VI Synod (1998): Session 1

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Mount St. Thomas, Kakkanad, recently celebrated an important event, the VI Synod (1998) Session 1 of the Bishops of the Syro-Malabar Major Archiepiscopal Church. It was the first time that the Synodal Assembly is conducted here in the new Curia building which is under construction. The faithful of this Church continued to keep up their genuine faith in this juridical institution of the synodal structure. They were hopefully looking forward to the Synod for the solutions of the problems which they face in their life as members of the Syro-Malabar Church.

One of the things that the Synod did was to approve the Rules of Palliyogam. The committee appointed by the commission for particular laws had to work hard to prepare the text. This and no other part of the particular laws of the Syro-Malabar Church had such a wide consultation and study. It was not an easy task to accommodate the old juridical institution of the Palliyogam to the changed situations of the present day. Several sessions of study and consultations, not only of the members of the committee, but also of the experts, and the representatives of the eparchial Pastoral and Presbyterial Councils and of the Institutes of Consecrated Life, have taken place in the formation of this text. The law is promulgated as the particular law of the Syro-Malabar Major Archiepiscopal Church regarding Palliyogam and is published in this issue.

The Major Archiepiscopal Assembly is a representative organ that assists the Major Archbishop and Synod of Bishops in dealing with matters of major importance of a Major Archiepiscopal Church. It helps the harmonisation of the forms and programme of Apostolate, taking into account the common good of the Church. As a prelude to the establishment and functioning of this
organ, Statues of the Major Archiepiscopal Assembly in the Syro-Malabar Church is promulgated and is published in this number.

Besides, this issue of Synodal News brings to you the speeches, report and decisions of the VI Synod (1998) Session 1. This gives you a chance to know more about the Church and her movement towards the third millennium. Directives on the reception of Holy Communion in hand and guidelines regarding the extraordinary ministers for the distribution of the Holy Communion are also included in this issue.

—Editors
VI SYNOD (1998): SESSION 1
MOUNT ST. THOMAS, KAKKANAD,
12-24 JANUARY 1998
OPENING ADDRESS
BY
MAR VARKKEY VITHAYATHIL C.Ss.R.

Your Eminence, Your Graces, Your Excellencies,

We have come together once more in Synod. It is indeed, a matter of pride and pleasure that this session of the Synod could meet at the headquarters of the Church. However, since the construction work is still in progress you will have to bear with a few inconveniences. I most cordially welcome you all to this VI Synod (1998).

I recall with great affection Bishop Joseph Irimpan, retired bishop of Palghat, whom the Lord has called to his reward. While recalling his great services to our Church I pray that the Lord may grant him eternal rest.

As you can see a few of the members are absent. Mar Dominic Kokkatt is away in the United States. He will join us in the coming week. Mar Mathew Vattackuzhy will leave after one week because of ill-health. Mar Kuriakose Kunnacherry will join us tomorrow as he will return from Indonesia only this afternoon. All the three have asked for leave of absence. I am sure that you will consent to grant their requests. Mar Sebastian Valloppilly and Mar Joseph Kundukulam will not come for this
session owing to ill-health. Let us remember them in our prayers.

It is now five years since our Church was elevated to Major Archiepiscopal status. As you know the concerned document was signed by the Roman Pontiff on 16th December 1992. On this occasion let us remember the Holy Father in a special way for his love and concern for our Church.

We can take pride that within these five years we could put all the constituents of the Major Archiepiscopal system, except the Major Archiepiscopal Assembly, in function even though in an imperfect manner. In conformity with the requirement of Canon Law we must convene also the Major Archiepiscopal Assembly in the near future.

As you are well aware at the end of the last session in June we had signed an agreement regarding liturgy. I sent the text of the agreement signed by you along with your observations and comments, which some of you had sent about this agreement, in original to the Congregation for the Oriental Churches. Having gone through the observations and comments of the individual bishops and taking into consideration the resistance that was taking shape, particularly among the clergy and the laity in the archdiocese of Ernakulam I subsequently informed the Congregation that a smooth and peaceful implementation of the agreement would not be possible and that there was possibility of even disobedience. In its reply of which I sent a copy to you the Congregation informed me that status quo will continue until January 1998.

On the Provisional Agenda you will find an item, namely, an evaluation of the situation in the liturgical field after the last Synodal session. This item was included on the agenda in conformity with the wish expressed by the Cardinal Prefect of the Congregation for the Oriental Churches in the reply mentioned
above. But just before Christmas the Cardinal Prefect asked me over the phone whether it was possible to postpone this session of the Synod as the Holy See would soon be working out a solution for the present problems in the area of liturgy in our Church. I told him that this would cause great inconvenience and that the Synod could refrain from discussing liturgy in this session. It could do so if needed after the Holy See has made known its solutions. This he accepted.

Unless you have something to add the agenda of this session will consist mainly of the discussion of the various drafts of Particular Law and the election or nomination to the Permanent Synod, to the Superior Tribunal and to the various commissions whose term of office will expire in May 1998. We will also have to elect our representatives to the Special Synod for Asia which will be held in Rome possibly in April this year. As you know it will be difficult to hold another session of our Synod before these dates. As for the drafts of the Particular Law the following ones will be discussed in this session: 1) Feast and Penance, 2) Laws on Religious, Secular Institutes & Societies of Apostolic Life, 3) Acquisition & Administration of Temporal Goods and 4) Laws on Sacraments. I am hopeful that we will be able to take decisions on at least some of them.

As agreed in the last session a meeting of the bishops with the representatives of the eparchial pastoral and presbyteral councils as well as of the Syro-Malabar Institutes of Consecrated Life is scheduled for the 14th of this month to discuss the draft of the Rules of Palliyogam. Then it will be up to us to approve it with the required modifications if any.

The financial matters of the curia and the construction of the new curia building is another area that deserves our special attention. If sufficient funds are made available we will be able to complete the entire work before the end of this year. During
the week the Chairman of the Finance Council and the Finance Officer will present the relevant facts and figures.

The path that we walked together in Synod during the last five years has not been always smooth or easy. It is no secret that there had been occasions of misunderstanding and mistrust. It is painful that they still persist. As leaders of our Church it is our duty and responsibility to overcome them and work for the common good of our faithful whom the Lord has entrusted to our care. Even though liturgical matters may not be taken up for discussion in this session let us make use of this occasion to bring about greater communion among ourselves.

Perhaps we have to overcome a psychological barrier that probably hinders our walking together. For more than a century the bishops in our Church were functioning as persons directly responsible to the Roman Pontiff. But with the establishment of the Major Archiepiscopal system there is a supra episcopal authority in between, namely the Major Archbishop and the Synod. The role of this authority is clearly drawn in canon law. I am fully convinced that if properly used this system can deliver marvellous results. But this entails a whole-hearted acceptance of this supra episcopal authority by all concerned. Let us make a sincere effort to make this system work effectively and as required by Canon Law.

May Mary the Mother of Christ and St. Thomas, our Father in faith help us in our efforts. With these words I declare the VI Synod (1998) open.
Inauguration

The VI Synod (1998) was officially opened by Mar Varkey Vithayathil C.Ss.R., the Apostolic Administrator of the Syro-Malabar Church at 10.30 am on 12 January 1998 at the Syro-Malabar Major Archepiscopal Curia at Mount St. Thomas. This is the first time that the synod meets at Mount St. Thomas. The inaugural session was preceded by the blessing of a portion of the new building where the session was held. Soon after the opening speech the time-table for the sessions was discussed and finalized. This was followed by the recollection led by Fr. John Kurichany OSB, prior of St. Thomas Benedictine Monastery, Kalaketty. He chose theme of the desert experience in the Bible. Quoting profusely from the Old and New Testaments he explained that desert experience means a rediscovery of faith and of austerity in life. So he reminded the participants that the only way to solve the problems in the Church is by undergoing the desert experience.

In his opening speech the Apostolic Administrator remembered the late Mar Joseph Irinpan who was called to his eternal reward a few months ago. Later on 20th January a requiem Mass was celebrated for the deceased prelate. As regards the agenda he pointed out that liturgy was not included on the agenda at the express wish of the Cardinal Prefect of the Congregation for the Oriental Churches; however he requested the participants to make use of the occasion to bring about greater communion among the members. He exhorted the members to make a sincere effort to overcome the psychological barrier that puts obstacle on the way of walking together. He appealed to
the members to make the synod work effectively and as re-
quired by Canon Law.

PARTICIPANTS

The following members were present in the opening ses-
session: Mar Varkey Vithayathil C.Ss.R. (Apostolic Administra-
tor), Cardinal Antony Padiyara (Major Archbishop-Emeritus),
Mar Joseph Powathil (Changanacherry), Mar Jacob
Thoomkuzhy (Trichur), Mar George Valiamattam (Tellicherry),
Mar Joseph Pallikaparampil (Palai), Mar George Punnakkottil
(Kothamangalam), Mar Abraham D. Mattam VC (Satna), Mar
John Perumattam MST (Ujjain), Mar Gratian Mundadan CMI
(Bijnor), Mar James Pazhayattil (Irinjalakuda), Mar Gregory
Karotemprrel CMI (Rajkot), Mar Joseph Pastor Neelankavil
CMI (Sagar), Mar Mathew Vattackuzhy (Kanjirapally), Mar
Paul Chittilapilly (Thamarassery), Mar Vijay Anand
Nedumpuram CMI (Chanda), Mar Jacob Manathodath
(Palghat), Mar Simon Stock Palathara CMI (Jagdalpur), Mar
Emmanuel Pothanamuzhzy CMI (Mananthavady), Mar George
Alencherry (Thuckalay) and Mar Thomas Elavanal MCBS
(Kalyan).

EXPERTS

Fathers Andrews Thazhath, James Thalachelloor,
Sebastian Thayyil, Joseph Thoompumkal and James Kallumkal
were present at some of the sittings to help the discussions on
the drafts of the various particular laws.

AGENDA

The following agenda was accepted for the current session.

1) Review of the decisions of the V Synod (1997)

2) Particular Laws
3) Rules of *Palliyyogam* with the representatives of the eparchial pastoral and presbyteral councils and of the Institutes of Consecrated Life

4) Mangalapuzha Seminary: Provisions to be made

5) Elections and nominations to the Permanent Synod, Superior Tribunal and to the Various Commissions; Election of representatives to the Special Assembly of the Synod for Asia


7) Finances of the Curia and inauguration of the new building; Staff of the Curia

8) Major Archiepiscopal Assembly

9) Request for mission territories; general policy regarding Syro-Malabar Congregations starting houses and provinces in the Latin Rite; opening institutions in the Latin dioceses with the faculty of bi-ritualism; admitting students of the Latin Rite in Syro-Malabar Religious Congregations.

10) Pastoral care of the Syro-Malabarians under the Latin jurisdiction in India and abroad

11) Meeting with the Board of Directors of the *Rashtradeepika*

12) Reports of the Synodal Commissions

13) Permanent Diaconate

14) Vadavathoor Seminary

15) Conclusions of the Special Commission of the CBCI for Evangelization

16) CBCI Evaluation report
17) Status of the National Biblical, Catechetical and Liturgical Centre at Bangalore (NBCLC) vis-a-vis the three sui iuris Churches

18) Communion in hand and extraordinary ministers for distributing Holy Communion

19) Question of Manimooly Forane

20) Syro-Malabar Church on Internet

21) Synodal News

22) Oriental Region & Oriental Territory

**ELECTIONS**

Since the term of office of the present members of the Superior Tribunal and the Permanent Synod expires on 20th May 1998 and since no session of the synod is foreseen before that date new members were elected. They are the following:

1) **Superior Tribunal**: Mar Jacob Thoomkuzhy (Moderator), Mar Paul Chittilapilly, Mar Kuriakose Kunnacherry

2) **Permanent Synod**:

   *Elected*: Mar Joseph Powathil, Mar Jacob Thoomkuzhy, Mar Kuriakose Kunnacherry

   The Apostolic Administrator nominated in conformity with the prescription of Canon Law Mar Paul Chittilapilly as the fourth member.

Substitutes


   Mar Gregory Karotemprel was nominated by the Apostolic Administrator as the fourth substitute.
A synodal commission for the St. Joseph’s Pontifical Seminary at Mangalapuzha which has come under the administration of the synod was constituted with the following synod members: Mar Joseph Pallikkaparampil (Chairman), Mar Jacob Manathodath, Mar George Punnakottil.

The following members were elected as delegates to the Special Assembly of the Synod of Bishops for Asia: Mar Joseph Powathil, Mar Kuriakose Kunnacherry, Mar George Punnakottil, Mar Jacob Manathodath and Mar Gratian Mundadan. Mar George Alencherry was elected as substitute.

Mar Jacob Manathodath whose term of office as the secretary of the synod expires in May 1998 was re-elected as secretary for another five year term.

APPOINTMENTS

The Apostolic Administrator in conformity with the norm of law reconstituted the various commissions whose term of office expires in May 1998. He constituted also the new Commission for the Clergy and the Institutes of Consecrated Life. The newly appointed members will take charge on 21st May 1998. The following are the new chairmen and members of the various commissions:

1) **Commission for Liturgy**: Mar Jacob Thoomkuzhy (Chairman), Mar James Pazhayattil, Mar Thomas Elavanal MCBS.

2) **Commission for Pastoral Care of the Migrants and for Evangelization**:

Mar Gregory Karotemprel CMI (Chairman), Mar Joseph Pallikkaparampil, Mar Gratian Mundadan CMI.
3) *Commission for Particular Law*: Mar Paul Chittilapilly (Chairman), Mar Kuriakose Kunnacherry, Mar Emmanuel Pothanamuzhy CMI.

4) *Commission for Catechism*: Mar George Alencherry (Chairman), Mar Jacob Mananthodath, Mar Simon Stock Palathara CMI.

5) *Commission for Ecumenism*: Mar Joseph Powathil (Chairman), Mar Kuriakose Kunnacherry, Mar Joseph Pastor Neelankavil CMI.

6) *Doctrinal Commission*: Mar Jacob Mananthodath (Chairman), Mar George Alencherry, Mar Dominic Kokkatt CST.

7) *Commission for Clergy and Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life*: Mar Joseph Pallikaparampil (Chairman), Mar Jacob Thoomkuzhy, Mar Vijay Anand Nedumpuram CMI.

**PARTICULAR LAWS**

1) Rules of Palliyogam

The Procedure *Rules of Palliyogam* were briefly discussed in the synod on 14th January 1998 before it was presented for discussion in the meeting of the representatives of the eparchial pastoral and presbyteral councils and of the Institutes of Consecrated Life and of Societies of Apostolic Life held on the same day. Later the draft was extensively discussed in the meeting of the representatives which began at 10.00 a.m. The observations on the draft collected through the workshop sessions were presented to the general session in which all the synod members also were present. After considering the amendments, observations and comments of the representatives the synod approved the draft and authorized the Apostolic Administrator to pro-
mulgate the laws contained in it in such a way as to be effective from 3rd July 1998. Accordingly the Apostolic Administrator promulgated the *Rules of the Palliyogam*. Rev. Frs Andrews Thazhath and James Thalachelloor helped at the discussions. The Commission for Particular Law was entrusted with the task of translating the text into Malayalam.

2) **On Religious and Secular Institutes**

For want of time the discussion on the draft of the particular law on Religious and Secular Institutes could not be completed. The draft will come for the consideration of the synod in its next session. It will, however, be sent to the Syro-Malabar religious Conference (SMRC) for its comments before re-presenting to the synod.

3) **On Acquisition and Administration of Temporal Goods**

The preliminary discussion of the synod on the Particular Laws on acquisition and administration of temporal goods was completed. Along with the observations and comments of the synodal members it will be sent back to the concerned sub-committee for reformulation.

4) **On Feast and Penance**

The particular laws on feast and penance were extensively discussed and the following were decided: Besides all Sundays, the Nativity of Our Lord, *Dukhrana of Mar Thoma Sleeha* and the Assumption of Our Lady will be days of obligation in the Syro-Malabar Church. It was decided that though feasts such as epiphany, and the feasts of Blessed Kuriakose Elias Chavara and Blessed Alphonsa may not be made days of obligation for practical reasons, they should be celebrated with due solemnity.

The following days were fixed as days of penance: All Fridays except the Fridays between Christmas and Epiphany
and the first Friday after Easter; all days of Lent, period of Annunciation, *Moonnunombu*, *ettunombu*, and *pathinanjunombu*. It was pointed out by many members that the true sense of penance should be inculcated in the faithful rather than making the people observe them out of fear of committing mortal sin.

The days of fast are all Fridays of Lent. Fasting is obligatory on the first day of the Lent and on Good Friday. Days of abstinence are all days of Lent and all Fridays.

With regard to fast some suggested that it should be from midnight to 3.00 p.m. while others disagreed with it pointing out the practical difficulties for the people to observe it. It was decided to present this point to the proposed Major Archepiscopal Assembly in November 1998.

5) On Sacraments

Having completed the preliminary discussion on the particular laws on sacraments the synod decided to send back the draft to the sub-committee for reformulation in the light of the observations and comments made in the synod. Though there was an observation from some of the synodal members that the present draft laws were too juridical the synod decided to retain the present format and see later what can be done to improve it from a theological and pastoral point of view.

6) Supplementary Laws on Clerics

The synod discussed the draft of a set of supplementary laws to the Laws on clerics prepared by Fr. Sebastian Thayyil, the convener of the sub-committee that prepared the draft. He presented also a scheme of formulation to be adopted in order to make the laws more comprehensive. The synod authorized the Apostolic Administrator to promulgate the laws on clerics after obtaining the text of the supplementary laws reformulated
according to the observations made by the synodal members and approved by the Commission for Particular Law.

In connection with the laws on clerics the synod decided to retain the present custom of having only celibate priests in the Syro-Malabar Church.

The synod entrusted the Commission for Clergy and Institutes of Consecrated Life the task of drafting the proposed Charter for Priestly Formation and the Directory for Priests.

OTHER TOPICS

Major Archiepiscopal Assembly and Synodal Session

The synod decided to convene the first Major Archiepiscopal Assembly from 4.00 p.m. on 9th November to 12.30 p.m. on 12th November 1998. Simultaneously the next synod session will be held from 10.00 a.m. on 3rd November to 12.30 p.m. on 14th November 1998. During the days of the Major Archiepiscopal Assembly there will not be sittings of the synod. All synod members will take part in the Major Archiepiscopal Assembly.

Mar Paul Chittilapilly as convener and Mar George Alencherry and Mar Emmanuel Pothanamuzhy CMI as members were chosen by the synod to the Secretariat of the Assembly. The other members of the secretariat will be chosen by the convener in consultation with the members.

The following topics were suggested by the members to be included on the agenda of the forthcoming Major Archiepiscopal Assembly: 1) liturgy, 2) Jubilee celebration of the year 2000, 3) Evangelization activities of the Syro-Malabar Church, 4) faith-formation, 5) unity in the Syro-Malabar Church, 6) Ecumenism and 7) the nature of a Major Archiepiscopal Church and its functioning. It was, however, pointed out that the Assembly should be seen as an occasion for the participants
to express their views on issues affecting the life of the Church. Later in the session Mar Paul Chittilapilly, the convener presented a general outline for the preliminary preparations. A meeting of the representatives of the eparchies, Major Seminaries, Institutes of Consecrated Life and of the various associations will be held on 6th March at Mount St. Thomas in order to plan the course of action with regard to the Assembly.

**Holy Communion in Hand and Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion**

With regard to the practice of receiving Holy Communion in hand and extraordinary ministers for distributing Holy Communion the synod resolved to give some guidelines to help the eparchial bishops who have already introduced the practice as well as those who wish to introduce it. Mar George Alencherry and Mar Thomas Elavanal were asked to draft the guidelines and in a later sitting the synod approved the draft prepared by them for publication. Likewise Mar Jacob Manathodath once more brought to the attention of the synod the norms already approved by the synod concerning extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion.

**Permanent Diaconate**

In conformity with an earlier decision of the synod Mar George Punnakottil presented a paper on the historical and dogmatic aspects of the institution of permanent deacons either married or unmarried. After examining the various aspects of the matter the synod decided to restore it as early as possible in the Syro-Malabar Church. A set of norms regarding selection, formation and other requirements for the candidates are, however, yet to be formulated. Mar George Punnakottil was asked to draft the necessary norms concerning permanent diaconate and present them in the next synodal session scheduled for No-
vember 1998. He was given the freedom to co-opt others to help him in this task.

Conclusions of Special Commission of CBCI for Evangelization

The conclusions of a recent meeting of the Special Commission of the CBCI for Evangelization were extensively discussed by the synod. The Apostolic Administrator and Mar George Alencherry had taken part in this meeting held in Bangalore. The conclusions in general were found to be not a step forward in interecclesial relations and many of them highly prejudicial to the rights of the individual *sui iuris* Churches guaranteed by the Decrees of Vatican II and by the letter written by the Holy Father to the Bishops of India in 1987. A committee consisting of Mar Kuriakose Kunnacherry, Mar Gratian Mundadan and Mar Paul Chittilapilly was asked to prepare a paper stating the position of the synod on the conclusions. The paper presented by the committee was discussed and approved by the synod.

As regards the so-called Madhya Pradesh Formula of “one territory, one jurisdiction”, it was clarified that the exarchs of Satna, Ujjain and Sagar had agreed to the formula as the circumstances at that time necessitated it and that the Syro Malabar Church had never endorsed that policy.

With regard to the representative of the Syro-Malabar Church in the Special Commission Mar Gratian Mundadan was asked to continue.

Request to transfer Manimooly Forane from Mananthavady to Thamarassery

A request from the late bishop of Thamarassery Mar Sebastian Mankuzhikary and followed up by the present bishop
to transfer the parishes under the Manimooly Forane from Mananthavady to Thamarassery was considered by the synod. After exploring various possibilities the synod authorized the Apostolic Administrator to constitute a three member committee for making recommendations to the synod in this regard. He constituted accordingly a committee consisting of Mar George Punnakottil (Convener), Mar Gregory Karotempreel and Mar Jacob Manathodath. The committee will submit its recommendations to the synod in its coming session.

Conclusions of the Meeting of the Committee for the Pastoral Ministry of the Religious in Parishes

Mar Joseph Pallikaparampil, one of the episcopal members of the special committee set up for studying the question of participation of the clerical religious institutes in the pastoral ministry of the parishes, presented the results of the works of the committee. The main conclusions of the committee were the following: 1) Where it is feasible, the churches of the religious of the clerical congregations could be made parishes; 2) Where it is not feasible those churches should function as filial churches or centres of the parish, the priests in charge of those churches should function as assistant to the parish priests officially recognized and appointed by the local hierarch. In principle the synod agreed to these conclusions. However the synod decided to draw up a set of norms for implementing the conclusions. These norms will be discussed with the representatives of the religious before finalizing them.

Three more members namely, Mar Thomas Elavanal MCBS, Mar George Alencherry and Mar Emmanuel Pothanamuzhy CMI were nominated to the committee. The Apostolic Administrator was authorized to nominate two more priests from the eparchial clergy of any unrepresented eparchy
and between five and ten religious, both men and women, to the committee.

**Finances of the Curia**

Mar George Punnakotttil, the Chairman of the Finance Council together with Fr. Mathew Madathikunel, the Finance Officer of the Curia, presented the present financial position of the Curia and explained the efforts hitherto made to raise funds for the construction of the new building. The Apostolic Administrator urged the members to collect the 1% contribution from the faithful as early as possible and to send the amount to the Curia. In this regard the synod decided to declare July 3rd as *Sabhadinam* and to inaugurate the new building on 3rd July 1998. The collection from the parishes on that day will be availed of for meeting the expenses of the Major Archiepiscopal curia. A common circular letter will be issued on 19th April 1998 in connection with the inauguration of the new building. Mar Joseph Powathil was asked to draft the circular letter.

**Oriental region and territory**

According to the decision of a previous session of the synod Mar George Punnakottil presented a short paper about the canonical concept of oriental regions and oriental territories. From the study it was clear that though according to the definition given in *Postquam Apostolicis Litteris* India should have been an oriental region it is not recognized as such.

**Chennai (Madras) Mission**

Mar James Pazhayattil who is in charge of the Syro-Malabar migrants in Chennai presented to the synod the difficulties that he and his priests are encountering there because of the lack of jurisdiction as well as because of the scarcity of funds. He appealed to the synodal members to help him in all
possible ways to fulfil his responsibility well. In this connection it was pointed out that similar difficulties are encountered in Delhi and Calcutta as well as in Kuwait. The Apostolic Administrator assured the synod members that he will take up the matter with the Latin bishops during the forthcoming meeting of CBCI and if necessary approach the Holy See as well. Mar Gregory Karotemprel was entrusted with the task of drafting two separate resolutions, one against the discouraging attitude of the local ordinaries of the Latin Church in India with regard to the pastoral care of the Syro-Malabar migrants in spite of the repeated requests of the faithful and the Major Archiepiscopal authority and the other about the refusal of permission to provide for the pastoral care of the Syro-Malabarians in Kuwait. The synod approved both the resolutions with minor modifications.

**Oriental Religious Houses in Latin Dioceses**

Attention was drawn to the anomalous situation of the existence of houses of the Syro-Malabar Institutes of Consecrated Life in the Latin dioceses in India. Many said that some guidelines must be given by the synod to the Religious Institutes in this regard. The matter is to be brought to the attention of the Syro-Malabar Religious Conference (SMRC).

**Joint meeting of Syro-Malabar and Syro-Malankara Bishops**

In order to discuss issues of common concern the synod decided to hold a meeting of the Syro-Malabar and the Syro-Malankara Bishops in the afternoon of 19th March 1998 at Varanasi where the forthcoming General Body meeting of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of India (CBCI) will be held.
Synodal News

In order to increase the subscription of Synodal News and thereby to reduce the cost of its publication Fr. James Kallumkal VC, the editor of Synodal News, wanted the synod members to encourage the parishes and other institutions in their respective eparchies to subscribe for the bulletin. He suggested that the subscription amount may be collected from the parishes at the time of the annual thirattu and sent directly to the office of the Bulletin. He was, however, not in favour of accepting advertisements for covering the loss since according to him, the bulletin may lose its serious nature. The St. Thomas Mission Bulletin will continue to be published by Mar Gregory Karotemprel.

Advisor for All Kerala Catholic Congress (AKCC)

Taking into consideration the request of the president of AKCC Mar Joseph Pallikaparampil was nominated advisor to AKCC. His term of office, however, was not determined.

About the Office of the Dead

Some of the members of the synod raised the propriety of the practice of nuns and lay people reciting the office of the dead. They suggested that the present office of the dead is to be recited by priests only and that an alternative prayer should be prepared for the use of others.

Civil Suit against the members of the Synod

In the afternoon of 14th January Advocate A.V. George Anjilithara briefed the Synod members about the civil suit filed by Sri Joseph Pulikunnel against the Syro-Malabar Bishops.
Devasom Bill

In respect to the Devasom Bill that is currently under the consideration of the Kerala Legislative Assembly and the developments at Sivagiri Mutt the synod asked the Apostolic Administrator to contact the President of KCBC and ask him to do the needful in consultation, if possible, with the heads of their Christian churches in Kerala.

Meetings

1) Staff Council of St. Joseph’s Pontifical Seminary

In the afternoon on 16 January the synod met the Rector and Staff Council of Mangalapuzha Seminary. Fr George Oliapuram, the rector of the Seminary, explained the present situation in the seminary and proposed ways to make the functioning of the seminary more effective. In this connection a number of points were raised in the synod to be clarified with the Holy See such as the status of the seminary, namely whether it is Pontifical or otherwise, whether it is possible to have two separate faculties and so on. The synod discussed also the issue of division of the properties of the seminary. As to the proposal to construct more rooms at Mangalapuzha it was suggested to take a decision after a detailed study of the matter. The possibility of starting another Seminary in Malabar is also to be explored. The synod members also visited the seminary on Friday, the 23rd and met the staff and the students.

With regard to the synodal commission for Seminaries the synod decided to have two separate commissions: one for St. Thomas Apostolic Seminary at Vadavathoor and another for St. Joseph’s Pontifical Seminary.

As it was pointed out that currently the seminarians at Mangalapuzha do not make a declaration to observe celibacy while they apply for the Holy Order of diaconate the synod
decided to issue instructions to the seminary authorities making it obligatory.

2) Various Associations

A few associations, both of clergy and laity, made requests to meet the synod to discuss issues of interest to the Syro-Malabar Church. After considering the various aspects of the issue the synod replied informing the concerned persons that it would be difficult for the synod to meet the individual groups because there are many such groups that want to meet the synod. The communication further said that as a rule the synod does not meet such groups because that would interfere with the proper transaction of the agenda fixed by the synod. Therefore they were informed that the points raised by them were under active consideration but since in the very synod there is considerable difference of opinion about them it would be difficult to give an answer in this regard. One of the groups which met the synodal Fathers earlier was asked to give in writing whatever new points they liked to put forward. However, the synod agreed for a personal hearing through its representatives at a convenient place and time if the groups so desired. Mar Jacob Thoomkuzy, Mar George Valiamattam and Mar John Perumattam MST were chosen as delegates of the synod to meet the groups. They met the representatives of the associations on 21st January at POC Palarivattom from 4.30 to 6 p.m.

On the following day the delegates briefed the synod of the meeting. Since some members wanted more discussion with regard to some of the issues raised by the groups, on 24th January in the last sitting Mar Jacob Thoomkuzhy introduced the points raised in the memorandum of one of the groups which he said was the only group that submitted the points in writing. About one of the points, namely the controversy over the Marthoma Cross, Mar Jacob Thoomkuzhy said that it is the
duty of the synod to remove doubts in the minds of the faithful and pronounce definitively on it. For want of time the discus-
sion had to be stopped without coming to any conclusion.

3) CNEWA Officials

Chorebishop John D. Faris, the assistant secretary general of Catholic Near East Welfare Association (CNEWA) addressed the synod on 24th January. He was accompanied by Mr. Thomas Varghese, the official in charge of the India Desk at CNEWA. Chorebishop Faris in his brief exposition asked the bishops to set the priority in requesting for funds from CNEWA and to send periodic progress reports of the projects that have already been sanctioned.

4) Rashtradeepika board of Directors

The synod met the board of directors of Rashtradeepika on 16th afternoon. The Chairman Sri C.M. Antony, the Acting Chief-Editor Sri George Jacob Mannamplakal, two of the directors Frs. Thomas Ayckara CMI and Mathew Muttamthottil spoke about the current situation of the company.

CONCLUSION

At 12.45 p.m. on 24th January the synod ended with the concluding speech of the Apostolic Administrator followed by Angelus.
DECISIONS

1. To appoint a Synodal Commission to study the request of the Bishop of Thamarassery for the transfer of Manimoooy Forane from Mananthavady to Thamarassery and to give recommendations to the synod in this regard.

2. To inaugurate the new Curia building on July 3, 1998.

3. To issue a common pastoral letter to be read out in the churches on April 19, 1998 explaining the need and purpose of the Head Quarters of the Church and announcing that the new building will be inaugurated on July 3.

4. To celebrate henceforth 3rd July as *Sabhadinam* and to take a collection on that day, which is to be sent to the Major Archiepiscopal Curia to meet its expenses.

5. To authorize the Apostolic Administrator to promulgate the Rules of Palliyogam immediately in such a way that it will come into force on July 3, 1998.

6. To hold a dialogue with the SMRC in view of reaching a decision in regard to their request for permission to celebrate Holy *Qurbana* on Sundays in all the churches attached to the houses of the Institutes of Consecrated Life and in regard to other related issues.

7. To form a separate Synodal Commission for the St. Joseph’sPontifical Seminary, Mangalapuzha.

8. To give instructions to the seminary authorities in Mangalapuzha and Vadavathoor making the declaration of celibacy obligatory for the candidates to diaconate.
9. To hold the first Major Archiepiscopal Assembly from 4.00 p.m. on 9th November 1998 to 12.30 p.m. on 12th November 1998.

10. To hold the next session of the Synod from 10.00 a.m. on 3rd November 1998 to 12.30 p.m. on 14th November 1998.

11. To send back the Particular Laws on acquisition and administration of temporal goods to the sub-committee along with the observations and suggestions of the Synodal Fathers so that the laws may be reformulated accordingly.

12. To implement the earlier decision to introduce the reception of Holy Communion in hand and institute extraordinary ministers for distribution of Holy Communion.

13. To restore Permanent Diaconate as early as possible and to depute Mar George Punnakkottil to present to the Synod at the next session a set of norms regarding the selection, formation and requirements of the candidates.

14. To authorize the Apostolic Administrator to promulgate the Laws on Clerics after obtaining the text of the supplementary laws reformulated according to the observations made by the Synodal members and approved by the Commission for Particular Law.

15. To entrust the Commission for Clergy and Institutes of Consecrated Life with the task of formulating the Charter for Priestly Formation and a Directory for Priests.

16. To declare the following days as days of obligation in the Syro-Malabar Church: All Sundays, Nativity of Our Lord and Dukrana of Mar Thoma Sleeha and the Assumption of Our Lady.
17. To approve the guidelines regarding the reception of Holy Communion in hand and those regarding the extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion.

18. To fix the following days as days of penance in the Syro-Malabar Church: All Fridays except the Fridays between Christmas and Epiphany and the first Friday after Easter; all days of Lent, period of Annunciation, Moonnunombu, Ettunombu, and Pathinanjunombu. The days of fast are all Fridays of Lent. Fasting is obligatory on the first day of the Lent and on Good Friday. Days of abstinence are all days of Lent and all Fridays.
DIRECTIVES
On
Holy Communion in Hand

The Synod of the Syro-Malabar Church decides to introduce the reception of Holy Communion in hand. However the faithful have the option to receive the Holy Communion on the tongue.

The tradition of the Oriental Churches in general and of the Syro-Malabar Church in particular, upholds the way of receiving Holy Communion in two species. Therefore, as far as possible, communion in both species should be the practice in our Church.

Whenever Holy Communion is given in hand the following directives are to be observed.

A. **For Communion in double species.**

1. The minister takes the Host and dips it in the Chalice and gives it to the communicant who receives it with his/her forefinger and thumb of the right hand holding the palm of the left hand underneath. He/she then raises the Host together with the left hand to the mouth and consumes it.

or

2. The minister takes the Host, dips it in the Chalice and gives it to the communicant who receives it in the right palm placed above the left palm in the form of a cross. The communicant, with due reverence, raises both palms upto the mouth and receives the Holy Communion.
3. In liturgically well trained and comparatively small communities, the communicant can first receive the Sacred Host in hand and then carefully dip it in the Chalice held by another minister or placed on a table and receive it without in anyway causing the Sacred Blood to be spilt.

or

4. The communicant first receives from the minister the Sacred Host in the left palm placed on the right palm, then proceeds to another minister who with a tiny spoon, drops a little of the Sacred Blood on the Host (which is sufficiently thick) and then consumes the Sacred Species.

5. The communicant receives the Sacred Host in hand following any of the directives given for communion in the form of Sacred Bread alone. He/she proceeds to a minister holding the chalice who with a small spoon pours a little of the Sacred blood into his/her mouth.

B. For communion in the form of Sacred Bread alone.

1. The communicant receives from the minister the Sacred Host in his/her left palm placed above the right palm in the form of a cross. He/she then takes the Host by the thumb and forefinger of the right hand and consumes it.

or

2. The communicant receives from the minister the Sacred Host in his/her right palm placed above the left palm in the form of a cross and raises the Host with both palms to the mouth and consumes it.

or
3. The communicant receives from the minister the Sacred Host with the forefinger and thumb of the right hand holding the palm of the lefthand underneath. He/she then raises the Host together with the left hand to the mouth and consumes it.

Proper instructions should be given to the faithful before introducing the practice of receiving Holy Communion in hand so that all may, with due reverence, receive the Holy Eucharist. The communicants who receive the Holy Communion in hand should consume it then and there.

In all circumstances the priest or other ministers commissioned by the Church have to distribute the Holy Communion and the faithful have to receive it as a gift from God. Nobody except the priest shall take and receive the Holy Communion by himself/herself.
GUIDELINES
Regarding Extraordinary Ministers

The Syro-Malabar Synod gives the following common guidelines regarding the extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion.

1. Priests and Deacons are the ordinary ministers of Holy Communion.

2. Whenever there are sufficient number of ordinary ministers extraordinary ministers shall not be deputed to distribute Holy Communion.

3. The following categories of persons may be commissioned as extraordinary ministers.
   a. Major Seminarians who have received at least the order of Karoya.
   b. Religious brothers who have made their final profession.
   c. The Superior or assistant Superior of a Convent or any religious sister who has made her final Profession.
   d. Lay people of good standing, generally acceptable to the parish priest and to the people.

4. Religious brothers and sisters, and lay people who are to be extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion must be presented by the parish priest and commissioned by the eparchial Bishop.
5. All the extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion shall be given special training as decided by the eparchial Bishop.

6. All the extraordinary ministers shall wear a special but simple vestment approved by the Bishop during the distribution of Holy Communion.

7. The extraordinary ministers have to perform their service according to the directions of the parish priest.

8. Only the priest has the right to take and receive the Holy Communion by himself.
CONCLUDING SPEECH

by

MAR VARKEY VITHAYATHIL C.Ss.R.

Your Eminence, Your Graces, Your Excellencies,

We have come to the conclusion of this two week-long session of the VI Synod (1998). To each of you I extend my thanks from the depth of my heart for your active participation in the discussions. My sincere thanks goes particularly to His Eminence Cardinal Antony Padiyara, the Major Archbishop Emeritus who was with us throughout the sittings in spite of his fragile physical conditions. I most sincerely thank those members of the synod who had been entrusted with some ad hoc duties in the course of the sittings. I deem it as my duty to thank the outgoing members of the Superior Tribunal, the Permanent Synod as well as the chairmen and the members of the various commissions who discharged their duties during the past five years with true devotion and utmost dedication. Indeed, they will continue until 20th May 1998, the date of the expiry of their five-year term of office. I am anticipating this public manifestation of my thanks because no session of the synod is foreseen before that date. I thank also the new members of the Superior Tribunal, the Permanent Synod and the chairmen and members of the various commissions who were either elected or appointed for accepting their new assignments unquestioningly. I wish and pray that the Lord help them all to fulfil the responsibilities entrusted to them successfully.

In this session our achievement has been not insignificant. I would single out the approval and promulgation of the Rules
of Palliyogam. It has been almost five years since we started working on its draft. As you know a lot of work of different sub-committees has gone into its formulation. In this regard I would like to mention the two meetings of the representatives of the eparchial pastoral and presbyteral councils and of the representatives of the Institutes of Consecrated Life and of Societies of Apostolic Life in which there was a cross section of our Church. The draft had been widely circulated and discussed in the various fora of the eparchies also. Now it is our turn to implement them in our parishes in the true spirit with which they were formulated. I am confident that it will be a very useful instrument for the better and effective conducting of Yogams in the parishes.

The Particular Laws on Clerics also have been approved by this synodal session for promulgation. As many have mentioned in this session and the previous ones they are not to be considered as a comprehensive set of laws regarding the clerics in our Church. Certainly we will have to legislate more as and when need will arise.

We have completed the preliminary discussion on the particular laws on acquisition and administration of temporal goods, laws on sacraments and laws on feast and penance. Now the drafts of these laws will be sent back to the respective sub-committees for reformulation. We had a very useful discussion on the pastoral care of our faithful living under the Latin jurisdiction in India as well as abroad and on the missionary rights and obligations of our Church in India.

The decision to hold the first Major Archiepiscopal Assembly has been historic. It had to be convened much earlier because Canon Law prescribes that the Major Archiepiscopal Assembly must be convened at least once in five years. But the initial hiccups and the events during the last three years pre-
vented us from taking off smoothly in the present juridical status. But better late than never! I am sure that our people will appreciate the assembly very much. The period running up to the Assembly scheduled for 9 - 12 November 1998 will be one of intense preparation. The faithful of our Church are certainly looking forward for such an occasion to express their views on a variety of issues in our Church. Let it be a legitimate open forum where a true dialogue takes place in true Christian spirit. I would request you to make the faithful fully aware of the extent and scope of this Assembly and send the delegates duly prepared.

The dialogue with the staff Council of St. Joseph’s Pontifical Seminary at Mangalapuzha and our visit to the Seminary will certainly boost the morale of the staff and the students there. I am very happy that twenty of our bishops visited the seminary and met the staff and the students. Let us remember that seminary is the heart of a Church. If the seminarians do not get a genuine Christian formation based on Christian values it will affect the entire Church very adversely. As you heard from the Rector while answering one of my questions there is an apprehension that the dispute over liturgy and the consequent tension in our Church might creep into the seminary at Mangalapuzha also. For the sake of our Church which is very dear to us let us resolve to avoid such a situation at all costs. The Synodal Commission for the Seminary has a great role to play here.

As we have decided the new curia building will be inaugurated on 3rd July 1998. I am sure that many of you will be there. I wish all of us could be present on that occasion! It is not a mean achievement that we could almost complete the building within such a short time even though our cash reserves are very low. I remember with gratitude the efforts of the Finance Coun-
cil and the Finance Officer of the Curia for the hard work they are doing to collect funds for the construction. I am hopeful that we will be able to raise enough funds. My thanks goes also to the members of the Construction Committee for the troubles they are taking to see this building complete within the scheduled time.

In spite of the still persisting differences about liturgical matters I believe that this session has helped us much to foster unity among ourselves. That is what the Holy Father expects of us, pastors of this Church. Let us make a sincere effort to measure up to our lofty and serious responsibility that God has entrusted to us. Let us prove ourselves mature enough to lead our people by opening wide our hearts to the dictates of the Holy Spirit. St. Thomas, our Father in faith will certainly aid us. May he intercede for us. May Mary, the Most Holy Mother of God, protect us from all temptations that might mar the true nature of our responsibility.

We shall meet again here from 3 to 14 November 1998. With these words I formally declare the VI Synod (1998) concluded. May God bless us all.
The great Dominican tradition of consecrated life that follows the *Rule of St. Augustine* is one of the pillars of the Western Church. In this tradition women never lagged behind. A convent of the Dominican Sisters was founded in Augsburg (Germany) in the year 1335. And later in 1845 a group of six sisters were sent from Augsburg to Landsberg to start the Priory of the *Dominican Sisters of the Most Holy Trinity* there. In the providence of God the Syro-Malabar Church also made her first contribution to the increment of this illustrious tradition through her daughters who joined the Priory at Landsberg on October 7, 1966. It was the same providence that brought them to India to found their first community at Mannarkkad in the eparchy of Palghat in 1975. The *Dominican Sisters of Mannarkkad*, as they were known until now, have been faithfully following their Dominican way of Life and carrying out their apostolate in conformity with the motto of the Order *contemplare et contemplata aliis tradere* engaging themselves in the field of education.

Ever since the foundation of the community at Mannarkkad it grew in all respects rendering the foundation in India capable of being independent in keeping with the Dominican tradition. However, taking into consideration the recommendation of the Second Vatican Council to *the religious orders and associations of the Latin rite, which are working in Eastern countries or among the Eastern faithful, that they should set up, so far as is possible, houses or even provinces of the Eastern rite to make their apostolic work more effective* (Orientalium
ecclesiarum 6) the General Synaxis of the Order at Landsberg passed the resolution to make the foundation in India an independent one in the Syro-Malabar Church. After having obtained expert advice on the difference in the juridical obligations of an Order in the Latin Church and in the Oriental Churches it was further decided to make the Indian foundation as a Congregation of Major Archiepiscopal right in conformity with the canons in the Code of Canons of the Oriental Churches. Sr. Gertrudis Wiltschka, O.P., the Prioress General of Landsberg and Sr. Rossy Tressokkaran, O.P., the Regional Superior of Mannarkkad, made their requests to this effect to the Major Archiepiscopal Authority of the Syro-Malabar Church. Given that the Priory at Landsberg is of eparchial right, Rt. Rev. Dr. Viktor Joseph Dammertz O.S.B., the Bishop of Augsburg, gave his nihil obstat to this project. Mar Jacob Manathodath, the eparchial bishop of Palghat has also given his consent.

Therefore having considered all things and having consulted the Holy See and obtained the required consent of the Permanent Synod as per CCEO c. 506 §2, I, Mar Varkey Vithayathil C.Ss.R., Apostolic Administrator Sede vacante et ad nutum Sanctae Sedis, vested with the authority of the Major Archbishop, taking into consideration the good of the members of the abovementioned foundation and its praiseworthy services to the Syro-Malabar Church, hereby erect the community of the Dominican Sisters of Mannarkad as a Congregation of Major Archiepiscopal Right in the Syro-Malabar Church which will henceforth be known as the Congregation of the

*Dominican Sisters of the Holy Trinity*

with all the rights, duties and privileges attached to such Institutes of Consecrated Life in the common law and in the particular law of the Syro-Malabar Church. The internal admin-
istration of the Congregation, however, will be subject to the Constitutions of the same Congregation which are herewith approved. The present Regional House at Mannarkkad in the eparchy of Palghat shall be the Principal House of this Institute.

It is further decreed that Sr. Rossy Tressokkaran, the regional superior of the erstwhile region of the *Dominican Sisters of Mannarkkad*, will continue as the Superior General of this new Congregation of the *Dominican Sisters of the Holy Trinity* until the term of office to which she was elected expires. After the expiry of the said date, the new office bearers shall be designated in conformity with the new Constitutions of the Congregation. This applies also to the Assistant Regional Superior and the other Regional Councillors, the Finance Officer and the Novice Mistress.

All contrary dispositions notwithstanding.

Given from the Major Archiepiscopal Curia at Mount St. Thomas on the twenty eighth day of the month of January of the year nineteen ninety eight.

sd/-

Mar Varkey Vithayathil C.Ss.R.
Apostolic Administrator

sd/-

Fr. Jose Porunnedom

Chancellor
No. 804/98

DECREE

The Synod of Bishops of the Syro-Malabar Major Archiepiscopal Church in its session held on 16th January 1998 approved the Particular Law of this Church for the regulation of the Palliyogam (Procedure Rules) appended to this Decree and decided that it should be promulgated by the Major Archiepiscopal Authority in such a way that it becomes effective on 3rd July 1998. Therefore, in conformity with the said decision of the Synod, I hereby formally promulgate it. This law will come into force on 3rd July 1998. The Venerable Hierarchs of the Syro-Malabar Major Archiepiscopal Church are requested to make this known to the faithful of their respective eparchies and in particular to the priests who have care of parishes and similar ecclesiastical units.

Given from the Major Archiepiscopal Curia of the Syro-Malabar Major Archiepiscopal Church at Mount St. Thomas on 16 January 1998.

sd/-

Mar Varkey Vithayathil C.Ss.R.
Apostolic Administrator

sd/-

Fr. Jose Porunnedom
Chancellor
THE PALLIYOGAM -PROCEDURE RULES-
OF
THE SYRO-MALABAR MAJOR ARCHIEPISCOPAL
CHURCH¹

INTRODUCTION

Whereas the system of Palliyogam is a laudable heritage of the Syro-Malabar Major Archiepiscopal Church by which she expresses in a tangible way the ecclesial communion of all Christian faithful in the Church;

And whereas, as per CCEO c. 295, a uniform particular law on the Palliyogam applicable to all parishes in the Syro-Malabar Major Archiepiscopal Church is required;

Now, the Synod of Bishops of the Syro-Malabar Major Archiepiscopal Church, in exercise of its legislative power, hereby makes the following rules to regulate matters relating to the Palliyogam.

¹ The text of this legislation was framed after receiving the suggestions from the Presbyterium/Presbyteral and Pastoral Councils and from similar bodies in the eparchies as well as from the representatives of the Institutes of Consecrated Life in the Syro-Malabar Major Archiepiscopal Church. The draft was discussed in the Synod of Bishops held in June 1997 at the Pastoral Orientation Centre at Palarivattom and in the Central Committee of the Commission for Particular Law held on 30 and 31 October 1997. It was discussed at length also in the General Body of the Synodal Commission for Particular law held on 12-13 December 1997. The reformulated draft was discussed in the meeting of the representatives of the eparchial Pastoral and Presbyteral Councils and of the Institutes of Consecrated Life held on 14 January 1998 at Mount St Thomas. The Sixth Synod of Bishops of the Syro-Malabar Major Archiepiscopal Church in its sittings on 15-16 January 1998 discussed the final draft and with the necessary modifications it was enacted law.
PART I

PRELIMINARY

Section I

Title and Purpose

1. Title: These Rules may be called The Palliyogam - Procedure Rules - of the Syro-Malabar Major Archiepiscopal Church

1.1. These Rules apply to all parishes within the proper territory (territorium proprium) of the Syro-Malabar Major Archiepiscopal Church.

1.2. Purpose: Palliyogam, as an expression of the communion of the people of God in the parish, is intended to advise and help the parish priest and to work in cooperation with him, in exercising the pastoral ministry and administering financial matters of the parish.

Section II

Definitions

2. In these Rules unless context otherwise requires:-

2.1. ACCOUNTANT means the person who keeps the accounts and does other office duties of the parish regularly, with or without an allowance or remuneration, under the supervision of the parish priest and Kaikkārans.

2.2. ĀNDUTIRATTU OR VĀRSHIKATHIRATTU means annual statement of accounts.

2.3. ARDHAVĀRSHIKATHIRATTU means half-yearly statement of accounts.
2.4. ASSISTANT PARISH PRIEST (Vicarius paroecialis/Assistant Vicar) means a presbyter appointed by the eparchial bishop to assist in the proper pastoral care of the parish under the authority of the parish priest and, if need should arise, to substitute for the parish priest (cf. cc. 301, 302).

2.5. ÄTMASTHITI /PARISH REGISTER means the official register maintained in each parish church showing particulars relating to the members of the parish.

2.6. BUDGET means the official statement of the proposed programmes of the church showing the estimated income and expenditure for the ensuing financial year.

2.7. CHURCH PROPERTY OF THE PARISH means all movable and immovable properties, including all institutions belonging to the parish as a juridic person, subject to the provisions of canons 920, 1007, 1008, 1009 and other relevant canons of the CCEO.

2.8. DAVĀLAYASUSRŪŚHI (SACRISTAN ) means the person, appointed as per eparchial statutes and approved by the local hierarch to serve in the church assisting the sacred ministers at divine worship and other functions, with or without an allowance or remuneration.

2.9. EPARCHIAL BISHOP means a bishop who, as the vicar and legate of Christ, governs in his own name the eparchy entrusted to him for shepherding with legislative, judicial and executive powers as per CCEO and the Particular Law of the Syro-Malabar Major Archiepiscopal Church (cf. c.178).

2.10. EPARCHY means a portion of the people of God, which is entrusted for pastoral care to a bishop with
the co-operation of the presbyterium, so that adhering to its pastor and gathered by him in the Holy Spirit through the Gospel and the Eucharist, it constitutes a particular Church in which the one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church of Christ is truly present and operative (cf. c. 177 §1).

2.11. FAMILY means, person or persons, residing within the territory allotted to each parish and entered as a family in the Parish Register maintained in the parish.

2.12. HEAD OF THE FAMILY is that senior member of the family, male or female, who is responsible for the running of the family and who has attained 21 years of age.

2.13. KAIKKÄRAN means a member of the parish, elected by the Potuyogam or Pratinidhiyogam and confirmed and appointed by the local hierarch, or directly appointed by him under special circumstances, to help the parish priest in keeping and administering parish properties and incomes according to the norms of ecclesiastical law and in conducting the programmes and affairs of the parish and to work in cooperation with the parish priest in exercising pastoral ministry and administering financial matters of the parish.


2.15. LOCAL HIERARCH means in these rules, eparchial bishops, protosyncellus, syncellus and others mentioned in CCEO c. 984 § 2.

2.16. MÄSATHIRATTU means, monthly statement of accounts.
2.17. MEMBERS OF A PARISH means the Christian faithful belonging to the same eparchy having domicile or quasi-domicile within the territory of the parish (cf. CCEO, cc. 912, 916) or those who have obtained membership through special orders by the eparchial bishop.

2.18. NĀLVAZHY (JOURNAL) means the book containing a record of each day's financial transactions entered datewise.

2.19. PALLIYOGAM in its two forms, namely Potuyogam and Pratinidhiyogam means the body constituted in the Syro-Malabar Major Archiepiscopal Church through tradition as a specific expression of the communion of the people of God in the parish, to advise and assist the parish priest, the president thereof, and to work in collaboration with him in exercising the pastoral ministry and administering the financial matters of the parish.

2.20. PARISH means a certain community of Christian Faithful stably established in an eparchy, as a rule within a definite territory, the pastoral care of which community is entrusted to a parish priest (cf. cc. 279, 280).

2.21. PARISH CHURCH means a building exclusively dedicated for divine worship of the parish community by consecration or blessing (cf. CCEO, c. 869).

2.22. PARISH PRIEST (Parochus/Vicar) means a presbyter, appointed by the eparchial bishop, to whom the care of souls in a given parish is entrusted as to its own pastor; he is the principal cooperator of the eparchial
bishop in the parish under the authority of the same eparchial bishop (cf. cc. 281, 284).

2.23. *PEREDU* (LEDGER) means the book in which the itemwise entries based on the journal relating to income and expenditure are made.

2.24. *POTUYOGAM* means a body of all the heads of families in the parish and members of the *Pratinidhiyogam* and others mentioned in Part II Section II No. 5 (1-8).

2.25. *PRATINIDHIYOGAM* means a body consisting of those elected by the *Potuyogam* or by the heads of families in the ward/family unit meetings, and others duly elected or nominated or posted ex-officio as members and approved by the local hierarch as per eparchial statutes.

2.26. *THIRATTU* means the statement of accounts showing the income and expenditure of the church.

**PART II**

**STRUCTURE, FUNCTIONS AND DUTIES OF PALLIYOGAM**

**Section I**

**Palliyyogam in General**

3. In every parish there shall be two forms of *Palliyyogam*, namely, *Potuyogam* and *Pratinidhiyogam*. In small parishes, however, the *Palliyyogam* may function as *Potuyogam* alone, with the permission of the local hierarch. Similarly, for grave reasons or in big parishes, the *Palliyyogam* may function as *Pratinidhiyogam* alone, with the permission of
the eparchial bishop. In the latter case, the Potuyogam has
to be convened at least once a year for a general review.

4. The Potuyogam and the Pratinidhiyogam have also the
right to form special committees or commissions for speci-
fied purpose and as soon as the purpose for which they
were constituted has been achieved, such committees or
commissions formed shall be dissolved.

Section II
The Potuyogam of the Parish

5. MEMBERS: The following persons shall be the
members of the Potuyogam:

5.1. Parish Priest.

5.2. Assistant Parish Priest(s).

5.3. Resident priests of the same eparchy serving in the
institutions of the parish by appointment.

5.4. Priests from the parish incardinated in the same
eparchy, present in the parish at the time of
Potuyogam.

5.5. Superiors of the houses of the Institutes of Consec-
rated Life/Societies of Apostolic Life.

5.6. Heads of families: Ordinarily only the head of the
family shall represent the family in the Potuyogam.
However, the husband and wife can mutually agree
who is to represent the family in the Potuyogam on a
stable basis and that has to be communicated to the
parish priest in writing. If the head of the family is
permanently disabled to attend such meetings he/she
can nominate on a stable basis another senior mem-
ber of his/her family who is not below the age of 21
to attend such meetings, on behalf of the family. Any such nomination shall be communicated in writing to the parish priest in advance of seven days.

5.7. *Kaikkārans* of the year.

5.8. Members of the *Pratinidhiyogam*.

6. **DISQUALIFICATIONS AND DISPUTES**

6.1. The following persons shall not be entitled to become members of any of the meetings of the *Potuyogam*:

6.1.1. Those who stand publicly against the faith and teachings of the Church, or

6.1.2. Those who are under ecclesiastical censure, or

6.1.3. Public sinners, or

6.1.4. Persons convicted of offenses involving moral turpitude until reformed and certified by the parish priest, or

6.1.5. Persons who have defaulted annual paschal duties, or

6.1.6. Persons who are of unsound mind, or

6.1.7. Willful defaulters of Church laws.

6.2. Known drunkards or those under intoxication shall not be permitted to participate in the meetings of the *Potuyogam* and *Pratinidhiyogam*.

6.3. The president of the *Palliyyogam* shall decide whether a person has to be excluded from a meeting of the *Potuyogam* in accordance with these rules and the meeting shall be conducted according to the decision of the president.
6.4. If any dispute arises as to whether a person is a member of the parish or whether he/she is entitled to exercise any right in a meeting of the Potuyogam, the matter shall be settled as per no 70 of this procedure rules after informing the eparchial curia.

7. The Potuyogam shall exercise the following functions in conformity with the general pastoral plan of the eparchy.

7.1. Make the parish community conscious that without the apostolate of the laity the pastors’ work will not become fully effective (Apostolicam Actuositatem = AA 10) and that the Church is not truly established and does not fully live, nor is a perfect sign of Christ unless there is a laity existing and working alongside the hierarchy (Ad Gentes = AG 21);

7.2. Prepare and launch a time-bound pastoral plan with the comprehensive vision of promoting the spiritual, social, cultural, biblical, catechetical and liturgical renewal of the whole parish;

7.3. Promote active participation in the liturgy (AA 10; Christifideles laici = CL 33);

7.4. Arrange to teach catechism to the children, youth and adults and to motivate others to do so (AA 10; CL 33,34);

7.5. Proclaim the Gospel through word and witness (AA 13; CL 33);

7.6. Promote vocations to priesthood and Institutes of Consecrated Life/ Societies of Apostolic Life;

7.7. Bring back to the Church those gone astray from the faith (AA 10; CL 33);
7.8. Give leadership in the forming and functioning of small Christian communities and family units (CL 26);

7.9. Take initiative in the forming and functioning of lay organizations and see that the whole youth are enlisted in one or other of the organizations in the parish (AA 29; CL 30);

7.10. Animate the parish community to exercise their apostolate in the world through life and witness like a leaven so as to invite others into the fellowship with God through Christ in the Spirit (AA 2);

7.11. Organize the Christian community into a common forum to meet the challenges to Faith and the violation of the fundamental rights through conscientisation and action (AA 18);

7.12. Divide the parish into wards/family units;

7.13. Promote the welfare of the Church and community by inspiring it by the gospel spirit of sharing goods and services according to one's capacity.

8. *Potuyogam* has the following duties:

8.1. To pass the annual accounts for submission to the local hierarch's approval;

8.2. To decide, subject to the eparchial statutes, the numbers of *Kaikkārans*, auditors, church employees and the representatives from each ward/family unit;

8.3. To elect, subject to eparchial statutes, *Kaikkārans*, auditors, and the representatives from each ward/family unit;
8.4. To discuss and pass the budget of the parish and to allot priorities of items of expenditure;

8.5. To devise means of raising funds and to fix amounts of contribution by the parishioners for ordinary expenses and/or special projects, subject to eparchial rules;

8.6. To fix, if needed, a gradation of contribution on the occasion of marriage etc. according to the financial capacity of the families, subject to the directions in each eparchy;

8.7. To fix the rate of fees for the use of the church paraphernalia and also the rate of offerings for taking devotional objects in procession, subject to the directives of the eparchial bishop (cf. c. 1013);

8.8. To fix the rate of fee for graves and tombs and to fix the duration of their use, subject to the directives of the eparchial bishop;

8.9. To pass resolutions regarding construction of church, chapels and buildings for any of the parish institutions and buying or selling or borrowing or gifting of movable or immovable properties, subject to the provisions contained in no. 40 and eparchial statutes;

8.10. To decide on the number of the solemn celebration of feasts in the parish and to propose programmes for the same;

8.11. To deliberate upon matters of importance that affect the parish generally;

8.12. To establish special committees or commissions as and when needed and to choose members to the same;
8.13. To do other duties stipulated in the eparchial statutes or such other duties as are directed by the eparchial bishop.

Section III
Pratinidhiyogam

9. MEMBERS: The following persons shall be the members of the Pratinidhiyogam:

9.1. EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS

9.1.1. Parish Priest

9.1.2. Assistant Parish Priest (s)

9.1.3. Kaikkārans of the year

9.1.4. Members of the Pastoral Council from the parish, if any

9.2. ELECTED MEMBERS

9.2.1. Elected representatives of the wards/units of families

9.2.2. One representative of the parish educational institutions and one representative from other parish institutions, if any, who is a parishioner

9.2.3. A representative of the Sunday School teachers

9.2.4. Representatives of the recognized parish associations as per the eparchial statutes

9.2.5. Representatives of the Institutes of Consecrated Life/Societies of Apostolic Life in the parish: one from men and one from women

9.2.6. An elected representative of the eparchial priests from the parish, working in the same eparchy, subject to the practice of the eparchy.
9.3. NOMINATED MEMBERS

9.3.1. Persons including experts nominated by the local hierarch in consultation with the parish priest.

9.3.2. In parishes with ten or more Dalit Catholic families, they are to be represented by nomination by the parish priest, if not elected otherwise or as determined by the eparchial statutes.

9.4. The total number of the nominated members shall not exceed 1/3 of the total members.

10. ELECTION: The election to the Pratinidhiyogam shall be as follows:

10.1. The Potuyogam or the ward meetings/units of families shall elect representatives from every ward in proportion to the number of families therein so that there shall be at least 10 and not more than 30 such representatives. In exceptional cases the local hierarch can fix a lower or higher number. Thirty percent of the members shall preferably be women; but the percentage of elected women representatives shall not be less than 10 percent.

10.2. The representatives of the men and women Institutes of Consecrated Life/Societies of Apostolic Life are elected at a meeting of the respective representatives of all the Institutes of Consecrated Life/Societies of Apostolic Life in the parish convened by the parish priest.

10.3. The parishioner representing the parish educational institutions is elected at a meeting of representatives of all parish educational institutions convened by the
parish priest. In the same way, if there are other parish institutions, their representative is elected.

10.4. The teachers of the Sunday School shall elect one among them as their representative.

10.5. Members/representatives of parish associations elect their representative/s as per eparchial statutes.

10.6. As far as possible elections shall be by consensus; if not, by the majority of the members present.

10.7. Complaints if any about the elections shall be submitted to the Protopresbyter or to the administrative tribunal mentioned in no. 70 through the eparchial curia.

11. Those who have any of the disqualifications mentioned in no. 6 cannot be members of the Pratinidhiyogam.

12. The Accountant and Sacristan (Ḍavālayasusruṣhi) can attend the meeting of the Pratinidhiyogam if so required to explain the accounts of the parish and to make a report of the meeting and other such matters; however, they shall not be members of Pratinidhiyogam.

12.1. A secretary shall be chosen to prepare minutes and reports at the Pratinidhiyogam. The term of office and other details shall be specified in the eparchial statutes.

13. The term of the Pratinidhiyogam shall be three years, unless it is extended by the local hierarch in special circumstances.
14. Any member absenting from three consecutive meetings without sufficient reason and excuse in the judgement of the parish priest shall lose membership in the Pratinidhiyogam.

15. If a member suffers from any of the disqualifications mentioned in no 6, but known only after becoming a member, or suffers a disqualification during the term of membership, he/she ceases to be a member of the Pratinidhiyogam and the matter must be brought to the attention of the Pratinidhiyogam by the president. And if there is a dispute, the matter shall be referred to the administrative tribunal mentioned in no 70 through the eparchial curia.

16. Vacancies arising in the Pratinidhiyogam are to be filled within three months by election or nomination or ex-officio posting according to the nature of the vacant seat.

17. The Pratinidhiyogam shall exercise the following functions and duties:

17.1. To impart leadership by initiating active and constructive roles with a view to fostering, facilitating and promoting the spiritual, social, cultural, catechetical, pastoral, developmental and charitable activities and youth formation in the parish, having due regard to the religious atmosphere of the parish;

17.2. To pass the māsathirattu or kurumtirattu or ardhavārshikathirattu (monthly, quarterly, half yearly statements of accounts).

17.3. To prepare āndutirattu (annual statement of accounts) and budget and submit the same to the Potuyogam;
17.4. To propose the programmes of feasts other than the major feasts and to help in conducting all such feasts;

17.5. To give guidelines on the general policies of administering the properties of the parish;

17.6. To constitute committees and to elect members to them as and when needed and to dissolve them;

17.7. To elect, subject to eparchial statutes, the Kaikkārans;

17.8. To do other duties specified in no 8.14.

**PART III**

**THE PROCEDURE OF CONDUCTING THE MEETINGS OF THE POTUYOGAM AND THE PRATINIDHIYOGAM**

18. Ordinarily the parish priest or the priest deputed by the parish priest shall announce on two consecutive Sundays or days of obligations during the Holy Mass at the parish church about the meeting of the yogams and the main items of the agenda unless after consulting with the Nadathukaikkāran, it is considered that the announcement of any particular item in the agenda may be prejudicial to the best interest of the parish.

18.1. In extra-ordinary situation only one announcement on a Sunday or on a day of obligation will suffice. In urgent matters where this announcement is impossible, the yogam may be conducted on any day by notice through appropriate means by the parish priest.

18.2. If one-third of the members of the Potuyogam or the Pratinidhiyogam request in writing specifying the sub-
ject, the convening of the respective *Yogam* the parish priest thereupon shall convene such meeting within two weeks from the date of receipt of such notice. If the parish priest is convinced that the conduct of such *yogam* is prejudicial to the good of the parish, he shall report the matter through the eparchial curia to the administrative tribunal mentioned in no 70.

19. The local hierarch may at any time direct or prohibit the convening of a meeting of the respective *Yogam*.

20. The *Potuyogam* shall meet at least once a year; the *Pratinidhiyogam* at least four times a year.

21. The *Potuyogam* has no definite quorum unless determined by the eparchial statutes. The quorum for the *Pratinidhiyogam* shall be one-fourth of the total number of members, but quorum is not necessary when a *yogam* adjourned for lack of quorum is reconvened.

22. An attendance register shall be kept for all the meetings and the members present shall sign it before dispersal.

23. The parish priest is the president of the *Potuyogam* as well as of the *Pratinidhiyogam*.

23.1. In the absence of the parish priest, with his authorization, the assistant parish priest can be the president of the meetings.

23.2. The local hierarch personally or his delegate has the right to preside over the meetings.

24. There shall be a definite agenda for the *Yogams*. With the permission of the president matters outside the agenda can also be discussed.
25. Yogams shall commence and end with a prayer.

26. All members shall participate in the yogam with a spirit of co-operation and service based on love for the Glory of God and the real progress of the parish.

27. Personal vendetta, groupism, family feud, political difference and such other matters shall in no way influence the deliberations of the yogams.

28. A discussion on a decision of a previous yogam already approved by the local hierarch shall be opened only after obtaining the prior permission of the eparchial bishop.

29. Statement or decision against the orders and directives of the eparchial bishop, or against the official teaching and canon law of the Church, is not permissible in the yogams.

30. All shall maintain decorum and discipline in the yogam and shall obey the rulings of the president.

31. In case of any improper comments or misbehaviour by any member in the yogam the president shall immediately warn and correct the member concerned. If such an erring member continues it or remains recalcitrant, he can be suspended from that meeting of the yogam. He can attend the subsequent meetings of the yogam only with the permission of the president.

32. As far as possible decisions in the Potuyogam and the Pratinidhiyogam should be unanimous or at least by consensus. Serious differences of opinions in the Pratinidhiyogam may be referred to the Potuyogam. If the Potuyogam fails to make a decision it may appoint
a committee to study the case in detail and recommend means to resolve the problem. If no solution is reached the matter shall be referred to the administrative tribunal mentioned in no. 70 through the eparchial curia. In exceptional cases the president of the yogam can directly refer the case to the administrative tribunal.

33. If the resolution at the Yogams is unacceptable to the president of the yogam he can write his note of dissent, and he shall refer it to the local hierarch.

33.1. Members of the Yogam having complaints against a resolution passed at its meeting may have recourse to the local hierarch within seven days.

34. All decisions by the Pratinidhiyogam within its competence shall have the same force as the decisions of the Potuyogam.

35. The resolutions of the Yogams must be recorded in the book of resolutions (Yoga pushthakam) and be signed by the president and members present.

35.1. A minutes book of the Yogams shall be maintained in which shall be recorded the proceedings of the meetings and they are signed by the president of the meeting.

36. To leave the meetings of the Yogams without permission of the president and/or without signing the resolution is irregular.

37. If and when a meeting of the yogam cannot proceed peacefully, the president may dissolve it; in which case such meeting may be reconvened within a month and if the reconvened meeting cannot be conducted
peacefully the president shall dissolve the meeting and report the matter to the administrative tribunal through the eparchial curia.

38. The eparchial bishop has the right to add to or modify or annul a resolution passed at the meetings of the Potuyogam and the Pratinidhiyogam and his decision shall be final.

38.1. No resolution can be passed either in the Potuyogam or Pratinidhiyogam touching upon or derogatory to the powers vested in the eparchial bishop or the Major Archbishop or the Roman Pontiff under ecclesiastical laws.

39. Resolutions passed in meetings on matters requiring the approval by the local hierarch shall have effect and be executed only after such approval is granted in writing by the local hierarch.

40. Matters that require the approval of the local hierarch are (cc. 1014, 1015, 1022, 1024, 1035, 1036, 1045 and 1046):

40.1. Buying, selling, gifting, mortgaging or otherwise transferring of the immovable properties;

40.2. Constructing, reconstructing, renovating of churches, filial churches, wayside chapels and crosses or other buildings;

40.3. Establishing institutions to be run by the parish;

40.4. Demolishing of churches, filial churches, wayside chapels or crosses erected for public worship;

40.5. Exchange, sale or gifting or altering of objects of antiquity (Antiques for no reason shall be destroyed);
40.6. Establishing of libraries, recreation centers, stadia, play grounds, wells and the like for the public on lands belonging to the parish;

40.7. Leasing of or construction on or use of the land of the church for any public or private utilities;

40.8. Receiving of stipend for pious foundation or endowments and scholarships;

40.9. Works which will cost more than one-fourth of the annual income of the previous year of the parish or Rs. 50,000/- whichever is less or as the eparchial bishop decides from time to time;

40.10. Fixing of subscriptions from parishioners with obligation to pay arrears;

40.11. Lending or borrowing or gifting money by the parish beyond the amount fixed by the eparchial statutes;

40.12. Other matters determined in the eparchial statutes;

PART IV

Section I

Kaikkārans

41. With due regard to no 8.2, the Potuyogam shall determine the number of the Kaikkārans according to the size of the parish, subject to a minimum of two. One among them shall be NadathuKaikkāran for an appropriate period to be decided among themselves and the parish priest. The other Kaikkārans(s) shall be known as Kūttukaikkāran(s) for the remaining period.
42. The Kaikkārans shall be persons, not below the age of 21, who are faithful, honest, efficient, service minded and having no parish arrears, and who have the other qualifications specified in the eparchial statutes; they shall not have the disqualifications mentioned in no. 6. The Accountant, the Sacristan and others specified in the eparchial statutes shall not be elected to be Kaikkārans.

43. The Kaikkārans are elected for a one year term and can be re-elected for a second term; but not for a third consecutive term unless by postulation to the local hierarch.

44. The elected Kaikkārans after being confirmed and appointed in office by the local hierarch, shall take charge receiving the keys from the parish priest at the sanctuary steps after making an oath of office. When their term of office is over they shall entrust the keys and accounts to the parish priest likewise at the steps of the sanctuary, after settling the accounts.

45. The Kaikkārans may divide the year into equal periods according to their number and each shall assume the main charge of the office in one of such periods according to age or convenience.

46. The parish priest may depute any one or more of the Kaikkārans or any one or more from the yogam or any other competent person or persons to represent the parish or its institutions before courts, tribunals, in specific cases of legal or of similar nature after obtaining permission from the local hierarch.

47. The Kaikkārans shall not receive remuneration or allowance. However, on days on which their presence
is required for a long time, they are entitled to meet their daily expenses from the parish funds during the duration of such engagement. A budgetary provision may be made for the same.

48. It is the right of the local hierarch under emergency to accept the resignation of the Kaikkārans or to remove a Kaikkāran for reasons of negligence of duty, dishonesty, disability, financial misconduct, commission of offenses involving moral turpitude, after giving him an opportunity for being heard. In ordinary circumstances, the question of removal of Kaikkāran shall be referred to the administrative tribunal mentioned in no. 70 through the eparchial curia.

Section II

Administration of the Temporalities of the Parish

49. The administration of the finance and other temporalities of the parish is to be done by the parish priest and the Kaikkārans with mutual understanding and co-operation and as per norms of common and particular law, as well as eparchial statutes.

50. The Nadathukaikkāran and the parish priest shall maintain bills, vouchers and receipts regarding income and expenditure relating to the matters dealt with by them, respectively. The accounts of the parish shall be maintained on the basis of such bills, vouchers and receipts. The Kaikkārans shall make available the accounts as and when required by the parish priest.

51. It shall be the responsibility of the parish priest and the Kaikkārans to maintain Nālvazhy (journals), Peredu (ledger), and Āndutirattu of the parish (the
annual statement of accounts). *Māsathirattu, Kurumtirattu, Ardhavārshikathirattu* (monthly, quarterly and half yearly statements of accounts) shall also be maintained, if required by the eparchial statutes.

52. If discrepancies in the account or shortage of money is noticed resulting in loss to the parish the same shall be recovered from the respective *Kaikkāran* or the parish priest whoever is responsible for the loss. However, as between them one shall not be responsible for the laches on the part of the other.

53. The chest (*Bhandāram*) and boxes containing the offerings shall be opened and the offerings counted by the *Nadhukuikaikkāran* in the presence of the parish priest or the *Kūtukaikkāran* or anyone authorized by the parish priest. They shall keep a document or receipt regarding the amount of offerings signed by both of them.

54. All offerings in kind received in the church shall be sold in public auction. However, if it is found that sale without auction is more appropriate this can be done after mutual consultation between the parish priest and the *Kaikkārans*.

55. All sales shall be made only on payment and receipt of all such amounts shall be entered on the same day in the books of accounts of the parish. If any credit is given it shall be the responsibility of the persons giving such credit to reimburse the amount to the parish.

56. If and when lands or buildings of the parish are given on lease or rent, it shall be done only after observing all legal formalities and with the permission of the local hierarch, preferably after obtaining legal opinion.
57. The cultivation on lands belonging to the parish shall be got done by the Kaikkārans in consultation with the parish priest.

58. The parish priest and the Kaikkārans shall have the right to spend necessary amounts to meet the day-to-day expenditure of the parish.

59. Subject to no. 40.9 the expenditure necessary for the day-to-day worship and catechetical formation can all be incurred by the parish priest without discussion in the Potuyogam or the Pratinidhiyogam.

59.1. Subject to no. 40.9 the expenditure necessary for essential furniture of the parish including those provided to the parish priest and the assistant parish priest(s) and for the maintenance of the church properties and their improvements can all be incurred by the parish priest and the Nadathu kaikkāran without discussion in the Potuyogam or the Pratinidhiyogam.

59.2. The parish priest and the Kaikkārans shall have mutual understanding and co-operation in respect of all such expenditure and all unnecessary luxury and extravagance shall be avoided.

60. The parish priest and the Kaikkārans can jointly keep the cash required for a period of one week for day-to-day expenses. Surplus amounts however shall be deposited in a scheduled, nationalized or reputed co-operative bank or in permitted securities in the joint account of the parish priest and the Nadathu kaikkāran.

61. All valuable articles and antiques, documents and receipts shall be kept in a separate box in the safe room with double locks and keys and the parish priest and
the Nadatthukaikkāran shall keep one key each of the box and of the room.

62. There shall be a murichārthu (inventory) (c. 1026) of all the movable and immovable properties of the parish classified into five heads, namely:

62.1. A schedule of immovable properties
62.2. Those in the custody of the parish priest
62.3. Those in the custody of the Kaikkāran
62.4. Those in the custody of the Sacristan.
62.5. Those in the custody of the heads of institutions.

63. The parish priests and Kaikkārans shall have overall responsibility for all the properties of the parish and in particular for the equipments in the presbytery (Pallimuri). The Sacristan shall be responsible for the paraphernalia and other valuable things kept in the church and the heads of institutions for the articles belonging to and kept in such institutions.

64. Whenever new articles are acquired and any change is made, the same shall also be entered in the inventory maintained in the parish.

64.1. A copy of the inventory of the ecclesiastical goods is to be kept in the eparchial archives (c.1026).

64.2. If any article is lost or damaged on account of culpable negligence, the person responsible for such negligence shall be liable for such loss.

64.3. Unusable articles which are not of historical value shall be destroyed only with the consent of the parish priest and in consultation with the Nadathukaikkāran and after having cancelled them from the inventory.
When any person in charge of the administration of the church properties is transferred, or has ceased to hold office, the new incumbent thereto, while taking charge, shall sign the list of articles handed over to him, after due verification.

When the parish priest is transferred, the accounts, pass-books and other documents as well as the balance cash and the list of movables shall be handed over to the Nadathukaikkāran; as soon as the new parish priest has taken charge the said Kaikkāran shall hand them over to the new parish priest. However, if there is an assistant parish priest, the parish priest who is under orders of transfer shall entrust all the administrative responsibility to the assistant parish priest and inform the Nadathukaikkāran accordingly. If any other custom or procedure is in vogue in any eparchy, the same may be followed.

The parish priest shall always pay attention to the proper and safe maintenance of the accounts and records of the parish and in these matters the Kaikkārans and the Accountant are bound to act according to the instructions of the parish priest.

No church record shall be taken outside the parish office without the permission of the parish priest.

All parish churches shall maintain the following registers, records, books and files:

1. Baptism Register
2. Confirmation Register
3. Betrothal Register
4. Marriage Register
68.5. Death Register
68.6. Ātmasthiti Register/ Parish Register
68.7. Minutes Book of Potuyogam and the Pratinidhiyogam
68.8. Yogapusthakam (Register for decisions of yogam)
68.9. Subscription Register (Variveetha Register)
68.10. Kurippu/account book
68.11. Journal
68.12. Ledger
68.13. Tirattu
68.14. Audit report
68.15. Voucher file
68.16. Canonical Visit Diary of the eparchial bishop
68.17. Bounded copies of the eparchial bulletin
68.18. Liturgical calendar
68.19. Register relating to documents and records
68.20. Books to copy the civil documents
68.21. File containing pastoral letters and circulars
68.22. File containing orders from the eparchial curia
68.23. A schedule containing the details of immovable properties
68.24. List of movable properties
68.25. List of Foundation Masses (This should be maintained in the sacristy also)
68.26. Diary (Chronicles, "Nālāgamam")
68.27. List of antiques
68.28. Vocation Register
68.29. Announcement Books
68.30. Book of ecclesiastical censures
68.31. Miscellaneous file
68.32. Other Registers as per eparchial statutes
68.33. Inventory Register (*Murichārthu*)

69. No record and orders relating to the parish or the eparchy shall be produced in any court without prior permission of the local hierarch.

**Section III**

*General and Transitory Norms*

70. All disputes and complaints with regard to the conduct, proceedings, resolutions, decisions and actions taken or adopted by the *Potuyogam* or *Pratinidhiyogam* shall be preferred by the aggrieved before the administrative Tribunal constituted by the eparchial bishop for such purpose, within seven days from the date of such yogam. The Tribunal shall dispose off the dispute or complaint within 30 days from the receipt of such complaints. A recourse shall lie on the decision of the Tribunal to the eparchial bishop within 15 days of such decision of the Tribunal. The eparchial bishop shall dispose off the recourse as expeditiously as possible and his decision shall be final.

71. For grave reasons the eparchial bishop can suspend a *Potuyogam* or a *Pratinidhiyogam* until further orders
from him and make alternate arrangements according to his discretion for the administration of the parish.

72. Notwithstanding anything herein contained, on account of the requirement, the eparchial bishop, depending upon the special features, customs or practice of his eparchy may make necessary adaptations to these Rules and the Rules so adapted shall be binding on the parishes within the eparchy.

73. If any difficulty or doubt arises in giving effect to the provisions of these Rules in a particular eparchy, the eparchial bishop may by order make such provision, not inconsistent with the purpose of these Rules, necessary or expedient for the removal of the difficulty or doubt.

74. No Christian faithful shall challenge these rules or matters arising therefrom in any legal proceeding other than have recourse to ecclesiastical authorities.

75. These rules may be amended by the Synod of Bishops of the Syro Malabar Church.

76. Until the forthcoming synod, the authentic interpretation of these Rules is the competence of the Major Archbishop having consulted with the permanent synod (cf. c. 112 § 2)

77. If there is any custom or practice in any particular parish inconsistent with the Rules contained herein all such custom and practice will stand superseded as soon as these Rules come into force.
No. 862/98

DECREE

The synod of bishops of the Syro-Malabar Major Archiepiscopal Church in its session held from 28 October to 15 November 1996 approved the Statutes of the Major Archiepiscopal Assembly appended to this decree and decided that it should be promulgated by the Major Archiepiscopal Authority. Therefore, in conformity with the said decision of the synod, I hereby formally promulgate them.

Given from the Major Archiepiscopal Curia at Mount St. Thomas on 15th March 1998.

sd/-

Mar Varkey Vithayathil C.Ss.R.

Apostolic Administrator

sd/-

Fr Jose Porunnedom

Chancellor
STATUTES
of the
Major Archiepiscopal Assembly
in the Syro-Malabar Church

Preamble

The Major Archiepiscopal Assembly of the Syro-Malabar Church is the gathering together of a representative cross-section of the same Church, integrating the spirit and dynamism of the ancient ecclesial institution of the Thomas Christians called yogam. In it is restored and updated that organ in fidelity to the teachings of the Church and in obedience to the legislation given by the Roman Pontiff to the Eastern Catholic Churches (Code of Canons of the Eastern Churches, canons 140-145), so that it is made to correspond to the changed historical situation and the new hierarchical status of the Syro-Malabar Church.

United in the spirit of prayer and reflection, and proclaiming and celebrating the great things God has done to the Church and through the Church, this Assembly strives to realize the high ideal of the Apostolic Church of one heart and one soul in fidelity to its own apostolic origins. Through mutual sharing of ideas, experiences and spiritual gifts (I Cor 12: 4, 28; Eph 4:11) it seeks closer ecclesial integration and collaboration among the various members and organs of the Church for the building up of the Body of Christ to its fullness (Eph 4:12, 13). Conscious of the Church’s mission to announce the gospel and to promote unity in the pluralistic religious and ecclesial context of India as well as the larger worldwide diaspora, it pursues better understanding of and cooperation with the other Churches both within and without the Catholic communion, while promoting dialogue -- inter-religious, inter-ecclesial, and inner-ecclesial. It reviews the various areas of the Church’s apostolate and service to the world and explores more effica-
cious ways in order that the kingdom of God may ever more potently leaven the mass of humanity.

Thus, in the confession of the Lordship of Jesus Christ, the Major Archiepiscopal Assembly strives after the renewal of the Church and closer fellowship with one another (1 John 1:3) for a growth that is from God (Col 2:19) by pursuing a deeper communion with the One who is the adorable Trinity, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

**Article 1: Nature and Scope**

§1. As a representative organ of the Syro-Malabar Church, the Major Archiepiscopal Assembly is its advisory body to deal with matters of major importance for the Church and its mission. It proposes in particular to help the Major Archbishop and the Synod of Bishops of the Syro-Malabar Church to suit the various kinds of apostolates and their methods as well as ecclesiastical discipline to the current and ever changing context and to the common good of the Syro-Malabar Church taking into account also the common good of the country as well as of the universal Church (CCEO c. 140).

§2. The Major Archiepiscopal Assembly acts always in communion with and submission to the Synod of Bishops of the Syro-Malabar Church and the Major Archbishop, the father and head.

**Article 2: Name and Designation**

What is called in these Statutes the Major Archiepiscopal Assembly of the Syro-Malabar Church may be designated simply the Assembly.
Article 3: Status and Function

§1. The Major Archiepiscopal Assembly is an organ of ecclesial consultation so that decisions genuinely responding to the sense of the faithful and fully enlightened by the Holy Spirit, who animates the Church, may be taken by the competent authorities.

§2. All the components of this Assembly have the function of helping to further the good of the whole Church, which is a body having various organs and members that are interdependent.

§3. The competencies of the Assembly are those prescribed by law, both common and particular, and are as specified and articulated in these Statutes.

Article 4: Convocation

§1. The Major Archiepiscopal Assembly is convoked by the Major Archbishop every five years (c. 141). Such an Assembly may be called an ordinary assembly.

§2. An extraordinary assembly may be convoked by the Major Archbishop whenever he deems it necessary or useful with the consent of the Permanent Synod or that of the Synod of Bishops of the Syro-Malabar Church (c. 141).

§3. An ordinary Assembly is convoked at least ten months in advance of its inaugural session; an extraordinary Assembly may be convoked with a shorter notice.

Article 5: The President

§1. The Major Archbishop is the ex-officio president of the Assembly.
§2. In case the Major Archbishop is absent or impeded, a vice-president nominated by him substitutes him as president (c. 142 §1).

§3. The president of the Assembly chairs the general sessions of the Assembly either personally or through another designated by him.

§4. The Major Archbishop is competent to transfer, prorogue, suspend or dissolve the Assembly (c. 142 §1).

§5. If the major archiepiscopal see becomes vacant, the Assembly is suspended ipso jure until the new Major Archbishop takes a decision on the matter (c. 142 §2).

Article 6: Participants

§1. The following persons are to be convoked to the Major Archiepiscopal Assembly to participate in it ex officio:

1° eparchial bishops and other local hierarchs from both within and outside the territorial boundaries of the Syro-Malabar Church, including exarchs and apostolic and major archiepiscopal administrators (if any), as well as protosyncelli and syncelli (cf. 984 §2);

2° titular bishops, including coadjutor bishops, auxiliary bishops and retired eparchial bishops;

3° superiors general of institutes of consecrated life, including religious orders and congregations, societies of common life in the manner of religious, secular institutes and societies of apostolic life;

4° superiors of monasteries sui iuris and presidents of monastic confederations (if any);

5° rectors of ecclesiastical universities and deans of faculties of theology and of canon law, which are located
within the territorial boundaries of the Syro-Malabar Church, if they are Syro-Malabarians;

6° rectors of all Syro Malabar major seminaries, and those of the inter-ritual seminaries within the territory of the Church if they are Syro-Malabarians.

§2. The following persons are convoked to the Assembly as delegates sent by each of the eparchies whether inside or outside the territorial boundaries of the Syro-Malabar Church:

1° One presbyter from each eparchy; if there are more than 50 presbyters ascribed to the same eparchy that eparchy can send one more presbyter-delegate each for every additional 50 presbyters or the fraction thereof exceeding 50 %. The maximum number of presbyter delegates from an eparchy shall be five; at least two-third of them shall be parish priests.

2° One delegate of the institutes of consecrated life; If there are more than 1000 professed members of the institutes of consecrated life / societies of apostolic life in the eparchy, that eparchy can send one more delegate each for every additional 1000 members. If there are 25 priests ascribed to institutes of consecrated life / societies of apostolic life working as pastors in an eparchy, that eparchy can send an additional delegate from this category. In sending these delegates, care should be taken that there are proportionate representation of the institutes of priests, brothers and sisters.

3° Three lay persons from each eparchy; if there are more than 50000 faithful in an eparchy, that eparchy can send one more delegate each for every additional
50000 faithful. The maximum number of lay delegates from an eparchy shall be ten; at least one-third of them shall be women and adequate representation shall be given to the youth and dalith Christians.

§ 3. The Major Archbishop in consultation with the members of the Permanent Synod may nominate some, not more than 15, as participants of the assembly.

§ 4. The eparchial bishop is responsible for the participation of the delegates from his eparchy in the Major Archiepiscopal Assembly. Hence,

1° it is for the eparchial bishop to convene the assemblies of election mentioned in § 5 at a place and time determined by him;

2° it is for him to preside over the same assemblies of election either in person or through another;

3° he is to forward to the Major Archbishop the names and addresses of the delegates from his eparchy as well as those of the substitutes.

§ 5. In order to ensure the necessary uniformity and avoid a disconcerting diversity in designating the delegates from the eparchies, the following norms are to be followed:

1° the presbyter delegate/s from each eparchy are elected by the presbyteral council of the eparchy;

2° the delegates from the institutes of consecrated life / societies of apostolic life are elected by the representatives of the institutes at a meeting convoked for the purpose by the eparchial bishop (cfr. c. 143 §1);

3° the lay delegates are elected by the lay representatives of the eparchial pastoral council.
§ 6. A certain number of substitutes are also to be chosen in the same manner to replace those who are impeded from attending the Assembly.

§ 7. Eparchial bishops, if impeded, may send a proxy designated by himself (cf. c. 143 §2).

§ 8. The delegates and the substitutes are chosen at least three months in advance of the inaugural session of the Assembly.

§ 9. All who have been convoked to the Major Archiepiscopal Assembly must attend it unless they are detained by a just impediment, of which they must inform the eparchial bishop at the earliest. The eparchial bishop informs the Major Archbishop of the substitution as early as possible.

§ 10. What is said in these Statutes concerning eparchies or eparchial bishops applies also to exarchies or exarchs (c. 313), if any, though with the consent of the Major Archbishop exarchies as well as small eparchies may send a smaller number of delegates.

**Article 7: Special Invitees and Observers**

§ 1. Persons of another Church *sui iuris* may be invited to the Major Archiepiscopal Assembly by the Major Archbishop as guests to foster mutual ecclesial understanding and to promote pastoral cooperation (c. 143 §3). Rectors of inter-ritual seminaries and inter-ritual universities and deans of faculties of theology and canon law within the territory of the Church and who belong to other Churches *sui iuris* may be specially invited.

§ 2. The Major Archbishop can invite some observers from other Churches or non-Catholic ecclesial communities to
foster and promote ecumenical understanding and cooperation (c. 143 §4).

§ 3 The special invitees and observers will have no right to vote in the Assembly.

Article 8: The Agenda

§1. All the Christian faithful of the Syro-Malabar Church may propose topics to be placed on the agenda of the Assembly through those convoked as ex-officio participants or as delegates or through the secretariat of the Assembly.

§2. The topics to be placed on the agenda are determined by the Major Archbishop in consultation with the members of the Permanent Synod, unless the selection has already been made by the Synod of Bishops of the Syro-Malabar Church.

Article 9: Experts, Resource Persons and Commissions

§1. It is for the Major Archbishop to see to it that through the services of suitable preparatory commissions and consultations, all the topics of the agenda are properly researched and studied and that the participants of the Assembly are informed in good time either directly or through suitable organs of publication sent to them (c. 144 §3).

§2. From a list of names discussed with the members of the Permanent Synod the Major Archbishop may appoint some experts and resource persons to facilitate the conduct of the Assembly, its secretariat and its various commissions.

§3. The Major Archbishop establishes the commissions for various matters (such as liturgy, evangelization, inculturation, education, communications and mass media, ecumenism, catechesis, caritative services, human and
Christian rights in the Church, family and social
apostolates, other apostolates), taking into consideration
the proposals and in view of the agenda that has been
determined.

**Article 10: The Procedure**

§1. Though the Major Archiepiscopal Assembly is not a par-
liament or legislature of the Syro-Malabar Church, it is a
forum for discussion and the expression of views and de-
sires in the spirit of Christian freedom and responsibility.
It is for the pastors of the Church to discern them and to
translate them into pastoral action.

§2. If a vote is taken to ascertain the mind of the Assembly on
a given issue, the bishops are excluded from the voting.

§3. A resolution approved by the Assembly can acquire the
force of law if it is ratified by the competent ecclesiastical
authority (cc. 82, 150 §§ 2 and 3).

**Article 11: The Acts of the Assembly**

The matters publicly discussed and the resolutions taken
in the Assembly may be freely reported and made known to
Christ's faithful even through the media of social communi-
cation; but the publication of the official acts of the Assembly is
reserved to the Major Archbishop (c. 666 §2).

**Article 12: Approbation and Amendment of the Statutes**

§1. The Statutes of the Major Archiepiscopal Assembly need
to be approved by the Synod of Bishops of the Syro-
Malabar Church (c. 145).

§2. Promulgated by the Major Archbishop, the Statutes con-
stitute the particular law of the same Church (c. 110 §1).
§3. To amend the Statutes two-third majority of the members of the same synod present at a session and voting is required, unless the proposal for the amendment has been approved already by a two-thirds majority of the Major Archiepiscopal Assembly, in which case an absolute majority of the votes of the members of the same synod present at a session and voting is sufficient.
(Several queries were made by the faithful of the Syro-Malabar Church to the Apostolic Administrator regarding the options given in the text of the Holy Qurbana. In this regard the Apostolic Administrator with the permission of the Congregation for the Oriental Churches has asked to publish a letter from the Congregation to Mar Sebastian Mankuzhikary dated 2nd July 1993. The following is the text of the letter).

CONGREGATIO PRO ECCLESIIS ORIENTALIBUS

00193 Roma,
Via della Conciliazione 34
2 luglio 1993

Prot. No. 955/65

Eccellenza Reverendissima,

Con Lettera del 20 maggio scorso l’Eccellenza Vostra Reverendissima inviava a questo Dicastero il testo della Relazione della Commissione Siro-Malabarese per la Liturgia.

Ringrazio l’Eccellenza Vostra della minuziosa esposizione, che ho esaminato con la massima cura.

Desidererei conoscere a quale “due approval from Rome” si riferisce l’Eccellenza Vostra circa la pubblicazione del testo separato per la forma semplice e solenne della Raza (pag. 2 par. 2).

Quanto alle opzioni menzionate alla p. 4 par. 5, vorrei ricordare che, essendo esse legittimamente autorizzate, non possono essere oggetto di provvedimenti restrittivi. Si ritiene invece pastoralmente utile una istruzione dei Vescovi per indicare ai sacerdoti, pur nel rispetto della loro libertà di presidenti delle celebrazioni, in quali particolari occasioni possa essere
particolarmente adatto questo o quel grado di solennità, con le relative eventuali opzioni.

Ricordo infine che tutti i testi liturgici, anche in uso “ad experimentum” devono avere l’approvazione previa di questa Congregazione.

Pare inopportuno insistere anche solo sull’eventualità di prendere in considerazione l’ipotesi di un conferimento della Confermazione disgiunta dal Battesimo (p. 6, ultimo paragrafo), in quanto contrario alla prassi di tutte le Chiese orientali ed anche a quella latina dell’ Iniziazione cristiana degli Adulti.

Mi valgo dell’occasione per confermarmi, con sentimenti di distinto ossequio,

dell’ Eccellenza Vostra Reverendissima

dev. mo nel Signore

(sd/-)

Achille Card. Silvestrini,

Prefetto

(sd/-)

M. Marusyn, Segr.

-----------------------------

A Sua Eccellenza Reverendissima

MAR SEBASTIAN MANKUZHIKARY

Vescovo di Thamarasserry

e Presidente della già Commissione

per la liturgia della SMBC

Bishop’s House

THAMARASSERY 673 573

Calicut Dt., Kerala, India.
Holy Father Pope John Paul II has appointed Monsignor Thomas Chakiath bishop auxiliary of Ernakulam-Angamaly. He has served St. Joseph’s Pontifical Seminary, Alwaye, for 23 years in various capacities. For the last one year he was working as the Synclerus of Ernakulam-Angamaly.
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