparchies and to the Religious seminaries for Consecrated life. The Secretariat conducted consultations with the representatives of the eparchies, the teachers of the faith formation, and the representatives of the youth at the Major Archiepiscopal Level at Mount St. Thomas, Kakkanad. For the Mission regions the Committee conducted one day seminar at the Pastoral Centre of the Eparchy of Ujjain. For the Eparchies outside India the committee organized an online seminar. The reports on the Lineamenta from the Eparchies and Religious institutes were submitted to the Secretariat before 31 March 2024. Basing on these reports the *Instrumentum Laboris* was prepared by three Committees for the study and discussion of the Assembly. Apart from the Synodal Committee for the Assembly, there are 13 various Committees working for the effective conduct of the Assembly 2024. The secretary read out the detailed timetable of

the Assembly and the Synod approved it with certain suggestions. Bishop Mar Joseph Kallarangatt informed the Synod of the various preparations made so far at Alphonsian Pastoral Institute, Pala and invited everyone to the Assembly. There was a proposal from some members to include certain persons additional to the existing list of participants. However, in view of limiting the number of participants the Synod decided to stick on to the present list.

There was a proposal that an oath of allegiance to the Pope, the Major Archbishop and the Synod be taken by all participants at the very outset of the Major Archiepiscopal Assembly. After the discussions, the Synod voted on this proposal. 42 out of 47 members eligible for voting voted in favor of the suggestion. Therefore it was decided to take a solemn oath of allegiance to the Syro-Malabar Church and the Synod by all the participants at the beginning of the Major Archiepiscopal Assembly.

Evaluation of the Fifth Major Archiepiscopal Assembly: The Synod spent some time in evaluating the Fifth Major Archiepiscopal Assembly held at Alphonsian Pastoral Institute, Pala in one sitting after the conducting of the Assembly. The Major Archbishop congratulated Bishop Mar Pauly Kannookadan, the Convener of the Committee for the Major Archiepiscopal Assembly, Bishop Mar Sebastian Adayanthrath, Bishop Mar George Rajendran SDB, Bishop Mar Prince Panengadan and Bishop Mar Thomas Tharayil its Episcopal members, Fr. Joji Kallingal, the Secretary and the members of the various Committees, who worked persistently for the effective conduction of the Fifth Major Archiepiscopal Assembly. Their farsighted preparations and meticulous planning made the Assembly a grant success. The Synod lauded with applause the unsurpassed and determined dedication of the eparchy of Palai as a whole and Bishop Mar Joseph Kallarangatt in particular who made the Fifth Major Archiepiscopal Assembly a landmark in the history of the Syro-Malabar Church. The cohesive team work of the volunteers under the meticulous leadership of Very Rev. Fr. Joseph Thadathil, the *Protosyncellus* of the Eparchy of Palai was specially commented by everyone.

Bishop Mar Joseph Kallarangatt presented in the Synod the account of the expenditure of the Major Archiepiscopal Assembly. Mar Kallarangatt informed the Synod that the entire expense of the Assembly will be met by the Eparchy of Palai. The Synod thanked Bishop Mar Kallarangatt and the Eparchy of Palai for this benevolent and generous financial help, and for the effective conducting of the Major Archiepiscopal Assembly at Alphonsian Pastoral Institute, Palai.

Final Statement of the Major Archiepiscopal Assembly: Bishop Mar Pauly Kannookadan, presenting the theme, observed that the action plan of the Major Archiepiscopal assembly can be implemented only with the help of Commission for Catechesis, Commission for the Pastoral Care of the Migrants and Commission for Public Affairs of our Church. He congratulated and invited Fr. Joji Kallingal, the Secretary of the Assembly and Fr. Francis Eluvathingal, Convenor of the Drafting Committee of the Assembly to present the final assessment report.

Fr. Francis Eluvathingal presented the details of action plan in three sections, same as the themes of the Assembly. (1) Renewal of Faith Formation in the Syro-Malabar Church, (2) Strengthening the Lay Faithful for the Effective Proclamation of the Gospel, and (3) Empowering the Syro-Malabar Community.

Theme 1: Renewal of Faith Formation in the Syro-Malabar Church

1. Revision of the text books of the Catechesis must be done in view of attaining the goals of catechesis.
2. Catechists should be trained in different methodologies to communicate faith in an efficient way suited to the children such as Storytelling, Dialogue, Debate, Discussion, Question-answer, digital means etc.
3. Catechism teachers shall be selected from among those faithful with deep faith, life of witness and love for the church, they must be given proper training.
4. The role of family and parish in catechesis must be properly discerned and promoted. Ongoing faith formation for parents and elders has to be made mandatory and systematic in every parish.

5. The action plan to be taken in the Eparchial and Major Archiepiscopal Levels were pointed out.

Theme 2: Strengthening the Lay Faithful for the Effective Proclamation of the Gospel

For living the missionary call both directly and indirectly in our daily lives, the recommendations are categorized into four distinct areas: (1) For the Lay Faithful (2) Eparchial and Parish Levels (3) Major Archiepiscopal Level (4) Through Media.

1. All lay faithful should be a part of the lay missionary organization established in our Church to fulfil the missionary call they received through Baptism.
2. The laity is encouraged to participate in the visits to the missions and the missionaries engaged in evangelisation activities. Those who can spend more time can directly help in missionary activities.
3. The laity may participate in the missionary activities by contributing a part of their income for the direct evangelization activities by the families, parishes, institutions and eparchies.
4. The laity has the duty to encourage the missionary vocations in our families and parishes, to be missionary priests, consecrated and lay missionaries.
5. The retired lay faithful are to be encouraged and trained to serve the mission for a few years or longer period. Young people can also be encouraged to spend at least six months in the mission before embarking on or even during their careers.
6. A common Training Centre for Laity must be set up immediately.
7. Restore and reinstate the spirituality of the Syrian Proto-Monastic group - sons and daughters of the covenant (*Bnay Qyama*) as the source from the living tradition of the East Syrian Churches while teaching about the mission of the laity.
8. Instead of the present Mission Week observed in January, which is often a failure due to the time of parish festivals and the start of school in the New Year, we can celebrate the whole month of October as Mission Month in conjunction with the

Universal Mission Sunday. There was another suggestion from some members of the Synod to celebrate the Mission Month in the liturgical season of the Apostles.

Theme 3: Empowerment of the Syro-Malabar Community

We need to raise awareness and provide terminological clarification to our community members and the broader public about the concepts of community and community consciousness, which are distinct from communalism and racism.

1. Promote a sense of pride in the community's heritage through awareness campaigns and educational initiatives.
2. Promote larger families integrating the theme into pre-marriage and post-marriage courses to emphasize the benefits of larger families.
3. Promote the idea of marriage before the age of 23 for women and 27 for men, including special matrimonial services for those who remain unmarried beyond these ages, potentially including matches with the Church members from other States.
4. We must strongly advocate for people-centred government policies that protect human lives from wild animals and natural disasters, and address issues related to ESA, ESZ, EFL and Buffer Zones.
5. Encourage the community to fully utilize loan facilities from minority development corporations, minority scholarships and other benefits from central and state governments.
6. Organize a conclave of Syro-Malabar business persons to coordinate efforts for the benefit of the Church, including support for young entrepreneurs.
7. Establish parish-level helpdesks and a liaison system to assist community members in accessing government schemes related to civil service and other government employment opportunities.
8. Promote awareness of the benefits of EWS (Economically Weaker Sections) reservations and provide support in

obtaining the necessary certificates. Develop a comprehensive database of both central and state EWS beneficiaries at the parish level.

9. Encourage participation in the *Catholica* Congress in parishes to strengthen and build up the community.
10. Set up *Nasrani* Research Centres in our prominent colleges and *Nasrani* Heritage Clubs in our schools to preserve and promote *Nasrani* culture.
11. Advocate for the inclusion of Christian cultural arts in school festivals, Christian languages in *curriculum* and ensure the integration of notable Christian history and contributions into the educational programmes. Argue for our minority rights in education.
12. The Syro-Malabar Public Affairs Commission has introduced an 'Action Plan for Community Empowerment'. Ensure its implementation at the Major Archiepiscopal, eparchial, and parish levels.
13. Reorganise Inter Church Council and its activities co-operating with other Churches

The Drafting Committee said that they will send the final draft of Action Plan to the Bishops. After a few interventions by the Bishops, it was decided to convene online, an informal meeting of the Bishops to discuss the action plan of the Major Archiepiscopal Assembly, once the text is fine-tuned by incorporating the suggestions of the Synod and sent to the Bishops by the Drafting Committee.

Anxieties on the Safety of Mullaperiyar Dam: Bishop Mar Joseph Arumachadath MCBS invited the attention of the Synod towards the deep anxiety of the people Kerala on the safety of Mullaperiyar dam. It was pointed out that the politicians are neither consistent nor sincere in their stance and continuously fail to safeguard the rights of the State of Kerala. We must follow the slogan: *Water to Tamil Nadu and Safety for Kerala*. The suggestion of Sri E.P. Sreedharan that instead of constructing a new dam, it is viable to

construct a tunnel to Tamil Nadu in view of reducing the water level of Mullaperiyar must be studied thoroughly. Several bishops intervened in the discussions and the following are the major points emerged:

- The international and national studies show that Mullaperiyar is one of the most dangerous dams in the world. Any damage to the dam will wipe away one third of Kerala.
- A new dam is not a viable solution as it may raise several ecological problems.
- The validity of the agreement for 999 years signed between Kerala and Tamil Nadu is under suspicion. It is now being challenged in the Supreme Court.
- Idukki dam cannot contain the water of Mullaperiyar as the safety of Kulamavu dam is at stake.
- The common people are desperate and insecure, as the hitherto protests did not produce any of the desired impact. It is our responsibility to unite our people convincing them that the Church is determined to support them.
- The Church should make use of the existing scientific studies and take the role of advocacy.
- Take steps to ensure the collaboration of the possible NGOs.

On the basis of the discussion, an action plan was formulated. It was decided to implement the following action plan in view of finding a lasting solution to the issue related to the Mullaperiyar dam: (i) To issue a statement after the Major Archiepiscopal Assembly inviting the immediate intervention of the Government on the Mullaperiyar issue to ensure the safety; (ii) To submit a memorandum to the Chief Ministers of both Kerala and Tamil Nadu as well as to the President, the Prime Minister of India and the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of India, which will be prepared by the Committee of five Bishops; (iii) To constitute a team of experts to facilitate the advocacy work; and (iv) To entrust a Committee of five Bishops to coordinate the study on the possible dangers and safety issues related to Mullaperiyar dam and take steps to find a solution to

the anxiety of the people, with Bishop Mar Joseph Kallarangatt as Convener and Bishop Mar Jose Pulickal, Bishop Mar Joseph Arumachadath MCBS, Bishop Mar George Madathikandathil, Bishop Mar John Nellikunnel being members.

Rebuilding Wayanad and Vilangad: Bishop Mar Jose Porunnedom and Bishop Mar Remigiose Inchananiyil explained the traumatic experience undergone by the people shattered by the landslide and torrential rain in Wayanad and Vilangad respectively. Bishop Jose Porunnedom provided a brief report on the affected areas of Mundakkai, Chooralmala etc. in Wayanad District. He noted that most of the victims were workers on tea and cardamom estates in the region, who, while sleeping in their homes, were completely washed out. Nine people from the parish Chooralmala lost their lives, and two bodies are still found missing. Bishop Mar Porunnedom highlighted the need for rehabilitation of the people, regardless of caste or creed. He mentioned that the Eparchy of Mananthavady has decided to construct 50 houses and offered 8 acres of land for the construction of homes for the victims. The Eparchy is also planning to provide household utensils and furniture for the affected families. The Wayanad Social Service Society (WSSS), the social service department of the eparchy, is coordinating the rehabilitation process. Bishop Mar Joseph Porunnedom acknowledged with gratitude the interventions of the KCBC and all Eparchial Bishops for their support in rebuilding Wayanad.

Bishop Mar Remigiose Inchananiyil narrated a picture of the tragic situation in Vilangad within the Eparchy of Thamarassery. He explained that due to high death toll in the landslides of Wayanad, Vilangad region did not receive proper media attention. There were a series of landslides in this area. After the first landslide, people were vigilant and moved to safer locations, which saved their lives during a number of successive landslides. 15 houses are completely washed out and around 44 houses are completely damaged or rendered uninhabitable. The Eparchy of Thamarassery has estimated the cost of rehabilitation to be nearly 25 crores.

Bishop Mar Remigiose Inchananiyil expressed gratitude for all the help and support received.

In a brief discussion that followed, Archbishop Mar Joseph Pamplany shared his experience of the visit he made to the affected areas in Wayanad and to Vilangad. Bishop Mar Jose Pulickal, the Chairman of the JPD Commission of the KCBC, along with the members of the Commission visited the sites and evaluated the situation. The Bishops offered financial help for rebuilding Wayanad and Vilangad. Bishop Mar Pauly Kannookadan, the Vice President of the KCBC, informed that the KCBC has decided to build 100 houses under the leadership of the Kerala Catholic Church for those who lost their homes due to the landslides. Regarding the transfer of funds, an agreement has been made between the KCBC and Caritas India, as decided by the CBCI: Eparchies in Kerala will transfer their funds through the Kerala Social Service Forum (KSSF), the arm of mercy of the Kerala Catholic Church, while Eparchies outside India will transfer their funds either through Caritas India or through SPANDAN. Mar Kannookadan also updated the Synod with details of the Disaster Management Committee meeting after visiting the affected areas.

Marathi Translation of *Qurbana Taksa*: Bishop Mar Ephrem Nariculam informed the Synod that the Marathi translation of the Syro-Malabar *Qurbana Taksa* is getting ready. He said that *Taksa* in Marathi is the exact translation of the Malayalam text which is the *editio typica*. However, the text for the common use of the faithful will be the translation of the abbreviated text for the use of the faithful, approved by the Commission. It was proposed that the draft of the translated texts could be submitted to the Commission for Liturgy for its approval. Intervening in the discussions, Bishop Mar Sebastian Vadakkel MST observed that in the Hindi translation of the *Taksa* in both forms - for the use of priests and the faithful - the exact translation of the Malayalam text which is the *editio typica* is followed.

The Proposal of the 'Mysteries of Promises': Fr. Thomas Panthaplackal CMI had submitted a new set of mysteries to the

Apostolic See, to be added to the Rosary. The five mysteries of promises are: 1. The promise of a redeemer and co-redemptrix in the Book of Genesis, 2. The promise of Eternal High Priest, 3. The Promise of Eternal King in the dynasty of David, 4. Advent of the Messiah fulfilling the OT promises, 5. Incarnation, the divine embodiment of hope. At the direction of the Apostolic See, a joint response was prepared by the Liturgical and Doctrinal Commissions of the Syro-Malabar Church. Bishop Mar Thomas Elavanal MCBS and Bishop Mar Tony Neelankavil, the Chairmen of the said Commissions presented the summary of the study report. They observed that the Mysteries of Promises do not foster the spirituality of the faithful. Most of these mysteries are either explicitly or implicitly reflected in the existing set of mysteries of rosary. Moreover there are several theological *lacuna* in the formulation of the themes and prayers. After the discussions, it was proposed not to promote the 'Mysteries of Promises', as presented.

Ecclesiastical Structures in Gulf: Presenting the theme, Major Archbishop Mar Raphael Thattil, informed the Synod that the Holy Father is in favour of granting an ecclesiastical provision for Syro-Malabar Church in the Gulf region. He suggested that we have to ask for an Exarchate in Gulf. The Exarchate should be under the direct jurisdiction of the Syro-Malabar Church.

It was informed that the present Vicar Apostolic of the Apostolic Vicariate of Northern Arabia His Excellency Aldo Berardi O.SS.T., who visited the Major Archbishop at Mount St. Thomas, expressed his readiness to gradually appoint priests in the Vicariate presented by the Major Archbishop for the pastoral care of the Syro-Malabar faithful.

Bishop Mar Sebastian Vaniyapurackal read out the earlier letters written by the Major Archbishop to the Dicastery for the Eastern Churches. In one of the letters (Prot. No. 0971/2016) responding to a query from the Dicastery for the Eastern Churches, it was even mentioned the place of the residence and the Curial Office of the proposed Exarchate as St. Thomas Syro-Malabar Church,

Doha, Qatar. It was also suggested that the countries that come under the proposed exarchate are Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar, Saudi Arabia in the Northern Arabia and UAE, Oman and Yemen in the Southern Arabia.

In the discussion that continued, it was pointed out that we have to work in coordination with other Eastern Catholic Churches, present in the Gulf region. Concluding the discussions, the Synod decided to approve the following steps to be taken in view of realizing an ecclesiastical structure for the Syro-Malabar faithful in the Middle East: (i) To request Cardinal Claudio Gugerotti, the Perfect of the Dicastery for the Eastern Churches to organize a meeting of Eastern Church Heads to discuss the issue of pastoral care of the faithful of the Eastern Churches in the Gulf region, preferably during the general Synod in Rome; (ii) To send letters with the signatures of all the members of the Synod to the Holy Father with copies to the Dicasteries concerned requesting immediate intervention for the erection of a Syro-Malabar exarchate in the Gulf Region.

The Secretary of the Synod read out the draft of the letter to be sent to the Holy Father signed by all the Synod fathers, requesting to erect an Exarchate for the faithful of the Syro-Malabar Church residing in the Middle East. The draft was approved incorporating certain suggestions by the members.

Pastoral Problems of the Migrants: The Bishops of the overseas migrant Eparchies presented certain important pastoral issues confronted by their Eparchies. They were of the opinion that migration is part of divine providence that led to the erection of four Eparchies and an Apostolic Visitation of the Syro-Malabar Church outside India. The statistical data shows that a huge flux of migrants occurs in Canada, the UK and Australia. Due to the scarcity of priests and churches, more than 50% of immigrants are left unattended pastorally. This situation leads them to possible unethical life.

Bishop Mar Jose Kalluvelil pointed out that due to the lack of connectivity between the home Eparchies and the migrant

Eparchies, proper information is not received from the home Eparchies. The connectivity between the sending and the receiving Eparchies is essential for the effective pastoral care. It was promised that the migrant offices of the overseas Eparchies are ready to accompany the migrants from the airport itself, if informed in advance. It was also observed that the practice of fostering 'chapters' of individual Eparchies in the migrant eparchies will cause division within the migrant eparchies. *Pravasi* Apostolate of the Eparchies shall not function with the vested interests that may contradict the unity of the migrant eparchies.

Bishop Mar Joseph Srampickal explained the various steps taken by the Eparchy of Great Britain to reach out to the new migrants. Bishop Mar John Panamthottathil CMI observed that faith transmission in the migrant families is diminishing to an average of 30%. Value system of the civil society is contrary to that of Catholic Church. 39% of Australians prefer to be irreligious as per the previous census. Various spiritual groups are organizing parallel ministries in the Eparchy of Melbourne. It is sad to see that even vocations are recruited by retreat groups without informing the local pastors.

Bishop Mar Stephen Chirappanath observed that there are 42 Holy *Qurbana* Centres in Germany at present. The youth ministry of the Apostolic Visitation is highly effective in reaching out to the migrant youth. Bishop Mar Joy Alappatt also stressed the importance of youth ministry. He observed that the Eparchy of Chicago is arranging campus ministry to get connected with the new youth, through the department of Diocesan Youth Apostolate (DYA).

In the discussion that followed it was suggested that each Eparchy must start a migrant office. We must be aware of the reality that the value system of the youth is different and they like to remain unidentified. It was suggested that a Coordinator may be appointed in the sending Eparchies to get connected with the migrant Eparchies. Some members observed that migration of youth below bachelor's degree shall not be promoted. The pastoral

care of the migrants is the prerogative of the local eparchies wherever the ecclesiastical circumscriptions exist. Therefore, the *Pravasi* Apostolate should lead the migrants to the corresponding migrant eparchies.

The Synod continued deliberations of the previous day on the pastoral problems of the migrants. There was an extensive discussion on the relevance of the pastoral accompaniment from the part of the *pravasi* department of the sending Eparchies. In general, the mind of the Synod was that the *pravasi* department of the sending Eparchies need to work in perfect understanding with the receiving Eparchies. At the same time, where there are no ecclesiastical structures, the sending Eparchies should accompany their faithful, wherever they are. The coordination of those ministries could be done by the Commission for Evangelization and the Pastoral Care of the Migrants from the Major Archiepiscopal Curia. The Major Archbishop intervened to add that the Eparchies which receive the migrants are to be supported in all the ways possible by the sending eparchies to provide the pastoral care of these faithful. In this context, he appreciated the service of the Archeparchy of Changanacherry in those regions which are currently part of the Eparchy of Shamshabad.

During the discussion on the topic, the members revisited the issue of vocation promotion done by the retreat preachers from the overseas eparchies. One member shared the instance where the local pastor was not even informed of admitting the members of his Eparchy in a religious congregation. Another member shared the concern that if the retreat preachers attracted all the active youth to join their congregations, the overseas Eparchies would suffer a crisis in vocations to priesthood in the future. There was an opinion that such vocation promotion in the overseas Eparchies should be reconsidered. At this point, one member observed that vocation is a divine call and it happens by attraction. Therefore we cannot restrict the vocation to any religious congregation. All what we can do is to instruct them to follow the guidelines given by the Commission for Vocation in this regard. The Major Archbishop

said that he would give directions in the forums concerned to respect the existing guidelines of the Commission for Vocations by everybody involved in promoting vocations.

Mission *ad Gentes* in Africa: One member invited the attention of the Synod, towards the response of the Dicastery for Evangelization during the visit of the Major Archbishop and the Permanent Synod to Rome, regarding the possibility of starting mission *ad gentes* in the continent of Africa. It was observed that pastoral care of the Syro-Malabar migrants may also be mentioned in the proposal. Another member suggested that we can request for an Apostolic Visitation in Africa. We can begin the work of evangelization in Africa in collaboration with the local Bishops. It was also suggested that the Syro-Malabar religious congregations worked in Africa could be entrusted with those countries of Africa where they have access now. Mission *ad gentes* is the responsibility of our Church.

It was suggested that a study of the ground reality may be conducted by the Commission for Evangelization and Pastoral Care of the Migrants. One member proposed that the Syro-Malabar missionaries working in Africa could be consulted in a meeting organized by the Commission in the presence of the Major Archbishop, seeking the help of our Bishops and priests working in various African Nunciatures. It was suggested that the experience and expertise of Archbishop Mar Kuriakose Bharanikulangara could made use in this respect. After the discussions, it was decided to organize an online meeting under the auspices of the Commission for Evangelization and Pastoral Care of the Migrants, in the presence of the Major Archbishop, ensuring the presence of the Syro-Malabar religious congregations working in Africa, together with the Bishops and priests of the Syro-Malabar Church who have worked and currently working in various African Nunciatures and present a report in the coming Session of the Synod.

Pastoral Care of the Migrants in the South Africa: One member invited the attention of the Synod to a difficult situation existing South Africa regarding the pastoral care of the Syro-Malabar migrants. A letter from the President of the South African

Catholic Bishops' Conference (SACBC) was read out in the Synod specifying that an exclusive pastoral care of the Syro-Malabar in the whole of South Africa was not possible. The letter proposed that the each Syro-Malabar Community could be inserted in the local community, with the celebration of the Syro-Malabar liturgy occasionally. It was observed by many Bishops that the resistance from the local bishops shall not be given undue weight, as it was our experience in the beginning of every new mission. After the discussions, it was decided to entrust Bishop Mar Stephen Chirappanath, the Procurator of the Major Archbishop in Rome, to discuss with the Prefect of the Dicastery for the Eastern Churches by way of solving the tension existing in South Africa regarding the pastoral care of the migrant Syro-Malabar faithful.

Archbishop Mar Kuriakose Bharanikulangara offered help for solving the existing misunderstanding, mentioned in the report of the previous day, regarding the pastoral care of the Syro-Malabar migrants in South Africa. The Synod welcomed his offer and asked Bishop Mar Stephen Chirappanath to proceed in consultation with Archbishop Mar Bharanikulangara.

Celebrations of Jubilee Year 2025 in the Syro-Malabar Church: Presenting the topic the Major Archbishop pointed out that Holy Father Pope Francis has already announced Ordinary Jubilee Year in 2025. The Syro-Malabar Church also should celebrate the Jubilee as exhorted and programmed by the Holy Father. The Major Archbishop invited Bishop Mar George Rajendran SDB to introduce the various moments of the celebration of the Jubilee, who gave the general information with regard to the celebration of the Jubilee as envisaged by the Holy Father. To a query regarding the direction of the CBCI on the jubilee celebrations, Archbishop Andrews Thazhath, the CBCI president, observed that this jubilee year 2025 is understood by CBCI more as formative rather than celebrative, and therefore Churches *sui iuris* have to make the action plan for the Jubilee year. Several Bishops intervened to affirm the importance of having a clear programme of celebration of the Jubilee Year in the Syro-Malabar Church, in

line with the celebrations in the Universal Church. At the end of the discussions, it was decided to entrust an *ad hoc* Committee of Bishops, consisting of Bishop Mar George Rajendran SDB as Convenor, Bishop Mar Sebastian Vadakel MST and Bishop Mar Tony Neelankavil being the members, with the assignment to present in the Synod a plan of celebrations of the Jubilee in 2025 in the current Session itself.

In this context, there was an observation regarding the lack of initiative to study and promote the encyclicals, other papal documents and communications from the Apostolic See. Often, such documents are not given the importance they deserve. There need to be machinery in the Church for the same. In the discussions, it was proposed that the Commission for Catechesis together with the Commission for Doctrine could take concrete steps to study and disseminate the papal documents and other documents of importance for the whole Church. The Major Archiepiscopal Curia could be more vigilant in making sure that the directions from the Vatican are implemented in our Church, according to their nature. The documents published should be subjected to serious study by different groups. The Syro-Malabar Vision could be used to introduce the recent documents to the faithful. To this point, it was pointed out that the Syro-Malabar Vision is introducing the latest documents every month in one of its pages.

Bishop Mar George Rajendran SDB, the Convener of the Bishops' *ad hoc* Committee, presented certain concrete proposals for the celebration of Jubilee Year 2025 in the Syro-Malabar Church. The *ad hoc* Committee was constituted in the current Session of the Synod with Bishop Tony Neelankavil and Bishop Sebastian Vadakel MST as members. The proposals of the Committee are the following:

1. Formation of a Jubilee 2025 Committee in the Syro-Malabar Church.
2. Designation of an Eparchial contact person for the dissemination of information regarding the Jubilee.

3. Each Eparchial Bishop writes a pastoral letter for his eparchy emphasizing the importance of Jubilee and indicating the programme to be followed in the eparchy.
4. One month intensive prayer in December 2024 in preparation for the Jubilee Year.
5. Parish-level inauguration should include: a) An introductory note by the Parish Priest, b) Display of the Jubilee logo near Bema or somewhere visible to all, c) Lighting of Jubilee candle, d) Recitation of Jubilee prayer, e) Recitation of one special *Karozutha* until the end of Jubilee 2025.
6. Classes/Seminars for Priests, Religious, and Laity on the four Constitutions of Vatican II.
7. Study of Vatican Documents in family units, with leaflets provided for each document for study and discussion.
8. Making available the Papal Bull *Spes non confundit* instituting the Jubilee year in vernacular languages.
9. Special arrangements for the Sacrament of Reconciliation.
10. Organization of pilgrimages to Holy places.
11. Provision of sufficient information to the faithful regarding the spiritual benefits of the Jubilee Year.
12. Creation of missionary awareness based on the baptismal mandate.
13. Promotion of visits to mission places and honoring of missionaries.

There was a short discussion on the proposals and at the conclusion of the same, the Synod endorsed the proposals presented by the *ad hoc* Committee to be implemented as part of the jubilee celebration. It was proposed that the Major Archbishop could make a reference to the Jubilee 2025 in the Post-Synodal Circular of the current Session.

Regarding the Jurisdiction of Archbishop of Kottayam over all Knanaya Faithful in India: Archbishop Mar Mathew Moolakkatt OSB presented the topic on the extension of the personal

jurisdiction of the Archbishop of Kottayam over all the Knanaya faithful in India. It was pointed out that, the XXVI Synod of Bishops of the Syro-Malabar Church, Session 1, held from 8 to 13 January, 2018 endorsed the extension of the personal jurisdiction of the Archbishop of Kottayam all the Knanaya faithful in India. On the basis of this Synodal endorsement the Major over Archbishop had written to the Dicastery for the Eastern Churches on January 8, 2019 with Prot. No. 0052/2019. As there was no communication from the Dicastery in this regard, the matter was presented in the XXXI Synod of Bishops of the Syro-Malabar Church, Session I, held from 09 to 14 January 2023 and after due discussion the Synod decided to vote on the proposal of the extension of the personal jurisdiction of the Archbishop of Kottayam over all the Knanaya faithful in India by secret ballot. Out of the 51 members present, one member abstained and 50 bishops voted in favour of this proposal.

Therefore, having the favourable *mens synodi* for the extension of the personal jurisdiction of the Archbishop of Kottayam over all the Knanaya faithful in India, another request was made to the Dicastery for the Eastern Churches by the Major Archbishop on February 10, 2023 (Prot. No. 0118/2023). However no reply is received yet in this regard. Bishop Mar Joseph Pandarasseril and Bishop Geevarghese Mar Aphrem explained the difficulties as well as the growing agitations confronted by the Knanaya community as the jurisdiction of Kottayam Archbishop was not extended to all parts of India.

Several bishops intervened in the discussions and observed that the Knanaya community lived always in communion with the Syro-Malabar Church. As the jurisdiction of the Syro-Malabar Church is extended to all India, the Knanaya community also must be given jurisdiction in the same level. There was an opinion that the Synod could take a decision on the request. At the same time, one member observed that for extending the personal jurisdiction of Archbishop of Kottayam over all Knanaya faithful in India needs the prior assent of the Apostolic See. It was observed that certain

civil cases are pending in the court on matters of jurisdiction. One member mentioned about the study conducted by the Pontifical Commission led by Archbishop Michael Mulhall in 2015 on the issue of the Knanaya endogamy. Another member observed that in order to strengthen the Archeparchy of Kottayam, the Synod must act as if the personal jurisdiction of the Archbishop of Kottayam is extended over all the Knanaya faithful in India, in view of solving problems among the Knanaya community members. After the discussions, it was decided to request the Major Archbishop to send a letter reminding the Prefect of the Dicastery for the Eastern Churches to extend the personal jurisdiction of the Archbishop of Kottayam over all the Knanaya faithful in India.

Reporting on the Study of the Principles of Translation of Liturgical Texts: Bishop Mar Thomas Elavanal MCBS, the Chairman of the Commission for Liturgy, introducing the theme, invited Fr. Jiphy Mekkattukulam, the Secretary of the Commission to present the report of the study regarding the principles of translation of liturgical texts in our Church. The study was made as per the decision of the Session I of the XXXI Synod of Bishops of the Syro-Malabar Church that entrusted the Commission for Liturgy and the Liturgical Research Centre to make a detailed study on the principles of translation of liturgical texts. On this matter, the Commission for Liturgy and the LRC jointly convened a meeting of the experts at Mount St. Thomas Kakkanad on 10 and 11 October 2023 in view of studying and formulating the principles to be kept in mind by those concerned while engaging in the translation of Liturgical texts, based on *Liturgiam Authenticam* (LA) and other Roman documents. Following are the proposals made by the study group:

1. To refer the principles enunciated in *Liturgiam Authenticam* when liturgical translations are done.
2. Liturgical translations are to be done respecting the living culture of the worshipping community.
3. Receptivity of the translated text is important. So the feelings and religio-cultural sentiments of the faithful of the place/

region (Hindi, Marathi, Odia, Kannada, Telugu, Tamil, etc.) have to be taken into account.

4. It was suggested to publish the guidelines for translation basing on the Church documents on the translation of liturgical texts into vernacular languages.
5. A healthy balance between dynamic and formal equivalence is to be kept in order to promote inclusive language.
6. Mystery aspect is to be maintained in the translation and the faithful should be given liturgical formation imbibing the letter and spirit of the document *Desiderio Desideravi* of Pope Francis that the faithful are enabled to understand the mystery of the liturgical celebration.
7. Convene meetings of those who are engaged in the translation of liturgical texts, under the supervision of the Bishops/ Regional Conferences into various local languages at Mount St. Thomas, Kakkanad, under the initiative of the Commission for Liturgy to give them general guidelines.
8. If needed, appoint a Synodal Committee to supervise and give guidelines to those who are engaged in the translation work.
9. The vernacular translations are to be made based on the Syriac texts and the *editio typica*.

Several bishops intervened in the discussions that followed the presentation. One member raised a query on the *editio typica* of the *Taksa* and it was clarified that the Malayalam *Taksa* is the presently approved *editio typica*. Another member observed that while accepting the Malayalam *editio typica* we shall not rule out the importance of the various versions of the Syriac *Taksa*, which is the source of our Holy *Qurbana*. In the translation of the *Taksa* it is not a book that is translated but the life of the Church. It was also observed that the cultural elements of the language context must be taken into consideration in the vernacular translations.

Concluding the discussions the Synod decided to entrust the Commission for Liturgy and Liturgical Research Centre to make liturgical principles of translation of liturgical texts in our Church

from the study report and the inputs given by the Bishops and present it in the forthcoming Session of the Synod for approval.

Study Report on "Liturgy, Sacraments, Sacramentals, Minister's duties & Responsibilities": Fr. Jiphy Mekkattukulam, the Secretary of the Commission for Liturgy, read out the report prepared by the Central Liturgical Committee regarding the duties of *M'samsana* and minor orders at the liturgical celebrations, to be included in the new edition of the Particular Laws of the Syro-Malabar Church. Following are the ordinary duties of *Msamsana* (deacon) received through the laying on of hand (power of order):

- Proclamation of the Apostle (Epistle), serving at the Mysteries (Raze)
- Herald of the Church, announcer and teacher of the *Kerygma*.
- The guide and leader of the liturgical assembly and gives instructions during liturgy to the faithful whenever necessary.
- Incenses during the liturgical celebrations, proclaims the litanies (*Bautha*, *Karozutha* and Angel of Peace)
- Announces the diptychs and formulates various intentions for prayer.
- Prepares and transfers the mysteries (Chalice and paten) to the altar,
- Holds the Chalice at the Holy Communion and does the ablution of the chalice and paten after the Holy Communion.
- Maintains order in the liturgical assembly, mediates between the priest and the people and exposes the Blessed Sacrament without giving the blessing.
- Presides over the Liturgy of the Word outside the celebration of the sacraments according to the text approved by the Synod.
- Recite the Liturgy of the Hours.

The ordinary duties make the deacon a minister par excellence in the liturgical assembly. The following are suggested as the non-Liturgical Rights and Duties of deacon in the Church:

- The deacons shall visit the sick and prepare them for Holy Communion.
- Impart religious instruction, conduct Bible Services, lead family unit gatherings, and serve the Church and society through social and charitable apostolate.
- Have their representatives in the Pastoral Council and Parish *Prathinidhiyogam* as per the eparchial statutes.
- To hold any office in the church (finance officer, chancellor, heads of various departments (social work, education, works of mercy and charity etc).

Following are the suggestions regarding the extraordinary duties to the deacons which can be delegated by the Church:

- To preach homily during liturgy, to distribute Holy Communion, to pray the office for the dead without the gesture of blessing.
- To officiate funeral when there are no priests available, but without the gesture of blessing.
- To perform the routine annual house blessing concluded with a prayer without the gesture of blessing with the sign of the cross, to lead Litany prayers (*Ladeenju*).
- To be extraordinary ministers of subsidiary mysteries (sacramentals) in exceptional situations as per the prescripts of the liturgical texts, except those reserved to higher orders by common law.
- To wear vestments proper to their order while assisting at liturgical celebrations. They are not permitted to wear *Paina* (Cope) worn by the priests.
- They shall not impart blessing with the Blessed Sacrament and shall not recite prayers reserved to priests at the liturgical / sacramental celebrations.
- They shall not bless newly constructed houses of the faithful. They shall not take and receive communion directly by themselves.

Several bishops intervened in the discussions and sought clarifications. Many doubts and queries were raised on the

practical relevance of distinguishing between the ordinary duties and extraordinary duties of the deacons. It was suggested that in the mission context, the duties of deacons may be subjected to redefinition, as the situation demands. There arose a proposal that a text explaining the duties of the catechists in the mission areas may be prepared by the Commission for Liturgy. The duties of the deacons and those who received minor orders must be taught in the major seminaries. The duties of deacons and minor orders are to be included in the Particular Law of the Church, which is currently under revision.

Study Report on Minister's Duties & Responsibilities: The Duties and Responsibilities of *Heupadiakona* and *Karoya*: In continuation of the presentation during the fifth day of the current Session of the Synod, Fr. Jiphy Mekkattukulam, the Secretary of the Commission for Liturgy, presented the study report on the duties and responsibilities of the *Heupadiakona* (Sub deacon) and *Karoya* to be included in the new edition of the Particular Laws of the Syro-Malabar Church.

Those in the ministry of *Heupdiaknusa* have the right and duty to assist at the liturgical celebrations according to liturgical norms. The strict liturgical norm or the "order" does not permit him during the liturgical celebrations to enter the sanctuary. The following are the ordinary duties of *Heupadiakona:*

- to take care of liturgical vessels and vestments, the sanctuary lamp
- to take care of the church doors and to keep the order and decorum in the church
- to lead the recitation of psalms and read the book of prophets, and
- to pray the Liturgy of the Hours and thus nourish his spiritual life.

In the present Pontifical, the *Heupadiakona* is given the book of psalms and tray with vessels reminding him of this role in the liturgical assembly.

Heupadiakona may be deputed by the Church as extraordinary minister. Following are the extraordinary duties suggested to the *Heupadiakona*:

- To incense and minister at the altar when there are no deacons.
- To distribute Holy Communion if there are no sufficient ordinary ministers.
- To administer all the rites performed by the *Karoya*.
- To lead the devotional prayers and practices like Novena and Way of the Cross.
- to expose (only) the Blessed Sacrament for adoration, and
- to lead Family Unit prayer meetings
- to preach outside liturgical services

The *Heupadiakona* shall never impart to the congregation blessings with the sign of the cross. They shall always wear vestments proper to their ministry while assisting at liturgical celebrations.

Those in the ministry of *Karoyusa* are the ordinary ministers for reading from the Old Testament: Law (*Torah*) and Prophets (*Nebiim*) during the liturgical services. According to Mar Abdisho and *Liber Patrum*, they symbolize the angels. They are obliged to learn to pray the Liturgy of the Hours and thus nourish their spiritual life. Following are the suggestions on the extraordinary duties to the *Karoya*:

- to incense and minister at the altar, to distribute Holy Communion if there are no sufficient ordinary ministers.
- to lead the devotional prayers and practices like Novena and Way of the Cross
- to lead prayer meetings, to preach outside liturgical services,

However, they shall not impart to the congregation blessings with the sign of the cross. They shall always wear vestments proper to their ministry while assisting at liturgical celebrations.

In the discussion that followed, several bishops expressed their opinion that the duties specific to the order should be clearly defined, followed by the extraordinary duties that could be assigned to *Msamsana*, *Heupadiakona*, and *Karoya*. One member raised concerns about the ambiguous and overlapping responsibilities of the ministers. After the discussions, the Synod decided to approve

the Study Report of CLC on 'Liturgy, Sacraments, Sacramentals, Ministers' Duties and Responsibilities' and entrusted the Commission for Liturgy to publish the guidelines explaining the duties of *Msamsana*, *Heupadiakona*, and *Karoya*.

Newly Printed Liturgical Text Books and Lectionaries: Bishop Mar Thomas Elavanal MCBS, the chairman for the Commission for Liturgy and Fr. Jiphy Mekkattukulam, the secretary for the Commission, presented in the Synod the following newly published liturgical books, giving a free copy of each book to the Synod Fathers: The Liturgy of the Hours in one volume, the *Sapra* text, the *Ramsa* text, and the Lectionary of the Epistles. The members thanked the Commission for Liturgy for the herculean task they have accomplished. Appreciating the standard size of the lectionaries there was a suggestion to print the *Taksa* of the Holy *Qurbana* also in the size of the lectionaries. Since the *Taksa* of the Holy *Qurbana* is getting ready for printing, the standard format could be used for the same. After a short discussion, the Synod decided to print the Holy *Qurbana Taksa* in the standard format of the Lectionaries, starting with the *Taksa* in English.

Alternate use of the Three *Anaphorae*: The Major Archbishop, making an intervention, said that the celebrants should take care to celebrate to use the second and third *Anaphorae*, instead of choosing always the first anaphora. There are days specified in the instructions when to choose the second and third *anaphorae* in the celebration of the Holy *Qurbana*. In addition to those days specified in the text, we should develop a habit of choosing all the three anaphorae in our celebrations, giving importance to all three of them.

Permission to Print the *Taksa* of Sacraments: The Commission for Liturgy sought the permission of the Synod for printing the revised text of sacraments incorporating the prayers from the revised *Taksa* of Holy *Qurbana*. The Synod Fathers after evaluating the draft copy of the text made the following observations:

1. The general instructions are to be listed in the beginning similar to those given in the *Taksa* of Holy *Qurbana*. It was

observed that the general instructions may be simple and as clear as possible.

2. Change the usage of *ivanil/ iyalil* and add more polite usages like *makanil/ makalil*, *dasanil/dasiyil*, etc., and maintain the consistency throughout the text.
3. It was suggested to make a thorough proof reading to eliminate the scribal errors. Some members offered assistance in this regard if one month of time is granted for proof reading before it will be printed.
4. There were queries regarding the form of administration of sacrament of baptism for adults and it was clarified that clear instruction will be given at the beginning of the text.
5. The possibility of incorporating the *Peshitta* translation of the Gospel in the *Taksa* for the sacraments was sought by one member.

One member asked the propriety of keeping the Decree of the then Major Archbishop in the revised text. After certain clarifications, it was decided to retain the decree of the first text together with a new decree of promulgation by the present Major Archbishop. After the discussions the Synod decided to give permission to the Commission for Liturgy to reprint the *Taksa* of Sacraments incorporating the prayers from the revised *Taksa* of Holy *Qurbana*.

Syriac Version of the *Taksa* of *Qurbana*: The Secretary of the Commission for Liturgy asked the permission of the Synod to reprint the Syriac version of *Taksa*. One member raised a query about the need of checking the Syriac text with the Malayalam *editio typica*. It was observed that the Malayalam text is prepared from the Syriac text as its source text. The slight changes that are necessary could be made with the help of the Syriac experts. After the discussions it was decided to give permission to the Commission for Liturgy to print the Syriac Text adding the second and third anaphora incorporating the necessary changes reflecting the suggestions made by the Synod.

Publication of the English Translation of the Syriac Text of the Liturgy of the Hours: The Chairman of the Commission for

Liturgy sought the permission of the Synod to publish the English translation of the Syriac source text of the Liturgy of the Hours prepared by Fr. Emmanuel Thelliyil CMI and others. After the discussions, it was decided to give permission to the Commission for Liturgy to publish the English translation of the Syriac source text of the Liturgy of the Hours prepared by Fr. Emmanuel Thelliyil CMI and others.

Copyright of the Liturgical Texts: Fr. Jiphy Mekkattukulam invited the attention of the Synod towards a copyright violation of the *Qurbana* text for the use of the faithful together with the text of *Sapra* published without the consent of the Commission for Liturgy. He pointed out that in the said text many instructions are added that are not in the original text and certain instructions are omitted from the general instructions of the *Qurbana Taksa* approved by the Synod. Archbishop Mar Joseph Perumthottam explained to the Synod it was by mistake that certain priests of the Archeparchy of Changanacherry printed the text with the intention of making the *Sapra* text available for the use of the faithful, which was not printed by the Commission for Liturgy for the past two years. As the Major Archbishop came to know about the text printed and distributed, he wrote a letter to Archbishop Mar Perumthottam seeking explanation. Mar Perumthottam read the letter he had sent in reply to the Major Archbishop, in which he had specified that he had corrected the act of the priests who violated the copy right of the text. There were a few interventions to clarify certain matters. After the discussions it was decided to instruct every eparchy not to print any liturgical text published by the Commission for Liturgy, that possesses the exclusive copy right of its publications. It was also decided to give direction to get prior written consent of the Commission for Liturgy, even for printing the text for the use of the faithful on specific events like ordination, consecration of churches, and consecration of Bishops, etc.

Integrated Holy Week *Taksa*: Fr. Jiphy Mekkattukulam presented the topic. In 2009, the Synod published an integrated *Taksa* of the Holy Week. This *Taksa* is in need of an 'incorporation' of prayers,

hymns and psalms of the revised text of the Liturgy of the Hours published on 25 December 2022. The prayers, hymns and psalms of the Holy Week are given in the pages 541-609 of Volume I of the revised text of the Liturgy of the Hours. The CLC suggested including Psalm 113 after the Psalm 104. Psalm 113 is not given in the present *Sapra* (Sundays & Feast Days) of *Yamaprarthanakal*. The Committee also suggested including Psalms 148 and 149 after Psalm 93. Psalm 148 and 149 are not given in the present *Sapra* of *Yamaprathanakal*. In the discussion that followed, it was made clear that the mandate of the Commission was to compile an integrated text of the Holy Week ceremonies and the Liturgy of the Hours in the Holy Week without making any innovation.

Incorporated Text for the Holy Week: Bishop Mar Thomas Elavanal MCBS sought the opinion of the Synod with regard to the printing of the revised integrated text of the Liturgy of the Hours and of the Liturgy of the Holy Week. Since the discussion on the draft was not complete, the Synod proposed that the decision could be taken in the January 2025 Session of the Synod, after verifying the content of the text.

The English *Qurbana* Text: Bishop Mar Thomas Elavanal MCBS, the Chairman of the Commission for Liturgy, presented the draft of the common part and of the nine seasons of the *Qurbana Taksa* in English to the Synod for review. Fr. Jiphy Mekkattukulam, the Secretary, was welcomed by Bishop Elavanal to present the draft. The Secretary said that the III Session of the XXXI Synod in August 2023 approved the text and gave permission for printing the English *Qurbana* Text. The draft has incorporated the suggestions given by the Bishops, before finalizing it for printing. As the decision is already taken for printing the text in English, the Commission requested the members to submit their final suggestions, if any, before 1 October 2024.

***Ramsa* Text in Special Format:** Bishop Mar Thomas Elavanal MCBS presented a request from Archbishop Mar Joseph Perumthottam to print the *Ramsa* text in a special format with reduced number of pages and consequently less expensive, compared to the text

of *Ramsa* already published by the Commission for Liturgy. To a query it was clarified that the text will be the same, as approved by the Commission, only the format would be different to save the pages and the expense incurred. The book will be published by the Commission for Liturgy. Concluding the discussion, it was decided to give permission to the Commission for Liturgy to publish a new text of *Ramsa* in a special format with reduced number of pages compared to the text of *Ramsa* already published by the Commission for Liturgy.

At the conclusion of the discussion on matters related to Liturgy, the Major Archbishop thanked Bishop Mar Thomas Elavanal MCBS, in a special way, for his dedicated and sincere service as the Chairman of the Commission for Liturgy for the past ten years. He also appreciated the members and secretaries of the Commission for their collaboration in publishing various liturgical texts of the Church.

Evaluating the Situation in the Archeparchy of Ernakulam-Angamaly: Bishop Mar Bosco Puthur, the Apostolic Administrator, explained the present scenario regarding the implementation of the uniform of mode of celebration of the Holy *Qurbana* in the Archeparchy of Ernakulam-Angamaly. 117 out of 263 parishes of the Archeparchy celebrate the uniform mode of Holy *Qurbana* once in every Sunday and other days of obligation. In 55 parishes, the celebration in the uniform mode is not implemented, as the civil cases are pending in courts. 85 parishes have reported their difficulty in implementing the synodal decision due to severe opposition from the parishioners against the uniform mode of celebration of Holy *Qurbana*, even though the parish priests are ready to implement uniform mode of celebration. In seven churches, the Holy *Qurbana* is celebrated in the uniform mode every day. Mar Bosco Puthur observed that, to avoid the tensions, the peace seeking people of the Archeparchy are going to Latin Churches for Sunday celebration.

He expressed his mind that it was not possible to implement the uniform mode of celebration of Holy *Qurbana* by force, and

assured that the uniform mode of celebration of the Holy *Qurbana* would be implemented gradually in the Archeparchy.

Several Bishops intervened in the discussions and the following are the major points emerged.

1. The Holy *Qurbana* in the uniform mode must be celebrated in parishes as one of the scheduled *Qurbanas* on Sundays.
2. We shall not over look the positive outcome of 117 churches that began to celebrate the Holy *Qurbana* in the uniform mode. Moreover, the Holy *Qurbana* in the uniform mode is celebrated every day in the minor seminary of the Archeparchy.
3. As prescribed in the post synodal notification, canonical disciplinary actions must be initiated against those priests, who deliberately remain in disobedience.
4. The Basilica Church must be legally cleared for the celebration of the Holy *Qurbana*.

Concluding the discussions, the Major Archbishop observed that the mind of the Synod was to avoid a division in the Church. We have to think of the means of effective administration of the Archeparchy. It was proposed to entrust the Secretary of the Synod to present an action plan to be implemented in the current scenario of the Archeparchy of Ernakulam-Angamaly, in the next sitting of the Synod.

Directives to the Apostolic Administrator of the Archeparchy of Ernakulam-Angamaly: The decision of the Synod on the uniform of mode of celebration of the Holy *Qurbana* which was approved by the Dicastery for Eastern Churches, and repeatedly exhorted by the Holy Father remains intact in the Archeparchy of Ernakulam-Angamaly. Taking into consideration the principle of graduality in view of catechetical purpose, certain exceptions were given to the Archeparchy in view of the full implementation of the uniform mode of celebration of the Holy *Qurbana*. Consequently, the directives in the Circular published on June 9 and the provisions given in the Post-Synodal Notification on June 21 and the Explanatory

Note on July 1 must be implemented sincerely in the Archeparchy. Although the Synod does not overlook the positive outcome of 118 parishes where the uniform mode of celebration of the Holy *Qurbana* has begun, and the uniform mode is celebrated every day in the minor seminary and seven parishes of the Archeparchy, it is to be implemented in the entire Archeparchy. The Synod decided to give the following directives to Bishop Mar Bosco Puthur to be implemented in the Archeparchy immediately:

1. It must be made clear unambiguously that there is no question of going back from the decision on the implementation of the uniform mode of celebration of the Holy *Qurbana* in the Archeparchy of Ernakulam-Angamaly.
2. The Holy *Qurbana* in the uniform mode must be celebrated in all the parishes as one of the scheduled *Qurbanas* on Sundays and other days of obligation.
3. As prescribed in no. 3 of the Post-Synodal Notification published on 21 June 2024, (Ref. N. 5/2024), canonical actions must be initiated (starting with show-cause notice) against the priests who do not follow the above instruction.
4. The forane vicars are to be called by the Apostolic Administrator for dialogue to facilitate the implementation of the uniform mode of celebration of Holy *Qurbana* at least one scheduled mass in every Sunday and on other days of obligation.
5. As the Post-Synodal notification, no. 7, clearly states, the Bishops and priests visiting the parishes of the Archeparchy can celebrate Holy *Qurbana* in the uniform mode, steps must be taken to ensure the implementation of this decision.
6. The priests who stood with the decision of the Synod, celebrating the Holy *Qurbana* in the uniform mode, must be properly heard and consulted.
7. Proper catechesis in view of implementing the uniform mode of celebration of the Holy *Qurbana* must be done sincerely by the priests. The use of Bema must be made mandatory in the celebration of the Holy *Qurbana*.

8. As the ordination of deacons is an emotional issue in the Archeparchy, it must be handled with utmost prudence. In this regard:
    i. The deacons must be examined by the Apostolic Administrator to know their mind in obeying the synodal decision on the implementation of the uniform mode of celebration of the Holy *Qurbana*.
    ii. A written affidavit must be obtained from the deacons expressing their allegiance to the Synodal decision on the uniform mode of celebration of the Holy *Qurbana*.
    iii. It is up to the Local Hierarch to provide the environment for the newly ordained priests to celebrate the Holy *Qurbana* in the uniform mode.
    iv. The deacons may be ordained together at the Cathedral Basilica or other churches of importance, concelebrating the uniform mode of Holy *Qurbana* with the ordaining Local Hierarch.

Briefing on the Civil Cases regarding the Implementation of the Uniform Mode of Celebration: At the invitation of the Moderator, the Chancellor gave a brief accounting on the civil cases in the various civil courts filed by the faithful from various parishes of the Archeparchy. He said that there are around 60 cases in which the Major Archbishop is a respondent. Now, as no *Qurbana* is celebrated in the uniform mode in parishes, where civil cases are filed by the faithful who desire the celebration in the uniform mode, it has become very difficult to conclude the cases amicably. He reported that the appeal filed against the order of the Munsiff prohibiting the celebration of the Holy *Qurbana versus populum* was not granted despite the petition filed the Apostolic Administrator. He said that the only way to settle the cases eventually is to start the celebration of the Holy *Qurbana* at least on Sundays and other days of obligation also in parishes where there are cases. He added that the position taken by the Apostolic Administrator should be in conformity with the position taken by the Major Archbishop in the court.

In a sitting, one member raised a query on the distinction between illicit and licit nature of the uniform mode of Holy *Qurbana* and the *Qurbana versus populum* celebrated simultaneously in the parishes of Archeparchy of Ernakulam-Angamaly. It was clarified that the uniform mode of celebration is the licit form of celebration of the Holy *Qurbana*. The *Qurbana versus populum* is valid, but illicit. However, taking into consideration the pastoral situation existing in the Archeparchy of Ernakulam-Angamaly, the Synod, gave the temporary provision to the priests who celebrate at least one Holy *Qurbana* in the uniform mode on Sundays and other days of obligation are exempted from the canonical punishment, even if they continue the existing form of celebration of the Holy *Qurbana*.

The Financial Report of the Major Archiepiscopal Curia: The Major Archbishop welcomed Fr. Joseph Tholanickal, the Finance Officer to the Synod. Bishop Mar Pauly Kannookadan, the Chairman of the Commission for Finance, presented the financial status of the Major Archiepiscopal Curia. Bishop Mar Kannookadan emphasized that the current contributions from the eparchies and religious congregations are insufficient to meet the expenses of the Curia. In the light of this observation, he urged the Synod members to propose both short-term and long-term plans to address this pressing issue of financial crisis. Fr. Joseph Tholanickal, the Finance Officer of the Major Archiepiscopal Curia, presented the audit report for the financial year 2023-2024 and the Synod passed the account after seeking certain clarifications.

Bishop Mar Pauly Kannookadan requested the Synod to consider increasing the per head annual contribution from eparchies from Rs. 2 to Rs. 5 as a means to face the current financial crisis of the Curia. He noted that the mission eparchies which are financially stable could contribute more, without going for the number of faithful in their eparchy. Bishop Mar Kannookadan sought proposals from the members of the Synod to find permanent solutions to the deficient financial situation of the Curia. Some members suggested for constructing an International Convention Centre or a shopping complex at Mount St. Thomas campus to

generate a fixed income. However, some other members were of the opinion that this would disrupt the serenity and sanctity of the Major Archiepiscopal Curia. There was a suggestion to reformulate the annual contribution based on the financial stability of each eparchy. Some bishops from mission eparchies pointed out their financial inability to contribute more and requested for an understanding of their financial deficiency.

In the discussion on the matter, one member recalled the tradition of the Eastern Patriarchal Churches, where Bishops present a considerable amount of money as gift to the patriarch during the Synod. Additionally, it was suggested that contributions from religious congregations could be increased proportionate to their financial stability. The Finance Officer sought the mind of the Synod regarding the increase the monthly salary of the auxiliary staff working at the Curia and the allowance of the Sisters helping at the Curia. The proposal was welcomed wholeheartedly by the members. Therefore it was decided to increase the allowance of the Sisters and the salary of the auxiliary staff who render their service at the Major Archiepiscopal Curia.

Concluding the discussions, it was decided to entrust Bishop Mar Pauly Kannookadan to present a studied proposal for augmenting the income of the Major Archiepiscopal Curia in the current Session of the Synod. The Major Archbishop thanked Fr. Joseph Tholanickal for his dedicated and unassuming service as the Finance Officer of the Major Archiepiscopal Curia.

Later in the Session of the Synod, Bishop Mar Pauly Kannookadan, the Chairman of the Commission for Finance, presented the concrete proposals for the increase of the income of the Major Archiepiscopal Curia. Bishop Mar Kannookadan said that the proposals are presented after extensive deliberation in the Commission and taking into account the financial capacity of each Eparchy.

The Commission proposed the following:

1. To pay Rs. 4 each per head of the number of faithful in the following 22 Eparchies: Changanacherry, Ernakulam-

Angamaly, Idukki, Irinjalakuda, Kanjirapally, Kothamangalam, Kottayam, Mananthavady, Palai, Palghat, Thamarassery, Tellicherry, Trichur, Belthangady, Bhadravathi, Faridabad, Hosur, Kalyan, Mandya, Ramanathapuram, Shamshabad and Thuckalay.

2. Rs. 50,000 each per year from the Eparchies of Adilabad, Chanda and Sagar.
3. Rs. 100,000 each per year from the Eparchies of Bijnor, Gorakhpur, Jagdalpur, Rajkot, Satna and Ujjain.
4. From the Eparchies outside India: Chicago (0.5 dollar per head) Great Britain (10000 pound), Melbourne (Ten Lakh Indian Rupees), Mississauga (0.5 Canadian dollar per head) and Apostolic Visitation for Europe (6000 Euros).

The Synod evaluated the proposal presented by the Commission for Finance. After short discussion on the matter, it was decided to approve the proposal presented by the Commission for Finance for increasing the annual contribution to the Major Archiepiscopal Curia from the Eparchies on the basis of their financial capacity and to revise the same only after five years.

Presentation of the Study Report of PAROC Research Centre on Priestly Formation: The Major Archbishop welcomed Fr. Saijo Thaikkattil and Fr. Saji Mathew Kanayankal CST to present the study report prepared by the PAROC research centre on 'Priestly Formation in the Major Seminaries of Catholic Church with special reference to the Major Seminaries of the Syro-Malabar Church'. The study envisions to formulate an appropriate formative programme for human, spiritual, pastoral, and mission areas of formation. The study report was prepared after a series of discussions, surveys, workshops and interviews among the people involved in the formative program, based on the document *Ratio Fundamentalis*.

In the human formation level, the seminarians often opine that they are not properly understood by the formators. 30% of seminarians are of the opinion that the spiritual guidance they receive does not influence their life. In the moral formation level, the value system

and formation of moral conscience is not actually taking place among 10-15% of the seminarians. In the intellectual formation, 21% of seminarians are not happy with the pedagogical means used in the seminary. The need for the revision of syllabus and the use of modern digital technologies in the class rooms are asked to be promoted. In the pastoral formation level, the seminarians are not adequately trained in the areas of youth ministry and finance management. Mission formation is considerably absent among the seminarians. However, it was observed that 85% of the Syro-Malabar seminarians are ready to go for ministries in the mission regions.

The report speaks about the benchmarks as explained in *Ratio Fundamentalis*. In order to determine a seminarian's readiness to move from one stage to the next, the *Ratio* has introduced the term 'benchmarks' for each stage and dimension of formation. For example, within the pastoral dimension, one of the benchmarks for a seminarian in the configuration stage is that he can "demonstrate that he is articulate, good at listening, and capable of public speaking." So, he should meet these and other benchmarks within the pastoral dimension before he is advanced to the vocational synthesis stage. The benchmark for promotion of the seminarians is not determined in our Church.

The report also speaks about the strategies for implementation. The formators must be ready for personally accompanying the seminarians. An approved common syllabus for human, spiritual, pastoral, and mission formation is not fixed as the syllabus for intellectual formation.

In the discussion that followed, Bishop Mar George Madathikandathil and Bishop Pauly Kannookadan, who guided the study project, congratulated the PAROC study team for the scientific work. It was suggested that regional level colloquium may be arranged for the formators of minor and major seminaries. Some Bishops asked for concrete action plan for implementing the findings of the study. Many Bishops shared the view that it is

difficult to find out formators who are capable of accompanying the students. It was pointed out that pastoral formation principles, specific for the students of oriental Churches are to be addressed in this study. The mandatory clarity in the doctrinal stance of the Church and personal conviction are lacking among the seminarians and young priests.

Teachers must be strengthened in the use of new pedagogical strategies. The seminarians must be taught the effective way of time management. One member observed that the discipleship shall not be restricted to disciplinary level. Another member asked the reason for the surprising finding in the report that the seminarians are influenced firstly by parents, secondly by their parish priests and thirdly only the seminary formators. It was also observed that although the study reveals that 85% seminarians are interested in mission ministry, the reality is that the new priests are reluctant for mission work.

It was observed that our formators are not given proper training to pursue the process of healing from inner wounds of the seminarians which is absolutely necessary in every formation. One member raised a query on the necessary measures taken in view of protecting the data collected on the seminarians and priests. We have to study in detail the reasons for the gradual diminishing of the priestly zeal of the seminarians in the course of seminary formation. It was suggested that as the present study is conducted exclusively among the eparchial seminarians, religious seminaries must also be incorporated in the study for a better accuracy. We have to pay attention to study the difference between the religious and eparchial priestly formation.

One member observed that interiorisation of faith by a personal encounter of Jesus is the focal point of formation. “Christian faith is either an encounter with Jesus alive or it does not exist” (DD, 10). Seminary formation should lead the seminarians to encounter the living Jesus. Formators who lack monastic spirituality, unable to read Christ in the Bible, lack Eucharistic ecclesiology are not

competent to provide proper formation to the seminarians. We must be judiciously cautious in selecting the formators in the seminaries.

After the fruitful interaction, the Major Archbishop thanked Fr. Saijo Thaikkattil and Fr. Saji Mathew Kanayankal CST for the unparalleled work they have done for the good of the Church, who in turn handed over a copy of the detailed study report of the synodal seminaries to the Major Archbishop.

There was a query from one member during the reading of minutes of the previous day regarding the implementation of the action plan outlined in the study report of PAROC Research Centre on the priestly formation in the Major Seminaries. Bishop Mar Tony Neelankavil clarified that the report will be sent to each major seminary for thorough analysis and discussions. Afterwards, the rectors and the members of the Synodal Commissions for the various Major Seminaries will meet together to finalize the action plan to be presented in the Synod in view of incorporating in the formation programme of the Major Seminaries in the Syro-Malabar Church.

Meeting with the Secretaries of the Commissions/Committees: The third sitting of the Synod was exclusively set apart for the meeting with the Secretaries of the various Synodal Commissions/ Committees in the auditorium of the Curia. 19 secretaries/office bearers who are residing outside the campus of Mount St. Thomas and 17 members who reside at Mount St. Thomas participated in the meeting. Bishop Mar Sebastian Vaniyapurackal welcomed the participants of the meeting. Bishop Mar Joseph Porunnedom moderated the meeting. Each secretary was given chance to address the Synod members describing the issues related to their Commission/Committees that deserve the attention of the Synod. The Secretaries appreciated the willingness of the Synod to listen to them, a practice that was discontinued for the past few years. The following are the major points emerged in the sharing of the Secretaries that deserve the attention of the Synod:

1. The Commission for Family, Laity and Life must be given an office at the Major Archiepiscopal Curia and a working fund be granted for effective functioning.
2. The Secretary for *Mathruvedi* requested the Synod to declare December 8, the Feast of Immaculate Conception of Mother Mary as *Mathruvedi dinam*.
3. The need of *Pithruvedi* for men in the Global level and should be initiated in all eparchies that have not yet started.
4. *Catholica Congress* leaders requested the Major Archbishop to issue a circular to the whole Church, explaining the importance of *Catholica* Congress for empowering our community.
5. The need for preparing a common Syro-Malabar syllabus for the Marriage Preparation course was pointed out.
6. The importance of appointing a Secretary for Ecumenism in all the eparchies was observed.
7. Pastoral Council Secretaries must be invited annually to one of the Sessions of the Synod.
8. It was asked to declare the feast of Holy Family as *Kudumba Koottayma dinam* (day of family units).
9. There was a suggestion to introduce at least a short course in the major seminaries on *Kudumba Koottayma* (family units).
10. It was suggested that the Online Marriage Preparation Courses must be stopped completely. Bishop Mar Sebastian Adayanthrath responded to this proposal stating that due to the geographical vastness of the Eparchy, online courses are conducted in the Eparchy of Mandya, exclusively for the members of the Eparchy.
11. A Syro-Malabar policy for pro-life must be published.
12. There must be lay representation in the Commission for Public Affairs.
13. Participation of SMYM in the national level.

After the presentations, several members including the Synodal Fathers intervened in the discussions. Bishop Mar Joseph

Kallarangatt, the Convenor of the Committee for Education, in the absence of the Secretary, explained the difficulties confronted in the educational sector on the appointment of the differently abled. He invited the attention of the members to the possible challenges in the implementation of the National Education Policy (NEP). The Bishops who intervened in the discussions appreciated the hard work rendered by the secretaries in keeping the commissions/ committees alive and effective. There were queries on the norm for selecting the participants of the Major Archiepiscopal Assembly. Bishop Sebastian Vaniyapurackal, the Curia Bishop, gave a reply to these queries.

Concluding the discussions the Major Archbishop pointed out that Church is a communion which means co-responsibility. It is sad that we the Syro-Malabar Church often fail to register our effective presence in public when compared to other communities. Fr. Abraham Kavilpurayidathil, the Chancellor proposed the vote of thanks. The meeting concluded with the blessing of the Major Archbishop.

Annual Report Presentation of Synodal Major Seminaries/ Institute: The Major Archbishop welcomed Fr. Scaria Kanniyakonil (Rector, Vadavathoor), Fr. Sebastian Palamoottil (Rector, Mangalapuzha), Fr. Jacob Chanikuzhy (Rector, Kunnoth), Fr. Mathew Kazhuthadiyil (Rector, Satna) and Fr. Pauly Maniyattu (President, Pontifical Oriental Institute of Religious Studies (POIRS) to present the reports of the formation year 2023-2024.

St. Ephrem's Theological College, Satna: Fr. Mathew Kazhuthadiyil, the Rector, presented a summary report of St. Ephrem's Theological College (ETC), Satna, where 68 students are currently studying. ETC Satna, being a mission seminary, is giving more importance to the missiological studies and the first-hand experience of the mission centres. Even though the Rector made reference to the scarcity of the personnel in the seminary, he said that the existing staff is a team of committed formators. He invited the attention of the Synod Fathers to the immediate need of repairing and maintenance of the present building of the seminary. The financial

non-viability is an obstacle in this regard. Referring to the present day challenges in the priestly formation, Fr. Kazhuthadiyil spoke about the language problems, lack of reading habits, lack of spirit of sacrifice, addiction to the social media in some of the students and the like.

One Bishop sought clarification on the nature of the course given on 'Safe Environment Policy' in the seminary. Another member observed that if the students are lacking linguistic proficiency in English and Hindi, as mentioned in the report, the purpose of a mission seminary is not served. Bishop Mar Joseph Kodakallil, the Chairman of the Seminary Commission for St. Ephrem's Theological College, pointed out that among the 68 seminarians; there are only two non-Malayalees. He informed the Synod that the seminary is lacking a missiology professor. He added that being a small community, the students get personal attention. Being a mission seminary, simplicity is maintained in all the activities of the seminary. This often leads the seminarians to compare the seminary with the major seminaries of Kerala. He clarified the queries of the bishops regarding the seminary.

Good Shepherd Major Seminary, Kunnoth: Fr. Jacob Chanikuzhy, the Rector, presented a brief report of the Good Shepherd Major Seminary, Kunnoth, where 175 seminarians are undergoing their priestly formation. He reported that the students are content with the formation they receive and the facilities available in the Seminary. Though the seminary manages with the existing 15 resident staff and 33 visiting staff, there is still the need of new teaching staff. It is very positive that all the staff members contribute, in varying degrees, to the spiritual formation of students. However, he mentioned a major challenge in priestly formation: dedicated, knowledgeable formators serving in the parishes are not willing to participate in seminary formation. A big challenge in the formation is that some formees seem to lack enthusiasm for bettering and be content with what they are now.

After the presentation, one member asked clarification regarding the supplementary exam free programme of the Seminary. It was

explained that the staff of the seminary motivated and empowered the students to attain better result, through various means of accompanying the weaker students. Archbishop Mar Joseph Pamplany, the Chairman of the Commission informed the Synod that the Seminary Commission is happy about the staff - students' relationship existing in the Seminary. The approach of responsible freedom practiced in the seminary seems to be more effective as it makes students more responsible. The seminary could develop the infrastructure essential for the smooth functioning of the seminary, including the indoor stadium and multi-purpose hall. The steps taken for increasing the linguistic proficiency in English as well as the means adopted for the memorizing of Biblical verses were also appreciated. As the Seminary is entering into the Silver Jubilee year, all were invited to the inaugural ceremony on 5 September 2024.

St. Joseph's Pontifical Seminary, Mangalapuzha: Fr. Sebastian Palamoottil, the Rector, presented the report of St. Joseph's Pontifical Seminary, Mangalapuzha, Alwaye, where 366 students are receiving formation. He informed that the seminary manages with the available staff, though it is in need of more teachers. He expressed satisfaction in settling the issues related to the property of the Seminary at Kakkanad. Thanks to the generous support of the funding agencies and individual sponsors a significant part of the main building of the seminary has been renovated. Currently the renovation of the seminary chapel is going on. As to the present challenges experienced in the priestly formation, the Rector pointed out that there is lack of interiorisation of the formation given and tepidity towards spiritual formation. Self referential tendencies seem to govern some staff members and even the theology students.

The Synod Fathers congratulated the rector for the daring steps he had taken for the renovation work in the seminary. Bishop Mar George Madathikandathil, the Chairman of the Commission for the seminary, observed that the Seminary Commission is

impressed by the quality of the staff and students of the seminary. He congratulated the staff for raising a good amount of money for the renovation works in the seminary. Making a reference to issues related to the Kakkanad property of the Seminary, he also proposed that it was expedient to sell the property in consultation with KRLCBC and invest the money in some income generating projects. He also appreciated the interventions of Archbishop Andrews Thazhath and Archbishop Mathew Moolakkatt OSB, who were specially designated by the synod to settle the issues related to the Kakkanad property of the seminary.

St. Thomas Apostolic Seminary and POIRS, Vadavathoor: Fr. Scaria Kanniyakonil, the Rector of St. Thomas Apostolic Seminary and Fr. Pauly Maniyattu, the President of Pontifical Oriental Institute of Religious Studies (POIRS), Vadavathoor, presented their reports of the year. The rector presented a brief report on the formation imparted to the seminarians at various levels. He informed the Synod that there are 302 students undergoing formation in the seminary. Though there are 18 resident staff and 42 visiting staff, the seminary is still in need of more personnel. He noted that a key issue in formation is that some seminarians lack deep faith in God and spiritual experience.

Fr. Pauly Maniyattu made reference to the instruction received from the Dicastery for Culture and Education to give priority to the title 'Pontifical Oriental Institute of Religious Studies (POIRS)' and to use the title *Paurastya Vidyapitham* (PVP) only as a second title. He spoke about the regular courses offered in the three cycles of the Faculty of Theology and the B. Ph. programme in the recently erected Institute of Philosophy. He highlighted the Theology Symposium, Philosophy Symposium, Extension Lecture and World Syriac Conference Sessions organized by the POIRS. He added that the Institute of Eastern Canon Law is also functioning well. He requested the Synod Fathers to send more priests to pursue M.Th. programme in theology, which would also help the priests to grow in their faith experience and personal convictions.

Archbishop Mar Mathew Moolakatt OSB, the Chairman of the Synodal Commission for the seminary congratulated the Institute for giving importance for oriental studies. He thanked everyone, especially His Beatitude Cardinal Mar George Alencherry, who worked hard for obtaining the affiliation for the Institute of Philosophy at POIRS. He invited the attention of the Synod towards the financial crisis in the seminary due to the shutting down of the mining quarry.

After the presentations of the rectors and the president of the institute and evaluation of the Seminary Commissions, the moderator invited the Synod Fathers to deliberate on the topic. Several bishops intervened in the discussions and the following are the main points emerged:

1. The dress code of the seminary staff must be seriously taken into account. In the seminaries of Kerala, cassock must be favored, if not, at least the dress code prescribed in the Particular Law must be followed.
2. Concelebration of the Holy *Qurbana* by staff must be promoted, as it is a powerful witness to the seminarians.
3. Celibate life and its implications must be seriously taught in the seminaries in such a way that the seminarians shall not have the impression that celibacy is not merely the state of being unmarried.
4. The seminarians should be trained to be *alter Christus*. It is sad to see that the depth of Christ-experience is getting diminished among them. Only those formators who are ignited by the Christ-experience can motivate them. We have to accompany the seminarians.
5. The readiness for enduring suffering and difficulties is found missing in the value system of our seminarians.
6. The PAROC Report must be properly studied in every seminary. After the studies, the rectors will be called for a joint meeting with Seminary Commissions to see how those suggestions could be implemented in the seminaries.

7. The concept of genuine Christian love is sometimes missing among the seminarians. The culture of club love is permeated among them.
8. The seminary staff must pay attention to build up a good relationship with the auxiliary staff and neighbors of the seminary. The intellectual formation must be emphasized. The idea of 'cruel mercy' suggested by St. George Henry Newman may be followed by the rectors in their approach in correcting the seminarians.
9. The concept of family group practiced in Good Shepherd Major Seminary must be evaluated properly, and if found good, implemented in other seminaries as well.

The rectors responded to the suggestions of the Synod members positively and promised that they will abide with the suggestions of the Synod. They explained the various steps of compassion initiated by the seminarians in view of helping the landslide affected people of Waynad and Vilangad. The Major Archbishop concluded the discussion with the remark that the quality of our priests depends to a great extent on the quality of formation given to them in the seminaries. He thanked the rectors of the major seminaries and the president of PIORS for their dedicated work.

The Deepika News Paper: Major Archbishop His Beatitude Mar Raphael Thattil invited Fr. Benny Mundanatte, the Managing Director of Rashtra Deepika Ltd., and Fr. George Kudilil, the Chief Editor of Deepika Daily, to present the current status of the company and the future plans envisioned. The Major Archbishop lauded the impeccable credibility of the Deepika which is accepted even by the government officials.

Fr. George Kudilil observed that the Deepika daily fights as a one man army of our community, in the media world. Citing Mahatma Gandhi, he said 'to run a news paper is equal to have an army with us'. The editorials of Deepika are quite influential and eye opening and it is capable of setting the trend of public opinion in Kerala. Fr. Benny Mundanatte assured the Synod that Deepika can become

a powerful global platform, uniting Syro-Malabar Christians while upholding its founder's values and embracing the digital age. He presented a five level plan in view of achieving this goal.

There was a general discussion on the ways and means to improve the quality of Deepika in all the aspects. Several Bishops intervened in the discussions. Concluding the topic, the Major Archbishop thanked both the MD and the Chief Editor.

Report of the Vocation Commission: Mar Lawrence Mukkuzhy, the Chairman of the Commission for Vocation, gave a brief overview of the activities conducted by the Vocation Commission. He expressed gratitude to all the Bishops for their support for the Commission and presented a comparison of statistical data of vocations between the years 2022-2023 and 2023-2024. He welcomed Fr. Thomas Melvettath, the Secretary of the Commission, to present the report.

According to the report presented, in the year 2022-2023, the eparchies had 608 Minor Seminarians, 237 new priests, and 327 new candidates in the Minor Seminary. In 2023-2024, there were 651 Minor Seminarians, 121 new priests, and 343 new candidates in the Minor Seminary.

For the Men Clerical Institute of Consecrated Life, in 2022-2023, there were 921 candidates in formation prior to Novitiate, 139 new priests, and 514 candidates in the first year of formation. In 2023-2024, there were 645 candidates in formation prior to novitiate, 96 new priests, and 329 candidates in the first year of formation.

In the non-clerical institutes of consecrated life, there were 29 candidates in formation prior to novitiate and 31 candidates in the first year of formation in 2022-2023. In the year 2023-2024, there were 14 candidates in Formation prior to novitiate and 31 candidates in the first year of Formation.

Concerning women institutes of consecrated life, in 2022-2023, there were 1421 candidates in formation prior to Novitiate and 1050 candidates in the first year of formation, whereas in 2023-

2024, there were 670 candidates in formation prior to novitiate and 840 candidates in the first year of formation.

In his general observation, Mar Lawrence Mukkuzhy mentioned that there are serious concerns regarding the decrease in vocations for both women and men, and he urged the Synod to take necessary steps to promote more vocations.

Fr. Thomas Melvettath, the Secretary of the Commission, presented the following suggestions of the vocation promoters meeting for the consideration of the Synod:

1. Vocation promoters from religious congregations should be allowed to visit vocation camps organized by the eparchies as far as possible.
2. All eparchies must recognize the ID Card given to the vocation promoters by Vocation Commission when they are visiting parishes to recruit candidates. Some parish priests are not allowing them to recruit candidates, even though they have the ID.
3. All parish priests should encourage the vocation of girls, especially after the SSLC exams. Some are currently discouraging vocations after Std. X.
4. The participation of eparchial Directors of Vocation from the eparchies in Kerala in the Annual Vocation Promoters' meeting seems to be very low. They show little interest in participating in programmes conducted at Mount St. Thomas.
6. Promote Vocation Day every year in the parishes to encourage vocations.
7. Bishops should encourage vocation promotion gatherings at the Major Archiepiscopal level.

The Secretary expressed gratitude to the Bishops for their efforts in promoting the Cherupushpa Mission League (CML) in the eparchies. He also thanked Bishop Mar Lawrence Mukkuzhy, the outgoing Chairman of the Commission for Vocation, as well as Bishop Mar Thomas Tharayil and Bishop Mar Peter Kochupurackal, the members, for their generous support over the years for the improvement of the activities of the Commission.

***Domus* Mar Thoma – *Procura* in Rome:** Bishop Mar Stephen Chirappanath presented the account details of *Domus Mar Thoma*, the Syro-Malabar Procura in Rome. Mar Chirappanath requested the Synod to find out financial sources for the maintenance of the *Procura*. He asked the Bishops to give the pending due of the amount offered for the construction of the *Procura* by the Eparchies.

Discussion on *the Guidelines for the Pastoral Ministry to the Faithful of the Latin and Eastern Catholics Churches sui iuris in India*: Archbishop Mar Andrews Thazhath, introducing the theme, invited Fr. Francis Eluvathingal, the Syro-Malabar Member of the *ad hoc* Committee to study the Guidelines, to present the topic. Bishop Mar Sebastian Vadakel MST, the Syro-Malabar Episcopal Member of the Special Committee also invited the attention of the Synod to finalise the report to be presented in the Special Committee meeting the CBCI.

Presenting the response to the Proposed Draft of the Guidelines prepared by the CCBI, Fr. Francis Eluvathingal observed that a careful and objective study of the draft of the Guidelines raises several questions and concerns on the part of the Eastern Catholic hierarchy and faithful. The Canons of the Code of Canons of the Eastern Churches are frequently referred to in the document. However, most of the canons either do not support the proposed guidelines or contradict them. The spirit of the canon and the mind of the legislator are not properly taken into account. After the presentation several Bishops intervened in the discussions and observed the following: We have to address seriously the extension of the Latin territory to the Syro-Malabar Eparchies with exclusive territory and the pastoral care of the faithful as directed in the letter of the Holy Father. The report prepared by the CCBI reflects the mind setup of the era before the erection of Shamshabad and the letter of the Holy Father granting us the jurisdiction throughout the country. The peaceful exercising of the multiple jurisdictions of Churches *sui iuris* existing in Kerala must be accepted as the norm for practicing the multiple jurisdiction all over India.

After the discussions, it was decided to entrust a Committee consisting of Bishop Mar Sebastian Vadakel MST (Convenor), Bishop Mar Jose Porunnedom, Fr. Francis Eluvathingal (Secretary) and Fr. George Thekkekara, to prepare the Guidelines from the part of the Syro-Malabar Church for the Pastoral Ministry to the Faithful of the Latin and Eastern Catholic Churches *sui iuris* in India, to be presented in the inter-ritual Special Committee of the CBCI. It was pointed out that the Committee has to finish the work soon as the next Standing Committee of CBCI is in two-week time.

The Role of SMYM in the National Level ICYM : A query was raised regarding the understanding between SMYM and ICYM. Archbishop Mar Andrews Thazhath, the CBCI President and member of Synod, informed the Synod that SMYM youth were denied of opportunity to participate in the World Youth Day 2023 under ICYM. We had to approach separately for getting admission in the international World Youth Day celebration. Even though it is accepted theoretically that ICYM is common for all three Churches *sui iuris*, it is not practically implemented. It is dominated by the CCBI. Mar Thazhath informed the Synod that this issue will be discussed in the coming Standing Committee of the CBCI.

Announcement Ceremony of the New Archbishop of Changanacherry and Bishop of Shamshabad: The announcement ceremony of the new Metropolitan Archbishop-elect of Changanacherry and Bishop-elect of Shamshabad started in the auditorium at 3.30 pm. The Synod Fathers moved from the Synod Hall to the auditorium for the ceremony. The appointments were formally announced by the Major Archbishop Mar Raphael Thattil. The appointment letters of Mar Thomas Tharayil and Mar Prince Antony Panengadan were read by Fr. Abraham Kavilpurayidathil, the Major Archiepiscopal Chancellor and Fr. Joseph Mattathil, the Major Archiepiscopal Vice-Chancellor respectively. The Major Archbishop Mar Raphael Thattil handed over the appointment letters to Mar Thomas Tharayil and Mar Prince Antony Panengadan and then garlanded them. Archbishop Mar Joseph Perumthottam, the outgoing Metropolitan of Changanacherry, felicitated the

new Archbishop by presenting a bouquet. Bishop Mar Joseph Kollamparampil, the Administrator of Shamshabad and Bishop Mar Thomas Padiyath, the Auxiliary Bishop, congratulated the new Bishop of Shamshabad by presenting a bouquet. Bishop Mar Joseph Kallarangatt, Member of the Permanent Synod and the Bishop of the Eparchy of Palai felicitated the newly appointed Bishops. Mar Tharayil and Mar Panengadan addressed the gathering thanking everybody. The Bishops attending the Synod and priests and religious of the Curia also felicitated the Archbishop-elect of Changanacherry and Bishop-elect of Shamshabad.

Ongoing Formation of Priests: Bishop Mar George Madathikandathil, the Chairman of the Commission for Clergy, requested the Bishops to send more priests for the forthcoming ongoing formation to be held from 16-25 September, 2024 at Mount St. Thomas, Kakkanad. He presented a list of the participants in the previous five sessions of on-going formation. The Chairman of the Commission noted that eight Eparchies have not yet sent their priests for the ongoing formation programme. He requested the cooperation of all Bishops in sending priests for this formation course. In the short discussion that followed, there was a suggestion that one course per year would be enough instead of holding two sessions in a year. To a query regarding the age of the participants, it was observed that the priests between 5 years and 15 years of ordination could be selected to participate in the course. Bishop Mar Tony Neelankavil, the new Chairman of the Commission, thanked Bishop Mar George Madathikandathil, Archbishop-elect Mar Thomas Tharayil, and Bishop Mar Sebastian Pozholiparambil, the outgoing Chairman and Members of the Commission respectively, for their responsible leadership in leading the Commission for Clergy over the past five years.

Video Presentation on the Jubilee Celebration of the Eparchy Belthangady: A short video was presented in the Synod covering the silver jubilee celebration of the erection of the Eparchy of Belthangady and the episcopal ordination of Bishop Mar Lawrence Mukkuzhy. The Synod congratulated Mar Mukkuzhy

with applause for the remarkable contributions to the Church as a whole, especially to the Eparchy of Belthangady.

Post-Synodal Circular: Archbishop Mar Joseph Pamplany, Chairman of the Commission for Media, read out the draft the post synodal circular. The Synod approved the draft with minor modifications.

Dates for the Forthcoming Sessions of the Synod: Bishop Mar Sebastian Vaniyapurackal, the Curia Bishop, brought to the attention of the Synod the need to decide the dates of the Session of the Synod in 2026. He informed the members that as already decided, the January Session of the Synod in 2025 would start at 6 pm on Monday, 6 January and will end at 6 pm on Saturday, 11 January. The August Session of the Synod is starting at 10 am on Monday, 18 August and will end at 12.30 pm on Friday, 29 August. After a brief discussion on the relevance of starting the Synodal Session in January after the Feast of *Denha*, it was decided to conduct the Sessions of the Synod in 2026 as follows:

2026 January Session:
6 January, Tuesday at 6 pm to 10 January, Saturday at 6 pm.

2026 August Session:
17 August, Monday, at 10 am to 28 August, Friday at 12.30 pm.

Modality of Proposing the Agenda and Discussions in the Synod Hall: Archbishop Mar Joseph Pamplany, the Secretary of the Synod, said that certain parameters are to be observed by the members in proposing the items to the agenda and participating in the discussions. He added that the topics are now presented in the Synod without adequate preparation. As a result, the discussions become shallow. He proposed that one who proposes an item to the agenda should present a brief description on the matter and handover to the Major Archiepiscopal Curia when the proposals are invited. The note on each item will be given to all the members together with the provisional agenda well in advance to come prepared for the discussions. Likewise, there will be a time limit

for the interventions by each member on a topic. In the discussion that followed, the members agreed to the proposals presented by the Secretary. There was an observation that the free and spontaneous exchange of views should not be hindered by the regulations for discussion in the Synod Hall. It was also proposed that the Permanent Synod could decide the time that could be allotted for discussing each item. At the end of the discussions, it was decided to implement the following proposals for a serious preparation and effective presentation of the topics in the Synod:

i. An item to be included in the agenda should be submitted to the Major Archiepiscopal Curia immediately after the Synod is convoked.

ii. Each item in the agenda is to be submitted together with a written synopsis by the member who makes the proposal.

iii. The synopsis on each item is to be sent to all the members together with the provisional agenda well in advance, to come prepared for the discussions.

iv. The possibility for proposing new items to the agenda in the first sitting of a Session is to be reserved only for very serious matters.

v. An intervention by a member on a topic is to be limited to a maximum of three minutes. A warning will be given 30 seconds before the time to conclude the intervention.

Scrutiny of the Decisions: The Synod made a scrutiny of the decisions of Session III of XXXII Synod (2024) and gave its approval.

Conclusion of the Synod: The Major Archbishop sought the consent of the members for concluding the III Session of the XXXII Synod and then he proceeded with his address. In his concluding speech, the Major Archbishop said that the Fifth Major Archiepiscopal Assembly, held during the days of this Session of the Synod, was an exceptional experience for the Church. He thanked Bishop Mar Pauly Kannookadan and Bishop Mar Joseph Kallarangatt and all the collaborators for the excellent conducting of the Assembly. Making a reference to the various elections held during the current

Session of the Synod, His Beatitude said that the true spirit of Synodality and communion was the motivating force in all the choices made in the elections. The Major Archbishop thanked all the Chairmen and members of the Commissions that completed the term, for their dedication and hardwork. His Beatitude thanked the Commission for Liturgy, in a special way, for the hard work they employed, the commitment they expressed in accomplishing such a demanding task of preparing and printing a number of liturgical texts in the past years. He congratulated the new Archbishop of Changanacherry in the person of Bishop Mar Thomas Tharayil and the new Bishop of Shamshabad in the person of Bishop Mar Prince Antony Panengadan.

Inviting the attention of the members of the Synod to the challenging aspects of formation, the Major Archbishop stated different aspects of formation and the challenges are to be seriously evaluated, as already decided. His Beatitude invited Bishop Bosco Puthur, the Apostolic Administrator of Ernakulam-Angamaly, to address the situation of disobedience case by case, with determination and firmness, in the process of implementing the decision of the Synod on the uniform mode of celebration of the holy *Qurbana* in the Archeparchy. He thanked all those who worked hard for the successful completion of this synodal Session and expressed his sincere gratitude to each and every member for the wholehearted cooperation and active participation in the Synod. Entrusting the Synod, the priests, the religious and the lay faithful of the Church to the protection of Holy Mary, the Mother of God, St. Thomas, our Father in faith, all the Saints and Blesseds of our Church, His Beatitude formally declared the III Session of the XXXII Synod of the Bishops of the Syro-Malabar Church closed.

Archbishop Joseph Pamplany
Secretary, Synod of Bishops

Fr. Abraham Kavilpurayidathil
Major Archiepiscopal Chancellor

XXXII SYNOD (2024) SESSION III
19- 31 AUGUST 2024

DECISIONS

1. To direct the Commissions for Public Affairs and Family, Laity and Life to study the viability of bringing *Catholica* Congress part of Public Affairs Commission in consultation with the Episcopal Delegate and the leaders of the *Catholica* Congress and present the report in the coming Session of the Synod.
2. To give a favourable opinion to the Dicastery for Culture and Education for the erection of Alpha Higher Institute for Religious Sciences (AHIRS) and its affiliation to the faculty of theology of *Dharmaram Vidya Kshetram*, Bengaluru.
3. To take a solemn oath of allegiance to the Pope, the Major Archbishop and the Synod by all the participants at the beginning of the Major Archiepiscopal Assembly.
4. To request the Major Archbishop to write a letter to all Bishops asking to get sponsors for at least one square foot of land (Rs. 25000/-) from all possible parishes of all the eparchies for constructing a Syro-Malabar Pilgrim Centre at Mylapore.
5. To authorize the Committee for Translation of *Peshitta* version to distribute draft copies of the texts of the newly prepared *Peshitta* translation of the four gospels to all the Bishops and experts in Sacred Scripture and the Syriac language for thorough scrutiny.
6. To appoint the Vicar of the Lourdes Forane Church, Trivandrum of the Archeparchy of Changanacherry, the Liaison Officer of the Syro-Malabar Church for coordinating the civil administration needs of the Church related to the Government of Kerala, until other provisions are made.
7. To meet the expense of the publication of Syro-Malabar Vision by the collaboration of each Eparchy of the Syro-Malabar

Church every month, taking turns. It was also decided to publish the Syro-Malabar Vision in English language as well in digital format.

8. To request the Major Archbishop to include an exhortation in the post-synodal circular highlighting the importance of family prayer.
9. To request the Major Archbishop to write a letter to the Holy Father for a special audience for the seminarians and priests of our Church studying in Rome.
10. To implement the following action plan in view of finding a lasting solution to the issue related to the Mullaperiyar dam:
    i. To issue a statement after the Major Archiepiscopal Assembly inviting the immediate intervention of the Government on the Mullaperiyar issue to ensure the safety;
    ii. To submit a memorandum to the Chief Ministers of both Kerala and Tamil Nadu as well as to the President, the Prime Minister of India and the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of India, which will be prepared by the Committee of five Bishops;
    iii. To constitute a team of experts to facilitate the advocacy work; and
    iv. To entrust a Committee of five Bishops to coordinate the study on the possible dangers and safety issues related to Mullaperiyar dam and take steps to find a solution to the anxiety of the people, with Bishop Mar Joseph Kallarangatt as Convener and Bishop Mar Jose Pulickal, Bishop Mar Joseph Arumachadath MCBS, Bishop Mar George Madathikandathil, Bishop Mar John Nellikunnel being members.
11. To approve the following steps to be taken in view of realizing an ecclesiastical structure for the Syro-Malabar faithful in the Middle East:
    i. To request Cardinal Claudio Gugerotti, the Perfect of the Dicastery for the Eastern Churches to organize a meeting

of Eastern Church Heads to discuss the issue of pastoral care of the faithful of the Eastern Churches in the Gulf region preferably during the general Synod in Rome;

ii. To send letters with the signatures of all the members of the Synod to the Holy Father with copies to the Dicasteries concerned requesting immediate intervention for the erection of a Syro-Malabar exarchate in the Gulf Region.

12. To entrust an *ad hoc* Committee of Bishops, consisting of Bishop Mar George Rajendran SDB as convenor, Bishop Mar Sebastian Vadakel MST and Bishop Tony Neelankavil being its members, with the assignment to propose to the Synod a plan of celebrations of the Jubilee in 2025 in the current Session itself.
13. To request the Major Archbishop to send a letter reminding the Prefect of the Dicastery for the Oriental Churches to extend the personal jurisdiction of the Archbishop of Kottayam over all the Knanaya faithful in India.
14. To organize an online meeting under the auspices of the Commission for Evangelization and Pastoral Care of the Migrants, in the presence of the Major Archbishop, ensuring the presence of the Syro-Malabar religious congregations working in Africa, together with the Bishops and priests of the Syro-Malabar Church who have worked and currently working in various African Nunciatures and present a report in the coming Session of the Synod.
15. To entrust the Commission for Liturgy to meet the expense of the printing of the draft copy of the new translation of the *Peshitta* version of the four Gospels.
16. To entrust Bishop Mar Stephen Chirappanath, the Procurator of the Major Archbishop in Rome, to discuss with the Prefect of the Dicastery for the Eastern Churches by way of solving the tension existing in South Africa regarding the pastoral care of the migrant Syro-Malabar faithful.
17. To entrust the Commission for Liturgy and Liturgical Research Centre to make liturgical principles of translation of liturgical texts in our Church from the study report and from the inputs

given by the Bishops and present it in the forthcoming Session of the Synod for approval

18. To increase the allowance of the Sisters and the salary of the auxiliary staff who render their service at the Major Archiepiscopal Curia.
19. To entrust Bishop Mar Pauly Kannookadan to present a studied proposal for augmenting the income of the Major Archiepiscopal Curia in the current Session of the Synod.
20. To give the following directives to Bishop Mar Bosco Puthur to be implemented in the Archeparchy immediately:
    1. It must be made clear unambiguously that there is no question of going back from the decision on the implementation of the uniform mode of celebration of the Holy *Qurbana* in the Archeparchy of Ernakulam-Angamaly.
    2. The Holy *Qurbana* in the uniform mode must be celebrated in all the parishes as one of the scheduled *Qurbanas* on Sundays and other days of obligation.
    3. As prescribed in no. 3 of the Post-Synodal Notification published on 21 June 2024, (Ref. N. 5/2024), canonical actions must be initiated (starting with show-cause notice) against the priests who do not follow the above instruction.
    4. The forane vicars are to be called by the Apostolic Administrator for dialogue to facilitate the implementation of the uniform mode of celebration of Holy *Qurbana* at least one scheduled mass in every Sunday and on other days of obligation.
    5. As the Post-Synodal notification, no. 7, clearly states, the Bishops and priests visiting the parishes of the Archeparchy can celebrate Holy *Qurbana* in the uniform mode, steps must be taken to ensure the implementation of this decision.
    6. The priests who stood with the decision of the Synod, celebrating the Holy *Qurbana* in the uniform mode, must be properly heard and consulted.

7. Proper catechesis in view of implementing the uniform mode of celebration of the Holy *Qurbana* must be done sincerely by the priests. The use of Bema must be made mandatory in the celebration of the Holy *Qurbana*.
8. As the ordination of deacons is an emotional issue in the Archeparchy, it must be handled with utmost prudence. In this regard:
    i. The deacons must be examined by the Apostolic Administrator to know their mind in obeying the synodal decision on the implementation of the uniform mode of celebration of the Holy *Qurbana*.
    ii. A written affidavit must be obtained from the deacons expressing their allegiance to the Synodal decision on the uniform mode of celebration of the Holy *Qurbana*.
    iii. It is up to the Local Hierarch to provide the environment for the newly ordained priests to celebrate the Holy *Qurbana* in the uniform mode.
    iv. The deacons may be ordained together at the Cathedral Basilica or other churches of importance, concelebrating the uniform mode of Holy *Qurbana* with the ordaining Local Hierarch.

21. To print the Holy *Qurbana Taksa* in the standard format of the Lectionaries, starting with the *Taksa* in English.
22. To approve the Study Report of CLC on 'Liturgy, Sacraments, Sacramentals, Ministers' Duties & Responsibilities' and entrusted the Commission for Liturgy to publish the guidelines explaining the duties of *Msamsana*, *Heupadiakona*, and *Karoya*.
23. To give permission to the Commission for Liturgy to reprint the *Taksa* of Sacraments incorporating the prayers from the revised *Taksa* of Holy *Qurbana*.
24. To give permission to the Commission for Liturgy to print the Syriac Text adding the second and third *Anaphorae* reflecting the suggestions made by the Synod.
25. To give permission to the Commission for Liturgy to publish the English translation of the Syriac source text of the Liturgy

of the Hours prepared by Fr. Emmanuel Thelliyil CMI and others.

26. To instruct every eparchy not to print any liturgical text published by the Commission for Liturgy, that possesses the exclusive copy right of its publications.
27. To give direction to get prior written consent of the Commission for Liturgy, even for printing the text for the use of the faithful on specific events like ordination, consecration churches, and consecration of Bishops, etc.
28. To convene online, an informal meeting of the Bishops to discuss the action plan of the Major Archiepiscopal Assembly, once the text is fine-tunedby incorporating the suggestions of the Synod and sent to the Bishops by the Drafting Committee.
29. To entrust a Committee consisting of Bishop Mar Sebastian Vadakel MST (Convener), Bishop Mar Jose Porunnedom, Fr. Francis Eluvathingal (Secretary) and Fr. George Thekkekara, to prepare the Guidelines from the part of the Syro-Malabar Church for the Pastoral Ministry to the Faithful of the Latin and Eastern Catholic Churches *sui iuris* in India, to be presented in the inter-ritual Special Committee of the CBCI.
30. To give permission to the Commission for Liturgy to publish a new text of *Ramsa* in a special format with reduced number of pages compared to the text of *Ramsa* already published by the Commission for Liturgy.
31. To approve the proposal presented by the Commission for Finance for increasing the annual contribution to the Major Archiepiscopal Curia from the Eparchies on the basis of their financial capacity and to revise the same only after five years.
32. To conduct the Sessions of the Synod in 2026 as follows: January Session: from 6 January, Tuesday at 6 pm to 10 January, Saturday at 6 pm; August Session: from 17 August, Monday, at 10 am to 28 August, Friday at 12.30 pm.
33. To implement the following for a serious preparation and effective presentation of the topics in the Synod:

i. An item to be included in the agenda should be submitted to the Major Archiepiscopal Curia immediately after the convocation of the Synod.

ii. Each item in the agenda is to be submitted together with a written synopsis by the member who makes the proposal.

iii. The synopsis on each item is to be sent to all the members together with the provisional agenda well in advance, to come prepared for the discussions.

iv. The possibility for proposing new items to the agenda in the first sitting of a Session is to be reserved only for very serious matters.

v. An intervention by a member on a topic is to be limited to a maximum three minutes. A warning will be given 30 seconds before the time to conclude the intervention

Archbishop Joseph Pamplany
Secretary, Synod of Bishops

Fr. Abraham Kavilpurayidathil
Major Archiepiscopal Chancellor

XXXII SYNOD (2024) SESSION III
19-31 AUGUST 2024

CONCLUDING ADDRESS OF THE MAJOR ARCHBISHOP

My dear Brother Archbishops and Bishops,

It's time to conclude the Session of the Synod. We came here on Monday, 19 August and started with prayer, recollection and the celebration of the Holy *Qurbana*. We also had the opportunity to receive the sacrament of reconciliation. Our daily celebration of the Holy *Qurbana*, the Liturgy of the Hours, rosary and personal prayers were part of our coming together as a Synod in Session. We lived our brotherhood in Christ, we shared the burdens each other, and we comforted and reassured each other in our episcopal ministry. We held extensive deliberations on various topics, all equally important in our walking together to the future as messengers of hope in our times. Thus we celebrated the Holy Synod in these days at this Major Archiepiscopal Curia.

The Fifth Major Archiepiscopal Assembly, held during the days of this Session of the Synod, was an exceptional experience of our coming together as one extended family to think and plan about the future of our Church. As we have already evaluated, the Assembly was well organized in all its aspects under the experienced leadership of Bishop Mar Pauly Kannookadan with his team of Bishops, priests and other collaborators. We should particularly acknowledge the Eparchy of Palai and Bishop Mar Joseph Kallarangatt for their excellent interconnectedness and effectiveness in managing every detail of the Assembly, especially their generosity in covering all costs for the Assembly. As we have already planned, we will come together without much delay to reflect together on the statement of the Assembly to see how they could be converted to concrete decisions and implemented effectively and timely in various levels in the Church.

During this Session we conducted elections to various Offices. I am sure that the true spirit of Synodality and our communion was the motivating force in all the choices we made. Many Commissions and Committees were reconstituted. I thank all the Chairmen and members of the Commissions that completed the term, for their dedication and handwork with which they could plan and execute fruitful activities to reinvigorate our Church. I congratulate all the newly elected and appointed office bearers. I wish them all the best for all their future plans and undertakings for the good of our Church. I think you will agree with me if I dare to say a few words to appreciate the Commission for Liturgy, in a special manner. The hard work they put in, the precision they employed, the commitment they lived in accomplishing such a demanding task of preparing and printing a number of liturgical texts in the past years. Bishop Mar Thomas Elavanal MCBS now exchanges the baton to the new Chairman, with the satisfaction of having run his lap with dedication, sincerity and love for the Church. Thank you Bishop Elavanal!

We have elected the new Archbishop of Changanacherry in the person of Bishop Mar Thomas Tharayil and the new Bishop of Shamshabad in the person of Bishop Mar Prince Antony Panengadan. We thank the Lord, who in His Providence never fails to give suitable leaders for His people. We wish Bishop Mar Thomas Tharayil and Bishop Mar Prince Antony Panengadan the abundant blessings of the Lord to be the Shepherds according to the meek and humble heart of Jesus, the Good Shepherd. I would like to place on record the leadership Archbishop Perumthottam gave to the Archeparchy of Changanacherry. I am sure that we will have other occasions to acknowledge his invaluable services to the Church and to the community.

Our deliberations on seminary formation this time have been very productive. We heard the rectors, sharing their hopes and anxieties in leading the centres of priestly formation in our Church. Their observations are the keys to unlock the practical issues connected with the priestly formation in our changed times. The

formative process should take into consideration the dangers and temptations our seminarians are exposed to, while they are least prepared to face them, fortified with the Word of God and nourished by the sacraments. The inference that evolves by reading the concerns of the rectors and the study report presented by PAROC Research Centre should be an eye opener for all of us. We do face challenges with regard to the quality of teachers in the seminary. The formators sometimes fail to live up to the dignity and uniqueness of their role in the seminaries. The teachers fail to captivate students with their academic expertise and intellectual pursuit. These different aspects of formation and the challenges are to be seriously evaluated, as we have already decided.

The implementation of the uniform mode of the celebration of the Holy *Qurbana* still remains an issue to be settled. But we could go forward from a point of uncertainty and fear of a division. The mind of the Synod is that the Apostolic Administrator addresses the situation of disobedience case by case, but with determination and firmness. As a Synod, we have to strengthen the Apostolic Administrator and all the efforts to implement the uniform mode in the Archeparchy. At the same time, we have to use every means to reiterate the decision of the Synod that the uniform mode of celebration of the Holy *Qurbana* is to be ultimately implemented in the Archeparchy of Ernakulam-Angamaly. We shall overcome this critical phase of the history of our Church, marked with its unforeseen events and situations. The need for unity in our Church is necessitated more than ever, being aware of the challenges we face in all walks of life as a Church and a community.

It is my duty to thank all those who worked hard for the successful completion of this synodal Session. My sincere thanks go to Archbishop Joseph Pamplany, the Secretary of the Synod for the comprehensive preparation of the minutes, Bishop Sebastian Vaniyapurackal, the Curia Bishop, Fr. Abraham Kavilpurayidathil, the Chancellor and Fr. Joseph Mattathil, the Vice Chancellor, and all others for the arrangements for the smooth conducting of this Session of the Synod. I thank Bishop Mar Jose Porunnedom and

Bishop Mar Jose Arumachadath MCBS for moderating the sittings of this Session. I appreciate and thank dedicated service of Fr. Joseph Tholanickal, the finance officer, the priests, the sisters and all other staff of the Curia, in one way or other, for having assisted the Synod and the Synod Fathers.

I express my sincere gratitude to each and every member of the Synod for the wholehearted cooperation and active participation in the Synod. Entrusting our Synod, the priests, the religious and the lay faithful of our Church to the protection of Holy Mary, our Mother, St. Thomas, our Father in faith, all the Saints and Blesseds of our Church, I formally declare the Third Session of the XXXII Synod of the Bishops of the Syro-Malabar Church closed.

Mar Raphael Thattil
Major Archbishop of the Syro-Malabar Church

PASTORAL LETTERS
CIRCULARS

Prot. No. 0205/2024

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\½psS k`b ¡p sszhw \elnbncn ¡pó A\p{Kl § Ä \nch[n bmW. 35cq]Xlfnepw bqtdm¸nse A¸ktXmenlhnkntäj \nepw aäp Akw LSnX kaql § fnepambn A³]Xpe £ ¯ne[nlwhcpó hnizmknlÄ \ap ¡pï. sshZnl kaÀ¸nX sszhhnfnlfmð k¼ óamWp \½psS k`. \½psS cq]Xlfnepw kwhn[m\§ fnepw am{Xañ aäp k`lfnepw temlwapgph\nepw ip{iqjsN¿pó ssh Znlcpw kaÀ¸nXcpw \½psS A`nam\amW. am\pjnlamb t]mcm

baIfpw kz`mhcoXnIfpw ]utcmInXy¯nsâbpw kaÀ¸nXPohn X¯nsâbpwtim` \ãs¸Sp¯msX ^e{]Zamb ip{iqjsN¿m³ sshZnIcpw kaÀ¸nXcpw IqSpXð BßobambImgN¸mS DÅ hcmIWsaópk`B{KIn¡póp.]¯pe£t¯mfwhcpóIpSpw _§fmWp\½psSk`bpsSiàn.{]mÀY\bnepwkt\I¯nepw]ckc_Ipam\¯nepw cq]s¸SpIbpw hfcpIbpw sN¿pó IpSpw_§Ä¡pam{Xta ImeL«wDbÀ¯pó inYneoIcWs¯ t\cnSm³ km[n¡pIbpÅq.

\½psSbphP\§fpwIpªp§fpwAhcpsShniznkPohnXhpw ssZhw\ap¡p\elns¡mïncn¡pó A\p{KI§fmW.bphP\ §fpsSIqsS\S¡m\pwPohnXkmlNcy§fnð AhÀt\cnSpó shñphnfnIsf A`napJoIcn¡m³ Ahsci àcm¡m\pw\ap¡p IgnbïXpï.bphP\§fpsSbpwIpªp§fpsSbpwhnizmk ]cnioe\wk`apgphsâbpwD¯chmZnXzambnIW¡m¡Ww. Cutimsb\mY\pwc£I\pambnkz´wPohnX¯nðkzoIcn ¡m\pwAXpaäpÅhÀ¡pap³]nðkm£ys¸Sp¯m\pw\½psS bphP\§fpwIpªp§fpwt_m[yapÅhcmIWw.hnizmk] cnioe\wCue£ywt\SpóXn\p]cym]XamtIïnbncn¡póp.

kmÀh{XnIk`bpsSt{]jnXkz`mhwAXnsâFñmXe§fnepw kzmwioIcn¡m³ kotdmae_mÀk`sbssZhw[mcmfambnA\p {KIn¨n«pï.\½psSanj³cq]XIfnepwanj³{]tZi§fnepw ip{iqjsN¿póhsc{]mÀY\bnð{]tXyIwHmÀ¡Ww.`mcX ¯nse]eAhnIknXtaJeIfnepwhnZym`ymkØm]\§fneq sSbpwBXpcip{iqjIfneqsSbpwkmaqly{]hÀ¯\§fneqsSbpw kt\Ihpw ImcpWyhpw]IÀópsImSp¯psImïpkmaqlytk h\¯nteÀs¸«ncn¡póhÀs¡XntcASnØm\cInXamb Btcm]W§ÄDóbn¨psImïptIkpIsfSp¡m\pwtkh\taJeI fnð\nópAhsc]pd¯m¡m\pwPt\m]Imc{]hÀ¯\§sfXS ks¸Sp¯m\pw\S¯pókwLSnX{ia§Ä\½psS{i²bnepï. C{]Imcwkphntij¯n\pthïn]oUn¸n¡s¸Spóhsctbmb¯p k`apgph\pw{]mÀYn¡Ww.AhcpsS{]hÀ¯\§Ä¡pkm[y amb Fñm]n´pWbpw\etIïXp\½psSHmtcmcp¯cpsSbpw ISabmsWóXpad¡mXncn¡mw.

\½psSkaqlwasämcpIpSntbäm\p`h¯neqsSISópt]mbs¡m ïncn¡póp.DóXhnZym`ymk¯n\pwanI¨tPmenkm[yXb¡pw

DbÀó PohnX\nehmc ¯n\pwth ïn\½psS bphP\ § fpw IpSpw _ § fpw hntZicmPy§ fnte¡p IpSntbdns¡m ïncn¡pIbmW. hntZicmPy§ fnepÅ kotdmae_mÀ cq]XIfpw \m«nse cq]X IfpambntbmPn¨pÅ {]hÀ¯\ ¯neqsS C¯cw IpSpw_ § sfbpw hyànIsfbpw A\pKan¡m\pw Bhiyamb kImb§Ä sNbXpsImSp¡m\pw km[n¡Ww. Nne kmlNcy§ fnse¦nepw hmKZm\wsN¿s¸Spó tImgkpItfmtPmentbm i¼ftame`n¡msX {]hmknIÄ hônXcmIpó kw`h§Ä DSseSp¡pópï.]{´ïmw ¢mkp Ign ª bpS³ hntZit¯¡pt]mIm\pÅ {]hWXbpw IpSpw_ §Ä henb IS_m[yX FSp¯phnpa¡sf hntZit¯¡ Ab¡pó kmlNcyhpw hnile\ hnt[bam¡Wsaóp Rm\m {KlnpópDóX]T\¯n\pw AXn\\pkrXamb tPmen¡papÅ kz´w \m«nse km[yXIÄ{]tbmP\s¸Sp¯m\pw km[n¡Ww.

kotdmae_mÀk`bpsS apónð N{Ihmft¯mfw hnimeamb km[yXIfmWp ssZhw XpdópXcpóX. k`bpsS Gähpw henb aqe[\wIq«mbabpwhnizmkhpamsWó kXyw\mwhnkacn¡cpX. GsXmcphyànk`bpsSbpwhfÀ¨bnð k`m]mc¼cy§ tfmSpÅ hnizkXXbpw (resourcement) kalmenIXtbmSpÅ Xpdhnbpw (aggiornamento) Hcpt]mse{][m\amsWó hn.tPm¬ Ccp]¯n aqóma³ amÀ]m¸bpsS ZÀi\w \ap¡p hgnIm«Ww.]mc¼cyhm Zhpw]ptcmKa\Nn´bpw]ck]c]qcI§ fmIbmð Ahsb`nó XbpsS ImcW§ fmbn \mamcpw ImWcpX hyXykX Nn´mKXn IfpÅhÀ tNcnXncn ª p kmaqlnIam[ya§ fneqsS ]ck]cw A[nt£]n¡pt¼mÄ apdnthe¡póXp \½psS IÀ¯mhnsâ icocamb Xncpk`b¡msWó kXyw \ap¡pad¡mXncn¡mw.

hnip² IpÀ_m\bpsS GIoIrXcq]w\S¸nem¡póXpambn _Ô s¸« FdWmIpfwþA¦amen AXncq]Xbnð \ne\ne¡pó{]Xnk ÔnIsf¡pdn¨p \n§Ä¡dnbmatñm. Xncpk`mK{X¯nse Cu apdnhpW¡m³ \aps¡ñmhÀ¡pw Hcpan¨p{]mÀYn¡pIbpw ]cn {ian¡pIbpwsN¿mw.Cuhnjb¯n\p]cnImcwImWm³ s]m´n ^n¡ð sUetKämb BÀ¨p_njkndnð hmknð ]nXmhn s\bpw A¸ktXmenI AUan\nkt{SäÀ _njamÀt_mktIm ]p¯qÀ ]nXmhns\bpamW ]cnip² knwlmk\w NpaXes¸Sp ¯nbncn¡póX. k`bnð sFIyw kwPmXam¡m³ AhÀ\S¯pó]cn{ia§ tfmSp Fñmhcpw B ßmÀYambn k I lcn¡Ww. \½psS

IpÀ_m\{Ia¯nsâ kn\Up Xocpam\n¨ GIoIrXcq]w \S¸nem ¡póXpambn _Ôs¸«p]cnip²]nXmh {^m³ knk amÀ]m¸ BhÀ¯n¨p \eInb DZt_m[\ ¯nð\nóp]ntóm«pt]mIm³ BÀ¡pw km[n¡nñ. It¯men¡m Iq«mbabnð \½Ä \ne\ne ¡póXp]cnip²]nXmhnt\mSp]qÀWamb hnt[bXzw]peÀ¯n s¡mïmhWw.

{]nbs¸«htc, kotdmae_mÀk`sb \bn¡pI Fó ZuXyw ssZhw Fsó `ctae]n¡pt¼mÄ \n§fpsS{]mÀY\bnepw hniznk ¯nepw kt\I ¯nepamWp Rm³ {]Xymihb ¡póX.{]Xnk ÔnIfpsS \SphneqsS ISópt]mIpt¼mgpw, "AhnSóp Xsâ ImcpWyw Hcn ¡epw \½nð\nóp]n³hen¡pónñ. hn]¯pIÄsIm ïp \ap¡p in£Ww \eIpsa¦nepw AhnSóp kzP\s¯ ssIhnSpónñ' (2 a¡ 6:16) Fó Bgamb hniznkw \ap¡pïmhWw. "\n§Ä Fsó sXcs ª Sp¡pIbñ, Rm³ \n§sfsXcs ª Sp¡bmWp sNbXX' (tbml 15:16) Fó CutimbpsS hN\w \ap¡p _ew]IcpóP. "\n§sf hnfn¡póh³ hnizkX\mW' (1 sXk 5:24) Fó hn.]utemknsâ Bgamb t_m[yhpw \ap¡pIcpt¯Is«. kmÀh{XnI k`bpsS Iq«mbabnð, ]cnip² ]nXmhnt\mSpÅ hnt[bXz¯nð,]uckXyhy ànk`IfnsemómbkotdmaeamÀ k`bpsS a¡fmb \ap¡ Cu ImeL«w Bhiys¸Spó hnizm kkm£yw \eIm³ kt\I ¯nepw sFIy¯nepw hym]cn¡mw. \n§sfñmhscbpw\½psSA½bmb]cnip² I\yImadnb ¯nsâ hnaeIrZb¯n\pw \½psS]nXmhmb amÀtXmamÇoImbpsS am[y kYy¯n\pw kaÀ¸n¡póp. \½psS IÀ¯mhotimanInImbpsS Ir]bpw]nXmhmb ssZh¯nsâ kt\Ihpw]cnip²mßmhnsâ klhmkhpw \n§tfmSpIqsS Dïmbncn¡s«!

Im¡\mSauïskâtXmaknepÅ kotdmae_mÀtaPÀ BÀ¡n F¸nktIm¸ð Imcymeb¯nð\nóp 2024bmw Bïs^{_phcn amkw 22bmw XobXn \eIs¸«X.

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kotdmae_mÀk`bpsS taPÀ BÀ¨p_nj¸

Prot No. 0205/2024

FIRST PASTORAL LETTER OF THE MAJOR ARCHBISHOP

Mar Raphael Thattil, the Major Archbishop
of the Syro-Malabar Church, to the Archbishops,
Bishops, Priests, Consecrated Men and Women
and Lay Persons of the Syro-Malabar Church.

May the Grace of the Lord be with you all!

Dearly beloved brothers and sisters in Jesus Christ,

I am addressing you for the first time through this pastoral letter after assuming the Office of the Major Archbishop of the Syro-Malabar Church. The First Session of the XXXII Synod of Bishops, held at the Major Archiepiscopal Curia of the Syro-Malabar Church, Mount St. Thomas Kakkanad from 8 to 10, January 2024, elected me the Major Archbishop and His Holiness Pope Francis confirmed the election. I was enthroned as the Major Archbishop on 11 January. I take this occasion to express my gratitude to the whole Church, for having prayed for the election of the new Major Archbishop. I also express my deep appreciation and gratitude to Mar Sebastian Vaniyapurackal, the Curia Bishop, who being the Administrator of the Church convoked the Synod and executed everything regarding the election and enthronement in a very meticulous and grace filled manner.

The history of the Syro-Malabar Church is a miraculous story of Divine interventions. This community which was born from the missionary work of St. Thomas, the Apostle, had to pass through several harrowing instances of suffering and complicated situations down through the centuries. This community, which overcame the temptations to be separated from the Catholic communion, continued relentlessly its efforts to form and solidify its self identity.

Even though the Syro-Malabar Hierarchy was established in 1923, all the canonical structures were developed only in 1992 when the Syro-Malabar Church was elevated to the Major Archiepiscopal Status. We should thank the Providence which guided our Church in the last two thousand years. On this occasion, I do remember in a special way the devoted service of His Beatitude Cardinal Mar Antony Padiyara, the first Major Archbishop, His Grace Mar Abraham Kattumana, the Pontifical Delegate, and His Beatitude Cardinal Mar Varkey Vithayathil, the second Major Archbishop of our Church.

The services of His Beatitude Cardinal Mar George Alencherry, the third Major Archbishop of our Church, are unparalleled and unique. His life is marked with simplicity, pure love for the Church, unwavering commitment to the Gospel and tireless work. His foresight enabled the Syro-Malabar Church to get all-India jurisdiction and to get eparchies established in Melbourne, Mississauga, Great Britain, and the Apostolic Visitation in Europe, giving our Church a global dimension. It was his determination and able leadership that made possible the uniform mode of celebration of the Holy *Qurbana* and the revision of the Liturgy of the Hours, at a time when the efforts for the liturgical reform were always complicated in our Church. We offer our gratitude to His Beatitude for his selfless commitment for the good of the Church.

His Holiness Pope Francis, in his letter confirming my election, asked me to care for the poor and the marginalized. Jesus identified himself with those who were deprived of food, water, clothing, shelter, land of their own, and freedom (Mt. 25:35-36). We must take every effort to live Pope Francis' vision, "the Church of the poor". Extravagance, luxury and ostentatious display are sins against the Gospels. The dream of simplicity that Jesus had about His Church should be reflected in all areas of the Church activities. The simplicity of the Gospels should be the guiding light of all our celebrations connected with parish feasts, marriages, ordinations and our constructions. Any institution that is not accessible to the poor has no right to be known as an institution of the Church.

We have to be consciously aware of the discrimination that is being experienced by the Christians in Kerala and in India as a whole.

We have to preserve and protect all the constitutional provisions that guarantee the growth and development of our community as a minority group. Farmers, unorganized labourers and small-scale traders are all neglected in all sectors. As the government is failing to protect the lives of the people in the hilly areas of Kerala, many lives and their hard-earned work are lost on account of the attacks of wild animals. In all these cases, organized movements in a democratic way are becoming essential.

We should never forget that Christians are always the spokespersons of religious harmony. We believe that the redemption that was brought about by Jesus is for all. Hence there is no place for racism or separatism in Christian life. We have to work with great care not to lose the harmony and fraternal relationship with different religions.

The blessings that our Church has received from God are manifold. There are more than 50 lakhs of faithful in 35 Eparchies, Apostolic Visitation in Europe and in other unorganized communities. Also, the Church is blessed with many vocations to priesthood and to consecrated life. We are proud of our priests and consecrated persons who serve not only in our eparchies and institutions but also in other Churches and around the world. The Church wants her priests and religious to inculcate a more spiritual perspective in order to render their service more effectively and not losing the brightness of priesthood and consecrated life by the human shortcomings and proper character traits. The ten lakhs families of our Church are our strength. Only those families that grow in love and mutual respect can confront and survive the disintegration of this age.

The faith life of our youth and children is the blessing of the Lord to our Church. We have to walk with the youth and strengthen them to confront the challenges they face in life. The faith formation of the youth and children should be considered the responsibility of the whole Church. Our youth and children must grow in their conviction to accept Jesus as Lord and Saviour in their own lives and to profess it before others. The faith formation should be focused on this goal.

God has blessed the Syro-Malabar Church abundantly to imbibe the missionary character of the Universal Church in all its dimensions. We have to remember in our prayers all our missionaries who work in our mission eparchies and the other mission areas. We know that there are organized attempts to drive out our missionaries by levelling baseless allegations and filing court cases against them who work in many undeveloped areas in India by establishing schools, orphanages and clinics in such areas, providing compassionate care and selfless love. The whole Church has to pray for these missionaries who are being persecuted for the sake of Gospel. Let us not forget that it is the duty of each one of us to give all possible support to their activities in the mission areas.

The Church in India is facing another phase of migration. The youths and young families are immigrating to foreign lands for higher education, better job opportunities and higher standard of life. The eparchies in India should join with the eparchies abroad to accompany the individuals and families who migrate and to give assistance to them. There are instances when the expatriates are deceived concerning the type of education or jobs offered to them before leaving India. I would urge all concerned to examine the cases of the young who leave their mother country immediately after the Plus Two and the tendency of placing a heavy debt burden on the families in order to send the children to abroad. We should explore the possibility for the opportunities for higher education and jobs in India itself.

God is opening new horizons before the Syro-Malabar Church. We should never forget that the great asset of the Church is its faith and communion. We should be guided by the vision of St. Pope John XXIII that in the growth and development of every individual Church, the faithfulness to the traditions (resourcement) as well as the openness to renewal (aggiornamento) are of prime importance. Traditionalism and liberalism are complementary in nature and therefore we should not approach them as causes of division. We should remember that it is the Church, the Mystical Body of Christ, that becomes wounded when such wrong-headed people throw out accusations against one another through social media.

I am sure that you are aware of the crisis existing in the Archeparchy of Ernakulam-Angamaly regarding the implementation of the uniform mode of the celebration of the Holy *Qurbana*. Let us pray fervently and work together to heal this wound in our Church. The Apostolic See has entrusted Archbishop Cyril Vasil' SJ, the Pontifical Delegate and Bishop Mar Bosco Puthur, the Apostolic Administrator, to find a solution to this problem. All are requested to cooperate with them in their effort to sustain unity in our Church. Nobody can step backward from the repeated exhortations given by the Holy Father to implement the decision of the Synod on the uniform mode of celebration. We have to remain in the communion of the Catholic Church by living total docility to the Holy Father.

Dearly beloved, I place my trust in your prayers, faith and love as the Lord entrusts me with the responsibility of shepherding the Syro-Malabar Church. Even when we pass through adversities, we should have the deep faith that "He never withdraws His mercy from us. Although he disciplines us with calamities, He does not forsake His own people" (2 Macc. 6:16). The words of Jesus "you did not choose me, but I chose you" (Jn. 15: 16) strengthens us. May the deep conviction of St. Paul expressed through his words: "the one who calls you is faithful" (1 Thess. 5:24) make us bold! As the children of the Syro-Malabar Church, which is one among the Eastern Churches *sui iuris*, let us remain in love and unity to give the witness which our time demands from us in communion with the Universal Church and in docility to the Holy Father. I commend all of you to the Immaculate Heart of Mary and the intercession of St. Thomas the Apostle, our Father in Faith. May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship 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 February 22, 2024.

Mar Raphael Thattil

Major Archbishop of the Syro-Malabar Church

Prot. No. 0642/2024

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ദുക്റാനതിരുനാൾ – സഭാദിനം 2024

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Ge]n¡s¸«cn¡pó Fñm ssZhP\¯n\pw FgpXpóX.
IÀ¯mhnsâ Ir]\n§sfñmhtcmSpwIqsS D ï mbncn¡s«!

Cutimanin lmbnð {]nb ktlmZcokt lmZcòmtc,

\½psS]nXmhmb amÀtXmamÇolmbpsS cà km£nXz¯nsâ HmÀa \nd ª p \ne¡pó ZpIdm\Xncp\mfnt\mS\p_ Ôn¨p \n§sfñm hscbpw Cu CSbteJ\¯neqsS A`nkwt_m[\sN¿m³ F\n¡ AXnbmb kt´mjapï.hÀj§fmbn \½Ä Cu Znhkw kotdm ae_mÀk`mZn\amb n BNcn¨phcnIbmW. D°nX\mb \½psS IÀ¯mhnsâ Xncphnemhnse apdnhnsâ ZÀi\¯nð \nóp amÀ tXmamÇolm \S¯nb ""Fsâ IÀ¯mth Fsâ ssZhta' Fó hnizmk{]Jym]\w A¸ktXmesâ kphntij{]tLmjWambn amdnbXneqsS cq]wslmï XmW \½psS k`.ZpIdm\¯ncp\mÄZn hkwhnizmk¯nð \½psS ]nXmhmb tXmamÇolmsb A\pka cn¡pIam{Xañ, A¸ktXmesâ NpSp\nW¯nð IrZbwslmïp sXm« Cutimbnepå \½psS hnizmkw Gäp]dª Ac¡n«pd ¸n¡pó sshlmcnlamb hnizmkm\p`h§fpsS Znhkw IqSnbm WX. tXmamÇolmbneqsS kphntij¯nsâ shfn¨hpw kt´m jhpwss[cyhpw \ap¡p\eInb sszh]cn]me\b¡ Cu Xncp\ mÄ Znhkw \ap¡p{]tXyIw \µn]dbmw.

kotdmae_mÀk`bpsS \memas¯ taPÀ BÀ¨p_nj¸mbnD¯c hmZnXztasäSp¯Xn\ptijw Fsâ ap³KmanIÄ sNbXXpt]mse kmÀh{XnIk`bpsS Xeh\mb]cnip² amÀ]m¸tbmS BZchpw

hnt[bXzhpw{]ISn¸n¡m³ 2024 sab amkw Rm³ tdmanð t]mbn cpóp.s]Àa\â kn\U AwK§tfmSpw k`bpsS Iqcnbm_nj¸n t\mSpw tdmanse s{]mIyptdädnt\mSpw IqsS sab 13þmw XobXnbmW {^m³ kok amÀ]m¸sb kµÀin¨X. henb kt´mjt¯mSpw kt\It¯mSpw IqsS R§sf kzoIcn¨ ]cnipw ]nXmh R§sf I ït¸mgpw XpSÀóp tdmanse kotdmae_mÀk`mwK§fpsS{]Xn \n[nIsf A`nkwt_m[\sNbXp\S¯nb{]kwK¯nepw kotdm ae_mÀk`sb ¡pdn¨p]dª \ñ Imcy§Ä \ap¡pÅ AwKo Imchpwt{]mÕmI\hpambncpóp.\½psS k`tbmSpÅ]cnipw]nXmhnsâ IcpXen\pw hmÕey¯n\pw \µn]dbpótXmsSm¸w]cnipw]nXmhnsâ BtcmKy¯n\pth ïnbpw Fñm\ntbmK§Ä ¡pth ïnbpw{]mÀYn¡m\pw FñmhtcmSpw B Izm\w sN¿póp.

{]nbs¸«htc,]cnipw]nXmh {^m³ knk amÀ]m¸ h¯n¡m³]mekmse I¬ knÌdn Imfnð sab 13þmw XobXn \S¯nb{]kw K¯nse Nne Imcy§Ä Zp Idm\mXncp\mfnsâ bpw k`mZn\mtLm j§fpsSbpw]Ým¯e¯nð hnNn´\hnj bam¡m³ Rm³ B{K In¡póp.

HómaXmbn, \½psS k`bpsS A¸ktXmenI]mc¼cys¯ ¡pdn¨p \mw Aht_m[apÅ hcpw AXnð A`nam\n¡póhcpam IWw. amÀ]m¸C{]Imcw]dª p:""`mcX¯nsâ A¸ktXme\mb amÀtXmam Çoln bpsSc à km£nXzkm£y¯nð thcqónbncn¡póXn\mð AXn]pcmX\amWp\n§fpsS hnizmk¯nsâ DÛhw. \n§sfñm hcpw At±l¯nsâ A¸ktXmenI{]t_m[\§fpsS kq£n¸p Imcpw AhImInIfpamW''. \½psS k`bpsS ZoÀLhpwZpj Ichp amb Ncn{X¯nð t\cntSïnhó Fñm{]XnIqe kmlNcy§ fnepw]t{Xmknsâ]n³KmantbmSp \½Ä Fópw ANôeamb Iqdp]peÀ¯nbn«pï Fóp{^m³ knk amÀ]m¸]dª Xp It¯men¡mk`bpsS Iq«mbabnð Fópw \ne\nó \½psS XymK]qÀW amb hnizkXXb¡pÅ AwKoImcambn IW¡m¡mw.

\½psS]qÀh]nXm¡òmÀ ISóptmb Fñm klI\§fnepw k`m kwhn[m\§tfmSp tNÀóp\nó A\pkcn¨XpsImïmW ]uck Xyk`IfpsSbnSbnð kotdmae_mÀk`Có F®¯nepw hnizmk Xoj WXbnepwt{]jnX{]hÀ¯\¯nepw{]iwkn¡s¸Spóhn[¯nð hfÀ¨{]m]n¨X. Ass\IyhpwA\pkcWt¡Spw hnX¨ henb hn]¯pIsftc«hcpw AXnsâ Xnà^e§ÄIïpsIm

ï ncn ¡ pó hcpamWp \½Ä. k`m[n Imcn I tfmSp Å A \pkcWw It ¯ men ¡ À Pohnt ¡ ï Hcp ]pWyamW. A tXmsSm¸w, ss\ bm an Iambn ]d ª mð Hcp k`sbóhn[¯ nð A \pkcn ¡ m³ \½Ä ISs¸«hcpamW. Ign ª c ï mbnc ¯ ne[n Iw hÀj § fneqsS {]Xnk Ôn IÄ ¡ nSbnepw CSapdnbm ¯ A¸ktXmen I]mc¼cy ¯ nð \s½ \bn¨ ssZh ¯ n\p \µn]dbmw. Cu A¸ktXmen I]mc¼cyw Hcp henb \n[nt]mse kq£n ¡ p I bpw Xeapd IÄ ¡ p ss Iamdp I bpw sNt¿ ï XmsWó D ¯ chmZnXzw \ap ¡ p ad ¡ m Xncn ¡ mw.

c ï maXmbn, \½pssS k`bpsS B tKmf kmón[yhpw t{] jnX{] hÀ ¯ \ § fpamWp \½Ä Nn´n ¡ póX. ]cnip² ]nXmh C § s\ ]d ª p:""\n § fpsS{]nb k`bpsS hni zmk nIÄ C´ybnð am{X añ, tem I ¯ m Iam\w hni zmk ¯ nsâ bpw `à nbpsSbpw Xo£W Xbmð Adnbs¸Spó hcmW".Ccp]Xmw \qäm ï phsc{][m\ambpw t Icf ¯ nð HXp § nb \½pssS k` Có B tKmf kmón[yap Å Hcp k`bmbn hfÀópshóX A`nam\ IcwXsó. Ign ª Ime § fnð hnhn[tZi § fnte ¡ p ISópsNó k`ma ¡ Ä \½pssS IÀ ¯ mhnep Å hni zmkw A`wKpcw Im ¯ pkq£n ¡ m\pw Ahcmbn cn ¡ pó tZi § fnð Xo j WXtbmsS Pohn ¡ m\pw IeÀ¸ñmsX Xeapd IÄ ¡ p ss Iamdm\pw Im Wn ¡ pó{]Xn_²X{] iwk \ob amW. B tKmf Ip Sntbä ¯ nsâ Cu Ime L«¯ nð Cu t{] jnX the XpScm³ {] hmk nIÄ XpSÀópw{]Xn_² cm I Ww.

`mcXwapgph\nepw tem I ¯ nsâ ]e `qJWU § fnepw kotdmae _mÀk`b ¡ B hiyamb k`mkwhn[m\ § Ä cq]s¸Sp ¯ m³ Ncn{X]camb Xocpam\ § sfSp ¯ {^m³ k nk amÀ]m¸ KÄ^ cmPy § fnð \½pssS k`b ¡ AP]me\ ip{iqjsN¿póXn\pÅ A \phmZw hm ¡ mð \e InbX C ¯ cpW ¯ nð \µntbmsS A \p kacn ¡ póp. KÄ^ cmPy § fnse A ôpe£ ¯ ne[n Iwhcpó hni zmk nIÄ ¡ B hiyamb k`mkwhn[m\ § Ä ImeXmakw IqSmsX cq]s¸Spsaóp \ap ¡ p{]Xymin ¡ mw.

B tKmf Ip Sntbä ¯ nsâ]Ým ¯ e ¯ nð]T\ ¯ n\pw tPmen ¡ pw sa¨amb Pohn Xkulcy § Ä ¡ pwth ï n \½pssS a ¡ fpw Ip Spw_ § fpw tem I ¯ nsâ hnhn[`mK § fnte ¡ p ISópsNñpt¼mÄ \½pssS k`bpsS X\Xmb ss]Xr Iw Im ¯ pkq£n ¡ m³ B tKmf k`bpsS Xeh³ B I zm\w sN¿póX C{] ImcamW:""a I ¯ mb

Bcm[\m]chpw B ßobhpw kmwk Imcn Ihpamb \n§ fpsSsss] XrIw Fópw Gsd Xnf ¡t¯msS {]Im inXamIpóXn\pth ïn, \n§Ä FhnsSbmbmepw \n§fpsS kzbw`cWmhImiapÅ k` tbmSp tNÀóp\ne¡m³ kotdmae_mÀ It¯men¡mk`mwK §fmb \n§sf Rm³ t{]mÕmIn¸n¡póp''.Cu BIzm\wkzoI cn¨psImïp \½psS k`bpsS Bcm[\m{IahpwhnizmK]mc¼ cy§fpw apdpsI]nSn¡m\pw A`nam\t¯msS AXp Pohn¡m\pw Fñmhcpw]cn{ian¡Wsaópwk`maisfk`mkwhn[m\t¯mSp tNÀ¯p\ndp¯m³ AP]meIÀ{]tXyIw{i²n¡Wsaópw Rm³ B{KIn¡póp.C¯cwkmINcy§fnð kotdmae_mÀk`ma¡ sfó\nebnepÅ kzXzt_m[¯nð Bgs¸«phfcm³ Nne k¦p NnXNn´IÄ shSntb ïnhcpw.k` hfcpóXp{]mtZinIambn«m sWóX bmYmÀYyamW.Fómð,BtKmfXe¯nð Hcp Icp¯pä k`bmbn kotdmae_mÀk` C\nbpw hfcm³ hnimeambn Nn´n ¡pIbpw \ne]mSpIÄ FSp¡pIbpwsNt¿ïX AXy´mt]£n XamW.

aqómaXmbn,\½psS IpSpw_ §fpsS sI«pd¸ns\bpw hnizmk] cnioe\¯nse{]Xn_²Xsbbpw Ipdn¨ FSp¯p]dbm³ Rm³ B{KIn¡póp.\½psS k`bpsS Gähpw henb k¼¯ \½psS IpSpw_ §fmW.BßobXbnepw A²zm\¯nepw ASnØm\an« \½psS IpSpw_ §ÄIqSntNcpóXmW k`bmIpóhenb IpSpw_w. IpSpw_ §fnemcw`n¡pó hnizmk]cnioe\w CShIIfnse aX t_m[\¢mÊpIfneqsSbpw IpSpw_ Iq«mbaIfneqsSbpw kwL S\m{]hÀ¯\§fneqsSbpw iàns¸tSïXpï.Ime¯nsâbpw kwk¡mc¯nsâbpw{]tem`\§fnð hoWpt]mIm¯hn[¯nð hnizmkamIpó]mdtað ASnØm\anSm³]pXnb Xeapdbnse IpSpw_ §sf iàns¸Sp¯Ww.Cutim\mY\pw GIc£I\p amsWóp PohnX¯neqsS{]tLmjn¡m³ hyànIÄ¡pw IpSpw _ §Ä¡pw AXphgn k`apgph\pw GXpkmINcy¯nepw km[n t¡ïXpï.

ssZhw \½psS k`bnð [mcmfwsshZnI kaÀ¸nXssZhhnfnIÄ \eIn A\p{KIn¨n«pï.\½psS sshZnIcpw kaÀ¸nXcpw temI sa¼mSpw ^e{]Zamb ip{iqjsN¿pópapï.kphntij{]tLm jWZuXyw{]tXyIambhn[¯nð kzoIcn¨phnhn[taJeIfnð ip{iqjsN¿pó AeambktImZc§sfbpw Cubhkc¯nð

{]tXyIw HmÀ¡póp. Cu ssZhhnfnIsfsbñmw t{]mÕmIn¸n ¡m\pw Ignbpó hn[¯nseñmw klmbn¡m\pw AhÀ¡pth ïn {]mÀYn¡m\pw \ap¡p {]tXyIambn]cn{ian¡mw. AXpt]mse bphP\§sf {]tXyIw {ihn¡m\pw AhcpsS IqsS\S¡m\pw tNmZy§Ä¡ D¯cw slmSp¡m\pw Bhiyamb amÀK\nÀtZi §Ä \eIm\pw AP]meIÀ{]tXyIw {i²bpÅhcmbncn¡Ww. bphP\§fpsShniznkPohnX¯nsâ Bgs¸Sepw km£y¯nsâ iànbpamWp k`bpsS`mhnsbóXp bphP\§fpw k`mip{iqj Icpw Hcpt]mse HmÀant¡ïXmW.

Cutimbnð F\n¡ Gähpw{]nbs¸«htc,ssZh¯nsâ kt\I amÀó]cn]me\ Fópw \t½mSSm¸apï.]cnip²]nXmhnsâ hm¡pIÄ Rm³ BhÀ¯n¡s«: ""_p²nap«pIfpsSbpw {]Xnk ÔnIfpsSbpw kab§fnð \ncpÕmItam\nk lmbXmt_m[tam \n§sf Iogs¸Sp¯m³ A\phZn¡cpsXó Fñmhtcm Spw]dbm³ Rm³ B{KIn¡póp". AXn\mð, It¯men¡mk`bpsS Iq«mba bnð A`nam\t¯mSS hym]cn¨psImï, A¸ktXmenI{]t_m[\§fpsS kq£n¸pImcpw AhIminIfpamb \ap¡p \½psS k` bpsSal¯mb ss]XrIw temI¯nsâ hnhn[`mK§fnð Gsd Xnf¡t¯mSS {]Imin¸n¡póXn\pthïn{]tXyIw]cn{ian¡mw. \½psS IpSpw_§sf iànsSp¯nbpw hnizmk]cnioe\kwc `§Ä IrZb¯nð GsäSp¯pw ssZhhnfnIÄ t{]mÕmIn¸n¨pw bphP\§sf tNÀ¯p]nSn¨pw Cu ImeL«¯nsâ ZpÀLSamb hgnIfneqsS kzÀtKmòpJcmbn \ap¡p bm{XXpScmw.

ZpIdm\Xncp\mfnsâbpw k`mZn\¯nsâbpw BiwkIÄ Fñm hÀ¡pw t\cpóp. \½psS A½bmb]cnip²I\ymImadnb¯n sâbpw amÀ butk¸p]nXmhnsâbpw amÀ tXmamÇoImbpsSbpw kIe hnip²cpsSbpw hmg¯s¸«hcpsSbpw am[yØyhpw A\p {KIhpw \t½mSpw \½psS Fñm{]hÀ¯\§tfmSpsam¸wDïm bncn¡s«!

Im¡\mS auï skâ tXmaknepÅ taPÀ BÀ¨p_nj¸nsâ Imcymeb¯nð \nóp 2024þmw Bï Pq¬ amkw 22þmw XobXn\e Is¸«X.

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Prot. No. 0642/2024

PASTORAL LETTER
DUKRANA - SABHADINAM 2024

Mar Raphael Thattil, the Major Archbishop
of the Syro-Malabar Church, to the Archbishops,
Bishops, Priests, Consecrated Men and Women
and Lay Persons of the Syro-Malabar Church.

May the Grace of the Lord be with you all!

Dearly beloved brothers and sisters in Jesus Christ,

It gives me great joy to address you through this pastoral letter on the occasion of the feast of *Dukrana*, which is filled with the memory of the martyrdom of our Father St. Thomas the Apostle. For years, we have been celebrating this day as the Syro-Malabar *Sabhadinam*. Our Church was founded through the apostolic proclamation of St. Thomas, who, upon seeing the wounds of our risen Lord, made the profession of faith, "My Lord and My God." The feast of *Dukrana* is not only a day to remember St. Thomas the Apostle, our Father in Faith, but also a day to experience faith emotionally, by touching the blood of the Apostle with our hearts, thereby confessing and confirming our faith in Jesus. On this feast day, let us especially thank the divine providence, which has given us the light, joy and courage of the Gospel through St. Thomas, the Apostle.

After assuming responsibility as the Fourth Major Archbishop of the Syro-Malabar Church, I went to Rome in May 2024 to express my respect and submission to the Holy Father, the head of the Universal Church, as my predecessors did. Along with the members of the Permanent Synod, the Curia Bishop of the Church

and the Procurator in Rome, I met Pope Francis on May 13. The Holy Father received us with great joy and love: the encouraging remarks he made on the Syro-Malabar Church when he met us in audience and during his address to the representatives of the Syro-Malabar Church in Rome were recognition for us. While thanking the Holy Father for his care and affection for our Church, I call upon everyone to pray for the health of the Holy Father and for all his intentions.

Dearly beloved, I desire to elaborate certain points from the Holy Father Pope Francis' speech at the Consistory Hall of the Vatican Palace on May 13 for our reflection in the context of the celebrations of the *Dukrana* and *Sabhadinam*.

First, we should be conscious of and take pride in the apostolic tradition of our Church. The Holy Father said: "Your faith is of an ancient origin, as it is rooted in the witness to the point of martyrdom of Saint Thomas, the Apostle of India. You are all custodians and heirs of his apostolic preaching." Pope Francis said that in the long and difficult history of our Church, despite all the adverse circumstances, we have always maintained unwavering loyalty to the Successor of Peter. This is an acknowledgement of the sacrificial fidelity with which we have always remained in the communion of the Catholic Church.

It is because our ancestors obeyed and adhered to the ecclesiastical structures during all the sufferings they went through that the Syro-Malabar Church has grown to be praised among the Eastern Churches for her number, fervour of faith and missionary work. We have faced and still continue to experience the bitter consequences and great dangers posed by disunity and disobedience. Obedience to Church authorities is a virtue that Catholics must live. At the same time, canonically speaking, as a Church, we are also obliged to obey. Let us thank God, who has led us through an unbroken apostolic tradition amidst adversities for over two thousand years. Let us not forget the responsibility to preserve this apostolic tradition as a great treasure and hand it down to generations.

Second, we reflect on the global presence and missionary activities of our Church. The Holy Father said: "The faithful of your beloved Church are known, not only in India, but throughout the whole world, for the "vigour" of their faith and piety". It is indeed a matter of pride that our Church, which was mainly confined to Kerala until the twentieth century, has now grown into a Church with a global presence. It is commendable that the members of our Church who migrated to various countries in the past were commitment to preserving the faith in our Lord intact, living fervently that faith in the lands of their sojourn, and passing it on unadulterated to generations. In this era of global migration, the faithful must continue to be committed to this missionary work.

On this occasion, I gratefully remember that Pope Francis, who made historical decisions to establish the necessary ecclesiastical structures for the Syro-Malabar Church throughout India and in various parts of the world, granted verbal permission for our Church to provide pastoral care in the Gulf countries. We hope that the necessary ecclesiastical structures will be erected without delay for more than five hundred thousand faithful in the Gulf countries.

In the context of global migration, as our children and families move to various parts of the world for study, work, and better living conditions, the Head of the Universal Church calls in this way for preserving our Church's unique heritage: "It is, therefore, good for me, as Bishop of Rome, to encourage you, the Syro-Malabar Catholic faithful, wherever you are, to cultivate the sense of belonging you have to your Church *sui iuris*, so that your great liturgical, theological, spiritual and cultural heritage may shine ever more brightly". Accepting this call, everyone should strive to adhere to our Church's liturgy and faith traditions and live them with pride. I desire that the pastors take special care to keep the faithful close to ecclesial structures. In such situations, narrow minded thoughts need to be abandoned in order to grow deeply in our identity consciousness as members of the Syro-Malabar Church. It is a reality that the Church grows locally. However, it is

essential to think broadly and take a stand for the Syro-Malabar Church to further grow as a strong Church at the global level.

Third, I wish to highlight the strength of our families and our commitment to faith formation. The greatest wealth of our Church is our families. The Church, which is a large family, is the union of our families founded on spirituality and hard work. The faith formation that begins in families should be strengthened through catechism classes in parishes and the involvement in the family units and various associations. Families of the new generation should be empowered to lay their foundation on the rock of faith in such a way that they do not fall into the temptations of the times and the culture. Individuals, families, and thereby the whole Church must be able to proclaim through life in any circumstance that Jesus is the Lord and the only Saviour.

God has blessed our Church with an abundance of priestly and religious vocations. Our priests and religious are rendering fruitful service all over the world. I take this occasion to remember in a very special way the lay brothers and sisters who have embraced the mission of Gospel proclamation in unique ways and are serving in various fields. Let us make special efforts to encourage all these vocations, help them in every possible way, and pray for them. Likewise, the pastors should be particularly attentive in listening to the young people, walking with them, answering their questions, and providing them with the necessary guidance. Both the youth and the Church ministers should remember that the future of the Church depends on the deepening of the faith life and the power of witness of the youth.

My dearly beloved in Jesus, God's loving providence is always with us. Let me reiterate the words of the Holy Father: "I would like to say to everyone, in moments of difficulty and crisis, do not be overcome by discouragement or a sense of helplessness in the face of problems". Therefore, as the custodians and heirs of the apostolic teachings, let us strive to radiate with great splendour the glorious heritage of our Church in various parts of the world by remaining with pride in the communion of the Catholic Church.

Let us continue our journey heavenward through the challenging paths of this era by strengthening our families, embracing wholeheartedly faith formation initiatives, fostering vocations, and holding the youth close.

I extend the greetings of the *Dukrana* feast and the *Sabhadinam* to all. May the intercession and blessings of our Mother, the Blessed Virgin Mary, St. Joseph, St. Thomas the Apostle, and all the saints and blessed be with us and all our endeavours!

Given from the Major Archiepiscopal Curia at Mount St. Thomas, Kakkanad on 22 June 22, 2024.

Mar Raphael Thattil
Major Archbishop of the Syro-Malabar Church

Prot. No. 0715/2024

സർക്കുലർ

അഞ്ചാമതു മേജർ ആർക്കിഎപ്പിസ്കോപ്പൽ അസംബ്ലി

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] m e m c q] X b m W C ¯ h Ws ¯ A k w » n b p s S B X n t Y b À.] m e m b n s e A ð t ^ m ³ k n b ³] m k ä d ð C ³ k ä n ä y q « n ð 2024 B K k ä 22 hym g m g N ssh I p t ó c w B c w ` n ¨ p 25 R m b d m g N D ¨ t b m s S k a m] n ¡ p ó c o X n b n e m W A k w » n {I a o I c n ¨ n c n ¡ p ó X. A k w » n b p s S h n P b I c a m b \S ¯ n ¸ n \p t h ï {I a o I c W § Ä A k w » n I ½ n ä n I ¬ h o \ À a m À t] m f n I ® q ¡ m S ³] n X m h n s â b p w] m e m c q] X m [y £ ³ a m À t P m k ^ I ñ d § m « p] n X m h n s â b p w t \ X r X z ¯ n ð h n h n [I ½ n ä n I Ä s N b X p s I m ï n c n ¡ p ó p.

t a P À B À ¡ n F ¸ n k t I m ¸ ð A k w » n b n ð B s c m s ¡ b m W p] s ¦ Spt ¡ ï X F ó X p k ` m \ n b a w \ n Ý b n ¨ n « p ï . c q] X I f n ð \ n ó p w k a À ¸ n X k a q I § f n ð \ n ó p a p Å {] X n \ n [n I f m W A k w » n A w K § Ä. c q] X I f p s S b p w k a À ¸ n X k a q I § f p s S b p w F ® w h À [n ¨ p h ó t ¸ m Ä A k w » n b n ð] s ¦ Sp ¡ p ó h c p s S F ® h p w B \ p] m X n I a m b n Db À ó p. 2016 ð 488 t] c m W] s ¦ Sp ¯ X. AX n \ ] p d t a b m b m b n c p ó p I ½ n ä n A w K § f p w a ä p i p{ i q j I c p w. A k w » n b p s S \S ¯ n ¸ n s â {] m t b m K n I Xe § Ä] c n K W n ¨ p w F ñ m h c p s S b p w B i b § Ä ^ e{] Za m b n A h Xc n ¸ n ¡ p ó X n \ p w t{I m U o I c n ¡ p ó X n \ p w B h i ya m b k m I N cy § Ä Hc p ¡ p ó X n \ p w th ï n] s ¦ Sp t ¡ ï h c p s S F ® w I p d b ¡ m ³ sa{X m ³ k n \ U p X o c p a m \ n ¨ p. AX n ³ {] I m c w,] c n i p ² k m w I m k \ ¯ n s â A w K o I m c t ¯ m s S A k w » n b n ð] s ¦ Sp ¡ p ó h s c ¡ p d n ¨ p Å t ` Z K X n h c p ¯ n b k ` b p s S {] t X y I \ n b a w Hc p I e ¸ \ h g n 2024 a m À ¨ 25 \ p {] m _ e y ¯ n ð h c p ¯ n b n c p ó p. Cu] p X n b \ n b a a \ p k c n ¨ 80 h b k n ð X m s g b p Å sa{X m ò m c p w ssh Z n I k a À ¸ n X A e a m b {] X n \ n [n I f p a S § n b 360 A w K § f m W C ¯ h W] s ¦ Sp ¡ p ó X.

A ô mas ¯ t a P À B À ¡ n F ¸ n k t I m ¸ ð A k w » n b p s S {] t a b w, ""I m e m \ p k r X a m b k ` m P o h n X h p w Zu X y h p w k o t d m a e _ m À k ` b n ð'' F ó p Å X m W. CX n s \ A S n k Y m \ s ¸ Sp ¯ n, h n i z m k c q] o I c W ¯ n s â \ h o I c W w, k p h n t i j {] t L m j W ¯ n s e A e a m b]

¦mfn ¯w, kotdmae_mÀkapZmb i àolcWw Fóoaqóphnj b§Ä Akw»nbpsS{]tXyI hnNn´\¯n\phnjbamIpw.

{]nbs¸«htc,{]mÀY\bpsSbpw hnNn´\¯nsâbpw Bßmhnð sFIys¸«psImïpw ssZhw k`b¡pw k`bneqsSbpw sNbXaI¯mb Imcy§Ä {]tLmjn¡pIbpw BtLmjn¡pIbpw sNbXpsImïpw kotdmae_mÀk`bpsS aptómkpÅ {]bmW¯nð hgnIm«nbmbn\net¡ï ImgN¸mSpIfpw BZÀi§fpw cq]olcn¡m\mWAkw»n{ianipóX.CXnð]s¦Spipó Fñm hcpw]cnip²mßmhn\mð\bn¡s¸Sm\pws]mXp\òe£yam¡n Bib§Ä]¦phb¡m\pwssZhaIXz¯n\pwk`bpsShfÀ¨ b¡pwD]lcn¡pó BibcqolcWwkm[yamIpóXn\pwthïn k`apgph\pwHcpa\tÊmsS{]mÀYn¡WsaópRm³kt\It¯msSA`yÀYn¡póp.CtXmsSm¸w\eIpó Imtdmkqk BKkä 4apXð Fñmhnip²IpÀ_m\bnepwsNmtñïXmW.

Im¡\mSauïskâtXmaknepÅ kotdmae_mÀtaPÀ BÀ¡n F¸nktIm¸ð Imcymeb¯nð\nóp2024þmw Bïp Pqsseamkw 24þmw XobXn\eIs¸«X.

മാർ റാഫേൽ തട്ടിൽ
kotdmae_mÀk`bpsS taPÀ BÀ¨p_nj¸

Prot. No. 0715/2024

CIRCULAR
FIFTH MAJOR ARCHIEPISCOPAL ASSEMBLY

Mar Raphael Thattil, 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,

I write to you now to inform you of the Fifth Major Archiepiscopal Assembly of our Church. The Major Archiepiscopal Assembly, also known as the *Sabhayogam*, is a consultative body of the entire Church presided over by the Major Archbishop. It is a joint meeting of the Bishops, Priests, Religious, and Lay representatives of the Church.

The basis of the Assembly is the reality that the Major Archiepiscopal Church is a large communion. The Code of Canons of the Eastern Churches clearly states the aim of the Assembly. It is a consultative body to assist the Major Archbishop and the Synod of Bishops when important matters need to be decided in the Church. The role of the Assembly is to discuss matters of greater importance at respective times, and to assist the Synod of Bishops in formulating action plans, taking into account the common good of the Church and the society.

According to the Canon Law, the Major Archiepiscopal Assembly should be convened once every five years. After our Church was elevated to the Major Archiepiscopal status in 1992, the first Assembly took place in 1998. Subsequently, it was held in 2004,

2010, and 2016. The Fifth Assembly is taking place in 2024, eight years after the previous one in 2016. The uncertainty that prevailed in the context of the Covid pandemic was the reason for the delay in holding the Assembly, which should have taken place in 2021.

The forthcoming Assembly is hosted by the Eparchy of Palai. The Assembly, which is held at Alphonsian Pastoral Institute, Pala, will begin on the evening of Thursday, August 22, 2024, and conclude by noon on Sunday, August 25. The preparations for the successful conduct of the Assembly are being carried out by various committees under the leadership of Mar Pauly Kannookadan, the Convenor of the Assembly Committee, and Mar Joseph Kallarangatt, the Bishop of Palai.

The Canon Law stipulates who should participate in the Major Archiepiscopal Assembly. The members of the Assembly are representatives from the eparchies and religious congregations. As the number of Eparchies and religious congregations increased in the Church, the number of participants in the Assembly also increased accordingly. In 2016, there were 488 participants in the Assembly. In addition, there were committee members and other assistants. Considering the practical aspects of conducting the Assembly and to create the suitable atmosphere for presenting and consolidating everyone's ideas effectively, the Synod of Bishops decided to reduce the number of participants of the Assembly. Accordingly, with the approval of the Apostolic See, the amended Particular Law of the Church on the participants of the Major Archiepiscopal Assembly was promulgated through a Decree on 25 March 2024. According to this newly promulgated law, 360 members are participating this time, including Bishops under the age of 80, Priests, Religious, and Lay representatives.

The theme of the Fifth Major Archiepiscopal Assembly is *Mission and Response of the Syro-Malabar in Response to the Needs of the Time*. Based on this, three topics will be discussed in the Assembly: Renewal of Faith Formation, Lay Participation in Evangelization, and Empowering of the Syro-Malabar Community.

Dearly beloved, I lovingly request that the entire Church pray with one mind so that all those participating in this Assembly may be led by the Holy Spirit, share ideas having the common good in mind, and formulate ideas that will contribute to the glory of God and the growth of the Church. The *Karozutha* given together with this circular shall be recited during the celebration of the Holy *Qurbana* from August 4 onwards.

Given from the Major Archiepiscopal Curia of the Syro-Malabar at Mount St. Thomas, Kakkanad on July 24, 2024.

Mar Raphael Thattil
Major Archbishop of the Syro-Malabar Church

Prot. No. 0857/2024

മുപ്പത്തിരണ്ടാം സിനഡ്, ആഗസ്റ്റ് സമ്മേളനം

സിനഡനന്തര സർക്കുലർ

k otdmae _ mÀ k `bpsS taPÀ B À¨p _ n j ¸
amÀ dmt ^ ð X«n ð Xsâ k l i p{ i q j I cmb
sa{Xmt ¸ meo ¯ mamÀ ¡ pw sa{Xm ³ amÀ ¡ pw
sshZn I À ¡ pw k aÀ ¸ nXÀ ¡ pw Xsâ AP] me \ i p{ i q j b ¡
Ge] n ¡ s ¸ «ncn ¡ p ó F ñm ssZhP \ ¯ n \ pw F gpXp ó X.

I À ¯ mhnsâ I r] \ n § sf ñmh tcmSpw I qsS D ï mbncn ¡ s«!

an i n I mbn ð {] nb k t I mZco k t I mZcò mtc,

k otdmae _ mÀ k `bpsS ap ¸ ¯ nc ï maXp k n \ Unsâ aq ó mw k t½
f \ w 2024 B K k ä 19 apX ð 31 hsc k `bpsS B k Ym \ I mcyme bamb
au ï s k â tXma k n ð \ S ó p. {] Xn k Ô n I Ä ¡ nSbnepw ssZh]
cn] me \ bpsS A Xn i b I camb \ S ¯ n ¸ A \ p `hn ¨ dnbm \ p Å A h
k cambmW k n \ Up k t½ f \ w A \ p `hs ¸ «X. k `sb bpw k aq I
s ¯ bpw _ m [n ¡ p ó \ nch [n I mcy § Ä k n \ Up] nXm ¡ òmcpsS
] cnNn ´ \ ¯ n \ p hn j bambn.

പ്രകൃതി ദുരന്തങ്ങൾ

h b \ m«nepw hne § mSpw k w `hn ¨ k am \ X I fnñm ¯ {] I rXnZpc ´
¯ n ð acWaS ª hsc k n \ Up {] mÀY \ m] qÀhw A \ p k acn ¨ p. Dä
hscbpw DSb hscbpw am{Xañ D Å sXñmw \ ãs ¸ « A \ mYcmbn
¯ oÀ ó ZpcnX _ m [nXÀs ¡ m ¸ w t I cfsam ó msI \ nesI m ï Xp
\ ½psS k aq I ¯ nsâ \ ò bpw {] Xym i bpsS {] I m i hpamW.
Zpc ´ _ m [nXsc] p \ c [nh k n ¸ n ¡ m \ p Å k wcw` ¯ n ð k `bpsS
k ¼qÀWamb k l I cWw Dd ¸ phcp ¯ nbn«p ï . hnhn [k w k Ym
\ § fnse I t ¯ men ¡ m sa{Xm ³ k anXn I fpsS k l I cWt ¯ msS
`h \ § Ä \ nÀan ¨ p \ e I m \ pw `qc I nXcmb hÀ ¡ p `h \ \ nÀamW ¯ n
\ mh i yamb `qan k uP \ yambn hn«p \ e I m \ pap Å k `bpsS k ó
² X D ¯ chmZnXzs ¸ «hsc CXnt \ mS I w Adnbn ¨ n«p ï .] p \ c [nhm
k {] { I nb XzcnXKXnbnem ¡ m \ pw ZpcnX _ m [nXÀ ¡ p Å \ ã] cn

lmc]mt¡PplÄ kXzcambn{]Jym]n¡m\pw kn\Upkt½f\w kÀ¡mcnt\mS Bhiys¸«n«pï.

\mw ""A[nhkn¡pó s]mXp`h\w'' Fóp{^m³knk amÀ]m¸ hntijn¸n¨ \½psS]cnkYnXnsb kwc£n¡m³ k` Fópw{]Xn Úm_²amW. Fómð,]cnkYnXn¡ BLmXwhcp¯pó hnhn[J\\§Ä¡pwh³InS\nÀamW§Ä¡pwt\tcl®Sb¡plbpw lÀjlsc]cnkYnXnLmXlcmbn Nn{Xolcn¡plbpw sN¿pó sXämb]cnkYnXnhmZs¯ k` Xncn¨dnbpópï.

{]IrXnZpc´ §fpsS adhnð lÀjlt{Zml]camb \S]SnIfmcw `n¡m³ kÀ¡mcnsâ `mK¯p\nópïmlpó \o¡§Ä A]e] \obamW.]cnkYnXnteme{]tZi§fmbntlcf¯nse131hntñPp lÄDÄs¸Sp¯ns¡mïptl{µkÀ¡mÀ]pd¯nd¡nb hn Úm]\w aetbmclÀjlcnð Gsd Bi¦bpfhm¡pópï. BbpÊpapgp h\pw A²zm\n¨pïm¡nb kz´w Irjn`qan aqeyclnXambn¯o cpó Zb\obamb kmlNcyamW Cu hn Úm]\whgn lÀjlÀ ¡pïmbncn¡póX. BtKmfXm]\whgnbpÅ AXnhÀjwXpS§n {]IrXnZpc´ §fpsS bYmÀY lmcWwhniZolcn¡pó imk{Xob ]T\§sf\ncmlcn¨psImï lÀjlsc_enbmSm¡m\pÅ \o¡w {]Xntj[mÀlhpwXncp¯s¸tSïXpamW. C¡mcy¯nð lÀjl cpsS Bi¦bläm\pÅ hyàambCSs]Sð kÀ¡mcnsâ`mK¯p \nópïmlWw.

സീറോമലബാർ മേജർ ആർക്കി എപ്പിസ്കോപ്പൽ അസംബ്ലി

kotdmae_mÀk`bpsS Aômaxp taPÀ BÀ¡nF¸nktlm¸ð Akw»nb¡p BKkä22apXð25hsc]memcq]Xbnse Aðt^m³ky³ ]mkädð C³känäyp«pw skâ tXmak tlmtfPpw kwbpàambn BXntYbXzw hln¨p. kwLmSlanlhpslmïpw lq«mbabpsS km£ywslmïpw NÀ¨mhnjb§fpsS lmenl{] kànslmïpwC¯hWs¯ Akw»n Gsd{it²bambncpóp. hnizmk]cnioe\¯nse \qX\m`napJy§Ä, anj³{]hÀ¯\ ¯nse AeambcpsS]¦mfn¯w, kotdmae_mÀ kapZmbiàol cWw Fóo hnjb§sf B[mcam¡nbpÅ]T\§fpw]cnNn´ \§fpamW Akw»nbnð{][m\ambpw \SóX. kotdmae_mÀ k`bnse sa{Xmòmcpw sshZnlcpw kaÀ¸nXcpw Aeambcpw DÄ s¸Spó348 AwK§fmW Akw»nbnð]s¦Sp¯X. k`bpsS aptóm«pÅ{]bmW¯nsâ KXn \nÀWbn¡m³ klmblamb {it²bamb Xocpam\§fpw lÀa]²XnIfpw Akw»nbnð cq]olcn¨n«pÅX hniZambn \n§sf]nóoS Adnbn¡póXmW.

apñs¸cnbmÀ Umansâ Ime¸g¡waqeapÅ ZpÀ_emhkY tIcf ¯nsâ aqónsemcp `mK¯n\p \miwhcp¯m³ ]cym]Xamb `oj Wnbmbn hfÀón«p ï.""Xang\mSn\p sh Åhpw tIcf ¯n\p kpc £nXXzhpsaó" \ne]mSnð Dd¨p\nópsImïpP\ § fpsS Bi¦ AIäm\pÅ kXzc\S]SnIÄ kÀ¡mcnsâ `mK¯p\nópDïmI Wsaóp k`m Akw»n kÀ¡mcnt\mSp Bhiys¸«p.

\yq\] £ambss{IkXhcpsS]ntóm¡mhkY]Tn¡m³ \ntbm Kn¡s¸«PkänksP._n.tImin I½ojsâ dnt¸mÀ«p{]kn²oIcn ¡mt\m \nÀtZi § Ä\S¸nem¡mt\m kÀ¡mÀ \mfnXphsc bmsXm ópwsNbXnñ Fó kXywss{IkXhkaqls¯ Gsdth Z\n¸n ¡pópï.C¡mcy¯nð kpXmcyhpw \oXn]qÀhIhpamb CSs]Sð kÀ¡mcnsâ `mK¯p\nópïmIWsaóp k` Bhiys¸Spóp.

കുടുംബപ്രാർഥന

\½psS IpSpw_ § fpsS i àntI{µw \ntXy\bpÅ IpSpw_{]mÀY \Ifmbncpóp. Xeapdlsf hnizmk]mc¼cy¯nepw k`mkt\I ¯nepw \ne\ndp¯póXnð IpSpw_{]mÀ°\b¡pÅ]¦phep XmW. Fómð,tPmen¯nc¡pIÄaqehpw IpSpw_mwK§Ä hnhn[tZi § fnð Bbncn¡pó kmINcy¯nepw \½psS]hn{Xamb IpSpw_{]mÀY\mkwk Imc¯n\p Ipdhphón«pÅXmbn kn\Up hnebncp¯n. \½psS IpSpw_ § fpsS Iq«mbasbbpw \ne\ne]n s\bpw]cnt]mjn¸n¡pó IpSpw_{]mÀY\mcoXn AhnIeamb n \ne\ndp¯m³ Fñm IpSpw_mwK§fpw]cn{ian¡Ww.

ഏകീകൃത വിശുദ്ധ കുർബാനയർപ്പണം

\½psS k`bpsS GIoIrX IpÀ_m\{Iaw Fñmcq]XIfnepw \S ¸nem¡m\pÅ 2021 se kn\UpXocpam\w k`bnepS\ofw amäan ñmsXXpScpóXmW. Fómð,Cu Xocpam\w]qÀWambpw \S¸nem ¡m³ C\nbpw \ap¡pIgn ª n«nñ FóXGsdZpxJIcamW. kn\ UpXocpam\w \S¸nem¡m\pÅ AP]me\]camb {]Xnk ÔnIÄ \ne\ne¡póXn\mð, FdWmIpfwA¦amen AXncq]Xsb a\Ên em¡m\pw]nXrkIPamb kt\It¯msS tNÀ¯p]nSn¡m\pamWp kn\Up{ian¨X. CXnsâ `mKambn, RmbdmgNIfnepw ISapÅ aäp Znhk § fnepw Hcp IpÀ_m\sb¦nepw GIoIrXcoXnbnð sNmñn¯pS§pó ]ÅnIfnse sshZnIÀ¡pk`m]camb \S]Sn Ifnð \nóp XmX¡menIambn Cfhp\eIpsaó Adnbn¨ncpóp. GIoIrX IpÀ_m\bÀ¸Ww AXncq]Xapgphnepwnepwnepw

sshapJys ¯ bmsXmcp hn[¯ nepw \oXolcn¡m\mhnñ. C ¯ cw \ne]mSpIÄ IpälcambnÀ ïp \S]SnIÄ kzolcn¡póXmW. GIoIrX IpÀ_m\bÀ¸WcoXn \S¸nem¡nb]ÅnIfnð]e Xnepw B ßmÀYamb kao]\w{]ISambnñ Fó]cmXn \nehn epï.Hcpan¨p\S¡m\pÅ kn\Unsâ]cn{ia§sf icnbmb AÀ Y ¯ nð a\Ênem¡n k l lcn¡m³ FdWmIpfwA¦amen AXncq]Xbnse sshZnItcmSpw kaÀ¸nXtcmSpw Aeambtcmspw kn\U Bhiys¸SpIbmW. Gsd shñphnfnIÄ ¡nSbnepw A¸ktXmen I[ocXtbmsS kn\Unsâ Xocpam\w \S¸nem¡nb sshZnIscbpw CShIIsfbpw kn\U BZc]qÀhw kacn¡póp. AXncq]Xbnð kn\Unsâ Xocpam\w \S¸nem¡m\pÅ hyàamb \nÀtZi§Ä A¸ktXmenI AUan\nkt{SäÀ amÀ t_mktIm]p ¯ qÀ]nXm hn\p \eInbn«pï.GIoIrX IpÀ_m\bÀ¸Whpambn _Ôs¸« {IaoIcW§tfmS Fñmhcpw kÀhmß\m k l lcn¡Wsaóp kn\U Bhiys¸Spóp.

ജൂബിലിവർഷം

\½psS IÀ ¯ mhotimanin Imbpss P\\ ¯ nsâ A\pkacWambn cïmbnc ¯ nCcp] ¯ nb ômw B ïns\ km[mcW Pq_nenhÀj ambn]cnip²]nXmh {^m³ knkamÀ]m¸{]Jym]n¨ hnhcw\n§ Ä¡ AdnhpÅXmWtñm. {]Xnk ÔnIfpsS Cu ImeL« ¯ nð ""{]XymibpsS XoÀYmSIcmIphn³'' Fó B lzm\amW]cnip²]nXmhp Pq_nenhÀj ¯ nð \eIpóX. \½psS IÀ ¯ mhnepÅ hnizmks ¯ k`bneqsS BtLmjn¡pI FóXmWp Pq_nen hÀj ¯ nsâ e£yambn \eInbncn¡póX. ""{]Xymi \s½ \ncm icm¡pónñ'' (spes non confundit) Fó A¸ktXmenI {]t_m[\ ¯ neqsS Pq_nenbmtLmj ¯ n\pÅ amÀKtcJ \apïp\eIs¸ «n«pï. 2024 Unkw_À amkw Pq_nen¡ ASp ¯ Hcp¡ ¯ n\m bpÅ {]mÀY\mZn\ §fmbn \mw BNcn¡Ww.

2024 Unkw_À 24\pcm{Xn Fñm I ¯ o{Uð]ÅnIfnepw XpSÀóp hcpó RmbdmgN FñmCShI]ÅnIfnepw Pq_nenhÀjw,Pq_n enXncnsXfn¨ DZLmS\w sN¿póXmW. Pq_nenhÀj ¯ nsâ temtKm DÄs¸Spó ^eIw Fñm]ÅnIfnepw kYm]nt¡ï XmW. Pq_nenhÀj ¯ nð Xncpk`mamXmhp Xsâa¡Ä¡p \e Ipó hnhn[§fmb hc{]kmZhgnIsfbpw ZWUhntamN\§ sfbpw hyàam¡ns¡mïpÅ CSbteJ\wcq]Xm[y£òmÀ \e IpóXmbncn¡pw. ]cnip² IpÀ_m\, A\pcRP\IqZmi Fónh bnð A[njTnXambXpw XoÀYmS\§sf t{]mÕmIn¸n¡póXp amb IÀa]²XnbmW cq]XmXe§fnð \S¸nemt¡ïX. k`bn

epS\ofw {]Xymi bpsS]pXnb {]Imiw]c¡m\pw Iq«mbabp sSbpw k`mkt\l ¯nsâbpw]pXnb hk´w hncnbm\pw Pq_nen hÀjw \nan¯amIs« Fóp{]mÀYn¡póp.

പുതിയ ഇടയന്മാർ

\½psS k`b¡pÅ ssZh¯nsâ k½m\ambn cïp ]pXnb CS bòmsc e`n¨p FóX Gsd A`nam\Ichpw kt´mj Ichpam W. N§\mtÈcn AXncq]XbpsS sa{Xmt¸meo¯bmbn{]kXpX AXn cq]XbpsS kImbsa{Xm\mbn tkh\w sNbXphcnIbmbncpó amÀ tXmak Xdbnð ]nXmhp \nbanX\mbn. Adnbs¸Spó a\xim k{XhnimcZ\pw kmaqlnI BßobtaJeIfnse \ewXnI ª \mbI\pamb \nbpà BÀ¨p_nj¸n\p k`bpsS apgph³{]mÀY \mawKf§Ä t\cpóp.]nXrk lPamb hmÕeyt¯mSpw kotdm ae_mÀk`bpsS ]mc¼cy§tfmSpapÅ AhnIeamb hnizkXX tbmSpw Ipeo\amb im´XtbmSpwIqSn Ign ª Ccp]¯ncïp hÀj§ÄN§\mtÈcn AXncq]Xbnð tae]«ip{iqj \nÀhln¨ A`nhµy amÀ tPmk^s]cpt´m«w]nXmhnt\mSp kotdmae_mÀ k` Gsd ISs¸«n«pï.]nXmhnsâ tkh\§sf BZcthmsS ka cn¨psImïp Xm]kXpeyamb]nXmhnsâ hgnIsf IÀ¯mhp XpSÀópw A\p{Kln¡s« Fó Biwkn¡póp.

`qhnkXrXnsImïp`mcX¯nse Gähpw henb cq]Xbmb jwjm _mZnsâ cïmas¯ sa{Xm\mbn A`nhµy amÀ{]n³k BâWn ]mtW§mS³ ]nXmhp \nbanX\mbn. k lPamb t{]jnXXo£W Xbpw ITn\m²zm\ioehpw PohnXemfnXyhpw A`nhµy]nXmhn\p]pXnb ZuXy¯nð k lmb IamIpsaó Dd¸pï. k`bpsSt{]jnX apJambn amdm³ ]nXmhn\p Ignbs«sbóp{]mÀYn¡póp. N§\m tÈcn AXncq]Xb¡pw jwjm_mZcq]Xb¡pw k`apgphsâbpw {]mÀY\miwk IÄt\cpóp.

\½psS A½bmb]cnip² I\yImadnb¯nsâbpw amÀ butk¸p]nXmhnsâbpw amÀ tXmamÇoImbpsSbpw kIe hnip²cpsSbpw hmg¯s¸«hcpsSbpw am[ykYyhpw A\p{Klhpw \t½mSpw \½psS Fñm{]hÀ¯\§tfmSpsam¸w Dïmbncn¡s«!

Im¡\mS auï skâ tXmaknepÅ taPÀ BÀ¨p_nj¸nsâ Imcymeb¯nð\nóp 2024þmw Bï BKkäp amkw 31þmw XobXn \eIs¸«X.

മാർ റാഫേൽ തട്ടിൽ

kotdmae_mÀk`bpsS taPÀ BÀ¨p_nj]

Prot. No. 0857/2024

XXXII SYNOD, AUGUST SESSION

POST-SYNODAL CIRCULAR

Mar Raphael Thattil, 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!

Beloved brothers and sisters in Christ,

The III Session of the XXXII Synod of the Syro-Malabar Church was held from August 19 to 31, 2024, at the Major Archiepiscopal Curia, Mount St. Thomas, Kakkanad. This Session of the Synod experienced the wonderful guidance of divine providence amidst manifold challenges. Various matters affecting the Church and society were the subject of reflection by the Synod Fathers.

Natural Disasters

The Synod prayerfully remembered those who lost their lives in the unprecedented natural disasters in Wayanad and Vilangad. The entire society of Kerala stood together with those who lost their loved ones and all their possessions. This is a sign of the goodness of our society and a beacon of hope. The Church has ensured full cooperation in the rehabilitation of the victims. In collaboration with the Catholic Bishops' Conferences of various States, the Church has informed the authorities of its willingness to donate the required land for housing and to build houses. The Synod appealed to the government to expedite the rehabilitation process and promptly announce relief packages for the victims.

While the Church is always committed to protecting our environment, which Pope Francis referred to as 'our common home', it also recognizes the flawed environmentalism that turns a blind eye to various mining and large-scale constructions that harm the environment and portrays farmers as enemies of the environment.

It is deplorable that the government is attempting to initiate anti-farmer measures on the pretext of natural calamities. The draft notification issued by the Central Government, which included 131 villages in Kerala as eco-sensitive zones, raises great concern among the highland farmers. This announcement will lead to a deplorable situation where the farmland that farmers have created by a lifetime of toil becomes worthless. The Synod protests against and calls for correcting this move to sacrifice farmers by rejecting scientific studies that explain the real cause of natural calamities, such as global warming leading to excessive rainfall. The government should make a clear intervention to allay the farmers' concerns in this matter.

Syro-Malabar Major Archiepiscopal Assembly

The Fifth Syro-Malabar Major Archiepiscopal Assembly was jointly hosted by the Alphonsian Pastoral Institute and St. Thomas College, Pala, from 22 to 25 August 2024. This Assembly was remarkable for its organizational excellence, witness of communion, and the relevance of its topics of discussion. The Assembly primarily focused on studies and reflections based on the themes of modern approaches in faith formation, lay participation in mission work, and empowering of the Syro-Malabar community. Three hundred forty-eight members, including bishops, priests, consecrated men and women, and the laity of the Syro-Malabar Church, participated in the Assembly. The Assembly has formulated notable decisions and action plans that will aid the forward journey of the Church. You will be informed in detail about these at a later time.

The deteriorating condition of the Mullaperiyar Dam, due to its age, has grown into a threat capable of destroying one-third of Kerala. The Synod appealed to the government to take immediate

action to allay the fears of the people by standing firm on the position, "Water for Tamil Nadu and Safety for Kerala".

The fact that the government has done nothing so far either to publish the report of Justice J. B. Koshy Commission appointed to study the backwardness of the Christian minority community or to implement its recommendations deeply grieves the Christian community. The Church demands a transparent and fair intervention from the government in this matter.

Family Prayer

The strength of our families has been the daily family prayers. Family prayer plays a significant role in preserving future generations in faith and love for the Church. However, the Synod assessed that our sacred tradition of family prayer has diminished due to busy schedules and family members living in different countries. All family members should strive to maintain the tradition of family prayer that nurtures the unity and stability of our families.

Uniform Mode of Celebration of the Holy *Qurbana*

The decision of the 2021 Synod to implement the uniform mode of celebration of the Holy *Qurbana* of our Church in all eparchies remains unchanged throughout the Church. However, it is regrettable that we have not yet been able to fully implement this decision. Since pastoral challenges persist in implementing the Synod decision, the Synod tried to understand the Archeparchy of Ernakulam-Angamaly and embrace it with paternal love. As part of this, it was informed that priests in parishes who start celebrating at least one Holy *Qurbana* on Sundays and other days of obligation in the uniform mode would be temporarily exempted from canonical punishments. This exemption was given to create an awareness in view of implementing the uniform mode of Holy *Qurbana* throughout the Archeparchy. Although this directive has been implemented in over a hundred churches, the indifference shown by other churches in the Archeparchy cannot be justified in any way. Such disobediences will be subject to punitive measures. There are complaints that a sincere approach is not manifested

in many churches where the Holy *Qurbana* was celebrated in the uniform mode. The Synod appeals to the priests, religious, and laity of the Archeparchy of Ernakulam-Angamaly to understand the efforts of the Synod to walk together in the right spirit and cooperate in this regard. The Synod gratefully remembers the priests and parishes where the uniform mode of celebration of the Holy *Qurbana* was implemented with apostolic courage amidst many challenges. In this synodal session clear directives have been given to Mar Bosco Puthur, the Apostolic Administrator, to implement the Synod's decision regarding the uniform mode of celebration of the Holy Qurbana in the Archeparchy. The Synod requests everyone to cooperate wholeheartedly with the arrangements for implementing the uniform mode of celebration of the Holy *Qurbana*.

Jubilee Year

You are aware that His Holiness Pope Francis has declared the year 2025, commemorating the birth of Our Lord Jesus Christ, as an ordinary jubilee year. In this time of crises, the Holy Father invites us to be 'the Pilgrims of Hope' in the jubilee year. The goal of the jubilee year is to celebrate our faith in our Lord through the Church. The apostolic exhortation 'Hope does not disappoint us' (*spes non confundit*) has been given to us as a guideline for the jubilee celebration. We shall observe December 2024 as a month of prayer in close preparation for the jubilee.

The jubilee year will be inaugurated by lighting the jubilee candle on the night of December 24, 2024, in all cathedral churches of our eparchies and on the following Sunday in all other parish churches of our Church. A banner with the logo of the jubilee year should be installed in all churches. The eparchial bishops will issue pastoral letters explaining the various graces and indulgences that the Church grants to her children in the jubilee year. A plan of action based on the celebration of the Holy *Qurbana* and the Sacrament of Reconciliation and the promotion of pilgrimages should be implemented at the eparchial levels. We pray that the jubilee year may be an occasion to spread the new light of hope throughout

the Church and to usher in a new spring of communion and love for the Church.

New Shepherds

It is a matter of great satisfaction and joy that our Church has received the gift of two new shepherds. Mar Thomas Tharayil, currently serving as the Auxiliary Bishop of the Archeparchy of Changanacherry, has been appointed as the Metropolitan Archbishop of the said Archeparchy. The Church extends its prayerful felicitations to the Archbishop-designate, who is a well-known psychologist and a pioneer in socio-spiritual fields. We are greatly indebted to His Grace Mar Joseph Perumthottam, who served as the Metropolitan Archbishop of Changanacherry for the past twenty-two years with paternal affection, unwavering fidelity to the traditions of the Syro-Malabar Church in noble serenity. Acknowledging the services of Archbishop Mar Joseph Perumthottam with respect, we shall pray the Lord may continue to bless his austere path.

His Excellency Mar Prince Antony Panengadan is appointed as the second Bishop of Shamshabad, the largest eparchy in India in terms of territory. We are confident that His Excellency's innate missionary zeal, hard work, and simplicity of life will be of great help in the new mission. We pray that His Excellency may become the missionary face of the Church. The whole Church extends prayerful wishes to the Archeparchy of Changanacherry and the Eparchy of Shamshabad.

May the intercession and blessings of Holy Mary our Mother, St. Joseph, St. Thomas the Apostle, all the Saints, and the Blesseds be with us and all our endeavours!

Given from the Major Archiepiscopal Curia of the Syro-Malabar Church at Mount St. Thomas, Kakkanad on August 31, 2024.

Mar Raphael Thattil
Major Archbishop of the Syro-Malabar Church

Prot. No. 1133/2024

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സീറോമലബാർ പ്രേഷിതവാരാചരണം 2025

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kaÀ¸nXÀ¡pw Aeamb ktlmZc§Ä¡pw FgpXpó kÀ¡peÀ.

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hn. tbmlómsâ Hómw teJ\¯nð\mw C{]Imcw hmbn¡póp: "" BZnapXð Dïmbncpó Xpw R§Ä tI«Xpw kz´w I®pIÄ sIm ïpI ïXpw kq£n¨pho£n¨Xpw ssIsIm ïpk]Àin¨Xp amb Pohsâ hN\s¯¸än R§Ä Adnbn¡póp" (1:1). Xm³ I ïXpw tI«Xpw ssIsIm ïpk]Àin¨Xpamb Pohsâ hN\s¯ bmWp\½psS]nXmhmb amÀ tXmamÇoIm\t½mSp{]tLmjn ¨Xpw\ap¡p]IÀópXóXpw. BIbmð, t{]jnXssNX\yw kz´

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ssZhm\p`hap Å hy à n Xsâ k t I mZc § fnð ssZhs ¯ \nÝ bambpw Is ï ¯ pó p. ssZh k t\ l ¯ nsâ bpw k t I mZc k t\ l ¯ nsâ bpw CgbSp¸w tbm l ó m³ Ço I m C{] Imcw A hXcn¸n ¡ pó p: "" ImWs¸Spó k t I mZcs\ k t\ l n ¡ m ¯ h\p ImWs¸Sm ¯ ssZ hs ¯ k t\ l n ¡ m³ k m[n ¡ pI bnñ" (1 tbm l . 4:20). ssZhhN\ ¯ neqsSbpw {] mÀY\ bneqsSbpw IqZm i I fneqsSbpw ssZhhpam bp Å sF Iyw {] m] n ¡ pó Xnsâ {] Im i \ hpw {] Xn ^ e\ hpambn cn ¡ Ww \½psS ip{iqjmtaJe I Ä. Cut i mbpsS apJw A]c\nð I ï pap«pó k m I Ncy § fpw k m² yX I fpamW \½psS Ø m] \ § Ä. k otdmae _ mÀ k `bnð \ap ¡ p [mcmfw Ø m] \ § fp ï . Cu Ø m] \ § sfñmw ssZh k t\ l ¯ nsâ bpw]c k t\ l ¯ nsâ bpw t I{µ § fmbn amdpt¼mgmW A h aäp Å hÀ ¡ p kphnt i j ambn amdpó X. Cu taJebnð ^ e{] Zamb k m £ yw\ e I m³ \ap ¡ k m[n ¡ pó pt ï msb ó X B ß]cnt i m[\ bpsS hn j bam I Ww.

t{] j nX{] hÀ ¯ \w B cpsS D ¯ chmZnXzamW F ó X Kuch I c amb hn i I e\w B h i yap Å tNmZyamW. ip{iqjm] utcm I nXyw {] tXy I ambn k zo I cn¨ncn ¡ pó sa{Xmòmcpw sshZn I cpw Uo ¡ òmcpw, amt½mZo k mbneqsS s] mXp] utcm I nXyw k zo I cn¨ncn ¡ pó k aÀ¸nXcpw A eambcpw H ó n¨ t{] j nX{] hÀ ¯ \ § fnð hym] r Xcm I Wsa ó XmWp Xncp k ` B{K I n ¡ pó X. t{] j nXthe sshZn I À ¡ pw k aÀ¸nXÀ ¡ pwth ï n am{Xap Å Xñ, amt½mZo k k zo I cn¨ F ñmhcpw k zo I cnt ¡ ï PohnXZuXyamW.

sshZn I cpw k aÀ¸nXcpw t{] j nXthe ¡ mbn k abw]qÀWambpw amänh ¡ pt¼mÄ A eambÀ ¡ F{] ImcamW Cu t{] j nXZuXy ¯ nð] ¦mfn I fm I m³ k m[n ¡ pó X F ó 2024 B K Ì am k ¯ nð \S ó k otdmae _ mÀ taPÀ B À ¡ nF¸nk t I m¸ ð A k w » n hnNn ´ \wsN¿pI bp ï mbn. t{] j nXÀ ¡ pw t{] j nX{] hÀ ¯ \ § Ä ¡ pw th ï n \nc´ cw {] mÀYn ¡ m\pw {] mb Ýn ¯ {] hr ¯ nI Ä ImgNh b ¡ m\pw A eambÀ ¡ pw k m[n ¡ psa ó Xp henb t{] j nX{] hÀ ¯ \ambn A k w » n F Sp ¯ p] dbpI bp ï mbn. \ap ¡ pNpäpap Å k m I Ncy § Ä \nkzmÀYamb t{] j nX CSs] Sep I Ä B h i ys¸Spó p ï . Chb ¡ mbn k abhpw k¼ ¯ pw amänh b ¡ m³ X § fpsS PohnXm h Ø bnð \nó ps I m ï A eambÀ ¡ pw k m[n ¡ pó XmW.

\½psS k ` {] hm kn I fpsS k `bmbn amdns ¡ m ï ncn ¡ pó k m I Ncy ¯ nð hnhn[tPmen I Ä ¡ mbn kz´ w PòtZ i whn« kztZ

i s ¯ aäp Ø e § fnepw hntZ i § fnepw t] m I p ó hÀ Hcp t{] j nX k aq l amb n] cnWant ¡ ï nbncn ¡ p ó p.{] hm k tem I ¯ p Å \½psS k `mwK § fpsS hn i zm k PohnXwXs ó he nb Hcp t{] j nX k m £ y amW. ss{I k X haqey § Ä apdps I] nSn ¡ p ó I pSpw _ PohnXhpw X § Ä B bncn ¡ p ó Ø e ¯ p Å CSh I mPohnXhpw {] hm k n I fpsS t{] j nX k m £ y ¯ nsâ A Sn Ø m \ ] camb B Zy] Snbm W. X § fmbncn ¡ p ó bnS § fnð k phnt i j ¯ nsâ t{] j nXcm I m³ F ñm {] hm k na ¡ t fmSpw Cu k µÀ` ¯ nð R m³ B l zm \ w sN¿ p ó p.

k otdmae _ mÀ k `bpsS F ñm an j ³ cq ] X I fpw {] tXy I amb hn [ ¯ nð \½psS k `bpsS t{] j nX{] hÀ ¯ \ ta J e I fmW. Chn S § fnseñmw hnZym`ym k w, B Xpct k h \ w, k aq l yt k h \ w F ó o ta J e I fnð he nb t k h \ k m [ yX I fmW \ ne \ ne ¡ p ó X. Cu {] tZ i § fnte ¡ A [ ym ] I cmbpw t \ g k pamcmbpw t Um I SÀamcmbpw aä B tcmKy{] hÀ ¯ I cmbpw k maq l y{] hÀ ¯ I cmbpw I S ó p sNñm³ A eambÀ ¡ pw k m [ n ¡ pw. Cu k m [ yX k otdmae _ mÀ k `bnse A eambcpw an j ³ cq] X I fpw th ï hn [w {] t bmP \ s¸ Sp ¯ Ww. an j ³{] tZ i § Ä k µÀ i n ¡ p ó Xpw A hnSs ¯ k m l Ncy § Ä t \ cnð ¡ ï p a \ k nem ¡ p ó Xpw an j s \ k t \ l n ¡ m \ pw k l mbn ¡ m \ pap Å {] tNmZ \ w \ e I psa ó pd¸ mW.

t{] j nX{] hÀ ¯ \ § fpsS A Sn k Ym \ w Cu t i mbpsS k phnt i j amW. A Xn \ mð k phnt i j w {] k wKn ¡ p I F ó A Sn k Ym \ ] c amb ZuXyw \ nÀh l n ¡ msX t{] j nX{] hÀ ¯ \ w] qÀWam I p I bnñ. F ñm P \ X I t fmSpw k phnt i j w {] k wKn ¡ m \ p Å Cu t i mbpsS I e] \ k a I men I k aq l ¯ nð \ nÀh l n ¡ m \ p Å \ qX \ amb amÀ KamW am [ya § fpw \ h k maq l yam [ya § fpw. t k m j yð aoUnb bnð h fsct bsd k abw Nnehgn ¡ p ó hÀ ¡ , A h bpsS D] t bmK ¯ nð I qSpXð sshZK [yw D Å hÀ ¡ , I qSpXð ^ e{] Zambn k phn t i j w] ¦ phb ¡ m³ k m [n ¡ pw. Cu ta J e bnð {] mhoWyap Å F ñmh tcmSpw {] tXy I n¨ p {] nbs¸« bphP \ § t fmSpw k maq l y am [ya § fnð Cu t i mbpsS t{] j nXcm I m³ k t \ l t ¯ msS B l zm \ w sN¿ p ó p. am [ya § fneqsSbpw \ h k maq l yam [ya § fneqsSbpw k phnt i j w hnhn [coXn I fnð {] t L m j n ¡ p ó F ñmhscbpw \ µn t bmsS HmÀ ¡ p I bpw {] mÀYn ¡ p I bpwsN¿ p ó p.

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amÀ]m¸ Cu hÀjs¯ Xsâ BtKmft{]jnXZn\ktµi¯nð FgpXnbXp\½psS Ime L«¯nð Gsd{]kàamW. IÀ¯mhp kzÀK¯nð\ap¡mbnX¿mdm¡nbncn¡pó hncpónte¡p\½psS ktlmZcnktlmZcòmsc £Wn¡pó t{]jnXcmIm³ \½Ä hnfn¡s¸«ncn¡póp. Xsâ hncpón\ BZyw £Wn¡s¸«hÀhcm Xncpót¸mÄsXcphnð ImWpó Fñmhscbpw £Wn¡m³ Bsf Ab¨h\mW \½psS ssZhw. AÀlXbp ï Fóp kzbw IcpXp óhÀX§Ä¡p\eIs¸« £Ww\ntj[n¡pt¼mÄ, AÀlXbnñ Fóp IcpXnbncpóhÀ £Wn¡s¸SpIbmW.{]Xymi bpsS kphn ti jamb ssZhnIhncpónte¡pÅ £W¡¯\ap¡pNpäpapÅ {]Xymi\jSs¸«hcnte¡ F¯n¨p\eIm³ Cut{]jnXhmcmN cW¯neqsS km[n¡s«.

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Cu hÀjs¯ t{]jnXhmcmNcWw ^e{]Zambn\S¯m³ \½psS k`bnse Fñm cq]XIfpw kwLS\Ifpw kwhn[m\§fpw{]tXy Iambn XmX]cysaSp¡Wsaóp Rm\m{KIn¡póp. bphP\§fpw k¬tUkIqÄ Ip«nIfpapÄs¸sS Fñmhcnte¡pw anj³ssN X\yw]IÀóp\eIm³ ]cym]Xamb BtLmj]cn]mSnIÄ Fñm CShIIfnepw kwLSn¸n¡patñm. \½psS k`bpsS anj³{]hÀ¯\§sf GtIm]n¸n¡pó kphntijhX¡cW¯n\mbpÅ I½ojsâbpw anj³Imcymeb¯nsâbpw{]hÀ¯\§tfmSp ap³ hÀj§fnseóXpt]mse DZmcambn kIIcn¡Wsaópw Fñm htcmSpw A`yÀYn¡póp.

FñmhÀ¡pw]pXphÀj¯nð kt´mjhpw kam[m\hpw kt\I]qÀhw Biwkn¡póp.

Im¡\mS au ï skâ tXmaknepÅ taPÀ BÀ¨p_nj¸nsâ Imcymeb¯nð\nóp 2024\hw_À 25þmw XnbXn\eIs¸«X.

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Prot. No. 1133/2024

CIRCULAR

MISSION WEEK CELEBRATION OF THE SYRO-MALABAR CHURCH - 2025

Mar Raphael Thattil, 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 Jesus Christ,

As you know, the Syro-Malabar Church is celebrating the Mission Week from January 6 to 12, 2025. We have been observing Mission Week for years to familiarize ourselves with the missionary activities of our Church, to gratefully remember the missionaries, to create opportunities to assist missionary activities and to pray for the missionaries and missionary endeavours.

Every person who has received baptism is a missionary. Jesus is the source of this missionary spirit. The Church, which is the mystical body of Jesus, continues His mission. When we do the things that Jesus commanded His disciples - go, preach the Gospel, make disciples, baptize, teach, sanctify through the sacraments, lead, go about doing good, be united with God in prayer, be a community in unity - we are carrying out missionary work.

We read in the first letter of St. John: “We declare to you what was from the beginning, what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we have looked at and touched with our hands, concerning the word of life” (1:1). It is the Word of life that St. Thomas the Apostle, our Father in faith, has seen, heard, and touched with his hands, which he proclaimed to us and passed on to us. Therefore, the first thing we must do to acquire a

missionary spirit is to personally encounter and experience Jesus. Someone who has experienced God will find Him in his brothers and sisters. St. John the Apostle presents the intimacy of God's love and brotherly love thus: "Those who do not love a brother or sister whom they have seen, cannot love God whom they have not seen" (1 John 4:20). Our service areas should be the manifestation and reflection of attaining unity with God through the Word of God, prayer, and sacraments. Our institutions provide us with the circumstances and opportunities to encounter the face of Jesus in others. We have numerous institutions in the Syro-Malabar Church. When all these institutions become centres of God's love and love of our brethren, they become the Gospel to others. Whether we can bear effective witness in this area should be a matter of introspection.

Who is responsible for missionary work is a question that requires serious analysis. The Church desires that the bishops, priests and deacons who have received the ministerial priesthood and the religious and the lay faithful who have received the common priesthood through baptism engage in missionary activities together. Missionary work is not only for priests and the religious but a duty that all who have received baptism should embrace.

While priests and religious set apart their time fully for missionary work, how the laity could participate in this missionary task was a topic reflected on at the Syro-Malabar Major Archiepiscopal Assembly held in August 2024. The Assembly highlighted that praying for the missionaries and missionary activities and offering penances are great missionary works that the laity could constantly undertake. The life situations around us require selfless missionary interventions. The laity can set aside time and resources for these while remaining in their proper vocation.

As our Church is increasingly becoming a Church of migrants, those who leave their homeland for various jobs in other parts of their own country and foreign countries must transform themselves into a missionary community. The faith life of our Church members in the migrant world itself is a great missionary witness. A family

life adhering to Christian values along with a parish life where they are rooted is the fundamental first step of the missionary witness of migrants. I call upon all migrant children on this occasion to become missionaries of the Gospel wherever they are.

All the mission eparchies of the Syro-Malabar Church are missionary areas of our Church in a unique way. In all these places, there are great possibilities for ministries in the fields of education, healthcare, and social service. The laity can also enter these areas as teachers, nurses, doctors, other health workers, and social workers. The mission eparchies and the committed lay faithful of the Syro-Malabar Church should utilize this possibility appropriately. Visiting the mission areas and directly knowing the circumstances there will certainly provide inspiration to love and assist the mission.

The basis of missionary activities is the Gospel of Jesus. Therefore, missionary work will not be complete without fulfilling the fundamental mission of preaching the Gospel. A novel way to carry out Jesus' command to preach the Gospel to all nations in contemporary society is the media and the new social media. Those who spend a lot of time on social media and have more expertise in using them can share the Gospel more effectively. I lovingly call upon all those who have proficiency in this field, especially the beloved youth, to become missionaries of Jesus on social media. I gratefully remember and pray for all those who proclaim the Gospel in various ways through the media and new social media.

As you know, we are celebrating the 2025th year of the incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ as a special jubilee. On this occasion, let us also become pilgrims of hope, as the Holy Father has called for. What Pope Francis wrote in his World Mission Day message for this year is very relevant to our times. We are called to be missionaries who invite our brothers and sisters to the banquet that the Lord has prepared for us in heaven. Our God is the one who sent people to invite everyone seen on the street when those who were first invited to his banquet did not come. When those who think they are worthy refuse the invitation given to them,

those who feel they are unworthy are invited. May we be able to deliver the invitation to the divine banquet of the Gospel of hope to those around us who have lost hope, through this Mission Week celebration!

As the Syro-Malabar Church celebrates Mission Week, let us gratefully remember and pray for the divine protection of all the members of the Church who serve in the mission areas in India and abroad. Let us particularly remember the eparchies, priests, religious and various groups engaged in missionary work under lay leadership who are very active in the mission areas.

I desire that all the eparchies, organizations, and structures in our Church take special interest in conducting this year's Mission Week celebration fruitfully. I hope that a celebration will be organized in all parishes to impart missionary spirit to everyone, including the youth and Sunday school children. I request everyone to cooperate generously, as in previous years, with the activities of the Commission for Evangelization and the Mission Office, which coordinate our Church's missionary activities.

I wholeheartedly wish everyone joy and peace in the New Year!

Given from the Major Archiepiscopal Curia at Mount St. Thomas, Kakkanad on 25 November 2024.

Mar Raphael Thattil
Major Archbishop of the Syro-Malabar Church

DOCUMENTS
DECREES
LETTERS

LETTER OF THE HOLY FATHER POPE FRANCIS

accepting the resignation of Cardinal Mar George Alencherry from the Office of Major Archbishop of the Syro-Malabar Church

To My Venerable Brother
His Beatitude Mar George Cardinal Alencherry
Major Archbishop of Ernakulam-Angamaly
of the Syro-Malabar Church

As you celebrated last year your fiftieth anniversary of priestly ordination and twenty-fifth anniversary as a Bishop, I was pleased to join you in giving thanks to the Lord, expressing as well my gratitude for the dedication shown over the course of those years by your many pastoral and educational efforts and initiatives. In particular, since 2011, the year of your election as Father and Head of the Major Archepiscopal Church of Ernakulam-Angamaly, the signs of your zeal and generosity were numerous, as you laboured unceasingly for the achievement of various important milestones in the life of this Particular Church.

In this regard, I think of the recognition of the All-India jurisdiction, the establishment of the offices of the Procurator in Rome and the erection of Eparchies in Australia, Canada and Great Britain. It is also encouraging that various provisions for the pastoral care of the faithful in the Arabian Peninsula are under serious consideration. You have attended to all this without neglecting the ordinary path of the Church, in considering, together with the Synod, pastoral care in catechesis and the liturgy, formation of the clergy and accompaniment of young people, especially in the diaspora, while not forgetting to give attention and service to the poor and those most in need.

The year 2022 witnessed another important event in the life of the Saint Thomas Christians as well as in the universal Church: the 1,950th anniversary of the martyrdom of the Apostle who, according to tradition, brought the proclamation of the Gospel to India. There, as a martyr, he conformed himself totally to his Lord and God (cf. *Jn* 20:28) through the supreme sacrifice of his life. Guided by this example of Saint Thomas, and

out of love for the risen Lord and his Church, in 2019 you offered to step away from the pastoral governance of the beloved Syro-Malabar Church when faced with divisions and protests. Yet at that time, the Apostolic See accepted the judgment of the Syro-Malabar Synod of Bishops, which did not consider it the suitable moment. The Synod, however, could not fail to recognize in your request the heart of a Pastor who set the unity and mission of the Church above everything else.

Now that you have reached two significant jubilees and accomplished the pastoral objectives set for the flock entrusted to your care, I consider your resignation not as the conclusion, but the fulfilment of your service. Indeed, this step represents a further witness of fidelity to the Gospel and a new way of serving the Church, above all through contemplative and intercessory prayer, as well as by continuing to offer your counsel to the Dicasteries of the Roman Curia of which you are a member.

In light of these considerations, together with the occurrence of the centenary of the Syro-Malabar hierarchy, and always mindful of the good and unity of the People of God, I have decided to accept your resignation as a sign of your openness and docility to the Holy Spirit. Invoking the intercession of Saint Thomas the Apostle and assuring you of my prayers, I impart my blessing to you and to the whole Major Archepiscopal Church of Ernakulam-Angamaly.

Rome, from Saint John Lateran, 29 November 2023

Franciscus

Prot. No. 1197/2023

മേജർ ആർച്ചുബിഷപ്പിന്റെ സ്ഥാനത്തുനിന്നു രാജിവച്ചത് അറിയിച്ചുകൊണ്ട് കർദ്ദിനാൾ ജോർജ് ആലഞ്ചേരി പിതാവ് എഴുതിയ കത്ത്

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Prot. No. 1197/2023

LETTER OF CARDINAL GEORGE ALENCHERRY

announcing his resignation from the Office of Major Archbishop

Dearly beloved,

By the grace of God, I have been serving the Syro-Malabar Church as its Major Archbishop since May 29, 2011. It was through the blessing of God Almighty that I was able to carry out my responsibilities as the Major Archbishop.

As some of you may be aware, I communicated to the Holy Father on July 19, 2019, my intention to retire from my position as the Major Archbishop. This decision was made after carefully considering the increasing pastoral demands on our Church and my health condition. Although I eagerly requested the approval of my abdication, the Holy Father sought the opinion of the Synod of the Syro-Malabar Church before endorsing my decision. The Synod did not approve my decision.

After further prayerful reflection, I submitted my resignation again on November 15th, 2022, to the Holy Father, expressing my desire to be relieved of my responsibilities as the Major Archbishop of the Syro-Malabar Church. Although the Holy Father Pope Francis did not make an immediate decision, I am pleased to announce that he has accepted my resignation after one year and given his consent to the abdication of my office. Therefore, I formally resign from the position of the Major Archbishop of the Syro-Malabar Church, to be effective today, 7th of December, 2023. Your continued prayers and support during this transition are greatly appreciated.

As per the Code of the Canons of the Eastern Churches, once the See of the Major Archbishop becomes vacant, the Curia Bishop, in the present instance, Bishop Mar Sebastian Vaniyapurackal will be the Administrator of the Church until a new Major Archbishop assumes the Office.

Yours in Christ,

Cardinal George Alencherry

HIS HOLINESS POPE FRANCIS' VIDEO MESSAGE TO THE ARCHEPARCHY OF ERNAKULAM-ANGAMALY OF THE SYRO-MALABAR CHURCH

7 DECEMBER 2023

Brothers and Sisters of the Archeparchy of Ernakulam-Angamaly, I am close to you! I have been following you for years. I know about the faith and apostolic commitment of the beloved Syro-Malabar Church which is a source of joy and pride for the Universal Church, and this is why my heart is saddened as I speak to you today.

After a long and tiring work, your Synod reached an agreement on the way to celebrate *Holy Qurbana*. Charity and love of communion spurred its members to take this step, even though some of them do not consider it an ideal form of celebration. These are the sacrifices required by communion!

But the Church is communion. If there is no communion, then there is no Church. It would be a sect.

I know that for years, some, who should be examples and true teachers of communion, mostly priests, have been pressing you to disobey and oppose the decisions of the Synod. Brothers and sisters, do not follow them!

When discussions are not peaceful, they create violence. And there has been and there is violence among you, especially against those who want to remain in communion and celebrate the way your Church has agreed upon.

I too have urged you multiple times to be docile to your Church. How can there be the Eucharist, if communion is broken, if the Most Blessed Sacrament is disrespected, with fighting and brawls?

I know there are reasons for opposition that have nothing to do with celebrating the Eucharist or the liturgy. They are worldly

reasons. They do not come from the Holy Spirit. If they do not come from the Holy Spirit, then they come from somewhere else.

This is why I examined closely and attentively, the reasons that have been used for years to convince you. I have already written to you several times in the past, but I know that my letters were not read out to everyone.

I have now decided to address you, the holy faithful people of God, the clergy, men and women religious, and especially you, dear lay faithful, who have great faith in the Lord and love the Church. And I am doing it in a slightly unusual way, so that no one may have any more doubts about what the Pope thinks.

In the name of the Lord, for the spiritual good of your Church, of our Church, I ask you to heal this rupture. It is your Church, it is our Church. Re-establish communion, remain in the Catholic Church!

And you, presbyters, remember your ordination and the commitments you took on. Do not separate yourselves from the journey of your Church, but rather walk with the Synod, with your Bishops, with the Major Archbishop. Accept putting into practice what was decided by your Synod.

I have sent Archbishop Cyril Vasil' as my Delegate. He came among you, and he too, on my behalf, has asked you to put an end to this fight, to put an end to the opposition and sometimes, to the violence — there has been some!

Do you not see that in this way the Church is at a standstill and many initiatives of goodwill can no longer be put at the service of the Holy people of God, at the service of the sanctification of the People of God?

Make it so that by Christmas 2023, your Archdiocese will humbly and faithfully agree to keep the pace with the rest of your Church, respecting all the indications of your Synod.

I ask you to be careful! Be careful that the devil does not lead you to transform yourselves into a sect. You are churches, do not become a sect. Do not force the competent ecclesiastic Authority

to acknowledge you as having left the Church because you are no longer in communion with your Pastors and with the Successor of the Apostle Peter, called to confirm all brothers and sisters in the faith and to preserve them in the unity of the Church. With great sorrow, sanctions would be incurred. I do not want to reach that stage.

Thus by Christmas, in the Archeparchy of Ernakulam-Angamaly as throughout the Syro-Malabar Church, may Qurbana be celebrated in communion according to the directions of the Synod. Remember your Major Archbishop in your liturgy and pray for him. This has always been an important sign - that you recognize yourselves in the unity of the Church. Then it will be Christmas for all your people, for everyone.

Please do not continue to wound the Body of Christ! Do not separate yourselves from it! And even though there have been some grievances against you, forgive them with generosity. May the Eucharist be the model of your unity. Do not shatter the Body of Christ which is the Church, so as not to eat and drink judgment upon yourselves. (cf. 1 Cor 11:29). May the Lord bless you and the Holy Spirit illuminate you. And please do not forget to pray for me. Thank you!

DECREE

Appointing Bishop Bosco Puthur the Apostolic Administrator of the Archeparchy of Ernakulam-Angamaly

Prot. N. 207/2023

DICASTERIUM PRO ECCLESIIS ORIENTALIBUS

D E C R E T U M

Cum per renuntiationem Em.mi D.ni Georgii Card. Alencherry a munere Archiepiscopi Maioris, ad normam canonis 126 §2 CCEO, Archieparchia Ernakulamensis-Angamaliensis Ecclesiae Syro-Malabarensis vacans exstitisset;

attento quod Exc.mus D.nus Andreas Thazhath, Archiepiscopus Metropolitanus Trichuriensis ac Praeses Catholicorum Episcoporum Conferentiae in India, enixe petiverit ut renuntiatio ab officio Administratoris Apostolici supra dictae Archieparchiae acciperetur;

quo melius spirituali bono christifidelium eiusdem Archieparchiae prospiceretur et speciali modo legibus liturgicis a Synodo Episcoporum Ecclesiae Syro-Malabarensis latis impleretur,

SUMMUS PONTIFEX FRANCISCUS PP.,

referente in Audientia die XVIII mensis Novembris hoc vertente anno infrascripto huius Dicasterii Cardinali Praefecto, Administratorem Apostolicum praefatae Archieparchiae ab hodierna die et ad nutum Sanctae Sedis nominare dignatus est **Exc.mum D.num Bosco Puthur**, Episcopum emeritum Sancti Thomae Apostoli Melburnensis Syro-Malabarensium, cunctis cum iuribus, obligationibus et privilegiis Episcopi eparchialis muneri adnexis, ad normam sacrorum canonum 190–211 et salvo canone 154 CCEO.

Praesens Decretum Summus Pontifex fieri et mitti iussit.

Contrariis quibuslibet minime obstantibus.

Datum Romae, ex aedibus Dicasterii pro Ecclesiis Orientalibus,
die VII mensis Decembris A.D. MMXXIII

Claudius Card. Gugerotti
Praefectus

P. Michaël Jalakh, oam
a Secretis

LETTER OF CLAUDIO CARDINAL GUGEROTTI

to Bishop Bosco Puthur, Apostolic Administrator of Ernakulam-Angamaly, regarding the implementation of uniform mode of celebration of the Holy *Qurbana* from 25 December 2023

CONGREGATIO
PRO ECCLESIIS ORIENTALIBUS

Dicasterium a die 5 Iunii 2022

00193 Roma
Via della Conciliazione, 34
Indirizzo postale: 00120 Città del Vaticano

December 7, 2023

Prot. N. 144/2023

Your Excellency,

This Dicastery has received the proposals of the committee for dialogue created during the last session of the Synod of Bishops, which Your Excellency, as Convener of the aforesaid committee, forwarded to the Apostolic See on 12 September 2023 through the Pontifical Delegate for the Archeparchy of Ernakulam-Angamaly, His Grace Cyril Vasil', S.J., Archbishop-Bishop of Košice.

I have presented the matter to His Holiness Pope Francis, who decided to make a final appeal to the conscience of the clergy and lay faithful of the Archeparchy. As indicated by the Holy Father, this Dicastery instructs that the Holy *Qurbana* in the synodal form be implemented in all parishes and other centres in the Archeparchy no later than 25 December 2023. Given the great scandal around Christmas 2022 caused by the abusive Eucharistic celebration and subsequent conflict in the Cathedral, His Holiness has established Christmas 2023 as a symbolic definitive date.

The Holy Father has also directed that His Delegate, Archbishop Vasil', who maintains all of his canonical prerogatives and faculties concerning the Sacred Liturgy, accompany and authenticate the necessary preparations.

With prayerful best wishes and cordial regards in Christ, I remain,

Sincerely yours,

Claudio Card. Gugerotti
Prefect

Fr. Michel Jalakh, oam
Secretary

His Excellency
The Most Reverend Bosco PUTHUR
Bishop *emeritus* of St. Thomas the Apostle of Melbourne
Apostolic Administrator of Ernakulam-Angamaly
Ernakulam, Post Box N. 2580
KOCHI 682 031, Kerala, India

HIS HOLINESS POPE FRANCIS' ADDRESS

to the new Major Archbishop, delegation of Bishops, representatives of priests, religious and lay faithful of the Syro-Malabar Church

Consistory Hall, Vatican, Monday, 13 May 2024

Your Beatitude,

Your Excellencies,

Dear brothers and sisters,

I am pleased to welcome you, your brother bishops and those who have accompanied you on your first trip to Rome after your election. It was good to have this election! I also fraternally greet the representatives of the Syro-Malabar community in Rome.

The faithful of your beloved Church are known, not only in India, but throughout the whole world, for the "vigour" of their faith and piety. Your faith is of an ancient origin, as it is rooted in the witness to the point of martyrdom of Saint Thomas, the Apostle of India. You are all custodians and heirs of his apostolic preaching. You have had many challenges over the course of your long and difficult history, which has also seen some members of the faith commit unfortunate acts against you because of their insensitivity to the particular nature of your flourishing Church. Yet, you have remained faithful to the Successor of Peter. And so it gives me great joy to welcome all of you and to confirm you in the glorious legacy that you have received and which you carry forward. You are obedient, and where obedience is present, there is the Church. Where there is disobedience, there is schism. You are obedient; this is one of your glorious attributes: obedience. I know this is not without suffering, but continue to press forward.

Your history is unique and precious, and it is a special heritage for all God's holy people. And I take this opportunity to stress that Eastern traditions are indispensable treasures in the life of the Church. This

is especially important to recall in a time like ours, which severs the roots connecting us to the past and measures everything based on what is useful and immediate. This unfortunately can also include religious attitudes. The Christian East allows us to draw from ancient and ever new sources of spirituality; these become fresh springs that bring vitality to the Church. It is, therefore, good for me, as Bishop of Rome, to encourage you, the Syro-Malabar Catholic faithful, wherever you are, to cultivate the sense of belonging you have to your Church sui iuris, so that your great liturgical, theological, spiritual and cultural heritage may shine ever more brightly. I also told His Beatitude to ask for jurisdiction with regard to all your migrants in so many parts of the Middle East. I said that they have to ask for jurisdiction in writing, but I have given it today and they can already exercise it. This has to be put in writing, but again, as of today, you can exercise it. I wish to help you, not supersede you, because the nature of your Church sui iuris empowers you not only to examine carefully the situations and challenges that you face, but also to take appropriate steps to address them, with responsibility and evangelical courage, remaining faithful to the guidance of the Major Archbishop and the Synod. This is what the Church wants, for apart from Peter, apart from the Major Archbishop, there is no Church.

To this end, I have recently sent letters and a video message to the faithful, warning them of the dangerous temptation to focus on one detail, and an unwillingness to let it go, even to the detriment of the good of the Church. It stems from a self-referentiality, which leads to listening to no other way of thinking but one's own. In Spanish we call this self-referentiality "yo, me, mi, conmigo, para mí": "I, me, with me, for me, everything for me". It is here that the devil, the divider, who truly exists, creeps in and thwarts the most heartfelt desire that the Lord expressed before dying for us: that we, his disciples, be "one" (Jn 17:21), without division and without breaking communion. For this reason, guarding unity is not a pious exhortation but a duty, and it is especially so when it concerns priests who have promised obedience and from whom the faithful expect the example of charity and meekness.

Your Beatitude, let us work with determination to protect communion and pray tirelessly that our brothers and sisters, tempted by a worldliness that leads to rigidity and division, may realize that they are part of a larger family that loves them and waits for them. Like the Father in the parable of the prodigal son, let us leave the doors open and our hearts open so that, once they have repented, they will not find it difficult to re-enter (cf. *Evangelii Gaudium*, 46): we are waiting for them. Let us meet and discuss without fear, this is fine, but above all, let us pray, so that the light of the Spirit, which reconciles differences and brings tensions back into unity, may resolve disputes. There is one certainty: pride, recriminations and envy do not come from the Lord and never lead to concord and peace. Showing a grave lack of respect for the Blessed Sacrament - the Sacrament of charity and unity – by arguing about the details of how to celebrate the Eucharist, the pinnacle of his presence among us, is incompatible with the Christian faith. The guiding criterion, the truly spiritual one that derives from the Holy Spirit, is communion: this requires us to do a self-examination of our dedication to unity and our faithful, humble, respectful and obedient care for the gifts we have received.

I would like to say to everyone, in moments of difficulty and crisis, do not be overcome by discouragement or a sense of helplessness in the face of problems. Brothers and sisters, let us not extinguish hope, grow weary of patience, or close ourselves off to prejudices that fuel animosities. Rather, let us think about the vast horizon of the mission that the Lord has entrusted to us, the mission to be a sign of his loving presence in the world, and not a scandal to those who do not believe! When making decisions, let us think of the poor and the estranged, those on the peripheries, in India and the diaspora, and those in an existential crisis. Let us also be mindful of those who are suffering and waiting for signs of hope and consolation. I know that the lives of Christians in many places are difficult, but the difference is that we Christians respond to evil with good and we work tirelessly with all believers for the good of humanity.

I would like to thank you for your Church's commitment in the areas of family formation and catechesis, and I support your pastoral work aimed at youth and vocations. I am close to you in prayer and carry you in my heart every day. Please also take my encouragement to your brothers and sisters.

Together we look to Jesus, crucified and risen, who loves us and makes us one, who wants us united as one family around one altar. Like the Apostle Thomas, let us look at his wounds. They are still visible today on the bodies of the hungry, thirsty and discarded, those in prisons, hospitals and on the streets. As we touch these brothers and sisters with tenderness, we welcome the living God in our midst. Like St. Thomas, we look at the wounds of Jesus, which had stunned the disciples and could have thrown them into a hopeless guilt, and see that it is from those wounds the Lord made channels of forgiveness and mercy. A big heart, always a big heart! What amazement must have seized the Apostle Thomas as he contemplated them and saw his doubts and fears vanish before the greatness of God! It is an amazement that generates hope, an amazement that prompted him to go out, to cross new borders and to become your father in faith. Let us cultivate this amazement of faith, which enables us to overcome every obstacle!

And you, dear faithful of the Syro-Malabar community in Rome, descendants of the Apostle Thomas in the city of Peter and Paul, have a special role to play. From this Church, which presides over the universal communion of charity (cfr. Saint Ignatius of Antioch, Letter to the Romans), you are called to pray and cooperate in a special way for unity within your Church, not only in Kerala but also throughout India and the whole world. Kerala is a treasure-trove of vocations! Let us pray that it will continue to be so.

Your Beatitude, thank you for this fraternal visit; I am pleased by it. Dear brothers and sisters, from the bottom of my heart I bless you and entrust you to the Virgin Mary, Saint Thomas the Apostle and your saints and martyrs; and I ask you, please do not forget to pray for me. Thank you, thank you very much!

സീറോമലബാർസഭയുടെ നാലാമത്തെ മേജർ ആർച്ചുബിഷപ് അഭിവന്ദ്യ മാർ റാഫേൽ തട്ടിൽ പിതാവിന്റെ ആദ്യത്തെ ഔദ്യഗിക സന്ദർശനവേളയിൽ മെത്രാന്മാരും വൈദികരും സമർപ്പിതരും അല്മായരും ഉൾപ്പെട്ട സീറോമലബാർ സമൂഹത്തോടു പരിശുദ്ധ പിതാവ് ഫ്രാൻസിസ് മാർപാപ്പ നടത്തിയ പ്രസംഗം.

(കൺസിസ്റ്ററി ഹാൾ, വത്തിക്കാൻ, 2024 മെയ് 13, തിങ്കൾ)

B ZcWob taPÀ B À¨p_nj¸, hµy]nXm¡ òmtc,{]nb k t l m Zcokt l mZcòmtc,

A § sb bpw A § bpsS k t l mZcsa{Xmòmscbpw taPÀ B À¨p_n j¸mbnsXcs ª Sp¡s¸«Xn\pti jw A § p \S¯pó B Zys¯ tdmambm{Xbnð A § sb A \p[mh\wsN¿póhscbpw kzmKXw sN¿m³ F \n¡ Gsd kt´mjapï. Cu sXcs ª Sp¸p \SóXp \ómbn. tdmansekotdmae_mÀkaql¯nsâ {]Xn\n[nIsfbpw Rm³ kmtl mZcyt¯mssS A`nhmZyw sN¿póp.

\n§ fpsS{]nb k`bpsS hniznknIÄ C´ybnð am{Xañ, temI ¯mIam\whniznk¯nsâbpw`à nbpsSbpwXo£WXbmð Adn bs¸Spóhcmw. `mcX¯nsâ At¸mkXe\mb tXm½mÇo lm bpsSc à km£nXzkm£y¯nð thcqónbncn¡póXn\mð AXn ]pcmX\amW \n§ fpsS hniznk¯nsâ DÛhw. \n§ sfñmhcpw At± l¯nsâ A¸ktXmenI{]t_m[\§ fpsS kq£n¸plmcpw Ahlmin I fpamW. \n§ fpsSZoÀL hpwZpj Ichpamb Ncn{X¯nð, hniznk lq«mbabnseNne AwK§Ä, A`nhr²n{]m]n¡pó \n§ fpsS k`bpsS{]tXyI kz`mhwa\Ênem¡msX, \n§ Äs¡Xnsc \nÀ`mKyIcamb {]hr¯nIÄ sN¿póXpÄs¸sSbpÅ \nch[n shñphnfnIÄ \n§ Ä¡ t\cntSïnhón«pï. Fón«pw \n§ Ä]t{Xmknsâ]n³KmantbmS Fópw AN ôeamb Iqdp]peÀ¯n. AXpsImï, \n§ sfsbñmhscbpw kzmKXwsN¿póXn\pw \n§ Ä kzoIcn¨Xpwaptóm«psImïpt]mhpIbpwsN¿pó \n§ fpsSal ¯z]qÀ®amb]mc¼cy¯nð \n§ sf kYncoIcn¡póXn\pw F \n¡phenb B \µwtXmópóp. \n§ Ä A \pkcWbpÅhcmW; A \pkcWbpÅnS¯ k`bpï. A \pkcWt¡SpÅnS¯ ioia Dïmhpw. \n§ Ä A \pkcWbpÅhcmW; A \pkcWw \n§ fpsS henb KpW§ fnð HómW. CX kl \w CñmsX Añ Fsó \n ¡dnbmw, Fómepw XpSÀópw aptóm«pt]mhpI.

A \ \yhpw Aaqeyhpamw \n§ fpsS Ncn{Xw; AXp ssZh ¯nsâ Fñm hnip² P\XIfpsSbpw Hcp {]tXyI ss]XrIamW.]uc kXy]mc¼cy§Ä k`bpsS PohnX ¯nse amän\nÀ¯m\mhm¯ \n[nIfmW Fó Dd¸n¨p]dbm³ Cu Ahkcw Rm³ D]tbmKn ¡póp. Ign ª Imehpambn \s½ _Ôn¸n¡pó I®nIÄ apdn¨p IfbpIbpw F´mW D]Imc{]Zhpw ASnb´chpw Fópam{Xw IW¡m¡nXocpam\§Ä FSp¡pIbpwsN¿pó \½ptSXpt]mse bpÅ Hcp Ime L«¯nð AXp khntijambn A\pkacn¡póX Gsd {]kàamW. \nÀ`mKyhimð aX]camb kao]\§fnepw Cuat\m`mhwDï.]uckXyss{IkXhÀ \s½ BßobXbpsS {]mNo\hpw \nXy\qX\amb t{kmXkpIfnð \nóp \pIcm³ A\p hZn¡póp; k`b¡p Ne\mß IX]Icpó]p¯³ DdhIfmbn AXp amdpIbmW. AXpsImï p tdmanse sa{Xm³ Fó \nebnð kotdmae_mÀ It¯men¡mk`mwK§fmb \n§sf, al¯mb Bcm[\m]chpw Bßobhpw kmwk Imcn Ihpamb \n§fpsSss] XrIw Fópw Gsd Xnf¡t¯msS {]Imin Xam IpóXn\pthïn, \n§Ä FhnsSbmbmepw \n§fpsS kzbw`cWmhImiapÅ k` tbmSptNÀóp\ne¡m³ \n§sf Rm³ t{]mÕmIn¸n¡póp.a[y ]qÀhtZi¯pÅ \n§fpsS Fñm IpSntbä¡mcpsStaepw `cWm [nImcwe`n¡póXn\mbn tNmZn¡m³ taPÀ BÀ¨p_nj¸nt\mSp Rm³ ]d ª n«pï.Cu`cWmhImi¯n\mbn tcJmaqew Bhiy s¸Sm\mW Rm³]d ª X, Fómð B A[nImcw Cóp \n§ Ä¡p Rm³ \eIpóp; AX\n§Ä¡ hn\ntbmKn¨p XpS§mhpó XmW. AXp tcJmaqew Bt¡ ïXpï,]t£ \n§Ä¡ Cóp apXð AXphn\ntbmKn¡mw. Rm³ \n§sfadnIS¡m\ñ, kImbn ¡póXn\mW B{KIn¡póX; ImcWw \n§fpsS k`bpsS kzbw `cWmhImi kz`mha\pkcn¨ \n§Ä t\cnSpó kmlNcy§ sfbpw shñphnfnIsfbpw {i²tbmsS hnebncp¯póXn\pam{X añ taPÀ BÀ¨p_nj¸nsâbpw kn\Unsâbpw \nÀt±it¯mSp hnizkXX]peÀ¯s¡mï, D¯chmZn¯t¯mSpw kphntij [ocXtbmSpwIqSn Ahsb t\cnSpóXn\pthï DNnXamb \S]Sn lÄ kzoIcn¡póXn\pw\n§Ä¡ A[nImcapï.CXmW k`Bh iys¸SpóX;]t{Xmknsâ IqSmsX, taPÀ BÀ¨p_nj¸ns\IqSmsX k`bnñ.

Cu e£yt¯msS, Hcp Imcy¯nð am{Xw tI{µoIcn¨psImïp, k`bpsS \òb¡ A]ISw hcp¯ns¡mïpt]mepw, hn«phogNbn ñmsXISpw]nSp¯¯n\pÅ{]tem`\wDïm¡pó B]¯ns\¡p

dn¨pap ó dnbn¸p\e Ins¡m ï ASp¯ Ime¯mbn Rm³ hnizmkn IÄ¡p I¯pIfpw hoUntbmktµihpw Ab¡pIbp ïmbn. Cu{]tem`\wapfsbSp¡pó XpXtâXñm¯asämcpNn´mcoXnsbbpw{i²n¡m¯, kzbw am\ZWVam¡pó ssienbnð\nópamW. k]m\nj`mjbnð kzbwam\ZWVam¡pó ssiensb R§Ä C§s\ hnhcn¡mdp ï:"Rm³, F\n¡, Fsâ IqsS, F\n¡pth ïn, Fñmw F\n¡pth ïn'. ChnsSbmW]nimN, `nón¸n¡pó h³, bYmÀY¯nð \ne\ne¡pó h\mb Ah³, \pg ª pIbdn, \½psS IÀ¯mhpacn¡pó Xn\pap¼p{]ISn¸n¨, hn`P\tam Iq«mbabpsS XIÀ¨tbm CñmsX, AhnSps¯ injycmb \½Ä HómIWw (tbmI.17:21) Fó Gähpw IrZbk]Àinbmb B{KIs¯ XInSw adn¡pó X.C¡mcW¯mð,sFIyw\ne\ndp¯pI FóXptIhew Hcp\ñD]tZiwam{Xañ, IÀ¯hyamW;{]tXyIn¨pw A\pkcW hmKZm\wsNbXn«pÅXpw, s]cpamä¯nð D]hnbpw im´Xbpw hnizmknIÄ{]Xo£n¡pó Xpamb sshZnIcpsS Imcy¯nð.

BZcWob taPÀ BÀ¨p_nj¸, Iq«mba]cn]men¡pó Xn\p \nÝbZmÀVyt¯msS \ap¡p{]hÀ¯n¡pIbpw ImÀ¡iy¯n te¡pw `nón¸nte¡pw \bn¡pó euInIXbmð{]tem`n¡s¸Spó \½psS ktImZcoktImZcòmÀ, X§sf kt\ In¡pIbpw X§Ä¡mbn Im¯ncn¡pIbpw sN¿pó henb IpSpw_¯nsâ `mK amWpX§sfópXncn¨dnbpóXn\mbn A£oWw{]mÀYn¡pIbpw sN¿mw. Hcn¡ð A\pX]n¡pt¼mÄ AhÀ¡pXncnsI{]thin¡p óXn\p (cf. kphntij¯nsâ B\µw, 46) Hcp XSkhpw Dïm Im Xncn¡m³ [qÀ¯]p{Xsâ D]abnse ]nXmhns\t¸mse \ap¡p hmXnepIÄ XpdópXsóbnSmw; \½psS IrZb§fpw XpdónSmw; \mw AhÀ¡pth ïn Im¯ncn¡póp. `bw IqSmsX \ap¡ Hcpan¨p hcnIbpw NÀ¨sN¿pIbpw sN¿mw, AXp\ñXmW; Fómð Fñm än\pap]cn, `nóXIsf A\pcRPn¸n¡pIbpw kwLÀj§sf sFIy¯nte¡pXncnsIsIm ïphcnIbpw sN¿pó]cnip²mßm hnsâ{]Imiw XÀ¡§Ä]cnIcn¡pó Xn\mbn \ap¡p{]mÀ Yn¡mw. Hcp Imcyw Dd¸mW: AI¦mchpw]ck]capÅ Ipäs¸Sp¯epIfpw Akqbbpw IÀ¯mhnð\nópÅXñ; Ah Hcn¡epw tbmPn¸nte¡pw kam[m\¯nte¡pw \bn¡nñ. \ap¡nSbnse AhnSs¯ kmón[y¯nsâ]ctamóXcq]amb, kt\I¯nsâbpw sFIy¯nsâbpw IqZmibmb]cnip² IpÀ_m\tbmS, AXnsâ AÀ¸Ws¯ ¡pdn¨pÅ hniZmwi§sf¡pdn¨pÅ XÀ¡waqew ImWn¡pó ISp¯ A\mZch ss{IkXhhnizmk¯n\p hncp²

amb {]hr¯nbmW. \s½ hgn\bnt¡ï am\ZWUw,]cni p²m ßmhnð\nóp hcpó bYmÀY BßobXbpsS am\ZWUamb Iq«mbabmW: CX sF Iy¯n\mbpÅ \½psS kaÀ¸Ws¯bpw \ap¡pe`n¨ Zm\§tfmSpÅ hni zkXhpw hn\bm\znXhpw BZc]qÀhIhpamb kao]\s¯bpwIpdn¨ Bß]cntim[\ \S¯m³ \t½mS Bhiys¸Spóp.

_p²nap«pIfpsSbpw{]Xnk ÔnIfpsSbpw kab§fnð \ncpÕm Ita m \nk ImbXmt_m[tam \n§sf Iogs¸Sp¯m³ A\phZn ¡cpsXó Fñmhtcm Spw]dbm³ Rm³ B{KIn¡póp. ktlmZco ktlmZcòmtc, \ap¡p{]Xymi sISp¯msXbpw £aImWn¡p óXnð XfÀópt]mImsXbpw hntZz jw Du«nhfÀ¯pó ap³hn[n Ifmð AS¨p]q«s¸SmsXbpancn¡mw.]nsótbm, IÀ¯mhp \s½ Ge¸n¨ncn¡pó hnimeamb D¯chmZn¯§sf¡pdn¨, Ahni zm knlÄ¡pCSÀ¨bmImsX, temI¯nð AhnSs¯kmón[y¯nsâ ASbmfamIpóXn\pÅ hnfnsb¡pdn¨pNn´n¡mw. Xocpam\§Ä FSp¡pt¼mÄ C´ybnepw]pd¯papÅ]mh§sfbpw]cnXy à scbpw]mÀizhX¡cn¡s¸«hscbpw AkXnXz{]Xnk Ôn tlcn Spóhscbpw Ipdn¨p \ap¡pNn´n¡mw.{]Xymi bpsSbpw km´z\ ¯nsâbpw ASbmf§Ä¡mbn Im¯ncn¡póthZ\ A\p`hn¡p óhsc \ap¡p IW¡nseSp¡mw.]ekYe¯pwss{IkXhcpsS PohnXw henb _p²nap«nemsWó F\n¡dnbmw; Fómð ss{IkXhcmb \mwXnòtbmSp{]XnIcn¡póX\òsImïmW FóXpw Fñm hnizmknlÄ¡psam¸w \mw am\hIpe¯nsâ \ò¡mbn A£oWw{]bX\n¡póp FóXpamW \½psS hyXymkw.

IpSpw_cq]oIcWw, aXt_m[\w Fóo taJeIfnð \n§fpsS k`]peÀ¯pó{]Xn_²Xb¡p\µn]dbm³ Rm³ B{KIn¡pó tXmsSm¸wbphP\§sfbpwssZhhnfnIsfbpwe£yam¡nbpÅ \n§fpsS AP]me\{]hÀ¯\§sf Rm³]n´pW¡póp.{]mÀ Y\bnð Rm³ \n§tfmsSm¸apï; Fsâ IrZb¯nð FñmZnh khpw \n§sf kwhIn¡pIbpwsN¿póp. Fsâ Cut{]mÕm I\w \n§fpsS ktlmZcoktlmZcòmcnte¡pw F¯n¡pI.

\s½ ktl\In¡pIbpw \s½ Hóm¡pIbpwsN¿pó, AÄ¯m cb¡pNpäpw \mw Hcp IpSpw_ambn sFIy¯nð BIWsaó B{KIn¡pó, {IqinX\pw D°m\wsNbXh\pamb Cutimbn te¡p \ap¡ Hcpan¨p t\m¡mw. tXm½mÇoImsbt¸mse \ap¡ AhnSs¯apdnhpIfnte¡pt\m¡mw.hni¡póhsâbpwZmIn¡p

ó hsâ bpw]cnXy à sâ bpw XShdbnepw B ip]{Xn I fnepw sXcp thmc § fnepw Ignbpó hcpsSbpw icoc § fnð Cóp \mw AXp ImWpóp. Cu k t l mZcokt l mZcòmsc \mw BÀ{ZXtbmsS k]Àin¡pt¼mÄ Pohn¡pó ssZhs¯ \ap¡nSbnte¡ \mw kzmKXwsN¿p I bmW. A¸ktXmeòmsc kX Ï cm¡p I bpw{]Xym ibnñm¯ Ipät_m[¯nte¡ Fdnbs¸Sm³ ImcWhpambncpó Cutimbpss apdnhpIfnte¡p tXm½mÇo I msbt¸mse \ap¡p t\m¡p I bpw B apdnhpIfnð \nómW IÀ¯mh £abpsSbpw IcpWbpsSbpw \oÀ¨mepIÄ {]h In¸n¨X FóXp a\ knem¡p I bpw sN¿mw. Hcp henb IrZbw; Fñmbt¸mgpw Hcp henb IrZbw! Ahsb¡pdn¨ [ym\n¡p I bpw Xsâ kwib § fpw `b § fpw Ahnsps¯ a l¯z¯n\papónð A{]Xy£ambX ImWp I bpw sNbXt¸mÄ tXm½mÇo I mb¡ F{X henb hnkabambncn¡pw D ï mbX!{]Xymi P\n¸n¡pó hnkabamWX;]pdt¯ ind§m³,]pXnb AXnÀ¯nIÄ adnIS¡m³, A§s\ hnizmk¯nð \n§ fpsS]nXmhmIm³ At±ls¯ t{]cn¸n¨ hnkabw! Fñm XSÊ §sfbpw adnIS¡m³ \s½{]m]Xcm¡pó hnizmk¯nsâ Cu hnkabw \ap¡pw hfÀ¯nsbSp¡mw.

]t{Xmknsâbpw]utemknsâbpw \Kcamb tdmanse amÀt¯m ½mbpssS a¡fmb, tdmanse {]nb kotdmae_mÀ hnizmknItf, \n§Ä¡ Hcp{]tXyI ZuXyw \ndthäm\pï.D]hnbpsS kmÀh {XnI Iq«mbabnð A[y£ywhIn¡pó (cf. At´ymIymbnse hn. Ctájyknsâ tdmam¡mÀ¡pÅ I¯) Cu k`bnð \nóp, tIcf ¯nð am{Xañ `mcX¯nepw temIw apgph\nepw \n§ fpsS k` bnsesF Iy¯n\pth ïn{]mÀYn¡m\pw{]tXyI hn[¯nð k l l cn¡phm\pwth ïn \n§Ä hnfn¡s¸«ncn¡póp. ssZhhnfnIfpsS \n[ntiJcamWtIcfw! AXA§s\ XpScm³ \ap¡p{]mÀYn¡mw.

BZcWob taPÀ BÀ¨p_nj], A§bpsS ktlmZc\nÀhnti jambkµÀi\¯n\p\µn. AXnð F\n¡ Gsd B\µapï.{]nb ktlmZcokt l mZcòmtc, IrZb¯nsâ AKm[Xbnð \nóp Rm³ \n§sf B ioÀhZn¡pImbpw]cnip²I\yImadnb¯n\pw amÀ t¯m½mÇo I mb¡pw \n§ fpsSh nip²À¡pwc à km£nIÄ¡pw Rm³ \n§sf `ctað¸n¡pIbpw sN¿pótXmsSm¸w F\n¡p th ïn{]mÀYn¡m³ ad¡cptX Fó A`yÀYn¡pIbpwsN¿póp. FñmhÀ¡pw \µn, H¯ncn \µn.

Prot. No. 0020/2024

DECREE

of the Major Archbishop appointing Mar Joseph Kollamparampil the Administrator of Eparchy of Shamshabad

Greetings and blessings in the Lord Jesus Christ

to

MAR JOSEPH KOLLAMPARAMPIL,

Auxiliary Bishop of the Eparchy of Shamshabad

The XXXII Synod (2024) Session I of the Synod of Bishops of the Syro-Malabar Church has elected Bishop Raphael Thattil, the Bishop of the Eparchy of Shamshabad, the Major Archbishop Syro-Malabar Church. Having obtained the confirmation of the Holy Father Pope Francis, the new Major Archbishop was enthroned on 11 January 2024, and the Eparchy of Shamshabad became vacant as per c.219 of CCEO.

In order that the people of God of every eparchy may grow and progress in faith and that they may not be left without a pastor of their own in the event of a vacant See, in accordance with the norms of law c. 220 § 3 of CCEO which specifies that the Major Archbishop should appoint Administrator to that eparchy within the stipulated time.

After mature reflection and required consultations, I have found you the most fitting person to be the Administrator of the Eparchy of Shamshabad. Therefore, in conformity with c. 220 §2 and c. 227 of CCEO, I, the Major Archbishop of the Syro-Malabar Church, appoint you **ADMINISTRATOR OF THE EPARCHY OF SHAMSHABAD** with all the rights and obligations attached to this Office, as specified in cc. 229 & 230 of CCEO, with effect from 13 January, 2024. However, the powers of the Administrator

should be exercised only after making the profession of faith in the presence of the Major Archbishop and taking possession of the Office by showing this letter of appointment to the college of eparchial consultors, as specified c. 220 §4 of CCEO, after which you may make your appointment to the entire people of God of Shamshabad. You shall pay adequate attention to c. 228 that specifies the nature of the administration in the interim period.

I wish and pray that the Spirit of the Lord guide and lead you in discharging the duties of your new Office until the assumption of the Office of the new eparchial Bishop.

Given from the Major Archiepiscopal Curia of the Syro-Malabar Church at Mount St. Thomas, Kakkanad, on 13th day of the month of January of the year Two Thousand and Twenty Four.

Mar Raphael Thattil
Major Archbishop of the Syro-Malabar Church

Fr. Abraham Kavilpurayidathil
Major Archiepiscopal Chancellor

Prot. No. 0370/2024

DECREE OF PROMULGATION

Particular Law on the Participants of the Syro-Malabar Major Archiepiscopal Assembly

Ever since the number of eparchies in India and abroad, as well as the institutes of consecrated life increased considerably, the number of delegates to be invited to the Major Archiepiscopal Assembly also increased accordingly. The Synod on various occasions deliberated extensively on the necessity of reducing the number of participants so that the Assembly can be more effective and can achieve its established objectives. The Session II of the XXX Synod held from 16 to 25 August 2022, after extensive deliberations, decided to reduce the number of delegates in a proportionate manner and entrusted the Synodal Committee for Canonical Questions to propose the amendments to be made in the Particular Law of the Syro-Malabar Church. The proposals were discussed in the subsequent Sessions of the Synod and finally Session III of the XXXI Synod held from 21 to 26 August 2023 discussed the fine-tuned text of the amendments and approved them reducing the number of participants of the Major Archiepiscopal Assembly for an effective and fruitful conducting of the Assembly while ensuring the proportionate representation of all sections of the faithful in it.

Since certain proposals for the amendments necessitated changes from the specifications given in canon 143 of the Code of Canons of the Eastern Churches, approval of the Apostolic See was sought by the Major Archbishop. The Dicastery for the Eastern Churches, through its letter (Prot. N. 8/2014, dated 6 February 2024) communicated that the Holy Father Pope Francis granted the required approval to the changes proposed, indicating certain points for the perfection of the text of the law and directing to consult the Permanent Synod in finalizing the text. The Permanent

Synod convened on 11 March 2024 approved the final text of the law to be promulgated.

Therefore, having fulfilled all the requirements envisaged by the law, the undersigned Major Archbishop of the Syro-Malabar Church, in conformity with canon 112 §1 of CCEO, promulgate the following Particular Law of the Syro-Malabar Church, replacing Article 6 **§§**2-**1** of the Statutes of the Major Archiepiscopal Assembly:

Article 6 Participants

§1. The following persons are the ex officio members of the Major Archiepiscopal Assembly:

1° eparchial bishops, titular bishops, including coadjutor bishops, auxiliary bishops and bishops *emeriti* except those above the age of 80, who do not have deliberative vote as per the *motu proprio Iam Pridem* dated April 16, 2023, as well as exarchs, apostolic administrators and apostolic visitators, if any (CCEO c. 984 §2), from both within and outside the *territorium proprium* of the Syro-Malabar Malabar Church;

2° *protosyncellus* from each eparchy and one *syncellus* from those eparchies where an auxiliary bishop is *protosyncellus*;

3° superiors general of the institutes of consecrated life and societies of apostolic life of pontifical and major archiepiscopal right;

4° two superiors of monasteries *sui iuris* (one male and one female) who will be selected in the order of precedence of the year of establishment of the monastery;

5° superior general, one male and one female each, of the institutes of conse-crated life and societies of apostolic life of eparchial right from the eparchy of their origin, who will be selected by their eparchial bishop in the order of precedence of the year of establishment of the institute;

6° president of the Syro-Malabar Religious Conference (SMRC);

7° rectors of the synodal major seminaries;

8° two representatives of the rectors of all the other major seminaries belonging to eparchies or the institutes of consecrated life and societies of apostolic life in the Syro-Malabar Church, in the order of precedence of the year of establishment of the seminary;

9° rectors of Syro-Malabar ecclesiastical universities/ presidents of pontifical institutes; and,

10° president/vice president of inter-ritual pontifical institute, who is a Syro-Malabarian.

§2. The following persons are to be convened to the Major Archiepiscopal Assembly as delegates sent by each of the eparchies whether inside or outside the *territorium proprium* of the Syro-Malabar Church:

1° one presbyter delegate from each eparchy having up to 300 presbyters; if there are more than 300 presbyters ascribed to an eparchy, that eparchy can send one more presbyter delegate;

2° two lay delegates, (one male and one female) from each eparchy having a population up to 100,000. If there are more than 100,000 faithful in an eparchy, that eparchy can send one more delegate each for every additional 100,000 faithful. The maximum number of lay delegates from an eparchy shall be ten and at least one third of them shall be women. Adequate representation shall be given to the youth and *dalit* Christians;

3° lay secretaries of eparchial pastoral councils; and one lay member of the pastoral council, selected by the eparchial bishop, from those eparchies where the secretary of the pastoral council is a priest;

4° three representatives of the catechists from all the mission eparchies proposed collectively by the bishops of the eparchies concerned and nominated by the Major Archbishop;

5° one lay representative of each of the Syro-Malabar pious associations and community associations to be chosen by the executive body of the said associations at the major archiepiscopal level and nominated by the Major Archbishop;

6° one representative of the retreat centres in the Syro-Malabar Church nomi- nated by the Major Archbishop;

7° one deacon each from the synodal major seminaries, chosen by the deacons themselves, endorsed by their respective rectors and nominated by the Major Archbishop;

8° one representative each from the Syro-Malabar migrant communities where there is no Syro-Malabar jurisdiction, presented by the chairman of the Commission for Evangelization and Pastoral Care of Migrants and nominated by the Major Archbishop;

9° resident officials/secretaries of major archiepiscopal Commissions/Commi-ttees at the major archiepiscopal curia and two non-resident secretaries nominated by the Major Archbishop; and,

10° members nominated freely by the Major Archbishop (not more than twenty) from among the priests, consecrated men and women, *dalits*, women, youth and experts in various disciplines.

All contrary dispositions notwithstanding.

Given this from the Major Archiepiscopal Curia at Mount St. Thomas, Kakkanad on 25 March, 2024, the Feast of the Annunciation.

Mar Raphael Thattil
Major Archbishop of the Syro-Malabar Church

Fr. Abraham Kavilpurayidathil
Major Archiepiscopal Chancellor

Prot. No. 0854/2024

MAJOR ARCHIEPISCOPAL LETTER OF CANONICAL PROVISION

Appointing Mar Thomas Tharayil Archbishop of Chanaganacherry

MAR RAPHAEL THATTIL, the Major Archbishop of the Syro-Malabar Church sends his paternal blessings to Your Excellency Bishop Mar Thomas Tharayil, until now Auxiliary Bishop of the Archeparchy of Changanacherry, whom the Synod of Bishops of the Syro-Malabar Church has elected the Metropolitan Archbishop of Changanacherry.

Upon acceptance of the letter of resignation submitted as per c. 210 §1 of the Code of Canons of the Eastern Churches, at the completion of 75 years of age by His Grace Archbishop Joseph Perumthottam, who shepherded the Archeparchy of Changanacherry with paternal care and the foresight of an able leader from 19 March 2007, for more than 17 years, as its eighth Bishop, there was the need to find a suitable successor to him. On the completion of the canonical process for the election of Bishops, the Synod of Bishops of the Syro-Malabar Church assembled in the III Session of the XXXII Synod held from 19 to 31August 2024 has found in you the right person for the Office and elected you the Metropolitan Archbishop of Changanacherry. The Holy Father Pope Francis approved your election which was communicated by His Excellency Archbishop Leopoldo Girelli, the Apostolic Nuncio in India through his letter dated 27 August 2024 with Prot. N. 8173/24/IN.

Therefore, in virtue of c. 86 §1, 1° of the Code of Canons of the Eastern Churches and by the authority vested in me as the Major Archbishop of the Syro-Malabar Church to provide the people of God entrusted to my care with pastors and efficient systems of governance, and guided by the consideration of the good of the

faithful of the Archeparchy of Changanacherry and of the entire Syro-Malabar Church, I, Mar Raphael Thattil, hereby appoint you Metropolitan Archbishop of Changanacherry. You are to take canonical possession of your Office in accordance with c. 223 of the CCEO.

Commending you to Our Lord, the Master Shepherd and praying that you may, through the intercession of Mary our Mother, St. Thomas, our Apostle, and St. Joseph, the Patron Saint of the Archeparchy of Changanacherry, in close communion and collegiality with the Major Archbishop and the Synod of Bishops of the Syro-Malabar Church, and the entire clergy and the faithful of the Archeparchy of Changanacherry, fulfil the duties of your Office as "an example in speech and conduct, in love, in faith, in purity" (1Tim 4:12), I extend to you, my hearty congratulations and prayerful good wishes.

All contrary dispositions notwithstanding.

Given from the Syro-Malabar Major Archiepiscopal Curia at Mount St. Thomas, Kakkanad, on 30th day of August, in the year of the Lord 2024, under my seal and signature.

Mar Raphael Thattil
Major Archbishop of the Syro-Malabar Church

Fr. Abraham Kavilpurayidathil
Major Archiepiscopal Chancellor

Prot. No. 0855/2024

MAJOR ARCHIEPISCOPAL LETTER OF CANONICAL PROVISION

Appointing Mar Prince Antony Panengadan Bishop of Shamshabad

MAR RAPHAEL THATTIL, the Major Archbishop of the Syro-Malabar Church, sends his paternal blessings to Your Excellency Bishop Mar Prince Antony Panengadan, until now, Bishop of the Eparchy of Adilabad, whom the Synod of Bishops of the Syro-Malabar Church has elected the Bishop of the Eparchy of Shamshabad.

As the undersigned, having been elected the Major Archbishop of the Syro-Malabar Church in the I Session of the XXXII Synod of Bishops, assumed the Office on 11 January 2024, the See of Shamshabad became vacant. This necessitated starting the canonical procedures to elect new Bishop for the Eparchy of Shamshabad. On completion of the canonical process, the III Session of the XXXII Synod of the Bishops of the Syro-Malabar Church held from 19 to 31 August 2024 at the Major Archiepiscopal Curia, Mount St. Thomas, Kakkanad, has found in you the right person for the Office of the Bishop of the Eparchy of Shamshabad, and elected you to this Office, transferring you from the Office of the Bishop of the Eparchy of Adilabad. The Holy Father Pope Francis approved your election which was communicated by His Excellency Archbishop Leopoldo Girelli, the Apostolic Nuncio in India, through his letter dated 27 August 2024 with Prot. N. 8174/24/IN.

Therefore, in virtue of c. 86 §1, 1° of the Code of Canons of the Eastern Churches, and by the authority vested in me as the Major Archbishop of the Syro-Malabar Church to provide the people of God entrusted to my care with pastors and efficient systems of governance, and guided by the consideration of the good of

the faithful of the Eparchy of Shamshabad and of the entire Syro-Malabar Church, I, Mar Raphael Thattil, hereby appoint you the Bishop of the Eparchy of Shamshabad. You are to take canonical possession of your Office in accordance with c. 223 of the CCEO.

Commending you to Our Lord, the Master Shepherd and praying that you may, through the intercession of Holy Mary our Mother, St. Thomas, the Patron Saint, and St. John Paul II, the Co-Patron of the Eparchy of Shamshabad, in close communion and collegiality with the Major Archbishop and the Synod of Bishops of the Syro-Malabar Church and the entire clergy and the faithful of the Eparchy of Shamshabad, fulfil the duties of your Office as "an example in speech and conduct, in love, in faith, in purity" (1Tim. 4:12), I extend to you, my hearty congratulations and prayerful good wishes.

All contrary dispositions notwithstanding.

Given from the Syro-Malabar Major Archiepiscopal Curia at Mount St. Thomas, Kakkanad, on the 30th day of the month of August of the year 2024 under my seal and signature.

Mar Raphael Thattil
Major Archbishop of the Syro-Malabar Church

Fr. Abraham Kavilpurayidathil
Major Archiepiscopal Chancellor

Prot. No. 1083/2024

DECREE

Appointing Bishop Prince Antony Panengadan Administrator of the Eparchy of Adilabad

Greetings and blessings in the Lord Jesus Christ

to

MAR PRINCE ANTONY PANENGADAN

Bishop of the Eparchy of Shamshabad!

The XXXII Synod (2024) Session III of the Synod of Bishops of the Syro-Malabar Church has elected you the Bishop of the Eparchy of Shamshabad and you assumed the Office on 10 November 2024, leaving the See of Adilabad vacant as per c. 219 of the CCEO.

In order that the people of God of every eparchy may grow and progress in faith and that they may not be left without a pastor of their own in the event of a vacant See, in accordance with c. 220 3° of the CCEO which specifies that the Major Archbishop should appoint an Administrator to that eparchy within the stipulated time.

After mature reflection and required consultations, I have found in you the most fitting person to be the Administrator of the Eparchy of Adilabad. Therefore, in conformity with c. 220 2° and c. 227 of the CCEO, I, the Major Archbishop of the Syro-Malabar Church, appoint you **ADMINISTRATOR OF THE EPARCHY OF ADILABAD** with all the rights and obligations attached to this Office, as specified in cc. 229 & 230 of the CCEO, with effect from 10 November 2024. However, the powers of the Administrator should be exercised only after making the profession of faith in the presence of the Major Archbishop and taking possession of the Office by showing this letter of appointment to the college

of eparchial consultors, as specified c. 220 4° of the CCEO, after which you may make your appointment public to the entire people of God of Adilabad. You shall pay adequate attention to c. 228 that specifies the nature of the administration in the interim period.

I wish and pray that the Spirit of the Lord guide and lead you in discharging the duties of Administrator until the new eparchial Bishop of Adilabad assumes the Office.

Given from the Major Archiepiscopal Curia of the Syro-Malabar Church at Mount St. Thomas, Kakkanad, on 10 November 2024.

Mar Raphael Thattil
Major Archbishop of the Syro-Malabar Church

Fr. Abraham Kavilpurayidathil
Major Archiepiscopal Chancellor

Prot. No. 0033/2024

DECREE

of the Major Archbishop conferring the title of Major Archiepiscopal Pilgrim Church to St. Sebastian's Forane Church Nedumkandam in the Eparchy of Idukki

Whereas the XXVI Synod (2018) of Bishops of the Syro-Malabar Church, Session I, held from 8 to 13 January 2018 decided to institute the title 'Major Archiepiscopal Pilgrim Church' 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. Sebastian's Forane Church Nedumkandam, of the Eparchy of Idukki, requested for the title 'Major Archiepiscopal Pilgrim Church' for St. Sebastian's Forane Church Nedumkandam, based on the decision of the *Pothuyogam* held on 12 August 2023 and Mar John Nellikunnel, Bishop of the Eparchy of Idukki recommended the request of the said Vicar,

Whereas St. Sebastian's Forane Church Nedumkandam, 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 XXXI Synod (2023), Session III held online from 21 to 26 August 2023, decided to confer the title of 'Major Archiepiscopal Pilgrim Church' to the said church, I,

MAR RAPHAEL THATTIL,

Major Archbishop of the Syro-Malabar Church,

hereby confer the title of

Major Archiepiscopal Pilgrim Church

on

ST. SEBASTIAN'S FORANE CHURCH, NEDUMKANDAM

of the Eparchy of Idukki with effect from 18 January 2024, with all the rights and duties envisaged in the norms for such a Pilgrim Church.

Given this from the Major Archiepiscopal Curia at Mount St. Thomas, Kakkanad on 18 January 2024.

Mar Raphael Thattil
Major Archbishop of the Syro-Malabar Church

Fr. Abraham Kavilpurayidathil
Major Archiepiscopal Chancellor

ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE IN THE SYRO-MALABAR CHURCH

SUMMARY REPORT - 2023

1. ACTIVITIES OF THE LOWER TRIBUNALS IN THE YEAR 2023

1.1. Cases Processed by the Tribunals of the First Instance during the Year 2023 Tribunals within the Four Metropolitan Provinces and the Archeparchy of Kottayam.

Tribunals		Cases for Process			Cases Disposed							Cases Pending
Sl. No.	Eparchial and Metropolitan Tribunals (First Instance)	Cases Pending from previous years	Cases Introduced	**Total**	Affirmative Sentences	Negative Sentences	**Total Sentences**	Cases Abandoned	Penal Cases	Ratified and Non-consummated	**Total**	
1	Changanacherry	16	125	**141**	122	3	**125**	2	-	-	**2**	**14**
2	Palai	27	86	**113**	76	3	**79**	3	-	-	3	**31**
3	Kanjirappally	17	43	**60**	38	1	**39**	-	-	-	-	**21**
4	Thuckalay	2	2	**4**	2	-	**2**	-	-	-	-	**2**
5	Ernakulam-Angamaly	17	118	**135**	102	Nil	**102**	-	-	-	-	**33**
6	Idukki	19	60	**79**	41	Nil	**41**	-	-	-	-	**38**
7	Kothamangalam	42	80	**122**	77	-	**77**	-	-	-	-	**45**
8	Tellicherry	9	82	**91**	71	-	**71**	-	-	-	-	**20**
9	Mananthavady	12	53	**65**	53	-	**53**	-	-	-	-	**12**
10	Thamarassery	32	62	**94**	58	-	**58**	1	-	-	**1**	**35**
11	Belthangady	-	12	**12**	10	-	**10**	2	-	-	2	-
12	Bhadravathi	3	3	**6**	4	-	**4**	-	-	-	-	**2**
13	Mandya	3	10	**13**	8	-	**8**	-	-	-	-	**5**

14	Trichur	36	84	**120**	83	-	**83**	3	-	-	**3**	**34**
15	Irinjalakuda	56	88	**144**	73	Nil	**73**	2	-	-	**2**	**69**
16	Palaghat	19	32	**51**	20	-	**20**	8	-	-	**8**	**23**
17	Ramanathapuram	-	7	**7**	3	-	**3**	-	-	-	-	**4**
18	Kottayam	4	33	**37**	35	-	**35**	-	-	-	-	**2**
	Total	**314**	**980**	**1294**	**876**	**7**	**883**	**21**	-	-	**21**	**390**

1.2. Cases Processed by the Tribunals of the First Instance during the Year 2023
Tribunals outside Metropolitan Provinces in India

Tribunals		**Cases for Process**			**Cases Disposed**							
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-consummated	**Total**	**Cases Pending**
1	Adilabad	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2	Bijnor	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
3	Chanda	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
4	Faridabad	2	4	**6**	4	-	**4**	-	-	-	-	**2**
5	Gorakhpur	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
6	Hosur	-	2	**2**	1	-	**1**	-	-	-	-	**1**
7	Jagdalpur	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
8	Kalyan	4	17	**21**	11	-	**11**	-	-	-	-	**9**
9	Rajkot	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
10	Sagar	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
11	Satna	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
12	Shamshabad	1	4	**5**	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	**4**

13	Ujjain	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Total	**7**	**27**	**34**	**16**	**-**	**15**	**1**	**-**	**-**	**-**	**16**
	Total	**314**	**980**	**1294**	**876**	**7**	**883**	**21**	**-**	**-**	**21**	**390**
	G. Total -2023	**321**	**1007**	**1328**	**892**	**7**	**898**	**22**	**-**	**-**	**21**	**406**

1.3. Cases Processed by the Tribunals of the First Instance during the Year 2023
Tribunals Out Side India

Tribunals		Cases for Process			Cases Disposed							
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	Chicago	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2	Great Britain	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
3	Melbourne	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
4	Mississauga	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Total	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

2. Cases Processed by the Tribunals of the Second Instance during the Year 2023

Tribunals		Cases for Process			Cases Disposed					**Cases Pending**
Sl. No.	Metropolitan Tribunals (Second Instance)	Cases Pending	Cases Introduced	**Total**	Decrees of Ratification	Affirmative Sentences	Negative Sentences	Cases Abandoned	**Total**	
1	Changanacherry	3	1	4	-	3	-	-	3	1
2	Ernakulam-Ang	1	-	1	-	1	-	-	1	-
3	Tellicherry	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
4	Trichur	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Total	**4**	**1**	**5**	**-**	**4**	**-**	**-**	**4**	**1**

3. Cases using the Briefer Process before the Bishop

Sl. No.	Eparchial and Metropolitan Tribunals	Pending at the start of year	Introduced during the year	Completed during the year	Pending at the end of the year

4. ACTIVITIES OF THE MAJOR ARCHIEPISCOPAL TRIBUNAL

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

I	Cases pending at the beginning of the year	4
II	Cases introduced	9
III	Decrees of ratification (total number):	
IV	Sentences given (after an ordinary examination):	8
	a) In favour of nullity ("constat de nullitate", at least on one ground)	8
	b) In favour of the bond ("non constat de nullitate": on every ground alleged)	
V	**Cases pending at the end of the year**	5

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

I	**Causes pending at the beginning of the year**	
II	**Causes introduced this year**:	
III	**Decrees of ratification** (total number):	
IV	**Sentences** given (after an ordinary examination):	
V	**Cases pending at the end of the year**	

Fr. Francis Eluvathingal
President, Major Archiepiscopal Tribunal

MAJOR ARCHIEPISCOPAL CURIA SUMMARY OF THE STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH, 2024

2022-2023		PARTICULARS	2023-2024	
RECEIPTS	PAYMENTS		RECEIPTS	PAYMENTS
I. INCOME & EXPENDITURE				
8,987,172	123,718	Syro Malabar Sabhadinam	5,727,920	151,101
4,312,499		Contribution and Donations	6,138,516	
1,767,187		Administrative Receipts	7,763,706	
469,987		Synodal and Commission Meetings	489,626	
900,896		Agriculture & Animal Husbandry	2,097,010	
92,224		Major Tribunal Collection	37,612	
109,448		Synodal News Collection	134,848	
90		Chancery Income	85	
4,148,734		Commission for Litergy	3,996,362	
675,647		Catechetical Commission	1,334,284	
		Liturgical Research Centre		
	1,172,291	Internet Mission		265,937
	22,444	S.M. Youth Commission		19,761
3,096,145		S.M. Mission Fund		1,232,184
	117,805	S.M. Media Commission	531,627	
	172,460	Commission for Clergy		40,501
	20,000	Special Fund	583,713	
	11,560,584	Administrative Expenses & Curia Running		14,767,686
	1,121,870	Synodal & Commission Meetings		607,554
	743,299	Agricultural & Animal Husbandry		1,615,700
	198,364	Major Tribunal Expenses		160,743
	188,406	Synodal News Expenses		195,482
	-	Chancery Expenses		3,789
24,560,029	15,441,241	Sub-Total	28,835,309	19,060,438

II. CAPITAL RECEIPTS & INVESTMENTS				
22,250,225	-	Special Contribution Received	38,860,295	198,931
		Land & Building		
	27,106,296	Museum Building		24,574,937
	189,544	Furniture & Equipments		1,292,746
	19,500	Other Fixed Assets		1,219,510
22,250,225	27,315,340	Sub-Total	38,860,295	27,286,124
III. CURRENT LIABILITIES & ASSETS				
446,291	4,148,734	Commission for Liturgy	30,129	3,032,838
	575,646	Catechetical Commission		486,810
	22,126	Liturgical Research Centre		
		Syro Malabar Internet Mission		839
	2,750,439	S.M. Mission Fund	865,532	
22,444		S.M. Youth Commission	6,780	
	182,242	S.M. Media Commission		773,483
	1,600	Commission for Clergy		35,684
	95,000	Mass Obligation		-
	1,427	Advance Account		65,000
	669,501	Major Arch Bishop's Fund		2,374
	83,943	Curia Bishop's Fund		198,899
	2,489,670	Apostolic Visitor Fund		-
1,138		SIB - Card	9,569	
478,693		Current Assets - TDS	5,860	646,705
948,566	11,020,328	Sub-Total	917,870	5,242,632
IV. BANK & CASH BALANCES				
72,361,603	67,137,346	Bank : Fixed Deposits	67,137,346	83,903,959
2,397,529	1,847,155	Bank : S.B. Accounts	1,847,155	2,296,457
367,023	288,065	Bank & Cash : Synodal News	288,065	227,431
687,678	581,538	Bank & Cash : Tribunal	581,538	443,907
3,614	3,704	Bank & Cash : Chaneery	3,704	-
62,955	4,505	Cash in Hand	4,505	14,839
75,880,402	69,862,313	Sub-Total	69,862,313	86,886,593
123,639,222	**123,639,222**	**GRAND TOTAL**	**138,475,787**	**138,475,787**

Fr. Joseph Tholanickal — **Finance Officer**
C.J. Romid FCA — Chartered Accountant

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