XVI SYNOD (2008)

SPEECHES

REPORTS

DECISIONS

DECREES

PASTORAL LETTERS

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EDITORIAL

This issue of the Synodal News, Vol. 16, Nos. 1&2, contains the Acts of the Synodal Session, XVI Synod (2008), held from 18–29 August 2008. Other items included are reports of the various commissions, pastoral letter on Sabhadinam, and some other usual items. This moment in history is a moment of great joy for the Syro-Malabar Church as one of her daughters has been raised to the honours of the altar. On 12 October 2008 Blessed Alphonsa was canonized by His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI calling Alphonsa the first woman saint of India. Indeed it is a proud moment for the Syro-Malabar Church. It is the spiritual coming of age of the Syro-Malabar Church. She has to come of age also juridically. She still suffers from the limitations imposed on her with regard to her status as well as jurisdiction especially in the areas of evangelization and pastoral care. This was one of the main concerns expressed in the Synod by the Synod Fathers. Major Archbishop His Beatitude Varkey Cardinal Vithayathil voiced this concern of the entire Syro-Malabar Church in the XII Ordinary Synod of Bishops held in Rome from 5–26 October 2008. "Speaking of the Syro-Malabar Church which is an apostolic Church founded by the Apostle St. Thomas in the first century of Christianity itself and has flourished immensely with plenty of religious and priestly vocations who constitute almost 70% of the missionary personnel of the Latin Church in India, she has been confined to a small Federal State Kerala and a few dioceses outside it in India. Even though the right of every individual Church to preach the Gospel everywhere in the world under the guidance of the Roman Pontiff (OE 3, CD 25) and the right of all the faithful
of the Oriental Churches to have pastoral care by their own bishops and priests throughout the world are recognized by the Second Vatican Council and the two Codes of Canon Law (CIC 383 §2 and CCEO 148 and 193), the Syro-Malabar Church is neither given new mission territories in India, Africa, etc., nor the freedom to exercise her right to give pastoral care by her own bishops and priests to the hundreds of thousands of migrants in India, in the Gulf Countries, Europe and elsewhere even after forty three years of the conclusion of the Second Vatican Council.” The Major Archbishop pointed out that this was a grave injustice. “It is justice that builds communion among the individual Churches which has been denied to the Syro-Malabar Church, for many centuries with regard to the right of evangelization and pastoral care in its own ecclesial traditions by its own pastors and it is high time that this Synod reflected over this unjust situation in the Church and proposed lasting remedies.” Let us hope that concrete measures will be taken immediately to rectify this situation and that before long the Syro-Malabar Church will be able to attain its fullness of growth also juridically.

The Editorial Board is happy to present this volume to the readers in the hope that this will help them be informed of the major events and decisions in the Syro-Malabar Church.
XVI SYNOD (2008)
Mount St. Thomas, 18-29 August 2008

INAUGURAL ADDRESS
OF THE MAJOR ARCHBISHOP

My dear brother Archbishops and Bishops,

It is my joy and pleasant privilege to welcome you all to Mount St. Thomas, the Major Archiepiscopal Curia of the Syro-Malabar Church, for the XVI Synod of Bishops of our Church that will be held from 18-29 August 2008. I am glad to note that all except a few bishops emeriti, are attending this session. I cordially welcome all of you to the XVI Synod of the Bishops of the Syro-Malabar Church.

We are gathered here to reflect together on various issues that our Church has to face in our present-day circumstances and to take the most appropriate decisions to solve them, guided by the Holy Spirit, the advocate given to the Church to be with her for ever (Jn14:16). Therefore, at the very outset, let us entrust ourselves to the guidance of the Holy Spirit so that by our active participation and sincere collaboration we may arrive at the most suitable solutions to the various issues we may be discussing during this session of our Synod. The recollection talk given by Bishop Thomas Thuruthimattam, CST and the Solemn celebration of the Holy Eucharist as one body have manifested powerfully the deep communion that exists among ourselves. I thank Bishop Thomas Thuruthimattam for preparing us for this Synodal session through his enlightening and stimulating words.

As I had mentioned in my inaugural speech of the Second Session of the XV Synod, the Syro-Malabar Church is on the verge of a great blessing from God – the Canonization of Bl. Alphonsa. This woman who was not known publicly during her life-time is
now being proposed by the Church for universal veneration. She offered with the Lord the constant and great sufferings in her life in a special way for the spread of His gospel in India. She may be proposed as the patron of all mission work in India along with St. Thomas and St. Francis Xavier. The canonization is scheduled for 12 October 2008. I am sure many of you may be participating in this great event that will take place in Rome during the XII Ordinary Assembly of the Synod of Bishops. A celebration at Bharananganam has also been planned for 9 November 2008 with the participation of all the three ritual Churches. I request your whole-hearted support to make it a grand event. I am happy to inform you that His Eminence Leonardo Cardinal Sandri, Prefect of the Congregation for the Oriental Churches, has promised to take part in this event. This will be an occasion for our Bishops to apprise the Cardinal Prefect about the needs of our Church.

On 30 June this year I had an audience with the Holy Father during which I shared with him our concerns especially regarding the erection of new dioceses in India and the pastoral care of our migrants. I had also an appointment with Cardinal Leonardo Sandri, the Prefect of the Congregation for Oriental Churches at which I presented these concerns in writing, a copy of which has been given to you for your perusal. Let us hope that effective measures will be taken by the Holy See to implement the teachings of Vatican Second and the provisions of CCEO and CIC regarding the pastoral care of the faithful of the Syro-Malabar Church by extending the *territorium proprium* of the Church to the whole of India and erecting dioceses for our faithful in the big cities of India and abroad where there are numerous faithful of our *sui iuris* Church.

In May this year, Fr. Cherian Kanjirakompil, the procurator of the Major Archbishop at Rome took charge of his office. This will certainly help in improving our contacts with the Roman dicasteries. You may also seek his assistance in your dealings with the Holy See as he is appointed for the whole Church. After my
visits in Rome, I went to the United States and consecrated the Cathedral Church of the St. Thomas Syro-Malabar Diocese of Chicago on 5 July. I was impressed by the great interest and love our faithful in this region manifest towards the Church. I congratulate Mar Jacob Angadiath and the faithful of the St. Thomas diocese of Chicago on their achievement of building a well-planned and beautiful Cathedral. I visited our faithful in Orange County, Los Angeles, Boston, New York and New Jersey. I am happy to state that our Syro-Malabar Church is well rooted in North America in a number of cities with its own churches and communities which give faithful witness to the Gospel.

One of the recent issues that have pre-occupied our Church in the field of education is the textbook controversy. We should on no count agree to teach our children such textbooks which try to inject atheism into their minds promoted by the present Marxist-led Government. At the same time we must intensify our efforts to catechise our children so that they may be able to withstand the sinful attractions of modern society and never lose sight of their goal of eternal life in Jesus Christ. I am glad to point out that the Major Archiepiscopal Commission for catechism has been working quite hard to make available new catechism texts to our children. They have succeeded in bringing out the Malayalam texts up to XI standard and the English texts up to IX standard.

The Commission for Clergy and Institutes of Consecrated Life has already published the Charter for Priestly Formation. I have issued a circular asking the Bishops, Rectors of Major Seminaries and the Religious Superiors of our Church to see that priestly formation is done according to this charter in all the seminaries where Syro-Malabar candidates are being trained. The meeting of the representatives of priests organised jointly by the Clergy Commission and the Liturgical Commission was very useful. In spite of the differences still remaining in the academic and pastoral areas, the participants really appreciated such a meeting and
manifested great cordiality and friendship among them. With the help of these discussions, I hope that the Synod will be able to improve before long the situation of Liturgy in our Church. The Liturgical Research Centre had organized a seminar on the role and mission of the laity in the Church. There were around 90 participants and all of them appreciated it very much. The seminar brought home quite strongly the importance of the role of laity in our Church. We should enlist the co-operation of lay people in the Apostolate which may be an antidote against certain Christian sects stealing our sheep.

Pastoral care of the Syro-Malabar migrants outside the proper territory of our Church still remains a serious issue in spite of the appointment of an Apostolic Visitor. As I had pointed out on earlier occasions, there is still no sign of any notable willingness from the part of the Latin Church to implement and execute the teachings of the Second Vatican Council, the provisions of Canon Law and the repeated pronouncements of successive Popes concerning the pastoral care of our faithful in areas outside the proper territory of our Church. The implementation of these principles and provisions are still very much dependent on the good will of the Latin Church. The successive representations we have made to the Holy See in this regard through memoranda and letters have not received any positive reply so far. What result will come out after my recent audience with the Holy Father and the Prefects of some Roman dicasteries, is yet to be seen. In this session of the Synod we will have to think about what stand we should take in this regard. The Synod should seek ways and means to get our legitimate rights established by canon law. As the new President of CBCI and Convener of the Special Committee for Evangelization, I had convened a meeting of this Committee on 13 August 2008. At this meeting the representatives of the 3 Individual Churches in India had a frank and cordial discussion. Points of agreement and disagreement will eventually be reported to the next meeting of the Standing Committee of CBCI. Let us hope that the three ritual
Churches will be able to carry out the one mission of the Catholic Church with greater communion and co-operation. Already we have agreed to conduct the Mission Congress together. May this spirit grow evermore.

When it comes to providing priests for pastoral care in different Latin dioceses where there is a great concentration of our faithful, the Major Archiepiscopal Commission for Evangelisation and Pastoral Care of Migrants often meet with great difficulty in finding suitable persons to be appointed. Most of the dioceses are reluctant to give their own priests for this mission. We have to have recourse to religious priests. This is also true of the missionary work. Since we have 250 priests newly ordained every year in our Church, including those in the clerical religious congregations, we should see how we can get mission territories for them with a view to developing them into eparchies afterwards, knowing that there are only 16 million Catholics altogether in the 3 ritual Churches in the whole of India which has a population of over 1200 million.

The role of the religious is quite significant also in making the pastoral work in our dioceses more effective. It would be good if we could incorporate the services of the numerous religious vocations in our pastoral work. Besides, they are a rich source of spiritual power for our Church. On 16 July of this year, I have started a Carmelite cloistered convent in my archdiocese which at present exists in the parish of Vennala as an experimental community for one year with four sisters and which will be transferred to Malayattoor after a year, the first of its kind in the Syro-Malabar Church. With the multiplication of similar convents in different eparchies, the prayers and sacrifices of these nuns will be a great support especially for our priests and for our missionary activity in India. My intention in founding such a monastery is also to raise it as a monument of gratitude to the Carmelite Missionaries of Europe who governed our Church for 3 centuries, formed our priests and inspired the formation of many religious institutes with the Carmelite charism like the CMI,
CMC and instilled into our Church a great missionary spirit, enriched our Church with many pious practices like wearing the Carmelite scapular, reciting the rosary, making the stations of the cross, adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, which devotions, though of Latin origin, have nourished the spiritual life of our people. Though we have lost many of our traditions – liturgical and otherwise – during the Latin rule, God allowed this for the benefit of our Church in many ways. May monasteries of such nuns give rise to great saints like St. Terese of Avila, St. Therése of Lisieux, St. Edith Stein, etc., in our Church also. We should also welcome initiatives in our Church to establish new religious institutes of contemplative life according to our Oriental ecclesial tradition.

As usual there is a long list of items on the agenda of this session of the Synod. Soon after this address, we will finalize the items that could be taken up in this session and when they could be taken up. One of the items that need our immediate attention and whole hearted co-operation is the current financial crisis in our Major Seminaries, including that of the Good Shepherd Seminary, Kunnoth. I am sure that we will be able to come up with some concrete suggestions regarding the ways and means to overcome this crisis. There is the request for the no objection of the Synod for taking up the causes for beatification of Mar Mathew Makil, Fr. Thomas Poothathil, Fr. Augustine John Ukken and Fr. Antony Thachuparambil. We have to discuss and take decision on the bifurcation of some eparchies and forming new eparchies there as well as electing the terna for others. We also have to appoint members to the Permanent Synod, Superior Tribunal, Synodal Commission for Mangalapuzha Seminary, Chairman and Bishop Member of the Board of Directors of LRC and members to the various Major Archiepiscopal Commissions. Some of these appointments are to be made through election by the Synod and others by the Major Archbishop. I would be grateful if you could give your suggestions personally to me regarding these appointments. We shall earnestly pray that the Holy Spirit may guide us in all these deliberations.
In conclusion, let me invoke God’s blessing upon all of us so that we may have a very fruitful session of our Synod. May the prayers of the Blessed Virgin Mary and of our Apostle St. Thomas help us during these days. With these words I formally declare the XVI Synod of the Bishops of the Syro-Malabar Major Archiepiscopal Church open.

Varkey Cardinal Vithayathil
Major Archbishop of the Syro-Malabar Church

Mount St. Thomas
18 August 2008
XVI Synod (2008)
18-29 August 2008

REPORT

The XVI Synod (2008) began with a recollection preached by Bishop Thomas Thuruthimattam, CST at 10.00 a.m., followed by some time for personal prayer and a concelebrated Holy Qurbana of the Bishops, the Major Archbishop being the main celebrant. During his homily, the Major Archbishop recalled the sad event of the brutal murder of Fr. Thomas Pandipally, CMI and requested the congregation to pray for his eternal repose.

The first sitting of the day started at 2.30 p.m. with a prayer by the Major Archbishop.

The formal inauguration of the Synod: The formal inauguration of the Synod took place at 2.30 p.m. In his inaugural address the Major Archbishop welcomed all the Bishops to the present session of the Synod. He thanked Bishop Thomas Thuruthimattam, CST, for preparing the bishops for the Synodal Session through his illuminating and inspiring words. He referred to the forthcoming canonization of Blessed Alphonsa and the subsequent celebration at Bharananganam in which His Eminence Leonardo Cardinal Sandri would be present. He informed the bishops of his audience with the Holy Father during which he shared with him the concerns of our Church especially regarding the erection of new eparchies in India and the pastoral care of our migrants. He said that he had a meeting also with Cardinal Leonardo Sandri, to whom he presented these concerns in writing. He expressed the hope that effective measures might be taken by the Holy See to implement the teachings of Vatican II and the provisions of CCEO and CIC regarding the pastoral care of the faithful of the Syro-Malabar Church by extending the territorium proprium of the Church to the whole of India and
erecting eparchies for our faithful in the big cities of India and abroad where there are numerous faithful of our Church. He informed the house that Cardinal Leonardo Sandri has accepted his invitation to come for the celebration in honour of St. Alphonsa in Bharananganam and added that it could be an occasion for our bishops to apprise the Cardinal Prefect about the needs of our Church. He expressed his great joy for having consecrated the Cathedral Church of the St. Thomas Syro-Malabar Eparchy of Chicago and congratulated Mar Jacob Angadiath and the faithful of the St. Thomas eparchy of Chicago on their achievement of building a well-planned and beautiful Cathedral. He said that Fr. Cherian Kanjirakompil took charge as the procurator of the Major Archbishop in Rome. He also referred to the textbook problem created by the Marxist-led Government of Kerala for which the Church in Kerala was taking continued measures for the defense of Christian faith. He summarized all the important steps he had taken in line with the decisions of the previous Synod and appreciated the different activities of the Commissions that took place after the previous Synod. Concluding his inaugural address, the Major Archbishop declared the XVI Synod open.

After the Major Archbishop inaugurated the Synodal Session, the Secretary intervened to congratulate the Major Archbishop on behalf of the Synod on his election as President of the CBCI and the Bishops acclaimed the Major Archbishop with a hearty applause.

Participants: The following members were present in the sittings of the day: Cardinal Varkey Vithayathil, (Major Archbishop), Mar George Valiamattam (Tellicherry), Mar Mathew Moolakkatt OSB (Kottayam), Mar Andrews Thazhath (Trichur), Mar Joseph Perumthottam (Changanacherry), Mar Jacob Thoomkuzhy (Archbishop Emeritus of Trichur), Mar Joseph Powathil (Archbishop Emeritus Changanacherry), Mar Joseph Pallikaparampil (Emeritus, Palai), Mar George Punnakottil (Kothamangalam), Mar Abraham Mattam VC (Emeritus, Satna), Mar Gratian Mundadan CMI (Bijnor), Mar James Pazhayattil (Irinjalakuda), Mar Gregory
Karotemprel CMI (Rajkot), Mar Joseph Pastor Neelankavil CMI (Emeritus, Sagar), Mar Paul Chittilapilly (Thamarassery), Mar Vijay Anand Nedumpuram CMI (Chanda), Mar Jacob Manathodath (Palghat), Mar Simon Stock Palathra CMI (Jagdalpur), Mar George Alencherry (Thuckalay), Mar Thomas Elavanal MCBS (Kalyan), Mar Thomas Chakiath (Auxiliary, Ernakulam-Angamaly), Mar Sebastian Vadakel MST (Ujjain), Mar Lawrence Mukkuzhy (Belthangady), Mar Joseph Kunnath CMI (Adilabad), Mar Mathew Vaniakizhakel VC (Satna), Mar Mathew Arackal (Kanjirapally), Mar Jacob Angadiath (Chicago), Mar Sebastian Adayanthrath (Auxiliary, Ernakulam Angamaly), Mar Mathew Anikuzhikattil (Idukki), Mar Joseph Kallarangatt (Palai), Mar Jose Porunnedom (Mananthavady), Mar Anthony Chirayath (Sagar), Mar Thomas Thuruthimattam CST (Gorakhpur), Mar Joseph Pandarasseril (Auxiliary, Kottayam) and Mar Joseph Arumachadath (Bhadravathi).

**Moderators:** The Major Archbishop nominated Archbishop Mathew Moolakkatt, Bishop Jacob Manathodath and Bishop Lawrence Mukkuzhy as moderators of the sittings of the Synod.

**Notary for the Present Session of the Synod:** The Major Archbishop, after taking the opinion of the Synod nominated Fr. Pauly Kannookadan to be the Notary of this session of the Synod.

**Tellers:** After consulting the Bishops, the Major Archbishop appointed Bishop Thomas Thuruthimattam, CST, Bishop Joseph Pandarasseril and Bishop Joseph Arumachadath, MCBS, Tellers for the elections during the current session.

**Committee for the Media:** The Major Archbishop nominated Archbishop Andrews Thazhath, Bishop Mathew Arackal, and Bishop Thomas Chakiath as members of the committee for the media for this session of the Synod.

**Liturgal Celebrations:** The Major Archbishop entrusted Bishop Sebastian Adayanthrath to see to the ordering of the liturgical celebrations during the Synod.
Review of the Decisions of the Previous Synod: Bishop George Alencherry, the Secretary of the Synod read out the decisions of the previous session of the Synod. The Synod reviewed their implementation. A few points from certain decisions were proposed as items of the agenda for the present session of the Synod.

Timetable: The proposed timetable of the Synod was approved without any change. The Synod also decided to have the forenoon time of the Second Monday of the Synod in two sittings with a break of ten minutes in between. At the suggestion of Archbishop Joseph Powathil the Synod decided that the time table of the Synodal Sittings currently being followed could be approved as a permanent one until any change was made in it.

Finalising the Agenda: At the request of Bishop Jacob Manathodath, the Moderator, the Bishops proposed a few more items to be included in the agenda. With these additional items, the final agenda had the following items:

2. Spirit in Jesus Movement of Tom Zacharia
3. A sitting with the three experts on the Holy Qurbana in the light of the inter-diocesan Priests’ meeting held at Mt. St. Thomas to bring in more Koinonia.
4. Diaconate of Scholastics by one’s own Bishop.
5. Carol singing after the Christmas and before the Epiphany and Peace Carol from Easter to II Sunday of Easter.
6. Adoption of Taluks in the Mission Diocese of Chanda by SMMAC Dioceses in the proper territory.
7. To stop offering wreaths in cemeteries and instead introduce clothes that can be given to the poor.
9. Consultation with the Synod of Bishops regarding initiating the process for the causes of beatification of Mar Mathew Makil and Rev. Fr. Thomas Poothathil.


11. A text for marriages with non-Catholics.

12. The draft texts (the text integrating the Liturgy of Hours and the text without the Liturgy of Hours) of the Holy Week Liturgy—Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday, Passion Friday, Holy Saturday and Easter Sunday and Vibhoodi Liturgy for the final scrutiny and approval prepared by the Synodal Committee of the Bishops.

13. The Liturgical Chants prepared by the Experts in Music.

14. The draft text of the Second Anaphora.

15. The final drafts of
   a) Dedication of the Church
   b) Blessing of the Deppa
   c) Rededication of the Churches
   d) Blessing of the Sacred Vessels


17. English Translation of the Pontifical

18. The printed copy of the Psalms

19. The progress in the implementation of the decision of the Synod in 1999 & 2000, regarding uniformity in the celebration of our Holy Qurbana - the Interior of our sanctuary.

20. Findings of the survey on the Life and Ministry of the Priests - Power point presentation by Fr Paul Parathazham
21. Discussion on the suggestions from *Vaidika* Conference conducted jointly by the commission for clergy and Liturgy.
22. Discussion on the draft of the common syllabus for Minor Seminaries.
23. Discussion on the suggestions by the Joint meeting of the Minor and Major seminary Rectors.
24. Discussion on the suggestions from LRC Research Seminar conducted for the Laity
27. Norms for the approval to constitute awards to encourage the Artists, Musicians, Authors of theological and Literary books, Christian Publishers and Poets.
29. Draft statutes regarding the Curial Bishop
30. Pastoral Care of the Syro-Malabar migrants in North India and Gulf.
31. Syro-Malabar Centre in Delhi
32. Chennai Mission
33. Reorganization of CBCI
34. Special Commission for Evangelization
35. Pastoral care of students who are studying in the big cities outside their eparchies
36. Pastoral care of our faithful in Madurai
37. All India Mission Congress
38. Annual meeting of Rectors of all Major Seminaries of SMMAC.
39. Subject Missiology to be made compulsory in all our major seminaries.
40. Selection of candidates to priesthood and to the congregation of sisters
41. Presentation of reports by the three Major Seminaries
42. Letter of the Major Seminary Rectors regarding the measures to be taken to overcome the current financial crisis in the seminaries.
43. Presentation of reports by the various commissions and Major Archiepiscopal Ordinary Tribunal.
44. Presentation of the financial report.
45. Discussion on the proposals of the Committee for the Redaction of the Particular Law of the Syro-Malabar Church.
46. Disparity of cult marriages
47. Amendment to the bye-laws of Prathinidhiyogam
48. Election of two delegates from the Synod to the IX Plenary Assembly of FABC to be held in Bangalore from 11-20 January, 2009.
49. Election of Members to the Permanent Synod.
50. Election of Members to the Commission for St. Joseph’s Seminary, Mangalapuzha
51. Election of the Ad hoc Committee for Kunnoth Seminary
52. Election of the Secretary of the Synod.
53. Election of the Members to the Superior Tribunal
54. Election of the Chairman and Bishop Member to the Board of Directors of LRC

55. Canonization of Bl. Alphonsa

56. Text Book of mystagogical and liturgical catechesis

**Attacks on Christians in Orissa:** It was reported to the Synod that Christians were attacked by the fundamentalists alleging them to be the culprits behind the gun firing of certain VHP leaders while the fact remains that the crime was committed by the Maoist revolutionaries. The Synod decided to give a statement expressing our grief about the sad events and to convey sentiments of solidarity from the part of the Synod with the Church in Orissa, in particular with Archbishop Raphael Cheenath. The Synod also suggested that the Major Archbishop could contact the authorities of the Central Government to take effective action for the protection of the Christians and their institutions in Orissa. Later Archbishop Andrews Thazhath briefed the Synod how the Major Archbishop intervened in bringing immediate action from the part of the authorities of the Central Government to stop the attacks against Christians in Orissa as a result of which the CRP was employed to stop the attacks by the fundamentalists. In order to express the deep sorrow at the atrocious events of Orissa and to manifest the Church's protest against the inaction of the State Government to establish peace in the areas of the riots, the CBCI appealed to all the dioceses in India to close down all the Educational Institutions of the Church on Friday, 29th August and to observe September 7 as a prayer day. The Synod also in solidarity with the CBCI decided to adopt the same measure while the Synod itself will observe fasting and have one hour adoration on 26th August. It was also decided to make a collection on 7th September, the declared prayer day for Orissa and send the money from each diocese to Archbishop Raphael Cheenath. The Synod suggested that it would be good that a delegation from the Church in Kerala goes to Orissa to express our solidarity with the suffering Christians there. Another suggestion was that a Press
Conference could be arranged to give to the Media the correct information about the incidents in Orissa. The Synod decided to take up these two action plans in consultation with the Office Bearers of KCBC.

**Remembrance of Fr. Thomas Pandipally, CMI:** Bishop Joseph Kunnath, CMI, briefed the Synod on the circumstances of the brutal murder of Fr. Thomas Pandipally, CMI at Lingampett in Andhra Pradesh. The Synod expressed deep sorrow at this atrocious event and conveyed heartfelt condolences to the CMI Congregation, the Archdiocese of Hyderabad and the relatives of the deceased. The Synod authorized the Committee for the Media to include the matter for the press release in connection with the inauguration of the Synod. In a later sitting, Bishop Joseph Kunnath, CMI, briefed the Synod about the developments in the case of the murder of Fr. Thomas Pandipally, CMI. He said that there were credible reports of the Police making malicious attempts to charge the crime on innocent people including some priests. He suggested that it would be better to refer this matter also to the attention of the authorities of the Central Government for their effective intervention. The Major Archbishop proposed that it was needed to give an additional note of condolence and an appeal for legal action against the murderers of Fr. Thomas Pandipally, CMI. The Synod wholeheartedly accepted the proposal and decided to send letters to the Prime Minister and to the Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh appealing for immediate legal action to bring the culprits to the dock and messages of condolence to the Archbishop of Hyderabad, to the CMI Congregation, especially to the Marthoma Province, Chanda and to the relatives of the deceased priest. The Synod also entrusted the Committee for the Media to prepare a statement on this matter to be given to the Press.

The Synod later discussed the drafts of the Press Release on these two items prepared by the Committee for the Media and approved them with some modifications.
Evaluative Study on the Functioning of the Synod: The formal discussions of the Synod started with the proposal of Bishop Vijay Anand Nedumpuram, CMI, to have an evaluative study on the functioning of the Synod from 1993 to the present session. The important ideas that came up were to have a performance auditing of the Synod, to include social and political issues as items of the agenda, to foster lay leadership in the Church, to communicate the findings and decisions of the Synod to the priests, religious and the lay faithful of our Church, to do the evaluation on the basis of the aims and objectives of the Synod enunciated in the particular laws of the Church, to take into consideration the spiritual and communitarian aspects of the Synodal functioning, to emphasize the mission thrust of the Church, to give time for listening to the pastoral experiences of individual bishops, and to reexamine the structures of the Synod and the scope for enhancing the financial requirements for the common activities of the Church. The Synod felt that for an effective evaluation a prior study of the matter by a special committee would be needed and that the discussions could be done on the basis of its study. Accordingly the Synod appointed Archbishop Joseph Powathil (Convener), Archbishop Andrews Thazhath, Bishop George Punnakottil, Bishop Gregory Karotemprel, CMI, and Bishop Jose Porunndom as the committee for this study. The Synod gave the following points of reference to the committee: to determine specifically the process of preparation before the Synod, the actual conduct of the Synod and the follow up after the Synod, to present the items of the agenda with well studied write ups and with the orientation of the decisions that should emerge from the discussion of each item, and to spell out clearly the process of the discussion of each item.

Continuation of the Study Programme on Liturgy: At the proposal of Bishop Vijay Anand Nedumpuram, there was a discussion on the desirability of continuing the study programme on liturgy with the presence of experts so as to arrive at greater consensus on certain liturgical matters. The Synod was of opinion
that the role of the experts was almost over and it was up to the bishops to take the decisions on liturgical matters with divergence of opinions and that such discussions could be deferred to a more opportune situation in the Church.

**Diaconate of Scholastics by One’s Own Bishop:** Bishop Vijay Anand Nedumpuram posited a query whether it was possible to give a mandate from the Synod to ordain the deacons of an eparchy only by the bishop of that eparchy. During the discussion that followed it was made clear that one could insist only the ordination of a candidate by a bishop of his own rite and that it was up to each bishop to decide whether he should ordain his own candidates or delegate it to some other bishop of his own rite or with the permission of the competent authority to a bishop of another Church *sui iuris*.

**Carol Singing and Peace Carol:** Bishop Vijay Anand Nedumpuram proposed that, if it were possible, the Synod could give a directive that the carol singing should be done only after Christmas and before Epiphany. Regarding the peace carol he said that it could be done from the Feast of Easter to the second Sunday of Easter. After a short discussion, the Synod said that the decision on the matter could be left to the discretion of each bishop taking into consideration the particular situations of his eparchy.

**Adoption of Areas in Mission Eparchies by the Eparchies in Territorium proprium:** During the discussion on this item, the Synod was unanimous that it was good to take up such missionary ventures by the eparchies and the clerical religious congregations of the *territorium proprium*. Regarding the real execution of the project, one suggestion was to establish a Synodal set up to organize this missionary venture. However, the Synod commonly felt that the situations of the local diocese should be taken into account and that this kind of missionary adventure could be taken up by mutual dealings between bishop to bishop or bishop to major superiors of religious congregations, keeping the balance of having sufficient number of priests to meet the pastoral needs of the home Church.
and promoting the missionary thrust by sending as many priests as possible to the mission areas of the mission dioceses.

**Missiology to be Made Compulsory Subject in all Major Seminaries:** Bishop Vijay Anand Nedumpuram, CMI, proposed the idea of making missiology a compulsory subject in the syllabus in all the major seminaries. The Synod was of opinion that the proposal was to be accepted and said that as the subject was already being taught in many of the seminaries it was better to verify the actual situation regarding this matter and to know whether the subject was taught with exposure programmes and then give a directive to the seminaries, if needed. Bishop Gratian Mundadan enquired whether there was any directive from Rome regarding the teaching of Missiology in the major seminaries. Bishop Joseph Kallarangatt said that in the syllabus given from the Congregation for Catholic Education, there was no mention of missiology; but in the major seminary of Kottayam, Missiology was taught as part of the seminary curriculum. Bishop George Punnakottil informed the Synod that in Alwaye seminary also missiology was taught as particular subject. Bishop Sebastian Vadakkel said that students from the Good Shepherd Seminary, Kunnoth were going to his diocese for exposure programmes as part of their missiology course. Archbishop Andrews Thazhath provided the information regarding the teaching of Missiology with exposure programmes in Mary Matha Seminary, Trichur. The Synod entrusted the Commission for Clergy and Institutes of Consecrated Life to execute the decision regarding the verification of the actual situation in the teaching of missiology in all our major seminaries and report the findings to the following session of the Synod.

**Offering of Clothes Intended for the Poor instead of Placing Wreaths at Funerals:** It was a suggestion of Bishop Vijay Anand Nedumpuram, CMI, that instead of wasting money for buying wreaths, it would serve the purpose better if clothes are offered at funerals that could be later distributed to the poor. After a short discussion the Synod thought it better to leave the matter for the
consideration of eparchial authorities who could give some guidelines, if needed, according to local customs.

**Causes for the Beatification of Rev. Fr. Augustine John Ukken, Rev. Fr. Antony Thachuparambil, Mar Mathew Makil and Rev. Fr. Thomas Poothathil:** Archbishop Andrews Thazhath introduced the subject of starting the beatification process of Fr. Augustine John Ukken and Fr. Antony Thachuparambil from the Archeparchy of Trichur. There was a long discussion on the correct discernment needed from the part of the local bishop in promoting the request for beatification process of saintly persons of our Church as there were many demands coming up from different dioceses. The Synod was of opinion that a procedure must be established for giving the *nihil obstat* from the part of the Synod in the case of similar requests in the future. The Synod decided to entrust the Synodal Committee for Canonical Questions the task of preparing a draft of the procedure for giving the *nihil obstat* from the part of the Synod in the case of requests for initiating the causes of saints from our Church and present them in the following session of the Synod.

In the case of Fr. Augustine John Ukken, Founder of the Congregation of Sisters of Charity, there was a clear testimony regarding his personal holiness, pastoral zeal, spiritually inspiring activities among the priests, the religious, the lay faithful and among the non-Catholic communities given by Bishop Paul Chittilapilly, Bishop James Pazhayattil and Bishop Anthony Chirayath. About Fr. Antony Thachuparambil also Bishop Paul Chittilapilly, Bishop James Pazhayattil and Bishop Joseph Pastor Neelankavil, CMI, testified to the prayer life, simplicity of life, love for the poor, and committed service for social development of people irrespective of religious affiliations in the Chelakkara region of Trichur Archdiocese. Archbishop Andrews Thazhath, the local ordinary of the two candidates for beatification expressed his firm conviction regarding their personal sanctity. The other bishops of the Synod did not have much knowledge of these candidates to say anything positive or negative about them.
In continuation of this discussion, Archbishop Mathew Moolakkatt, OSB, presented the causes of Mar Mathew Makil, First Vicar Apostolic of Changanacherry and Kottyam and Founder of the Sisters of the Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary and Fr. Thomas Poothathil, Founder of St. Joseph Congregation and informed the Synod that he had the conviction regarding the holiness of the two candidates and that the community in the Archdiocese of Kottayam also regarded them as saintly persons. In the case of these candidates too the other bishops were unable to pronounce any opinion, positive or negative, due to lack of much knowledge about their lives and activities.

The Synod unanimously decided to request the Major Archbishop to give his letter to the Local Bishop stating that the Synod had no objection to proceed with the process of beatification of these four saintly persons of the Syro-Malabar Church.

Curial Bishop(s): Bishop Sebastian Vadakkel, MST, presented to the Synod the findings of the Synodal Committee for Canonical Questions regarding the bishops of the Major Archiepiscopal Curia. He read out a draft proposal in which the first part exposed the historical and canonical background of the institution of Curial Bishop(s) and the second part giving the guidelines for their constitution and functioning on the basis of the provisions of CCEO. As some Bishops requested some interval to study the proposals, the Synod decided to take up the proposals for discussion in another sitting of the present Synod during the following week.

Amendment to the bye-laws of Pratinidhiyogam:

a. Bishop George Punnakottil explained to the Synod that an amendment to the norm in the Particular Law regarding the term of membership of the representatives to the pratinidhiyogam. He proposed it to be limited to two terms of three years after which any member could be disqualified at least for an interval of some years to become again member of the pratinidhiyogam. To this question it was pointed out
that Palliyogam—Procedure Rules of the particular law, n. 72 was quoted as an answer which says: *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.*

b. Bishop George Punnakottil proposed that persons who were official members of the political parities that stand for atheism, class war, materialism, domination of a particular class were to be disqualified for election as *kaikarans* or members of the *pratinidhiyogam*. There was a detailed discussion on the question and the Synod found that an interpretation of the *Palliyogam*—Procedure Rules n. 6.1.1 would help the Church to find a solution to the problem. Therefore the Synod requested the Major Archbishop to give an official interpretation of n. 6.1.1 of the *Palliyogam*—Procedure Rules after having consulted legal experts so as to ensure the interpretation does not go against the Civil Law.

**Redaction of the Particular Law:** The Synodal Committee for Canonical Questions informed the Synod that their task for the redaction of the Particular Law could not be completed because of the time-consuming work needed for the same. The Committee proposed that they could present the report of the work for redaction in the following Synod. When the Committee asked whether some of the Synodal decisions of a canonical nature could be proposed as part of the Particular law, the Synod said that those decisions with long standing relevance could be proposed to be included in the Particular Law. As per the suggestion of Bishop Vijay Anand Nedumpuram, CMI, the Synod decided to request the Synodal Committee for Canonical Questions to prepare a list of provisions of the Common Law that required complementary norms and not yet included in the Particular Law, and to present it in the following Synod.
Use of Canonical Terms of Eparchy, Archeparchy and Metropolitan: There was a discussion whether the Synod should use strictly canonical expressions of eparchy, archeparchy and metropolitan Archbishop in the official documents. It was pointed out that although the CCEO does not use the term ‘Archbishop’, one could find in the documents coming from Rome the use of the expression ‘Metropolitan Archbishop’ for ‘Archbishop’ and ‘archeparchy’ for the metropolitan see. After a short discussion the Bishops said that the Synod could continue to use the terms we were using so far.

Indult Granted to Certain Faithful in Kalyan: Bishop Thomas Elavanal explained to the Synod the backdrop of the issue of the indult for certain faithful in the eparchy of Kalyan and the misuse of it by some faithful of the eparchy of Kalyan and by certain priests of other dioceses in the area of Kalyan. He said that when he approached the Holy See for a solution in this matter he was asked to present a proposal to solve the problem. Accordingly he presented certain proposals for the approval of the Synod on the basis of which the Major Archbishop could give his recommendation for his appeal to the Holy See. The main points he proposed were: 1. to fix a time limit for the indult, 2. to avoid double membership of the Syro-Malabar faithful both in Kalyan and in a Latin diocese and, 3. as a last resort to permit those who persistently insist, to take membership in the Latin Church.

There was a long discussion on the matter in which the Bishops examined the pros and cons of the proposals of Bishop Thomas Elavanal. The following points emerged from the discussion:

- The indult was meant only for the Syro-Malabar faithful of the eparchy of Kalyan; but there is the danger of it being interpreted as a measure that could be applied in all the Latin dioceses of India.
- One has to request the Latin Bishops to educate the faithful and the clergy regarding the real intent and provisions of the indult.
• There should be real catechesis to the faithful in this matter both from the part of the eparchy of Kalyan and the other Syro-Malabar eparchies.

• Although the indult was an exceptional concession granted to some individuals who were expected to join the eparchy of Kalyan at the time of its formation but wanted to continue receiving the sacraments in the Latin rite at the same time remaining juridically in the Syro-Malabar Church, practically the indult proved to be some kind of permission for those Syro-Malabar faithful to remain in the Latin Church.

• There should be a pastoral approach to dissuade the people going for worship in the Latin Church and gradually win them over for membership in the eparchy of Kalyan.

• This matter is to be presented as an injustice and to be appealed to Rome for the redress of the injustice.

As a conclusion the Synod appointed a Committee consisting of Bishop Thomas Elavanal as Convener, and Archbishop Joseph Powathil, Archbishop Andrews Thazhath, Bishop Gratian Mundadan, Bishop Paul Chittilapilly and Bishop Jose Porunnedom as members to formulate the proposals for the solution of the problems arising from the misuse of the indult in the eparchy of Kalyan, in the light of the points presented by Bishop Thomas Elavanal and the discussion that ensued.

**Stipends for Concelebrants:** One of the clarifications requested by the priests who participated in the Conference was whether it was appropriate to take stipend by a priest who concelebrates in the Holy *Qurbana*. The clarification given was that no stipend could be taken by a concelebrant who had already celebrated another *Qurbana*, nor could he take it for the intention of the bishop and that, if the participation in a concelebrated *Qurbana* was the only celebration on a day, stipend could be taken for that *Qurbana* as it is the custom followed till date. It was noted that the Common Law
presents to follow the legitimate customs approved by the Church in this matter and that in the Particular Law of our Church there was no prescription in this matter. Therefore, it was decided to entrust the matter to the Synodal Committee for Canonical Questions for further study and presentation of their findings in the following Synod so as to include them in the particular law of our Church.

Reduction of the Number of Earlier Mass Intentions with the Later Rates: To the question whether the number of earlier Mass Intentions could be reduced according to the higher rates later fixed by the Church, it was clarified that CCEO c. 1052 §3 provided the norm for the same, e.g. An eparchial bishop has the power, because of a diminution of revenues and while this lasts, to reduce the number of the celebrations of the Divine Liturgy to the level of the offerings legitimately in force in the eparchy, provided there is no one who is bound by obligation and can effectively be forced to increase the offering.

Marriages with Disparity of Cult: Bishop Sebastian Adayanthrath introduced the problem of sending persons whose marriage was to be blessed with the dispensation of the disparity of cult to other eparchies for the reason of avoiding scandal in a local eparchy. Archbishop Andrews Thazhath gave sufficient canonical clarifications on the matter. The Synod said that a pastoral approach should be adopted in each case by informing the eparch or parish priest concerned to whom such cases were referred to. The Synod also decided to entrust the Commission for Liturgy to prepare a liturgical text for the blessing of marriages with non-Christians.

Action against some Movements Professing False Teachings: Bishop Thomas Elavananal introduced the problems of the aberrations of Catholic faith created by the Movement of Spirit in Jesus. During the discussion that followed the Bishops talked about other heretical movements like Emperor Emmanuel, and Upper Room. In the case of the New Age Rosary, there was a suggestion to make a real study of this movement before making any disciplinary pronouncement
about it. The Bishops were unanimous that the Synod should take steps to ban these movements. Although there was the suggestion to counteract the evil caused by these movements by a pastoral letter of the Major Archbishop and afterwards by a juridical procedure to take penal action against them, it was finally decided that the pastoral letter should be sent only after having concluded the juridical procedure and the appropriate action following from it. In order to help the juridical procedure from the Major Archbishop Curia, the Bishops were requested to send all the possible documents of eparchial juridical procedures taken against these movements and any other useful testimonial matter against them.

**Felicitation to Archbishop Andrews Thazhath:** The Major Archbishop felicitated on behalf of the Synod Archbishop Andrews Thazhath on his recent appointment as Consultor of the Pontifical Council for Legislative Texts.

**Release of the Complete Works of Fr. Placid J. Podipara and the New Edition of Manikathanar’s Translation of the New Testament:** After the sittings of the day came to a close on 21 August, at 6.00 p.m., there was the release of the Complete Works of Fr. Placid J. Podipara, edited by Fr. Thomas Kalayil, CMI, by the Major Archbishop giving a copy to Archbishop Joseph Powathil and the New Edition of Manikathanar’s translation of the New Testament by the Major Archbishop giving a copy to Archbishop George Valiamattam. Fr. Jose Panthapalamthottiyil, Prior General of the CMI Congregation, Fr. George Thanchan, CMI, Vicar General, Fr. Kuncheria Pathil, Provincial of St. Joseph’s Province, Fr. Thomas Kalayil, CMI, and other priests who collaborated in the publication of these books were present on the occasion.

**Release of the Book of Psalms:** At the beginning of the first afternoon sitting, the Major Archbishop, flanked by Bishop Paul Chittilapilly, Chairman of the Commission for Liturgy, released the Book of Psalms newly translated by the Commission for Liturgy
with the help of a Synodal Committee and experts in Bible, Syriac and Malayalam languages by giving a copy of the book to Archbishop Joseph Powathil. The Major Archbishop thanked Bishop Paul Chittilapilly, the Synodal Committee for the translation of the Psalms and all those who co-operated with them.

**Holy Week Liturgy:** Before starting the discussion, Bishop Paul Chittilapilly, Chairman of the Commission for Liturgy, informed the Bishops of all the drafts of the liturgical texts prepared by the Liturgical Commission and included in the agenda for the discussion and approval of the Synod. In addition, he brought to the attention of the Bishops that the texts of the *propria* were also to be finalized and printed for permanent use in the Church by incorporating them into the *Taksa*. He said that he had received only a few observations and comments regarding the *propria* and that it would be better all those who want to send the comments do it as early as possible. He called the attention of the Synod to the fact that as the copies of the Liturgy of the Hours were not available for distribution, it would be better for the Synod to consider whether the *propria* of the Liturgy of the Hours used in the present texts could be incorporated into the structure agreed upon by the Central Liturgical Committee and make the new text of the Liturgy of the Hours. He sought the opinion of the Bishops regarding the priority to be given in taking up each of these items for discussion. Accordingly the Synod preferred to start with the Holy Week Liturgy. After a detailed discussion, the Synod approved with the modifications proposed by the Synod, the texts of the liturgies of *Vibhooti*, Palm Sunday, Holy Thursday and Good Friday, the Holy Saturday and Easter Sunday, finalized by the Synodal Committee for Holy Week Liturgy. As all the liturgical texts of the Holy Week and the text of *Vibhooti* were by now approved by the Synod, it was decided that further procedure regarding the promulgation of the liturgical texts could be taken about these texts.

**Other Liturgical Texts:** The Synod took up for discussion the draft texts of Dedication of Churches, Rededication of Churches,
Blessing of the *Deppa* and Blessing of Sacred Vessels and decided to entrust the task of finalizing the draft texts to the Synodal Committee for Liturgical Texts together with Bishop Joseph Kallarangatt as a newly co-opted member.

**Time of the Easter Liturgy:** There was a short discussion in the Synod regarding the time appropriate to celebrate the Easter Liturgy. The Synod decided that it could be normally at 3.00 a.m. on Easter Sunday. For serious inconveniences the time could be after 3.00 a.m. or even at late hours of Holy Saturday, according to the direction of the Local Hierarch.

**Liturgy of the Hours:** Bishop Paul Chittilapilly explained to the Synod that the general structure of the Liturgy of the hours was prepared by the Central Liturgical Committee as per the mandate of the Synod. He proposed that if the Synod would agree, the *propria* needed for the Liturgy of the Hours could be taken from the texts of the Liturgy of the Hours that are in use in the Church. The Synod agreed to the proposal and further decided to entrust the task of preparing the finalized draft of the Liturgy of the Hours to the Synodal Committee for Liturgical Texts together with Bishop Joseph Kallarangatt as a newly co-opted member.

**Integration of the Liturgy of the Hours with the Holy *Qurbana***: As per the request of Mgr. Bosco Puthur, Rector of St. Joseph Pontifical Seminary, Mangalapuzha, the Synod discussed the possibility of integrating the liturgy of the hours with the celebration of the Holy *Qurbana*. It was entrusted to the Commission for Liturgy to give the guidelines for such an integration of the liturgy of the hours with the Holy *Qurbana* and to give them to all the seminaries of our Church.

**Reprint of the Text of the Liturgy of the Hours:** Occasioned by the request of Mgr. Bosco, the Synod discussed the possibility of making the text of the liturgy of the hours available to those who want them. As the new text of the liturgy of the hours could be finalized only after the following Synod, the Synod was of opinion
that it would be better to reprint the present book and Archbishop Joseph Powathil expressed his readiness to take orders and reprint the book according to the need of the Church.

**Starting the Day of the Liturgy of the Hours:** During the discussion on the Holy Week Liturgy, the Synod pointed out that the practice of praying the liturgy of the hours of a day starting from the evening of the previous day should be taken up for study by LRC and subsequent discussion in the Synod.

**Propria:** Bishop Paul Chittilapilly informed the Synod that the time given for the experimental use of the *propria* was about to terminate and therefore it was up to the Synod to decide the process of incorporating them into the *Taksa*. The Synod suggested that proposals for improvements regarding the *propria* could be called forth from the eparchies by the Commission for Liturgy in the light of which the final text of the *propria* could be prepared by the Synodal Committee for *Propria*. The Synod also suggested that with a view to the better participation of the people, this Committee could select one set of prayers and hymns of a Sunday from each season for the use of the community on all Sundays of the same season. Similarly the Committee was given the option to set apart, if needed, any prayer of the celebrant too, according to their discretion.

**Revision of the Present Text of the Holy *Qurbana***: The Conference of the Representatives of Priests had suggested that there was a promise from the Holy See that the text of the Holy *Qurbana* currently used could be revised on termination of five years after its promulgation and that such a revision could be initiated by the Synod. The Chairman of the Commission for Liturgy said that if the Synod gave a mandate to study this question, it could very well take it up. There was a suggestion that at any rate there should be the revision of the text and that it must be done at a very slow pace without creating any commotion or confusion in the Church. As a conclusion the Synod said that no decision could be taken now regarding this matter and that much study and deliberation are needed
for it. It could be taken up for discussion in the Synod when the Commission for Liturgy presents its report of the study on the suggestions given by the Conference of the Representatives of Priests.

**Blessing of Marriage by a Celebrant without Officiating the Continuation of the Celebration of the Holy *Qurbana***: Another suggestion discussed in the Conference of the Representatives of Priests that was brought to the attention of the Synod by Bishop Paul Chittilapilly was that it was not proper that the main celebrant leaves after the blessing of the marriage without continuing the celebration of the Holy *Qurbana*. The Synod was of the opinion that for pastoral needs and practical purposes the Bishop could leave the celebration just after the blessing of the marriage as is the custom till date. It was also mentioned that the final prayers and the *huttama* were not essential parts for the valid celebration of the sacrament of marriage.

**The English Translation of the Pontifical and the Liturgy of the Hours**: Bishop Paul Chittilapilly, Chairman of the Commission for Liturgy informed the Synod that the work of the English translation of the Pontifical was completed and that it would be published as per the procedure approved by the Synod. Bishop Mathew Vaniakizhakkel, V.C. said that the same was true of the Liturgy of the Hours and that could also be published without delay.

**Liturgical Chants**: The Commission for Liturgy presented three types of chants that could be used for the celebration of the Holy *Qurbana* composed by 1. Fr. Mathew Vellanickal jointly with Mgr. Jacob Vellian, 2. Fr. Anto Amarnath, CMI and 3. Fr. Paul Poovathingal, CMI, for the evaluation of the Synod. The Bishops listened to a few parts of the compositions from the three types of chants. The Bishops appreciated the earnestness with which the composers of the chants worked for making the chants and presenting them to the Synod, considering the fact that many others were also requested to do the work. In general the Synod was of opinion that none of the chants could be accepted as such since
they were more musical than in the style of chanting. All the bishops were of opinion that there should be only one type of chanting as a model for the whole Church while adaptations of the same might be necessary in situations of the mission eparchies. Some Bishops felt that the opinion of the laity was of importance in selecting the liturgical chant for our Church. Many suggested that a chant naturally evolved from the tunes of recitation of the liturgical prayers that exist somewhat in general in our Church could be ‘fine-tuned’ with the help of the composers of these chants presented in the Synod and receiving the suggestions from a chosen group of priests who are already known to be doing the recitation in chant form having the appreciation of the liturgical congregations. In this selection process some representatives of the laity also should be consulted. Finally this suggestion was accepted as the decision of the Synod and the work was entrusted to the Commission for Liturgy and the Commission for Catechism as a joint effort.

**Report of the Survey on the Ministry and Life of Priests:** The Major Archbishop welcomed Fr. Paul Parathazham who gave a power point presentation of the interim report of the survey on the ministry and life of priests conducted by the Commission for Clergy and Institutes of Consecrated Life. Bishop James Pazhayattil, the Chairman, introduced the project of the survey. During and after the exposition of the findings of the survey, the Bishops asked clarifications on many points that emerged from the survey. The Synod appreciated very much the way in which the survey was conducted and the insights that Fr. Paul Parathazham presented to the Bishops regarding the ministry and life of priests in the Syro-Malabar Church. Both the Major Archbishop and the Moderator thanked Fr. Paul Parathazham for the valuable service he rendered on behalf of the Synod for the welfare of priests in our Church.

**Conference of the Representatives of Priests:** Bishop James Pazhayattil presented the report of the conference of the representatives of priests conducted jointly by the Commission for
Clergy and Institutes of Consecrated Life and the Commission for Liturgy. As all the suggestions given by this conference are requiring deeper study and preparation and as all of them are pertaining to liturgical matters the Synod decided that the Central Liturgical Committee should be given the mandate to make a detailed study on these suggestions, excepting the one on mystagogical catechesis, and present their findings to the following Synod through the Commission for Liturgy.

**Discussion on the Suggestions by the Joint Meeting of the Minor and Major Seminary Rectors:** Bishop James Pazhayattil, Chairman of the Commission for Clergy and Institutes of Consecrated Life, briefed the Synod about the Conference of the Rectors of the Major Seminaries, Superior Generals and General Councilors for Formation of the Institutes of the Consecrated Life and Rectors of the Diocesan Minor Seminaries. The objective of this Conference was to find out ways and means to implement the Charter for Priestly Formation in the Syro-Malabar Church.

As the first item of discussion, the Synod took up minor seminary formation, especially the syllabus. The Conference had suggested to have the minor seminary formation extending over a period of four years to which the Synod responded by saying that the earlier position of the Synod to have the formation either for three or for four years could be still maintained according to the possibility of each eparchy. Regarding the Syllabus the Bishops felt that the proposed draft included all the essential elements of formation. But many Bishops pointed out that the whole syllabus looked too heavy for the intellectual and psychological capacities of the minor seminarians and that a syllabus in a simplified form could be prepared for all the essential subjects to be taught in the minor seminary. It was pointed out that the minor seminary is the place where the basic attitudes towards priestly vocation, deepening of faith through catechesis with the help of the Compendium of the Catechism of the Catholic Church, prayer life, mission orientation
Ad gentes, etc., skills for communicating in various languages and qualities of human formation like discipline, silence, good manners, etc., are nurtured and developed. As a conclusion of the discussion the Synod entrusted the Commission to finalize the syllabus for the minor seminary formation on the basis of the suggestions from the Synod and in consultation with the Rectors of the minor seminaries.

The Synod also decided to entrust the Commission for Clergy and Institutes of Consecrated Life to organize an orientation course for the members of the Staff from all the major seminaries on priestly formation taking the orientation from the Charter for Priestly Formation. Besides, the Commission was entrusted with the task of conducting a conference of Rectors of Major and Minor Seminaries, both diocesan and religious. A third decision drawn from the suggestions of the joint meeting of the Minor and Major Seminary Rectors was to entrust the same Commission the task of conducting a Conference for the new members of the Staff in the Major Seminaries. It was suggested that in the priority list of projects presented to CNEWA these conferences and seminars should find their due place. A fourth decision was taken to request the Synodal Commissions for Major Seminaries to ensure academic seriousness in the major seminary formation. The Synod also recommended that each eparchy might take upon itself the responsibility to organize study classes on the Charter for Priestly Formation for all the priests in its jurisdiction.

**Annual Meeting of Rectors of all Major Seminaries:** Bishop Vijay Anand Nedumpuram, CMI, proposed that an annual meeting of the Rectors of all the major seminaries could be convened to discuss issues regarding the formation of seminarians to which Bishop James Pazhayattil, Chairman of the Commission for Clergy and Institutes of Consecrated Life, responded that such a meeting was conducted in the previous year and the next one was in the offing.

**Response to the Statement in the Media Maligning Archbishop Joseph Powathil:** The Major Archbishop brought to the attention
of the Bishops the statement in the media by the General Secretary of the CPI (M), Kerala, attributing false allegations against Archbishop Joseph Powathil maligning even his personality on the basis of the rightful actions that he had taken as Chairman of the Inter-Church Council for the protection of the educational rights of the minorities, in particular of the Christian community. Many Bishops expressed their strong condemnation of the comportment of the political leader and the Synod unanimously decided to give the response of the Synod in the Media against this unjust attack on the person of Archbishop Joseph Powathil. The Synod entrusted the Committee for the Media to prepare a statement of response on behalf of the Synod.

**LRC Seminar on the Role and Mission of the Laity:** Archbishop Andrews Thazhath briefed the Synod about the Seminar on the Role and Mission of the Laity. Fr. Pauly Kannookadan read out the suggestions from the Seminar on which there followed a discussion in the Synod. All Bishops were of the opinion that the lay participation in the Church had to be promoted. Many Bishops suggested that the laity should be given formation to have commitment to the Church and leadership in political and social affairs. Another suggestion was that the laity must be respected and duly consulted and thereby making them feel their important role in the Church. It was pointed out that the laity should be integrated in the communion of the Church together with the other sections of the People of God.

The Synod finally decided to request the Major Archbishop to create a Commission for the Laity for the formation and participation of the laity in the Church. The Synod also felt that there should be great care from the part of the Commission to ensure the rightful and ecclesial participation of the laity in the functioning of the Commission. When the Commission is instituted it should first prepare a draft of statutes regarding its functioning and present it to the following Synod.

**Release of the Book, the Mission Theology of the Syro-Malabar Church:** The Book by name “The Mission Theology of
the Syro-Malabar Church,” edited by Fr. Pauly Kannookadan, Executive Director of LRC was introduced to the Synod by Bishop Joseph Kallarangatt. The Major Archbishop released the book giving a copy of the book to Bishop Gregory Karotemprel, Chairman of the Commission for Evangelization and Pastoral Care of Migrants. Together with the Major Archbishop, Archbishop Andrews Thazhath, Chairman, LRC, Bishop Joseph Kallarangatt, Member Bishop and Fr. Pauly Kannookadan, participated in the releasing function.

Suggestions from the Seminar on Proclamation of the Word of God in the Life and Mission of the Church: Archbishop Andrews Thazhath briefed the Synod about the Seminar on Proclamation of the Word of God in the Life and Mission of the Church. There was a short discussion on these suggestions in which it was pointed out that there should be an authentic but popular interpretation of the Bible made available to the people and that liturgical homilies should include interpretation of the Word of God and the mysteries of the liturgical celebration. The Synod welcomed all the suggestions from the Seminar and recommended them to be executed in our eparchies according to the discretion of the diocesan authorities.

Periodical of the LRC: Archbishop Andrews Thazhath, Chairman of LRC, informed that the first number of the biannual of LRC would be released on 14 November in New Delhi during the proposed Seminar on the Ecclesial Mission of the Syro-Malabar Church in India and abroad. The contents of the first number of the biannual were read out in the Synod by the Chairman of LRC. There followed a discussion on the proposed name of the biannual “St. Thomas Heritage,” and the Synod decided to accept the name “Thomas Christian Heritage.” It was suggested that the studies and findings of LRC, both from the seminars and the publications should be popularized through seminars and classes conducted by the dioceses and the religious congregations of our Church.
Seminar on the Ecclesial Mission of the Syro-Malabar Church in India and Abroad in New Delhi: Archbishop Andrews Thazhath announced to the Synod that a Seminar on the Ecclesial Mission of the Syro-Malabar Church in India and Abroad was proposed to be conducted from 14-16 November 2008. He also informed the Synod that there would be a public gathering and a solemn Holy *Qurbana* on that occasion, officiated by the Major Archbishop with the participation of our emigrant faithful in Delhi. He invited all the Bishops to participate in this Seminar and the celebration.

**LRC Award**: Archbishop Andrews Thazhath presented the bye-laws of the St. Thomas Museum Award and the Synod discussed the different aspects of the proposed project. The Synod suggested certain amendments to the bye-laws of the Award and changed the name of the Award from St. Thomas Museum Award to *Syro-Malabar Research Centre Award*.

**Syro-Malabar Centre in New Delhi**: Archbishop Andrews Thazhath proposed the idea of having a Syro-Malabar Centre in New Delhi. All the Bishops accepted the idea of having a Centre of our Church in New Delhi with a Bishop as its head to co-ordinate the missionary and evangelization work of our Church and to have the liaison work with the Governmental authorities and the CBCI Centre. The Synod had a detailed discussion on the nature of this centre and the mode of implementation of the project. The Bishops emphasized the fact that this centre should be a common centre of the Syro-Malabar Church distinct from the centre of the proposed diocese in Delhi. The Synod decided that this centre could serve also as the office of the Apostolic Visitor who would develop it into a centre of our Church with the support of the people of our Church. It was suggested by some Bishops that, as the proposed Syro-Malabar Centre in Delhi was a centre for the whole Church, it need not be necessarily linked with the office of the Apostolic Visitor. Another idea that came up was that instead of a retired Bishop, a bishop in his normal term of office could be in charge of the Centre.
The Synod finally concluded the discussion on the point by saying that for the time being the proposed Centre in Delhi could be linked with the office of the Apostolic Visitor who could develop it initially.

**Faridabad Property:** The building and the land owned by Bishop A.D. Mattam in Faridabad was to be transferred to the Syro-Malabar Church according to an earlier decision of the Synod (cfr. III Assembly of II Synod, 7-23 November 1994, Synodal News, No. 4, February 1995). Bishop Gratian Mundadan reported that he could not get it transferred because of some technical difficulties. The House and Land are of the Housing Board and it could not be transferred to an organization. Bishop A.D. Mattam expressed again his willingness to transfer it to the Syro-Malabar Church. The Synod entrusted Bishop Gratian Mundadan to get it done with the help of legal experts either as a donation or as a testament from the part of Bishop A.D. Mattam. Since the signatories of the Deed of Purchase are Bishop A.D. Mattam and Bro. Joseph Naduvileparambil, V.C., both will have to sign the new document transferring it to the Syro-Malabar Church.

**Reimbursement of the Expenses Incurred by the Apostolic Visitor:** The Major Archbishop presented the need for meeting the expenses of Bishop Gratian Mundadan for his mission as the Apostolic Visitor by the Synod. The Synod approved the proposal of the Major Archbishop.

**Canonization of Blessed Alphonsa:** Bishop Joseph Kallarangatt briefed the Synod about the programme in connection with the canonization of Blessed Alphonsa in Rome on 12th October 2008. He said that the canonization as such takes place at 10.30 a.m. on 12th October and that there would be a thanksgiving Mass in the forenoon on 13th October officiated by the Major Archbishop. He also informed that the Holy Father might give a special audience to the Indian participants of the canonization function. He explained also the details of the programmes that would be conducted on 9th November at Bhamanganam of which the main item is the celebration
of the Holy *Qurbana* by the Major Archbishop with the Homily by Malankara Major Archbishop Baselios Mar Cleemis at 4.00 p.m. before which there would be a public meeting starting at 2.30 p.m. His Eminence Cardinal Leonardo Sandri, Prefect of the Congregation for Oriental Churches, would be present for both functions and Sri Abdul Kalam, former President of India, would be the Chief Guest for the public meeting. He invited all the Bishops to participate in this important celebration. The Major Archbishop appealed to the Bishops present on the occasion to make themselves available for a meeting with Cardinal Sandri either at Mount St. Thomas or at Palai (Bharanangkanam) to discuss with him the needs of our Church. Bishop Kallarangatt said that to help the pilgrims, there was a Public Relations Office functioning at Bharanangkanam and that in Rome Mgr. Paul Pallath was serving as a contact person for information.

**Report of the Meeting of the Special Commission for Evangelization:** The Major Archbishop explained to the Synod the main points of discussion seemingly converging to some kind of agreement that evolved in the meeting of the CBCI Special Commission for Evangelization. He said that the report of the Special Commission and certain guidelines for the Latin Bishops for the creation of personal parishes or other pastoral measures, would be submitted to the Standing Committee of the CBCI and that he expected some positive outcome from the Standing Committee Meeting scheduled in September. The Major Archbishop appreciated the way in which Bishop Gratian Mundadan effectively presented the cause of our Church in the meeting of the Special Commission. Archbishop George Valiamattam and Bishop George Alencherry also supplemented the points of discussion of the meeting of the Special Commission.

Bishop Gratian Mundadan, the Apostolic Visitor, explained the procedure of his visitations in different Latin dioceses and the communities of our emigrant faithful in different cities and towns outside the *territorium proprium*. There followed a detailed
discussion in which many Bishops expressed their views regarding the presentation of our just demands to the Latin Bishops and the Holy See.

- All India Jurisdiction should be our final aim.
- Our cause should be presented as a matter of justice, not simply as a request.
- There should be a concerted effort from the part of all the Bishops to represent our cause before the Holy See.
- We should be prepared to create the structures for an ecclesiastical jurisdiction that might be given to us if at all our request for All India Jurisdiction gets realized.
- It is a great need to create a corpus fund in the Curia for the mission expansion of our Church.
- We should start with the preparation for the creation of Syro-Malabar dioceses in the big cities of Chennai, Bangalore, Delhi.
- The dioceses of the three big cities could be visualized together with the neighbouring towns and places of our people.
- The Mission Conference should be an annual feature.
- A write up of the Apostolic Visitor could be given to the diocesan bulletins.
- Seminarians could be formed by the dioceses in view of supplying them for service in the future dioceses and personal parishes.
- Our cause should be presented to Rome as a time-bound appeal.
- Our priests should be given correct orientation before being sent to the personal parishes in the North.
- The priests who go to the personal parishes should not create any division in our communities. They should follow the directives of the Synod regarding liturgical celebrations.
The pastoral letters of the Major Archbishop should reach all the co-ordinators of our faithful outside the Syro-Malabar dioceses.

Dioceses should be generous in sending priests for personal parishes proposed by the Apostolic Visitor.

If the priests are requested at the time of general transfers in the dioceses it would be easier to send them for service in the personal parishes outside Kerala.

It is good to make agreements for sending priests at the time of the Synod itself.

Seminarians could be trained in our seminaries of North India so that after ordination they could be sent to the personal parishes of our Church.

The priests who are sent to the personal parishes must report back to the Major Archbishop about their activities and experiences.

The priests and the faithful of our Church should be given clear and correct information regarding the work of our Church and that of the Apostolic Visitor to get our just demands acknowledged.

There should be one Bishop to look after all the faithful outside our dioceses and the regions entrusted to our Church.

We should request for Syro-Malabar dioceses in the big cities on a larger basis to include all the reachable areas of the Region.

The faithful of our Church in the neighbourhood of our own dioceses could be pastorally cared for by those dioceses themselves.

The following points emerged as conclusions from the discussion to be presented as our propositions to the Latin Bishops or/and to the Holy See:
a. All India jurisdiction is our ultimate goal in the pastoral and evangelization work of the Syro-Malabar Church in India.

b. As a first step the Syro-Malabar Church should be given without further delay dioceses in the three big cities of Delhi, Bangalore and Chennai.

c. Provision should be made for the dioceses of the Syro-Malabar Church to provide pastoral care of the Syro-Malabar faithful of the neighbouring region within the jurisdiction of the Latin Church.

d. A Bishop should be appointed for the personal parishes instituted as a result of the Apostolic visitation and the communities of the Syro-Malabar Church who are not covered by the pastoral care of the Syro-Malabar dioceses.

e. The Latin faithful within the jurisdiction of the present Syro-Malabar dioceses should be given pastoral care by the Latin Church according to the principle of all India jurisdiction of all the three individual Churches.

**Chennai Mission**: Bishop James Pazhayattil briefed the Synod about the present situation of Chennai Mission and the difficulties our priests and people face in their pastoral activities. He informed the Synod that the Mission was about to celebrate its Silver Jubilee and he invited all the Bishops to participate in the Jubilee functions. The Moderator suggested that proper decisions could be taken on the issues of Chennai Mission together with the common discussion on the pastoral care of our emigrant faithful in the big cities of India.

**Silver Jubilee of Chennai Mission**: Bishop Vijay Anand, CMI, expressed his view that it would be good if all the Bishops, as far as possible, attended the concluding functions of the Silver Jubilee celebrations of Chennai Mission. The Synod welcomed the idea.

**Laity Commission**: The Synod thought it better to have the Syro-Malabar Member of the KCBC Commission for Laity, Family and
Women also as a member of the Major Archbishop Commission for Laity in order to have unity of action in this apostolate wherever it is necessary. The Synod requested the Major Archbishop to consider this suggestion also when he would take decision in this matter.

**Inclusion of the Syro-Malabar Member of the KCBC Commissions in the Major Archiepiscopal Commissions:** As a sequence of the suggestion of the previous day to request the Major Archbishop to consider the inclusion of the Syro-Malabar Member of the KCBC Commission for Laity, Family and Women in the Major Archiepiscopal Commission for Laity, Bishop Gratian Mundadan, CMI, proposed that the same measure may be accepted for the other Commissions also. The Synod requested the senior Bishop Members of KCBC to give a list of Commissions of KCBC that have common fields of activity in which the proposed inclusion of the Syro-Malabar Member of the KCBC Commission into the Major Archiepiscopal Commissions is helpful for unity of action. Bishop Sebastian Adyanthray pointed out the practical difficulty involved in the inclusion of the Syro-Malabar Member of the KCBC Commissions in the Major Archiepiscopal Commissions as there was a lack of correspondence between the terms of office of the KCBC Commissions and the Major Archiepiscopal Commissions. The Synod then left the recommendation open to the consideration of the Major Archbishop.

**Election of Delegates to FABC Plenary Assembly:** The Synod elected Bishop George Alencherry and Bishop Joseph Kallarangatt as delegates to the IXth Plenary Assembly of FABC to be held in Bangalore from 11-20 January 2009.

**Elections:** The Synod conducted the following elections in the current session:

1. **The Permanent Synod:** The Synod elected Archbishop Andrews Thazhath, Archbishop George Valiamattam and Archbishop Mathew Moolakkatt, OSB, members of the Permanent Synod. The nominee of the Major Archbishop
was Archbishop Joseph Perumthottam. As Substitutes Bishop George Punnakottil, Bishop Mathew Arackal and Bishop Joseph Kallarangatt were elected. The nominee of the Major Archbishop was Bishop Jose Porunnedom.

2. **Secretary of the Synod:** The Synod re-elected Bishop George Alencherry the Secretary of the Synod for the second term of five years.

3. **Commission for St. Joseph’s Pontifical Seminary, Mangalapuzha:** The Synod elected Bishop Jacob Manathodath Chairman and Bishop Mathew Anikuzhikattil and Bishop Jose Porunnedom Members of the Commission for St. Joseph’s Pontifical Seminary, Mangalapuzha.

4. **Superior Tribunal:** The Synod elected Archbishop Mathew Moolakkatt, OSB, the General Moderator of the Superior Tribunal and Bishop Paul Chittilapilly and Bishop Jose Porunnedom members.

5. **Chairman and Bishop Member of the Board of Directors of LRC:** The Synod re-elected Archbishop Andrews Thazhath Chairman of the Board of Directors of LRC and Bishop Joseph Kallarangatt the Bishop Member.

**Major Archiepiscopal Commissions:** The Major Archbishop announced in the Synod the list of Commissions appointed by him for a term of service of five years.

**Liturgy:** Bishop George Punnakottil (Chairman), Bishop Thomas Elavanal, MCBS ((Member), Bishop Sebastian Adayanthrath (Member)

**Catechism:** Bishop George Alencherry (Chairman), Bishop Jacob Manathodath (Member), Bishop Joseph Pandarasseril (Member).

**Evangelization and Pastoral Care of Migrants:** Bishop Sebastian Vadakkel, MST (Chairman), Bishop Simon Stock Palathra, CMI (Member), Bishop Anthony Chirayath (Member)
Clergy and Institutes of Consecrated Life: Bishop Thomas Chakiath (Chairman), Bishop Thomas Thuruthimattam (Member), Bishop Joseph Arumachadath (Member)

Doctrine: Bishop Joseph Kallarangatt (Chairman), Bishop Joseph Kunnath, CMI (Member), Bishop Mathew Vaniaikizhakkel, VC (Member).

Ecumenism: Archbishop Joseph Perumthottam (Chairman), Bishop Vijay Anand Nedumpuram, CMI (Member), Bishop Lawrence Mukkuzhy (Member).

Commission for Laity: Bishop Mathew Arackal (Chairman), Bishop Sebastian Adayanthrath (Member), Bishop Mathew Anikuzhikattil (Member)

Ad hoc Committee for Kunnath Seminary: The Synod considered whether in the place of the Ad hoc Committee in the Kunnath seminary a Commission could be appointed. After a short discussion the Synod decided that the Ad hoc Committee could continue for a term of three years more from this day to function with the induction of the new members Bishop Joseph Pandaraseril instead of Archbishop Mathew Moolakkatt and Bishop Joseph Arumachadath of the new diocese in the Province. Therefore presently the Committee is constituted of Archbishop George Valiamattam (Convener), Bishop Paul Chhtilapilly, Bishop Jose Porunnedom, Bishop Lawrence Mukkuzhy, Bishop Joseph Pandarasseril and Bishop Joseph Arumachadath, MCBS.

Presentation of the Reports by the Three Major Seminaries: The Rectors from the three Major Seminaries Mgr. Bosco Puthur (Mangalapuzha) Fr. George Madathikandam (Vadavathoor) and Fr. Geo Pulickal (Kunnath) briefly presented the annual reports of the life and activities of the respective Major Seminaries. The Bishops asked clarifications on certain points regarding each seminary.

Mgr. Bosco Puthur informed the Synod that five professors would terminate their service during the course of the current year
and that the strength of the seminary was 403 including the day scholars. He said that there was a tendency among seminarians to take break after the philosophy course to do post graduation according to their own likings. He pointed out the difficulty to enforce among the present seminarians certain habits of spiritual life like silence. He brought to the attention of the Synod that due to the non-availability of the books of the Liturgy of the Hours the first year philosophy seminarians find it difficult to join the community prayer. He requested the Synod to give the liturgical guideline for celebrating the Holy Qurbana integrated with the Liturgy of the Hours. He added that the interest for study also was becoming low. However Mgr. Bosco Puthur concluded by saying that despite these limitations the seminary in general was functioning rather well. He explained to the Synod the financial situation of the seminary. He said that during the current financial year the seminary spent Rs. 30 Lakhs to repair the buildings of the seminary especially the old roofing of the central building of the seminary, getting donations from Cologne Arch Diocese, CNEWA, Opus Sancti Petri and CNEWA Canada. Bishop George Punnakottil expressed a special note of appreciation regarding the leadership given by Mgr. Bosco Puthur and the repair works done through his initiative without bringing any financial burden on the seminary.

Fr. George Madathikandam presented the special features of seminary formation in Vadavathoor, introduced recently. He said that as a new spiritual programme lectio divina, i.e., reflective reading of a Bible passage for 15 minutes every day before the beginning of the classes was being done. On every working day there are four periods in the morning and one period in the afternoon. The rest of the time is given for library work and private study. He said that there was an outreach programme of visiting the families around the area and a kind of family celebration inviting all the neighbours together to the seminary. He pointed out that the library of the seminary was big and that because of the financial difficulty new books could not be bought. He briefed the Synod about the Silver
Jubilee celebrations of *Paurastyavidyapitham*. He informed the Synod that six professors retired in the previous year and five new professors had been appointed and that presently the strength of the Seminary was 307 students. Fr George Madathikandam also mentioned the financial difficulties of the seminary and explained to the Bishops how the running of the seminary and the maintenance works were done both with the help of CNEWA and by taking a part of the *Corpus* Fund. Bishop Joseph Kallarangatt too informed the Synod of certain new developments in the seminary and he greatly appreciated the leadership of Fr George Madathikandam in enlisting the co-operation of the staff and implementing a balanced way of formation for the seminarians.

Fr. Geo Pulickal gave a brief outline of the growth of Good Shepherd Seminary, Kunnoth, during the last seven years. He said that, God willing, the first batch of 14 Deacons would be ordained priests at the end of this year. He informed that there were 135 students and 12 members on the residential staff including an additional spiritual father. The most important matter that Fr. Geo Pulickal put forward as the pressing problem was the Over Draft from the Bank to the tune of Rs. 3 Crores for which every three months the seminary was supposed to give Rs. 14.5 Lakhs as interest. He made a strong appeal to the Synod to help the seminary to overcome the financial crisis. However he mentioned that by his own fund-raising attempts he could collect Rs. 60 lakhs which was deposited as the *Corpus* Fund. Archbishop George Valiamattam thanked Fr. Geo Pulikal for his painstaking efforts both in the matter of formation of seminarians and in the attempts to alleviate the financial difficulties of the seminary by his own fund-raising programmes.

**Solution for the Financial Crisis of the Good Shepherd Seminary, Kunnoth:** To solve the financial crisis of the Kunnoth seminary many proposals came from the part of the Bishops. After a protracted discussion on the subject, the Synod came to the following conclusions. After having come to the consensus that the
additional expenses incurred by all the four seminaries in Kerala could be reimbursed from the dioceses, it was further decided that the full amount of the dues of the seminarians of Mangalapuzha and Mary Matha, Trichur should be given to the Kunnoth seminary as a first measure to solve its financial crisis. The Seminary Commission for Vadavathoor was asked to examine the seminary accounts and see the possibility of giving similarly to Kunnoth Seminary the dues of the seminarians there. Secondly, it was decided that the seminaries of Mangalapuzha and Kottayam should try to advance as much amount as possible as a soft loan to Kunnoth seminary. Thirdly, it was decided to collect funds through mission appeal programmes abroad by Bishop George Alencherry and Bishop Mathew Arackal and by personal correspondence of Bishop Gregory Karotempreel within the country. The Synod said that a special appeal should be made to CNEWA to give priority during the coming year to the Kunnoth seminary project above all other projects of the Church.

**Reports of Various Commissions:**

**Commission for Liturgy:** Fr. Pauly Kannonkadan, Secretary of the Commission, presented the report of the projects of the Commission in the publication of the text of Psalms, organization of liturgical seminars and conferences, and the scrutiny and approval of different versions of the liturgical texts and the chants for the Holy Qurbana. The Secretary informed the Synod that the Central Liturgical Committee had prepared the anaphora of Theodore, the revised structure of the liturgy of the hours, the Holy Week Liturgy, and the English translation of the Pontifical to be presented in the Synod. The Synod was convinced of the meritorious service of the Commission and the Secretary and congratulated them whole-heartedly. The Synod placed on record its indebtedness to Bishop Paul Chittilapilly, Chairman of the Commission for Liturgy for his unique service in giving the leadership of the Commission for Liturgy and promoting the works of the Commission.
During the discussion on the report of the Commission for Liturgy, the Secretary of the Commission requested whether the liturgical texts of the profession of the religious vows and that of the consecration of the members of the Secular Institutes could be published without sending them for the recognitio of the Holy See. The Synod was of opinion that since they are only sacramentals, they could be published with the approval already given by the Synod.

**Commission for Catechesis:** At the request of the Commission, Fr. Pauly Kannookadan presented the report of the Commission in which the activities of the Commission mainly regarding the publication of the text books were highlighted. It was reported that the Catechism text books of Standard XI in Malayalam and Standards VII, VIII, and IX in English were published during the current year. The information regarding the publication of Kannada and Hindi text books also was included in the report. The Commission conducted a training programme for forming diocesan resource teams by inviting the representatives of catechism teachers from our dioceses for a seminar at Mount St. Thomas. The Synod requested the Commission to publish a catechetical text book in English on sex education and the Commission accepted it. There was a similar request to publish literature for adult catechesis too. The Synod appreciated the important service done by the Commission and thanked all those who are co-operating in this endeavour of the Church.

Archbishop Joseph Powathil, Convener of the Synodal Committee for Mystagogical Catechesis, briefed the Synod about the procedure agreed upon for the publication of books of mystagogical catechesis under the joint auspices of the Commission for Liturgy and the Commission for Catechesis.

**Commission for Evangelization and Pastoral Care of Migrants:** Bishop Gregory Karotemprel, CMI, Chairman of the Commission, presented to the Synod a short report on the activities of the Commission in India and abroad. The Bishops asked for
information on the confused state of affairs regarding pastoral care in the Gulf Countries and in England. The Synod was very much in appreciation of the painstaking work of the Commission, especially of the Secretary in organizing the Gulf Meet, the seminars on Mission Policy in Bhopal and in Mount St. Thomas, and One-day seminar for the Children, Youth and Parents from the Gulf. Bishop Karotemprel informed the house that a journal by name ‘Syro-Malabar Global Mission’ is being published for the Syro-Malabarians in the Gulf region. He thanked Fr. Joby Kottumkal, MST, the outgoing secretary of the Commission and welcomed Fr. Justin Vettukallel, MST, the new secretary. The Synod also placed on record the extra-ordinarily dedicated service of Fr. Joby Kottumkal who has gone for higher studies in Rome. The Synod was all in appreciation of the wonderful service of Bishop Gregory Karotemprel as Chairman of the Commission for Evangelization and Pastoral Care of the Migrants and thanked him wholeheartedly with a great applause.

**Commission for Clergy and Institutes of Consecrated Life:**
Fr. Pauly Kannonadan, the Secretary of the Commission, presented to the Synod the report of the important activities of the Commission by which greater communion and unity developed among our priests, namely, meeting of the representatives of priests, conference of the Rectors of major and minor seminaries, meeting of priests celebrating the golden and silver jubilee of the priestly ordination, and meeting of the newly ordained priests. Two special ventures realized by the Commission during the current year were the survey on the ministry and life of priests in the Syro-Malabar Church and the specification of common syllabus for the minor seminaries. The Synod suggested that similar meetings for the religious priests and sisters also could be arranged by the Commission. The Synod expressed its appreciation for the functioning of the Commission especially the inspirational role of Bishop James Pazhayattil, the Chairman who gave a strong leadership to launch a series of activities by the Commission. On behalf of the Synod, Bishop James Pazhayattil
thanked Fr. Pauly Kannookadan, the Secretary without whom these programmes could not have been realized.

**Doctrinal Commission:** Bishop Gratian Mundadan presented the report of the various activities of the Doctrinal Commission and presented thirteen lines of action that the commission intends to take up in the near future. He said that ten pamphlets were under preparation to explain to the people the basic doctrines of our faith that are often challenged by the fundamentalists both Christian and non-Christian. Bishop Gratian thanked all those who have collaborated with him for the work of the Commission especially Fr. Siby Pulickal, the secretary.

**Commission for Ecumenism:** Bishop Mathew Arackal, Chairman of the Commission, presented to the Synod the report of the projects executed by the Commission. They were mainly Promotion of the observance of ecumenical prayer week, Joint programmes of different Churches under the auspices of the Ecumenical Centre, Nilackal, Ecumenical response to HIV +ve – Asha Kiran at Pampady, Joint ecumenical venture on environment and ecology, and Ecumenical conventions and dialogue sessions. The Synod thanked the Commission for the praiseworthy work it has done during the current year.

**Major Archiepiscopal Tribunal:** Fr. Mathew Kochupurackal, the President of the Major Archiepiscopal Tribunal presented to the Synod the annual report of the Tribunal. He mentioned that a seminar for the eparchial tribunal personnel was conducted with great success. Archbishop Andrews Thazhath informed Fr. Mathew Kochupurackal that the Synod had taken a decision to initiate legal action against the movements that spread false teachings against the Church and that the Tribunal had to take it up. The Synod appreciated the work of the Tribunal and congratulated the President on his efficient leadership.

**Financial Report of the Curia:** Fr. Mathew Elappananickal, the Finance Officer, presented to the Synod the financial report of the
Curia 2007-2008. The bishops asked clarifications on certain items of the statement of accounts. The Synod discussed the ways and means to make the curia function without serious financial difficulties. The Synod decided to continue the collection on *Sabhadinam* as One Rupee per faithful to assure a regular income for the expenses of the Curia. Bishop Gregory Karotemprel, CMI, Chairman of the Finance Commission suggested conducting a sponsored mega show ‘Marian,’ in order to collect funds for the Curia. The Synod requested the Finance Commission to enquire the details of this show, especially the propriety of conducting it as a programme to raise funds under the auspices of the Curia. The Commission is to present their report to the Permanent Synod who will take the final decision in the matter. The Synod finally thanked the Finance Officer for his committed service.

**Collections for the Curia from the Shrines and Big Parishes:** Some bishops suggested that the collections from shrines and big parishes could be continued. Although in the previous year collections were not taken from the shrines and big parishes, the Synod decided to continue taking those collections the current year onwards.

**Sabhadinam Collection from the St. Thomas Diocese of Chicago:** Bishop Jacob Angadiath on his own accord offered his willingness to collect as far as possible 1 Dollar per faithful on the *Sabhadinam* and give it to the Curia.

**Special Contributions from the Dioceses:** Bishop Joseph Kallarakatt presented the proposal of a special collection for this year, i.e., a collection of Rs. 1,00,000.00 each from dioceses in Kerala excepting Idukki, Palghat and Thamarassery who would contribute Rs. 50,000.00 each, and from the mission dioceses, Rs. 25,000.00 each, without fixing this amount proposed for the mission dioceses as a strict regulation. The Synod approved the proposal. It was suggested that the collection of this money should be utilized to pay off the Over Draft from the Bank.
Liturgical Research Centre: Fr. Pauly Kannookadan, the Executive Director, presented a short report of the work so far done by LRC during the current year, namely, seminars on Christology of the Syro-Malabar Church, Proclamation of the Word of God in the Life and Mission of the Church and Role and Mission of the Laity in the Syro-Malabar Church, an exhibition and multimedia presentation at NBCLC on the patrimony of our Church, publication of a new book, the Mission Theology of the Syro-Malabar Church, collection of liturgical manuscripts and texts, and institution of an annual Award by name “Syro-Malabar Research Centre Award.” He informed the Synod the new programmes being organized by LRC, namely, the National Research Seminar in Delhi on the Ecclesiastical Mission of the Syro-Malabar Church, publication of a biannual “Thomas Christian Heritage,” and publication of a Directory on Popular Devotions. Archbishop Andrews Thazhath thanked Fr. Pauly Kannookadan for the tireless work he has rendered for executing the work of LRC. The Synod expressed its appreciation of the work done by LRC and congratulated the Board of Directors and the Executive Director on their initiatives and achievements.

Proposals of the Synod for the Re-organization of CBCI: The Synod discussed the measures to be taken to protect the rights and privileges of our Church in the functioning of the CBCI in the backdrop of its reorganization. The Synod emphasized the fact that while respecting the constitutional nature of the CBCI, the principle indicated in the letter of Holy Father John Paul II that the CBCI is a Conference of three individual Churches should be borne in mind when the measures are finalized for the re-organization of the structure of the CBCI. There was a suggestion from the Synod that the members of the CBCI Standing Committee from our Church could meet together and come to some common stand regarding this matter. The Synod authorized the Secretary to write a letter to the CBCI including in it the following points:

1. The Synod agrees to the principle that the Secretariat of the CBCI should be strengthened.
2. There should be the representation of the Archbishops in the Standing Committee.

3. The roles of the President and Vice-Presidents should not be diminished.

4. There should be individual Commissions for supra-ritual matters like Education and Culture, Justice and Peace, Doctrine, and Health Care.

5. There should be a Commission or a co-ordinating body on the CBCI level for the Youth, Laity and Women apostolates in the three individual Churches.

6. The principle of the rotation of the important offices in the CBCI should be respected as far as possible.

7. The final decision on the re-structuring of the CBCI should be taken only in/after the next General Body Meeting of the CBCI.

**Indian Mission Congress:** Bishop Gregory Karotemprel, CMI, briefed the Synod about the programmes of the Indian Mission Congress to be organized in Bombay from 14-18 October 2009. He was of strong opinion that our Church should get sufficient representation in this Mission Congress and the due recognition to the Major Archbishop in the main functions of the Congress.

**Bible Reading in Homes and Institutions During the Days of the October Synod in Rome:** At the suggestion of Bishop Mathew Arackal, the Synod after a short discussion decided to exhort the faithful to read meditatively every day for some time the written Word of God from the Bible from 5th to 26th October, the period in which the Synod in Rome on the theme *the Word of God in the life and mission of the Church* would take place.

**INFAM:** Fr. Joseph Ottaplackal, National President of INFAM briefed the Synod of the activities of INFAM especially for making agriculture a profitable occupation. He said that INFAM had its
units all over the dioceses of Malabar area and that it was taking roots in Idukki, Palai, Kanjirapally. The Bishops suggested that the programme of Zero Budget farming should be profitably conducted in many of our dioceses and that INFAM could take initiative for the re-cultivation of the paddy fields that remained uncultivated for a long period. Archbishop George Valiamattam appreciated the good work done by Fr Joseph Ottoplackal and thanked him on behalf of the Synod.

The Items of the Agenda Carried Over to the Following Synod:
The Moderator announced to the Synod that the remaining items on the agenda and the Synod decided the following items among them to be carried over to the following Synod for discussion.

1. Draft Statutes regarding the Curial Bishop(s).
2. Title for Proto-Syncellus of the Archdiocese Ernakulam-Angamaly
3. Selection of candidates to priesthood and to the congregations of religious sisters – Bishop Thomas Chakiath


The Time-Schedule for the Synod in 2009: The Synod decided to hold the following session of the Synod from 17-28 August 2009.

Press Release: Bishop Thomas Chakiath presented the draft of the press release and the Synod approved it with a few modifications regarding the content and the formulations.

Conclusion of the Synod: In his concluding address, the Major Archbishop thanked Almighty God for His abiding presence during the Synodal Session. He thanked the Bishops for the spirit of communion each one of them had manifested by which the Synod could arrive at clarity of vision regarding many issues that affect our Church and find practical solutions for them. He referred to the sad
events of Orissa where our missionaries and people are undergoing persecution for Christian faith and to the brutal murder of Fr. Thomas Pandipally, CMI, and expressed the solidarity of the Synod with the suffering brothers and sisters. He appealed to the Bishops to exhort the faithful to continue to pray for them and to express their solidarity in all the ways possible. He highlighted the important items on the Agenda that were discussed in the Synod and summed up the achievements of the present Session of the Synod, especially the approval of the liturgical texts for *Vibhooti* and the Holy Week. He thanked everyone who helped in the conduct of the Synod, namely, Bishop George Alencherry, the Secretary of the Synod, the Bishop Moderators, Fr. Antony Kollannur, the Chancellor and the staff of the chancery, Fr. Pauly Kannookadan, the Notary and the residents of the Major Archiepiscopal Curia who made the stay during the Synodal Session very pleasant. Informing the members about the following Synodal Session to be held from 17-28 August 2009 and invoking the blessings of God and the intercession of Mary our mother and St. Thomas our Apostle, the Major Archbishop declared the XVI Synod closed.

The Synodal Session ended with the angelus at 6.00 p.m.

Bp. George Alencherry, Secretary
Synod of Bishops of the Syro-Malabar Church

Fr. Antony Kollannur, Chancellor
Major Archiepiscopal Curia.

Mount St. Thomas
29 Aug. 2008
XVI Synod (2008)  
18-29 August 2008

DECISIONS

1. To appoint a committee with Archbishop Joseph Powathil as Convener, Archbishop Andrews Thazhath, Bishop George Punnakottil, Bishop Gregory Karotemprel and Bishop Jose Porunnedom as members to study the functioning of the synod and present a working paper for evaluation in the following session of the synod.

2. To request the Major Archbishop to give his letter to the Local Bishop stating that the Synod had no objection to proceed with the process of beatification of Fr. Augustine John Ukken, Fr. Antony Thachuparambil, Mar Mathew Makil and Fr. Thomas Poothathil.

3. To establish a procedure for giving the *nihil obstat* from the part of the synod in the case of requests for initiating the beatification processes of saintly persons in the Church and to request the Synodal Committee for Canonical Questions to prepare and present it in the following session of the synod.

4. To entrust the Commission for Liturgy to prepare a liturgical text for the blessing of marriages with non-Christians.

5. To entrust the Commission for Clergy and Institutes of Consecrated Life the task to verify the actual situation regarding the teaching of missiology in all the major seminaries of our Church and to know whether the subject was taught with exposure programmes and to report the findings to the following session of the synod so that a directive may be given to the seminaries, if needed.

6. To request the Major Archbishop to send a pastoral letter to counteract the false teachings of the heretical movements like
Spirit in Jesus, Emperor Emmanuel, and Upper Room after having concluded the juridical procedure and the appropriate action following from it.

7. To take up for study by LRC and subsequent discussion in the Synod the practice of praying the liturgy of the hours of a day starting from the evening of the previous day.

8. To give the response of the Synod in the Media against the unjust attack on the person of Archbishop Joseph Powathil by the General Secretary of the CPI (M), Kerala and to entrust the Committee for the CPI to prepare a statement on behalf of the Synod in this regard.

9. To send letters to the Prime Minister and to the Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh appealing for immediate legal action to bring the culprits of the murder of Fr. Thomas Pandipally, CMI, to the dock and messages of condolence to the Archbishop of Hyderabad, to the CMI Congregation, especially to the Marthoma Province, Chanda and to the relatives of the deceased priest and to entrust the Committee for the Media to prepare a statement on this matter to be given to the Press.

10. To approve the texts of the Holy Week and the text of Vibhooti and to adopt further procedure regarding the promulgation of the liturgical texts in the case of all the texts of the Holy Week and the text of Vibhooti.

11. To fix the time of the celebration of the Easter Liturgy normally at 3.00 a.m. on Easter Sunday and for serious inconveniences, after 3.00 a.m. or even at late hours of Holy Saturday, according to the direction of the Local Hierarch.

12. To entrust the task of preparing the finalized draft of the Liturgy of the Hours, Dedication of Churches, Rededication of
Churches, Blessing of the *Deppa* and, Blessing of Sacred Vessels to the Synodal Committee for Liturgical Texts together with Bishop Joseph Kallarangatt as a newly co-opted member.

13. To authorize the Commission for Liturgy to call forth proposals for improvements regarding the *propria* from the eparchies in the light of which the final text of the *propria* could be prepared by the Synodal Committee for *Propria*.

14. To authorize the Committee for *Propria* to select one set of prayers and hymns of a Sunday from each season for the use of the community on all Sundays of the same season with a view to the better participation of the people, and similarly to set apart, if needed, any prayer of the celebrant too, according to their discretion.

15. To give the mandate to the Central Liturgical Committee to make a detailed study on the suggestions given by the Conference of the Representatives of Priests, excepting the one on mystagogical catechesis, and to present their findings to the following Synod through the Commission for Liturgy.

16. To entrust the study on the question of stipends for concelebration to the Synodal Committee for Canonical Questions who should present their findings in the following Synod for discussion and approval for including them in the particular law of our Church.

17. To entrust the Commission for Clergy and Institutes of Consecrated Life to finalize the syllabus for the minor seminary formation on the basis of the suggestions from the Synod and in consultation with the Rectors of the minor seminaries.

18. To entrust the Commission for Clergy and Institutes of Consecrated Life to conduct the following programmes:

a. An orientation course for the members of the Staff from all the major seminaries on priestly formation taking the orientation from the Charter for Priestly Formation.
b. A conference of Rectors of major and minor Seminaries, both diocesan and religious

c. A conference for the new members of the Staff in the major seminaries.

19. To request the Synodal Commissions for Major Seminaries to ensure academic seriousness in the major seminary formation.

20. To reimburse the expenses incurred by Bishop Gratian Mundadan for his mission as Apostolic Visitor.

21. To entrust the Commission for Liturgy and the Commission for Catechism as a joint effort the task of selecting a chant developing from the naturally evolved tunes of recitation of the liturgical prayers, that exist somewhat in general in our Church, 'fine-tuning' them with the help of the composers of the chants presented in the Synod and receiving the suggestions from a chosen group of priests, who are already known to be doing the recitation in chant form having the appreciation of the liturgical congregations and with the consultation with some representatives of the laity.

22. To give a statement expressing our grief about the sad events in Orissa and to convey sentiments of solidarity from the part of the Synod with the Church in Orissa, in particular with Archbishop Raphael Cheenath.

23. To request the Major Archbishop to create a Commission for the Laity for the better formation and participation of the laity in the Church.

24. To accept the name "Thomas Christian Heritage" for the biannual of LRC.

25. To accept the idea of having a Centre of our Church in New Delhi with a Bishop as its head to co-ordinate the missionary and evangelization work of our Church in North India and to
have the liaison work with the Governmental authorities and the CBCI Centre which could serve also as the office of the Apostolic Visitor who would develop it into a centre of our Church with the support of the whole Church.

26. To request the Synodal Committee for Canonical Questions to prepare a list of provisions of the Common Law that required complementary norms and not yet included in the Particular Law, and to present it in the following Synod.

27. To request the Major Archbishop to give an official interpretation of n. 6.1.1 of the Palliyogam – Procedure Rules after having consulted legal experts.

28. To include the synodal decisions with long-standing relevance as norms of the Particular Law of our Church.

29. To continue the collection on Sabhadinam as One Rupee per faithful to assure a regular income for the expenses of the Curia.

30. To continue taking collections for the Curia from the Shrines and Big Parishes the current year onwards, although in the previous year they were not taken.

31. To approve the proposal of a special collection for this year, i.e., a collection of Rs. 1,00,000.00 each from dioceses in Kerala excepting Idukki, Palghat and Thamarassery who would contribute Rs. 50,000.00 each, and from the mission dioceses, Rs. 25,000.00 each, without fixing this amount proposed for the mission dioceses as a strict regulation.

32. To exhort the faithful to read meditatively every day for some time the written Word of God from the Bible from 5th to 26th October, the period in which the Synod in Rome on the theme the Word of God in the life and mission of the Church would take place.
33. To authorize the Ad hoc Committee for Kunnoth Seminary to function for a term of three years more from this day with the induction of Bishop Joseph Arumachadath and Bishop Joseph Pandarasseril instead of Archbishop Mathew Moolakkatt.

34. To take two measures in consultation with KCBC for the suffering Christians of Orissa, namely to send a delegation from the Church in Kerala to Orissa to express our solidarity with the suffering Christians there and to hold a Press Conference to give to the Media the correct information about the incidents in Orissa.

35. To entrust the Commission for Liturgy to give the guidelines for an integrated celebration of the Holy *Qurbana* with the liturgy of the hours and to give it as a model for all the seminaries of our Church.

36. To authorize Archbishop Joseph Powathil to reprint the book of the liturgy of the hours according to the need of the Church.

37. To entrust the Commission for Catechesis to publish a catechetical text book in English on sex education.

38. To approve the request of the Rectors of the four major seminaries for the additional expenses incurred for the formation of the seminarians to be reimbursed by the dioceses.

39. To approve as a first measure to solve the financial crisis of the Kunnoth Seminary the diverting of the full amount of the dues of the seminarians of Mangalapuzha and Mary Matha, Trichur to Kunnoth Seminary and to request the Seminary Commission for Vadavathoor to examine the seminary accounts and see the possibility of giving similarly to Kunnoth Seminary the dues of the seminarians there.

40. To approve the suggestion that the seminaries of Mangalapuzha and Kottayam should try to advance as much amount as possible as a soft loan to Kunnoth seminary and to collect
funds through mission appeal programmes abroad by Bishop George Alencherry and Bishop Mathew Arackal and by personal correspondence of Bishop Gregory Karotemprel within the country to overcome its financial crisis.

41. To authorize the Secretary of the Synod to write a letter to the CBCI including the suggestions of the Synod regarding the reorganization of the structure of CBCI.

42. To hold the following session of the Synod from 17-28 August 2009.

Bp. George Alencherry, Secretary
Synod of Bishops of the Syro-Malabar Church

Fr. Antony Kollannur, Chancellor
Major Archiepiscopal Curia.

Mount St. Thomas
29 August 2008
CONCLUDING ADDRESS
OF THE MAJOR ARCHBISHOP

My dear brother Archbishops and Bishops,

After two weeks of intense discussions and deliberations we have now reached the successful conclusion of the XVI Synod (2008) of our Church. Let us now raise our hearts in thanksgiving to Almighty God who has guided us through His abiding presence with us during these days, leading us to appropriate solutions to the issues we had taken up for consideration in this Session of our Synod. I am very happy to highlight the fine spirit of communion and brotherly love manifested by each one of you which made it easier to find practical solutions to the many issues we addressed in this Session. I thank every one of you for your co-operation in making our Synodal Session fruitful.

While assembled here we were shocked to hear of the brutal murder of Rev. Fr. Thomas Pandipally, CMI, at Lingampett in Andhra Pradesh where he was rendering commendable service to the people of the area. We had expressed our grief at this gruesome murder, conveyed our condolences to the Archdiocese of Hyderabad where Fr. Thomas Pandipally was serving as a priest, to the CMI Congregation and the bereaved family of the deceased. It is deplorable that the State Government has not yet succeeded in nabbing the culprits. We shall remember Fr. Thomas in our prayers. May his soul rest in peace! The blood of martyrs is the seed of new Christians. The blood shed by Fr. Pandipally, I am sure, will be instrumental for the growth of the Church of Christ in Andhra Pradesh.

Not many days later, we were engulfed with reports of persecutions of Christians in Orissa, burning of our Churches,
institutions and even of burning persons alive! Already the number of causalities has crossed a dozen, as reported in the Media. But I am sure the situation is much grimmer than what is reported in the media. Although we succeeded in getting central intervention, this has not succeeded in stemming the tide of violence and restoring peace in the region. We protested against the inaction of the State Government in restoring peace and communal harmony in Orissa. Today following the direction given from the CBCI we are observing a day of protest against the attack on Christians by closing down our institutions and a day of prayer on 7 September. We shall pray for power from above that alone can protect us and preserve us in our faith especially in the face of persecution. Persecutions are not far away. The message of Christ will certainly meet with opposition. Let us be prepared to face them by deepening our faith. I reiterate here our solidarity with those Christians – priests, religious and lay people who had to flee from their homes and institutions and are seeking shelters in the forest that the Lord who has promised to be with us till the end of times strengthen them and comfort them in this hour of suffering and enable them to witness to their faith heroically as demanded by the Lord.

Besides such persecutions we are called to be vigilant against many groups who through their false teachings destroy the faith of our people and turn them away from the Church. In this Session of the Synod we have decided to take corrective measures against some such groups like the Spirit in Jesus, Emmanuel Emperor, Upper Room, New Age Rosary, etc. I request all of you to be very vigilant against the activities of such groups that are infiltrating into our Catholic communities and leading them astray from true doctrines of the Church.

We are now looking forward to a great event in our Church—the canonization of Blessed Alphonsa on 12 October this year. Let it be an occasion for our Church to proclaim the value of suffering for the sake of Christ which is the touchstone of our faith as manifested
in her life. Besides the other Blessed of our Church, in this session of our Synod we have given the *nihil obstat* for initiating the causes of four more persons of proven holiness, namely, of Mar Mathew Makil, Fr. Thomas Poothathil, Fr. Augustine John Ukken, and Fr. Antony Thachuparambil. I am sure that the initiation of these causes would promote holiness of life among our faithful through the imitation of the virtues of these saintly persons.

During this Synodal Session also, we spent almost two full days for the discussion on the Liturgy. The discussions we had during the sittings helped us greatly in approving some liturgical texts like that of *Vibhoody*, the Holy Week Liturgy and take the discussion on some other texts to the next stage of preparation such as on the Dedication of the Church, Blessing of the Deppa, Rededication of Churches, Blessing of Sacred Vessels, etc. I wish to thank Bishop Paul Chittilapilly, the Chairman of the Major Archiepiscopal Commission for Liturgy and the other Bishop Members and Fr. Pauly Kannoookadan, the Secretary of the Commission for their efforts.

In this Session of the Synod, we were able to elect the *terna* for one diocese, to approve the proposal of the bifurcation of some eparchies and the subsequent erection of new eparchies, and to decide on beginning the process for ecclesiastical provisions for some eparchies. These are quite momentous decisions regarding our Church and we shall pray that the implementation of these decisions may go without any hitch.

We have also carried out the elections of members of the Permanent Synod, Secretary of the Synod, Superior Tribunal, Synodal Commission for Mangalapuzha Seminary, Chairman and Bishop Member of the Board of Directors of the Liturgical Research Centre, Adhoc Committee of Good Shepherd Seminary, Kunnoth. I have also appointed Members of the various Major Archiepiscopal Commissions including that of a new Commission for the Laity whose work I consider is of great importance to the life of our Church.
I take this opportunity to express our heartfelt gratitude to those Bishops and others who have worked hard on these bodies and whose term of office has now expired. I wish the newly designated Members of these bodies every blessing of God in their work.

We had a thorough discussion on our obligation for missionary work and the pastoral care of our migrant faithful of our Church. We were able to come to some concrete proposals on this matter including the erection of new Syro-Malabar eparchies in certain big cities of India where there are a very large number of permanent residents of our faithful.

We discussed the financial problems in our seminaries and especially that of the Good Shepherd Seminary of Kunnath. We hope that with the help of God we will be able to find solutions to these problems without delay.

I would like to express my gratitude in a special way to all those who helped us in the conduct of the Synod, Bishop George Alencherry, the Secretary of the Synod, the Moderators Archbishop Mathew Moolakkatt and Bishops Jacob Manathodath and Lawrence Mukkuzy who have wisely guided the proceedings of this Session of our Synod, Fr. Antony Kollannur, the Chancellor and the Staff of the chancery, Fr. Pauly Kannookadan, the Notary, Fr. Mathew Elappanickal and the fathers, the sisters and their helpers who serve at the Major Archiepiscopal Curia.

The next Synod is scheduled for 17th – 28th August 2009. May Our Lord Jesus Christ, the Word of God whom we commemorate in a special way this year, through the prayers of His Mother Mary and St. Thomas our Apostle, shower his blessings on us so that the work of this session of the Synod bear abundant fruit. With these words I formally declare this Session of the XVIth Synod of the Bishops of the Syro-Malabar Church closed.

Varkey Cardinal Vithayathil
Major Archbishop of the Syro-Malabar Church
Prot. No. 360/2008

ഭവനമായി

നിരക്ക് ചെയ്തിട്ടുള്ള ഉത്തരവ് അബദ്ധത്തിന്റെ
അടയ്ക്കപ്പെട്ട ആവാഴി

നിരക്ക് സാങ്കേതികജീവിതത്തിൽ അവലോകനം വ്യവസ്ഥകൾക്ക്
ഇല്ലാതാകുകയും വിലക്കം തുക്കുകയും വിരിക്കുകയും
നിരക്ക് ആലോകമായ ആഗോളകോർപ്പറേറ്റുകൾ ആവശ്യാവശ്യമായ
മാർഗ്ഗങ്ങൾ ശ്രമിക്കുകയും അഭിമുഖമാലയിൽ;

അനുശീലനങ്ങൾ ആണ് അവലോകനം വ്യവസ്ഥകൾ ഉപയോഗിക്കുക;
ലോക സമ്മേളനത്തിന്റെ ദേശീയമായി മേഖലയിൽ ഒരു ലോകാനുഷ്ഠാനത്തിന്റെ നിലയിലുള്ള പഠിപ്പുകൾ പോലുള്ള തുടക്ക ഉറപ്പുണ്ട്. 

1. അതായതെന്നെയാലും കാർഡ് സമ്മേളനത്തിന്റെ പുതിയ തുടക്കം ഒരു പുതിയ സമ്മേളനത്തിന്റെ നിലയിലുള്ള പഠിപ്പുകൾ പോലുള്ള തുടക്ക ഉറപ്പുണ്ട്. 

2. ലോക സമ്മേളനത്തിന്റെ ദേശീയമായി മേഖലയിൽ ഒരു ലോകാനുഷ്ഠാനത്തിന്റെ നിലയിലുള്ള പഠിപ്പുകൾ പോലുള്ള തുടക്ക ഉറപ്പുണ്ട്. 

അതായതെന്നെയാലും കാർഡ് സമ്മേളനത്തിന്റെ പുതിയ തുടക്കം ഒരു പുതിയ സമ്മേളനത്തിന്റെ നിലയിലുള്ള പഠിപ്പുകൾ പോലുള്ള തുടക്ക ഉറപ്പുണ്ട്.
ജീവിക്കുന്നവരിൽ എന്നു അബദ്ധം അവകാശത്തിൽ യാളും കാലാവധിയെക്കുറിച്ച് ഉറപ്പിക്കുന്നതിനു പക്ഷേ മാനസികവും പ്രചാരവും അതിപ്രധാനതയായതിനാല്‍ അവ മാനസികവും പ്രചാരവും അതിപ്രധാനതയായതിനാല്‍ അവ മാനസികവും പ്രചാരവും അതിപ്രധാനതയായതിനാല്‍ അവ മാനസികവും പ്രചാരവും അതിപ്രധാനതയായതിനാല്‍ അവ മാനസികവും 

2000 ജീവിക്കുന്ന എണ്ണാം സാരാംശത്തിലെ പ്രധാന വ്യാപക വിഷയം മാതൃകയായി സ്പിഷ്ടമായി 

(ജാലികതയെക്കുറിച്ച്) വ്യാപാരം

(ജാലികതയെക്കുറിച്ച്) വ്യാപാരം

(ജാലികതയെക്കുറിച്ച്) വ്യാപാരം

(ജാലികതയെക്കുറിച്ച്) വ്യാപാരം
കത്തോലിക്ക പായുഴ തൈക്കും സൈലിക്കട പൊളിച്ചു പിടിപ്പിച്ച കൊച്ചിലാണ് നായകൻ കോളിയോപ്പ്ലെയോട് മോംഗോള മുഖോതിമാതിവും അവരുടെ മാതാപിതാ മുഖോതിമാതികളുടെ പേരുകൊടുത്തിരിക്കുന്നു. കോളിയോപ്പ് പോലെ മുഖോതിമാതികൾക്ക് തൊട്ടടുത്ത് മുഖോതിരിക്കുകയും സൂചിപ്പിക്കുന്ന മുമ്പിലം നിർദ്ദേശിക്കുമ്പോൾ മുഖോതിമാതികൾക്ക് മുട്ടെങ്ങനെയും മുഖോതിരിക്കുന്നു. അസ്തിഭീക്കിയാകർഷിക്കുന്ന മുഖോതിരിക്കുന്ന നിർദ്ദേശം പോലെ നിർണ്ണയിച്ചു. കോളിയോപ്പ് പോലെ മുഖോതിരിക്കുന്ന മുമ്പിലം നിർദ്ദേശം പോലെയും മുഖോതിരിക്കുന്ന മുമ്പിലം നിർണ്ണയിച്ചു. 

അവന്റെ "അമരാ" മനുഷ്യശാസ്ത്രം ലാഭമായുള്ള വെടിയായ അരാകാൻ പാലനായും അവന്റെ "2008-മലാ" അവന്റെ 23-ആം ക്രമത്തിൽ തൊട്ടടുത്താണ്.

നിരവിഭാഗം അവന്റെ പിന്നാളിനെ നിരവിഭാഗത്തിൽ തൊട്ടടുത്താണ് അവന്റെ അവരാനെ അവന്റെ അവരാനെ.

N.B: അവരാന്റെ അവരാന്റെ അവരാന്റെ അവരാന്റെ അവരാന്റെ അവരാന്റെ അവരാന്റെ അവരാന്റെ.
Prot. No. 360/2008

PASTORAL LETTER

VARKEY CARDINAL VITHAYATHIL, the Major Archbishop of the Syro-Malabar Church, to the Archbishops, Bishops, Priests, Men and Women Religious and Lay Faithful of the Syro-Malabar Church, blessings and peace in our Lord Jesus Christ.

Dearly beloved in the Lord,

On this day of the feast of Dukrana of our father in faith, St. Thomas, let me extend to you all the greetings of Dukrana. A Syro-Malabar Catholic, wherever he is, can think of this day only with gratitude and a sense of honour. It is the sacred remembrance of St. Thomas who having followed the command of his Lord and Master Jesus Christ, sowed the seed of faith in India and enriched it with his own life-blood thus giving it the necessary food and energy for growth. Let us bow our heads before this unique providence of God. So also it is a day when every Syro-Malabar Catholic can sincerely take pride in the fact that he has been blessed to be the part of the succeeding generations of Christians of the first faith proclamation of St. Thomas, "My Lord and My God," as he beheld before his very eyes the wounds on the side of his Master. This is also the fruit of the providence of God.

Therefore, as we celebrate the feast of Dukrana, we shall think of our great responsibilities with regard to our faith-life. In this context, it is specially to be remembered that the theme of the forthcoming General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops to be held in Rome from 5th to 26th October is the 'Word of God in the Life
and Mission of the Church.’ In the providence of God the Good News of the Word of God was given to us right at the very beginning of the Church through the Indian Apostolate of St. Thomas. At the end of twenty centuries now, we have to examine how this light of the Good News is producing its fruit in the life and the particular mission of our Church. When I say at the level of our Church, it has to be understood at the individual level, at the level of the families and that of the various communities.

On this theme, two points I want to place for your careful study.

1. According to the teachings of the Second Vatican Council, every individual Church has the right and responsibility of proclaiming the Gospel all over the world in accordance with their particular ecclesial traditions, subject to the guidance of the Holy Father. However, with regard to the Syro-Malabar Church, even after 40 years of the conclusion of the Second Vatican Council there exist many limitations concerning the fulfilment of this responsibility. As the Universal Church is reflecting on the theme of the Word of God in the life and mission of the Church, let us hope that the limitations prevailing in this area with regard to the Syro-Malabar Church will be removed.

2. Secondly, we ourselves, the sons and daughters of the Syro-Malabar Church are the missionaries to fulfil this great mission of the Syro-Malabar Church, namely, that of preaching the Gospel to the whole world. Whether we are in India or abroad, every one of us has the serious responsibility of bearing witness to the Word of God by living our lives according to the ecclesial heritage of our faith. In this context, we have to bear in mind that the Word of God is not to be interpreted
according to the whims and fancies of every individual; it is to be interpreted by the authority of the Church. We have to take great care to discern the interpretation of the Gospels in conformity with the sacred traditions of the Church. Because of the limitations imposed upon the mission of the Syro-Malabar Church of providing pastoral care according to her ecclesial traditions, we are unable to give proper guidance and effective help in this area. Therefore we have to ensure the urgent attention and constant vigilance of everyone in this sphere. We have to be extremely careful not to lose through false teachings the deposit of faith which our forefathers have kept up for around 2000 years.

This year as we celebrate the feast of *Dukrana*, I cannot but ponder over a great occasion of joy which Almighty God is bestowing upon the Syro-Malabar Church. On 12th October this year, a daughter of the Syro-Malabar Church will be raised to the rank of a saint. On that day Blessed Alphonsa will be declared saint by the Holy Father. She will be the first woman saint of India. She is going to be the first flower in the garden of the Syro-Malabar Church which was nurtured and nourished by the blood of St. Thomas himself. We shall thank God for this occasion. We shall also pray for the canonisation of the other blesseds from the Syro-Malabar Church. Above all, like Blessed Alphonsa, we shall endeavour to meditate on the word of God in our hearts, practice it in our lives and rise to the heights of sanctity through our heroic life-witnessing to the Word of God.

The feast of *Dukrana* is also celebrated in our Church as the day of the Church, *Sabhadinam*. St. Thomas the Apostle shed his own blood for the growth of this Church. When we celebrate the feast of *Dukrana*, let us examine ourselves to see how much sacrifice
we are prepared to make for our Church. Today our Church faces many challenges both from outside as well as from within. In these moments of crises, we should be ready to think and act with the Church and to defend her even at the cost of great sacrifices. We should detect the enemies of the Church who are acting against the teachings and deeds of the Church. We should not only desist from collaborating with such enemies of the Church, but also, rising above the consideration of temporary gains and personal interests, should work together as one body for the good of the Church.

On the occasion of the Sabhadinam, I want to draw your attention to the decision of the Synod of Bishops held last year to take, as in the previous year, this year also, a collection of at least Rs. 1/person from all the Syro-Malabar faithful for helping the Church to overcome her financial difficulties. Those who can afford to contribute more are welcome to do so. The Church is ours. All her children according to their financial situations have to play an active role in helping in her forward march. In connection with the Sabhadinam, all her children are given an opportunity to extend a helping hand in the financial difficulties of their Church. I wish and hope that all of you will make use of this occasion with a generous heart and come to the aid of the Church.

A word to those Syro-Malabar faithful residing outside the proper territory of the Major Archiepiscopal Church: It is a painful reality that even today our efforts to provide the facilities for adequate pastoral care in our own ecclesial and liturgical traditions to those Syro-Malabar faithful in these areas have not met with considerable success. There is an inexcusable delay in granting our legitimate rights. Although as the head and father of your Church, myself and the entire Episcopal body of our Church have continuously presented our requests to the Holy Father and at the various offices of the
Holy Father in Rome, the progress in this regard is very slow. Nevertheless, we have to continue our legitimate struggle for our legitimate rights, especially through our constant prayers. As we are approaching another feast of Dukrana, let us entrust our Church to the special intercession of St. Thomas, our father in faith. Like St. Thomas, may we also be able to give heroic witness to our faith. Once again wishing you all sincere greetings of the feast of Dukrana, let me invoke the blessings of Almighty upon all of you and bless you, in the name of the Father + and of the Son + and of the Holy Spirit + Amen.

Given at Kakkanad from the Major Archiepiscopal Curia of the Syro-Malabar Church at Mount St Thomas on 23 May 2008.

+Varkey Cardinal Vithayathil
Major Archbishop of the Syro-Malabar Church

N.B: This pastoral letter is to be read out during the Holy Mass on June 29 in all churches and chapels of the Syro-Malabar Church where there is Sunday Mass for the public.
Guidelines for Raising a Religious Congregation to the Major Archiepiscopal Status & for Granting *nihil obstat* for Pontifical Status to a Religious Congregation

According to CCEO c. 506 §3, “A congregation of eparchial right which, within the territorial boundaries of the patriarchal Church, has expanded to several eparchies of the same territory, can become of patriarchal right by a decree of the patriarch, after having consulted those who have an interest and with the consent of the permanent synod.”

Besides this provision, the following guidelines also were approved by the Permanent Synod held from 9.30 a.m. to 12.30 p.m. on Friday, 12 September 2008 in the Major Archiepiscopal Curia at Mount St. Thomas to be considered while raising a Congregation to the Major Archiepiscopal status. These guidelines are being published as instructed by the Permanent Synod. A threefold distinction was made, namely, those applicable to the Congregations of Religious Sisters, to the Clerical Congregations of Men Religious and to the Congregations of Religious Brothers and the criteria applicable to each is given below in that order.

1. **Guidelines for Raising a Religious Congregation to the Major Archiepiscopal Status:**

   A. Number of Professed Members should be at least:

   - 150 for Congregation of Sisters
   - 100 for Clerical Congregations of Men Religious
   - 75 for Congregations of Religious Brothers

   The majority of the professed members should be finally professed. Besides, there should be a satisfactory growth rate for the congregation with respect to the number of
vocations and the profession of members during the previous ten years.

B. Number of Houses should be at least:
   35 for Congregation of Sisters
   25 for Clerical Congregations of Men Religious
   20 for Congregations of Religious Brothers

C. Number of dioceses other than the diocese of origin, in which the Congregation is engaged in the apostolate should be at least:
   10 for Congregation of Sisters
   8 for Clerical Congregations of Men Religious
   5 for Congregations of Religious Brothers

D. Number of canonically erected communities in dioceses other than the diocese of origin should be at least:
   10 for Congregation of Sisters
   8 for Clerical Congregations of Men Religious
   5 for Congregations of Religious Brothers

The number of persons working outside the diocese of origin also has to be considered.

E. The Congregation should have been in existence for at least 25 years before it could be considered for the Major Archiepiscopal Status.

F. The Congregation should have at least one canonical house of formation in a Syro-Malabar Diocese.

G. There should be at least 10 members with Secular Degrees.

H. There should be at least 10 members with ecclesiastical Degrees.

I. There should be sufficient financial stability for the Congregation.
J. The request should be recommended by all the Bishops where the Congregation is engaged in the apostolate. The Congregations are not to collect the recommendations of the Bishops by themselves but only to request the bishops concerned to send their recommendations directly to the Major Archbishop.

2. **Guidelines for granting the nihil obstat for Pontifical Status to a Religious Congregation:**

   a. The congregation should have completed at least 10 years as a Major Archiepiscopel Congregation

   b. There should be a satisfactory growth in all the points of the guidelines for raising a religious congregation to the Major Archiepiscopel Status.
Report of the
Syro-Malabar Commission for Liturgy

September 2007 – August 2008

The Commission is assisted as usual by the Syro Malabar Central Liturgical Committee and hence the report deals also with the deliberations of the Central Liturgical Committee in which the Commission members also participate.

1. Publication of the Psalms

As per the decision of the Synod (XII Synod 2004) the committee consisting Mar Paul Chittilapilly, Mar George Punnakkottil, Mar Joseph Kallarangatt, Mar George Alencherry and Mar Mathew Moolakkatt, Mar Thomas Elavanal with Fr Paul Kalluveettil and the Secretary of the Commission for Liturgy made 11 sittings on the following dates 14 - 15 February 2005 (Ps 1-7); 11 - 13 April 2005 (Ps 8-17); 7 - 9 July 2005(Ps 18-31); 17 – 19 November 2005 (Ps 32-45) 28- 30 March 2006(Ps 46-65) 23 - 25 May 2006 (Ps 66-78), 12-14 July 2006 (Ps 79-97), 11-13 October 2006 (Ps 98-110), 6-8 February 2007 (111 -120), 27-29 March 2007 (Ps 121-150) to study and evaluate the translation of the Psalms prepared by Fr Paul Kalluveettil. The Committee also collected observations from the following experts namely Fr Abraham Pezhkumkattil (Bible), Fr Immanuel Thelly(Syriac), Fr Joseph Thondiparambil (Bible), Fr Charles Pyngott (Syriac), Fr Antony Nariculam (Liturgy) and Fr James Kurianal (Bible). The final draft text was given to the following Malayalam experts namely Prof Kurias Kumbalakuzhy, Prof Mathew Ullakamthara, Sr Vigilia SH, and Fr Cherian Kuniyanthodath and received their corrections. On 12-15 June 2007 the Committee gathered again and incorporated necessary Malayalam corrections and finalized the text to submit to the Synodal Fathers. The Commission has presented the final draft text to the Synodal Fathers of Our Church on 20th
August 2007. The Synod approved the translated text of the Psalms and granted permission for its publication and use in the Church. The Commission has published the text with the Imprimatur of the Major Archbishop for distribution.

2. Meeting of the Synodal Committee for preparing the text of the Holy Week according to the suggestions of the Synod

The Synodal Committee consisting of Mar Paul Chittilapilly (Convener), Mar Thomas Elavanal, Mar Mathew Moolakkatt, Mar Andrews Thazhath, Mar Joseph Perumthottam, Mar Joseph Kallarangatt and Mar Sebastian Adayanthrath met on 8-10 January 2008 and 8-9 June 2008 prepared the two texts of the Holy Week (Text with the liturgy of Hours and Text without the liturgy of Hours) as per the directions of the Synod and finalized to submit to the Synod.

3. Meeting of the Synodal Committee for scrutinizing the language perfection and textual authority of the Liturgical Texts

The Synodal Committee consisting of Mar Paul Chittilapilly (Convener), Mar Thomas Elavanal, Mar Mathew Moolakkatt, Mar Jacob Thoomkuzhy, Mar George Punnakottil, Mar Mathew Anikuzhikattil, Mar Joseph Perumthottam, Mar Sebastian Adayanthrath and Mar Jose Porunnedom met on 7-8 June 2008 scrutinized the language perfection and textual authority of the Liturgical Texts of liturgy of the Profession of the Vows of the Religious the Profession of the Secular Institutes and finalized them.

4. Liturgical Chant

The Syro-Malabar Synod (XV Synod 2007) had decided to introduce a liturgical chant for the whole Church. And the Synod entrusted the task to the Liturgical Commission which could contact experts in music and present three types of chants for the consideration of the Synod. The Synod proposed certain names to which other names could be added whose service might be sought
for this purpose. About the chants to be selected, it was said that they should be distinct in the pronunciation of words, as simple as could be chanted by everybody and with a unique quality suitable for our Church. Accordingly the Commission Contacted Fr Mathew Vellanickal, Fr Amarnad CMI, Fr Jacob Vellian, Fr Thomas Mangatt, Fr Joseph Palackal, CMI, Fr. Paul Poovathamal CMI, Fr. Antony Urulianickal, CMI and received three chants from Fr Mathew Vellanickal & Fr Jacob Vellian; Fr Amarnad CMI and Fr Paul Poovathamal. The commission will present the three chants in the Synod.

5. Liturgical Music

The Synod had decided (XV Synod 2007 Session 2) to publish a liturgical hymnal for Holy Qurbana containing alternate hymns for 1. The Psalms, 2. Zummarar (Pre-Gospel Hymn), 3. Onitha d’ Raze, 4. Sanctus and 5. The Hymn at the time of fraction. It was clarified that the alternate hymns were to be faithful to the content and spirit of the text of the Qurbana. The committee for the scrutiny of liturgical texts was entrusted with the task of approving the hymns of the liturgical hymnal. Local Ordinaries may scrutinize and approve the other devotional hymns used in the eparchies. Accordingly the Commission requested the eparchies to send the alternate hymns for 1. the Psalms, 2. Zummarar (Pre-Gospel Hymn), 3. Onitha d’ Raze, 4. Sanctus and 5. The Hymn at the time of fraction, with the copy right to publish them as well as their tunes. Though the Commission received responses from some of the dioceses, they are not according to the specification requested.


The fourth meeting of the newly constituted Syro-Malabar Central Liturgical Committee began on October 22, 10 AM. The Chairman of the Commission for Liturgy Bp Mar Paul Chittilapilly presided over the meeting. Abp Mar Mathew Moolakkatt and Bp. Mar Thomas Elavanal moderated the discussions by turn. Thirty eight members of the Central Committee participated in the meeting.
1. The Chairman welcomed Fr Raphael Ambadan, and Fr Naiju Thaliyath, the new diocesan representatives of Irinjalakuda and Rajakot respectively to the Committee. He appreciated and thanked Fr Jose Kanamkudam and Fr Joby Kachapilly, the outgoing representatives for their contribution as the members of the Committee.

2. The convener of the Committee presented the report from the suggestions on the second Anaphora submitted by 19 dioceses and tabulated by the special committee.

3. The Central Liturgical Committee discussed the second Anaphora (the order of Mar Theodore) on the basis of the given suggestions of the dioceses and passed the text with certain modifications and a few questions to be decided by the Synod.

7. Central Liturgical Committee Meeting 21 -23 April 2008

The Fifth meeting of the newly constituted Syro–Malabar Central Liturgical Committee held from April 21 to 23 April 2008. The Chairman of the Commission for Liturgy Bp Mar Paul Chittilapilly presided over the meeting by turn. Abp Mar Mathew Moolakkatt and Bp Thomas Elavanal moderated the discussions. Thirty one members of the Central Committee participated in the meeting.

1. The Chairman welcomed Fr Johnson Pazhukunnel, Fr Joice Kaithakkottil, and Fr Sebastian Muthuplackal the new diocesan representatives of Thamarasserry, Ernakulam and Kanjirapilly respectively to the Committee. He appreciated and thanked Fr Remegius Inchananyil, Fr Kuriakose Mampilly and Fr James Chavarapuzha, the outgoing representatives for their contribution as the members of the Committee.

2. Fr Antony Vallavanthara CMI, who died on 12-01-2008, was gratefully remembered and prayed for the repose of his soul.
3. The Committee discussed the general structure of the liturgy of the hours – *Ramsa* and *Lelya* – and passed them with certain modifications.

4. A subcommittee was appointed to help Fr Paul Kalluveettil to prepare the prayers of the Liturgy of the Hours. The members were Fr Jacob Vellian, Fr Thomas Mannooranparmbil, Fr Jose Kochuparambil, Fr Pauly Manniatu, Fr Cherian Kunniyanthodathu and Fr Joice Kaithakkottill. The Secretary of the commission would be the convener.

5. Another committee was appointed for the corrections of the *propria*. The members were Fr Thomas Mannooranparmbil, Fr Mathew Valiamattam, Fr Antony Nariculam, Fr Jose Kochuparambil, Fr Cherian Kunniyanthodathu. The Secretary of the commission would be the convener.

8. Approval Given by the Commission during 2007 -2008

As per the mandate given by the Synod, the Commission for Liturgy had given approval for the following:

1. Gujrati version of the Taksa of the Holy Qurbana prepared by the Diocese of Rajkot (08.10.07)

2. Marathi translation of the Office for the dead (both ordinary version and solemn version prepared by the Diocese of Kalyan (14.11.07).

3. Marathi version of the Taksa of the Holy Qurbana prepared by the Diocese of Kalyan (27.05.08).

9. Solemn Liturgical Celebration at Jamshdedpur during the CBCI Plenary Meeting

The Liturgical Commission had made preparations and arrangements for the solemn Liturgical Celebration during the CBCI Plenary Meeting at Jamshedpur on 18 February 2008 as per the request of the Secretary of the Synod Bishop George Alencherry.
Major Archbishop Varkey Cardinal Vithayathil presided over the Solemn Liturgical celebration. Fr Amarnath CMI and Fr Johny from the diocese of Jamshedpur led the Choir.

10. Conference of the Representatives of the Priests

As per the direction of the Major Archbishop and the Synod to conduct a Conference of the Representatives of the Priests to facilitate healthy interaction among them on liturgy and to arrive at greater understanding on liturgical matters, the Major Archiepiscopal Commission for Clergy and the Major Archiepiscopal Commission for Liturgy organized it. The selection of priests from the dioceses was in the range of 3-7, proportionate to the number of priests in the dioceses.

The conference of the Priests was held from 17th June 2008 Tuesday to 18th June, Wednesday. The program started on Tuesday at 10AM and ended on Wednesday at 1PM. His Beatitude Cardinal Varkey Vithayathil, the Major Archbishop inaugurated the conference. Rev. Dr Antony Nariculam and Rev. Dr Pauly Manniattu presented the papers. The details of the seminar are given in the report of the Commission for Clergy.

11. A Word of Thanks

First of all, the Commission for Liturgy expresses its thanks to God for His loving protection and wise guidance. The Chairman and members of the Commission with the secretariat take this opportunity to place on record our gratitude to the Major Archbishop, Cardinal Varkey Vithayathil, to all the members of the Synod of Bishops, to all members of the Syro-Malabar Central Liturgical Committee and to all the members of the Curia and the whole staff at Mount St. Thomas for their love and concern towards the activities of the Commission for Liturgy.

We sincerely express our gratitude to Archbishop Mar Mathew Moolakatt and Bishop Mar Thomas Elavanal, the Members
of the Commission. Our thanks go to the office staff and accountant of the commission Sr. Nirmala SH. With deep gratitude to all, who helped us in our different activities, the commission for Liturgy presents this report.

Fr Pauly Kannookadan
Secretary

Bishop Paul Chittilapilly
Chairman

Since August 2007 the Syro-Malabar Catechetical Committee held five expert committee meetings, two special committee meetings, and one Catechism Directors meeting. As a result of our work we could publish the catechism text books for Std. XI in Malayalam, Std. VII, VIII, & IX in English. The details of the activities are given below:

**Expert Committee meetings**

In order to prepare the drafts of the textbooks for Std. XI & XII the expert committee held five meetings at Mount St. Thomas, Kakkanad. Although the plan was to publish the text books for Std. XI & XII together in 2008, because of the lack of time and considering the difficulties in publishing both textbooks together the Bishops' Commission has decided to publish in 2008 only the textbook for Std. XI. The drafts of the textbook for Std. XI, approved by the experts committee, were sent to the diocesan directors to get their opinions and suggestions for the improvement of these texts. After incorporating the main suggestions from the diocesan centers the texts were presented to the Special Committee of Bishops.

**Special Committee Meeting**

Two Special committee meetings were held in order to discuss and finalize the text book for Std. XI. The first Special Committee of the Bishops was held on 21st & 22nd January 2008. This committee discussed in detail the final draft of the textbook for Std. XI and proposed substantial changes for the draft. Hence they had decided to gather once again after getting incorporated the corrections and suggestions by the bishops. The second Special Committee Meeting of Bishops was held together with the expert committee members and the Diocesan Catechism Directors on 27th & 28th February 2008 at Mount St. Thomas Kakkanad. Seven bishops participated
in it. The main agenda was the approval of the Catechism Textbook for Std. XI. The committee discussed in detail the draft text of the Std. XI and approved the same with some corrections and adaptations.

**Publication of Textbook: Std. XI**

Having incorporated the suggestions and corrections given by the Special Committee of Bishops and having received the permission from the Major Archbishop Cardinal Varkey Vithayathil, the Syro-Malabar Synodal Commission for Catechesis published the textbook for Std. XI on 13th May 2008. On this occasion we extend our sincere thanks to the members of the expert committee, especially to Rev. Fr. Jose Puthiyedath and Sri Shaji Malipara who prepared the draft text for std. XI. We remember with thanks all the members of the expert committee and all others who contributed to the publication of this textbook. This year we have printed forty four thousand copies each for Std. I to IV; forty thousand each for Std. V and VI, thirty five thousand each for Std. VII and VIII; and Thirty five thousand each for Std. IX, X and XI. All the more, we are happy to inform you that, now these texts are used for catechesis in all the Syro-Malabar dioceses of Kerala.

**English Edition of Catechism Text Books**

Together with the publication of the Malayalam textbook for Std. XI, we are happy to inform you that we could also publish the English Edition of the Catechism Text Books for Std. VII, VIII and IX. On this occasion we extend our sincere thanks to all who contributed to the publication of these English edition text books. In a special way we extend our sincere thanks to Sr. Sergius CMC, Dr. Jose Kuttiyanickal, and Prof. Marykutty Thomas who prepared the draft text of these books respectively.

**Kannada Translation**

Another important event in the activities of the SMCC is the publication of the Kannada translation of these textbooks. Last year
we could publish textbooks for Std. V to VI. This year we could also publish the textbook for Std. VII & VIII. On this occasion we extend our sincere thanks to Bp. Lawrence Mukkuzhy, the Bishop of Belthangady and to Fr. Sunny Alappatt the director of the Catechetical Centre, Belthangady for the leadership they took for the publication of these texts. Now they are proceeding with the translation of the textbooks for Std. IX & X.

The Hindi translation

One of the important events in the catechetical history of our Church is the publication of the Hindi Translation of our Catechism Texts. The Catechetical Committee for the North Indian Missions published the Hindi translation of textbooks for Std. V & VI, in June 2007. This year they have published the text books for std. VII & VIII. On this occasion we express our sincere thanks to Bishop Sebastian Vadakel, the Convener of this committee, and all the experts who contributed to the publication of these textbooks.

Our Future Plans

The expert committee meeting held on 22\textsuperscript{nd} and 23\textsuperscript{rd} July at Mount St. Thomas discussed about the future plans. We have decided to prepare and publish the textbook Std. XII. With this purpose in mind we have already started the works for the preparation of the primary draft for std. XII. The preparations for the publication of the English edition of textbooks for the Std. X & XI are also on its track. We have also a plan to publish a final edition of this text book series with all corrections and minor adaptations if needed. We have also planned to have two expert committee meetings on 22 & 23 September and on 11 & 12 November at Mount St. Thomas Kakkanad. Both of them are meant for the discussion on the draft of the textbook for Std. XII. We are also trying to publish this year the teachers guide for Std. VIII, IX & X. We hope to finish everything in time.
Training Program for Resource Team

This year as per the request of the diocesan catechism directors we could organize a training program at Mount St. Thomas Kakkanad on 24th & 15th May 2008, for the catechism resource team members from 10 dioceses. Thirty eight persons participated in this training program. Fr. Jose Puthiyedath, Fr. Jolly Vadakkan, and Sri Shaji Malipara conducted the classes and training programs introducing the text book for Std XI. This training program was a wonderful experience for the participants. They also suggested to organize more training programs for the catechism teachers and resource team in order to update them with new catechetical approaches and methods.

On this occasion, on behalf of the commission we express our hearty thanks to all who cooperated with us in the completion of these works. In a special way we express our sincere thanks to His Beatitude Cardinal Varkey Vithayathil for his whole hearted support and encouragement. We also express our sincere gratitude to all the Bishops of the Synod, especially the Bishops of the Special Catechism Committee, for your words of encouragement and support. Expecting your continued support and requesting your valuable prayers and blessings,

Yours faithfully

Fr. Jose Puthiyedath
Secretary, SMCC

10.08.08
Report of the Commission for the Evangelization and Pastoral Care of the Migrants (CEPCM) 2007-2008

1. Commission Meetings

On the sidelines of the XV Synod (2007) Session 2 of the Bishops of the Syro-Malabar Church, held from the 20th to the 31st of August 2007 the Syro-Malabar Major Archiepiscopal Commission for the Evangelisation and the Pastoral Care of the Migrants (CEPCM) held two meetings at the CEPCM office at Mount St Thomas to evaluate the functioning of the Commission, to plan out the future course of action and specific modes of functioning. Bp Gregory Karotemprel CMI, the Chairman of the Commission presided over the meeting. Both the Bishop members of the Commission, Bp Vijay Anand Nedumpuram CMI and Bp Mathew Vaniakizhakkel VC were present together with Fr Joby Koottumkal, the secretary. There were discussions on the publications of the Commission as well as the seminars of the Mission Policy of the Syro-Malabar Church which were going to be held in two phases in Bhopal and Mount St Thomas in 2007 and 2008 respectively. The details of the pastoral care of the migrants as well as the appointments of the Syro-Malabar priests to various places/countries like UK & Ireland and Australia also were the topics of the discussions.

2. Seminars on the Mission Policy of the Syro-Malabar Church

A. Bhopal

The Synod of bishops of the Syro-Malabar Church that met in August 2007 at Mount St Thomas decided to hold two study seminars on the Mission Policy of the Syro-Malabar Church. It was the first time that a general guiding policy for the Syro-Malabar Mission was formulated and promulgated by the Church on 19th March 2006. The decision of the Synod prompted the Commission for the Evangelisation and the Pastoral Care of the Migrants (CEPCM) to conduct the first study seminar on the mission policy
in Bhopal. The Seminar aimed at making the North Indian Missionary Members of our Church more deeply aware of the missionary call and reminding the other members of the of the Church of the fact that each one is called "to be the salt of the earth and the light of the world" in the concrete situation of our Motherland, India. Hundred and twenty delegates, consisting of the representatives of the ten Mission Dioceses of the Syro-Malabar Church and of the various Institutes of Consecrated Life, both for men and women, together with five Syro-Malabar Missionary Bishops, under the leadership of Mar Gregory Karotemprel CMI, met at Poornodaya, Bhopal on 13th and 14th of November 2007 to study and find ways and means to implement the Document "The Mission Policy of The Syro-Malabar Major Archiepiscopal Church," promulgated by His Beatitude Mar Varkey Cardinal Vithayathil, Major Archbishop of the Syro-Malabar Church.

His Grace Dr Leo Cornelio, the Archbishop of Bhopal, inaugurated the Seminar on 13th of November 2007. A message of the Major Archbishop of the Syro-Malabar Church was read out in the inaugural session. In his message the Cardinal urged all the children of the Syro-Malabar Church to intensify the work of evangelization according to the ritual traditions and policy. Three Papers were presented: (1) The Syro-Malabar Mission Policy: To be the Salt of the Earth and the light of the World by Rev. Dr Joseph Thekkekarott MST (2) Syro-Malabar Missionary Witnessing Thrust and Mission Documents of the Church by Rev. Dr Thomas Kollamparampill CMI and (3) A Panorama of the Present Syro-Malabar Missionary Involvement – A Critical Appraisal by Rev. Dr Jose Palakeel MST.

There was a session for the sharing of the rich experiences of the Syro-Malabar mission dioceses such as Adilabad, Bijnor, Chanda, Gorakhpur, Rajkot, Kalyan, Jagdalpur, Sagar, Satna and Ujjain. During another sharing session on the missionary involvement of the Institutes of Consecrated Life, the Congregations like CMI, VC, MST, MCBS, CST, CMC, FCC, SABS, DST, SD, SH, CHF
and MMB shared their missionary experiences, difficulties and possibilities. Rev. Fr James M.L., Director, Poornodaya, moderated the general discussions on the final day of the seminar. Co-operation among the various mission dioceses, support from the Mother Church, the relation between the Mother Church and the mission dioceses, co-operation among the religious in the mission, missionary vocations, on-going formation of the missionary personnel, creation of provinces for the Syro-Malabar Mission dioceses, organizing programmes for creating missionary consciousness among the laity in the proper territory, developments in the Delhi mission, fund-raising for the mission gatherings etc. were the main topics of the general discussions. There was a well-arranged exhibition on the missionary activities of the Mission dioceses of the Syro-Malabar Church. The participants made the best use of the charts and flex sheets and appreciated the work behind. The seminar ended on 14th November by 4:00 pm with the approval of the Final Statement.

B. Mission Seminar at Mount St Thomas

The Second Seminar on the Mission policy of the Syro-Malabar Church was conducted at Mount St Thomas, the Major Archiepiscopal Curia of the Church, on 5th, 6th and 7th of February 2008 predominantly for the representatives of the 16 Archdioceses/dioceses of the Syro-Malabar Church in South India and that of the various Institutes of Consecrated Life, both for men and women. 222 delegates, including four Archbishops, six Bishops, priests, one representative each from the 10 Syro-Malabar mission dioceses, a good number of sisters and lay faithful participated in the seminar. The seminar tried to analyse the extent of the mission awareness, prevailing in the Mother Church, find out ways and means to promote mission spirit in the Mother Church, ponder over the possibilities to support and sustain the mission dioceses and various mission endeavours taken up by different Institutes of Consecrated Life and to study and implement the Document “The Mission Policy of The Syro-Malabar Major Archiepiscopal Church. His Beatitude
Mar Varkey Vithayathil inaugurated the seminar and the session was presided over by Archbishop Mar Joseph Powathil.


Almost all the dioceses of the Syro-Malabar Church, including the mission dioceses, presented reports that clearly evinced their missionary spirit and enthusiasm during the sharing sessions of the seminar.

A mission exhibition was arranged along the sidelines of the seminar at Mount St Thomas. Almost all the dioceses and Institutes of Consecrated Life in the Syro-Malabar Church prepared on flex sheets a comprehensive presentation of their manifold activities in the mission field.

Suggestions of the Seminar

The representatives, after the presentation of all the papers and reports, had group discussions. The significant suggestions of the discussions are given below.

a. Establish a Mission Secretariat at Mount St Thomas with all the facilities so as to collect, store and transfer the statistics on mission and migrants.

b. Giving importance to mission work, establish a similar set up at the head quarters of all the dioceses with all the necessary facilities and appoint a priest who is efficient and notably interested in the mission work.
c. Establish an archdiocese for all the mission dioceses of the Syro-Malabar Church for their unity and sustained growth. Promote and foster vocations to the mission.

d. Renew the syllabus of the catechism classes, especially the 11th and the 12th standards so as to generate love for the mission in the students. Give opportunities to the visiting missionaries of the parishes to share their missionary experience with the students of the catechism classes. Train the children to pray for the mission and missionaries. Mission League has to be strengthened in the parishes.

e. Mother dioceses, financially sound parishes and various pious organisations may be encouraged to support the mission dioceses and endeavours through prayer, financial assistance etc. They may send priests and religious to the mission areas for a fixed period of time. The bishops from the Mother dioceses must visit the mission dioceses whenever it is possible so as to enhance mutual co-operation.

f. Organize seminars and exhibitions that foster the missionary awareness among the faithful in the diocesan, forane and parish levels.

g. Arrange parish mission meet, for the Syro-Malabar missionary personnel, working in the Latin dioceses.

h. Create missionary consciousness in the Mother Church through the means of communication like Catholic magazines, news papers, TV, radio, CDs, websites, e-mail etc.

i. Train and send lay faithful to the mission fields, taking into consideration the importance of laity in the mission work.

j. Ensure the co-operation and support of the migrants of the Syro-Malabar Church for mission work as they have a unique role to play in the modern circumstances of the mission work.

k. Realize that the term ‘proper territory’ is unjust and stop using it in further discussions and documents.
The Seminar’s Evaluation of the Mission Context

a. The mission context in India offers both challenges and opportunities for the work of evangelisation of the missionaries of the Syro-Malabar Church.

b. Join hands with the residents of the mission area in language and food habits.

c. In matters related to social and religious aspects of the mission area, the missionaries should work in the forefront with justice and virtue.

d. Life witness, personal holiness, attitude for reconciliation, friendliness and tolerance should be the basic virtues of the missionaries.

e. Handle provocations with Christian spirit.

f. Inform Mother Church and dioceses of the tensions and problems of the mission areas without delay.

g. Make use of the popular media like dance, drama, music, cinema etc. for the effective work of evangelisation.

h. Encourage inter-religious dialogue in mission and foster tolerance among religions.

i. Support the efforts for obtaining reservation for the Dalit Christians.

Important Points of the Final Statement

a. The seminar emphasizes its concern regarding the dangers of religious relativism and possible dilution of faith in Jesus Christ, and affirms unequivocally that we Christians have no other way, truth and life without or besides Jesus Christ the Lord and we proclaim Jesus as the only Saviour and Mediator between God and man.

b. The seminar very strongly states that all India jurisdiction for the Syro-Malabar Church is not a concession or a favour, but
our just and natural right. The Syro-Malabar Synod is duty-bound to take necessary steps to get these unjust and unchristian restrictions removed.

c. The mission seminar assembly earnestly requests the Synod of the Syro-Malabar Church to take immediate steps to obtain for the migrants their ecclesial birth right to pastoral care in their own Rite and ecclesial tradition.

d. To provide adequate pastoral care for our migrants in our own Rite and ecclesial tradition different bishops may be appointed with jurisdictional power over the migrants wherever necessary, especially all over India, in the Gulf countries and in Europe and UK.

e. Occasional gatherings of the Syro-Malabar missionaries working in the sister churches may be organized by their (Syro-Malabar) home dioceses to inculcate in them interest and appreciation for their mother church.

f. In the context of our mission in India, we feel that proclamation of the Good News through loving and caring Christian presence - through being rather than actions - would be more judicious and effective. At the same time, no one shall forget the responsibility for direct proclamation wherever the situation is conducive for it.

g. As India is land of many cultures, the specific modes of inculturation should organically evolve from the living context of the people. Hence, *incarnation* of the Good News in the context is to be considered an urgent need for effective evangelization.

h. The CEPCM should make proper arrangements for raising funds for mission from our faithful (almost 9,00,000 families) and institutions, perhaps in the model of German Missio. It will also create an improved missionary consciousness in the faithful. The Syro-Malabar Mission Sunday collection should
be made effective and the funds be utilized for the promotion of the Syro-Malabar mission.

i. The vocations from the Mother Church should be directed primarily to the Syro-Malabar mission dioceses and the Institutes of Consecrated Life.

j. Since Laity’s role in evangelization is vital, we need to train lay evangelizers and use their talents and resources as co-workers in both evangelization and pastoral care of the Migrants.

k. The seminar strongly advocates organizing mission exposure programme for the major seminarians and for the members of Mission League and other Church organisations of Kerala.

The seminar ended on 7th February 2008 by 4:00 pm with the approval of the Final Statement.

3. Gulf Meet 2007

The first Gulf Meet of the Syro-Malabar emigrant faithful from various countries of the Gulf area was held in Doha, Qatar on 30th November 2007. Some 200 Syro-Malabar delegates from Saudi Arabia, U.A.E., Sultanate of Oman, Kuwait, Bahrain and Qatar, the six States of the Gulf area attended the Meet along with both the bishops of Gulf area, Bishop Paul Hinder of the Vicariate of Saudi Arabia and Bishop Camillo Ballin of the Vicariate of Kuwait and Bishop Gregory Karotemprel CMI of Rajkot, Chairman of the Synodal Commission for Evangelization and Pastoral Care of Migrants of Syro-Malabar Church (CEPCM). Rev. Fr Cherian Kanjirakkompil, Procurator of the Syro-Malabar Church in Rome, Rev. Fr Joby Koottumkal mst, Secretary to the Commission (CEPCM), Rev. Fr. Tomasito Veneracion OFM Cap, Parish Priest of Doha Catholic Parish, Rev. Fr. Selvaraj Arokiam OFM Cap. Asst. Parish Priest of Doha Catholic Parish and Mr Francis Thekkethala, Coordinator in Kerala also attended the Meet.
The Gulf Meet 2007 was arranged in line with the decisions of the Global Meet 2006 to conduct the Emigrants’ Meet occasionally at the regional level for better results in the Gulf and other areas where Syro-Malabar faithful live in large numbers. The Syro-Malabar Cultural Organization of Qatar voluntarily came forward to conduct such a get-together in Qatar. Office bearers and delegates from the Syro-Malabar Cultural Associations/Fellowships from the GCC States presented their reports on the existing facilities available for them to practise and follow the faith in the Syro-Malabar tradition in their respective countries. The Meet was held in three different sessions.

The Inaugural Session of the Gulf Meet 2007 began when the two bishops from the Gulf area joined the gathering. Mr Clarence Elavathingal, President, SMCA Qatar, welcomed the dignitaries to the Meet. The Gulf Meet 2007 was formally inaugurated by lighting the traditional lamp. Bp Paul Hinder delivered the Presidential Address while Fr Cherian Kanjirakkompil and Fr Tomasito Veneracion Ofm Cap addressed the gathering, felicitating the Gulf Meet 2007. Delegates from the six GCC Countries presented the reports of their respective countries. There were strong suggestions in the reports that the local bishops were providing pastoral care in a limited way and not to the satisfaction of all. Dr Mohan Thomas presented a list of requests, raised in the Interactive Session, to improve the quality of the pastoral care for the consideration of the two bishops.

The list of Requests Presented by Dr Mohan Thomas

1. This meet records our deep gratitude, satisfaction and sincerest thanks to Bp. Cammilllo Ballin and Bp Paul Hinder.

2. There are some common and country wise observations reflected at the meet. They are the following:

a) Bishops of Vicariate of Arabia and Kuwait to appoint a Chief Priest Coordinator and six ‘Priest Coordinators for each GCC countries nominated by Cardinal Varkey Vithayathil.
b) Provide Syro Malabar ‘Holy Mass in every country / Emirates on Fridays and Sundays.

c) Provide all sacraments in Syro Malabar rite to all the Syro Malabar faithful.

d) Catechism to be taught in the syllabus provided by the Syro Malabar Synod.

e) Christmas, Easter and St. Thomas day celebrations to be provided in Syro Malabar rite.

f) To provide a Syro Malabar Priest as the spiritual advisor and allow them to use the church premises to conduct their prayer meetings and official programmes.

g) To promote the present Ad hoc Syro Malabar Priest in Qatar to the status of Parish Priest.

h) The Vicariate uses the term “Malayali Catholic Community” in every parish. This is not a rite. Syro Malabar community cannot identify with such terms.

i) To have a detailed discussion for a solution on the pressing issues of the Syro Malabar faithful in Oman and Bahrain and to appoint a commission by Bp. Gregory Karotemprel in consultation with Bp. Paul Hinder.

j) Holy Mass in Syro Malabar Rite on every Fridays and Sundays in all Emirates

k) Catechism in Syro Malabar rite

l) Consent may be taken from Cardinal Varkey Vithayathil before appointing a Syro Malabar Priest in that area.

m) There is a need for three more churches in UAE. The Syro Malabar community is ready to work on the permissions and fund raising for such a project.

3. The most touching picture was narrated by the Syro Malabar faithful from Saudi Arabia. Four delegates who spoke in the meet requested for the following:
a) To obtain official permission and facility to pray and to receive sacraments in their rite.

b) Currently they are having only five masses in a year. The frequency may be increased.

c) Currently there is no confession, but only general absolution. More priests may be provided for confession.

d) Fr. Cherian Kanjirakombil, Procurator designate to Vatican may request to Holy See to get a special permission to appoint a Syro Malabar Priests for the services of the Syro Malabar faithful in Saudi Arabia. All safety requirements will be met by the prayer groups.

e) To authorize the Head of the Prayer Group to issue Status Certificates prior to marriages and to conduct Catechism in the syllabus approved by Syro Malabar Synod.

f) To appoint a separate local coordinator under Mr. Francis Thekkethala to coordinate their matters with Major Archbishop and with Bp. Gregory Karotemprel

g) A request to send a visiting Syro Malabar Priest from Qatar, as they are getting a second priest for Syro Malabar faithful.

h) Requested the Syro Malabar Curia to organize a three day seminar in the first week of August every year for the children and parents of visiting Syro Malabar faithful from GCC countries.

4. As part of the Global meet it was decided to constitute a Global Council for Syro Malabar faithful. A GCC wing was suggested in the following manner:

a) A regional GCC council representing the members is suggested.

b) Two members nominated from the SMCA of Kuwait, Qatar, Bahrain and Oman
c) Four members nominated by the prayer groups from Saudi Arabia. Four members nominated by SMCA, UAE.

d) The Assembly unanimously elected Dr. M. Thomas as the Ad Hoc Chairman of the GCC Regional Council on the proposal by Bp. Gregory Karotemprel and authorized him to formulate the body.

Many of the delegates visited the construction site of the first Syro-Malabar Church in the Gulf. All gathered congratulated the SMCA Qatar, Mr Siby, Chairman of the IDCC and all the faithful for the progress they had achieved in the construction of the church.

A good number of the Syro-Malabar faithful from all over Doha participated in the public meeting in the evening at the premises of the St Thomas Syro-Malabar Church premises where grand traditional reception was accorded to the Bishops and other dignitaries. H.E. Dr George Joseph, the Indian Ambassador to Qatar, was the chief guest of the meeting. He, himself being a member of the Syro-Malabar Church, spoke highly of the Syro-Malabar Church and its glorious tradition and achievements. Mementoes of the Gulf Meet 2007 were presented to the dignitaries. Bp Paul Hinder, Bp Camillo Ballin and Bp Gregory Karotemprel CMI delivered Paternal Address, encouraging the faithful to go forward in true faith and practice. Mr Clarence Elavathingal, President, SMCA Qatar, concluded the public meeting with vote of thanks. With the Holy Qurbana in the evening, the Gulf Meet 2007 came to a beautiful conclusion.

4. Syro-Malabar Global Mission (Malayalam)

It is a journal for the Syro-Malabar emigrants, published from December 2006, as per the suggestions of the Global Meet 2006. It is meant to foster the feeling of oneness among the Syro-Malabar Emigrants as well as to publish reports and events that would shed light into the various activities, successes, failures, difficulties and developments of each centre/place/country where the emigrants live.
Different events and news items from the emigrant areas are collected through e-mail and edited for the purpose of publishing in the *Syro-Malabar Global Mission*. The third issue was published around Easter 2008 with a beautiful exposure of the Gulf Meet 2007 as well as the Seminars on the Mission Policy both in Bhopal and at Mount St Thomas and reports and news from various centres of the Syro-Malabar emigrant faithful.

5. Indian Mission Congress 2009

As a follow up of the Asian Mission Congress held in Thailand in 2006 the CBCI has decided to hold an Indian Mission Congress. Most probably it will be held at the Seminary Compound at Gauregaon in Mumbai in the month of October in 2009. An Organising Committee was formed to monitor the efficient conduct of the Congress. Bp Gregory Karotemprel CMI, Fr Antony Kariyil CMI, National President of the CRI (Priests) and Fr Joby Koottumkal mst, secretary to the CEPCM are the members to the Committee from the Syro-Malabar Church.

The Organising Committee held three meetings from December 2007 to August 2008 in Mumbai while the Executive Committee held two in Bangalore until August 2008. Fr Joby Koottumkal was nominated also to the Executive Committee. He was nominated the joint secretary of both the Committees by His Beatitude Oswald Cardinal Gracias during the second meeting of the Organising Committee on April 29, 2008. Bp Gregory Karotemprel CMI and Fr Joby Koottumkal attended the meetings of the respective committees until August 2008 and presented the proposals in the interest of the Syro-Malabar Church.

6. One-day Seminar for the Children, Youth & Parents from the Gulf

The Gulf Meet 2007 requested the Syro Malabar Major Archiepiscopal Curia to organize a three day seminar in the first week of August every year for the children and their parents from
GCC countries. It was arranged separately for two groups from the Gulf; one on the 1st of August 2008 and the other on the 30th of the same month.

Major Archbishop Mar Varkey Cardinal Vithayathil inaugurated the one-day seminar at Mount St Thomas at 10:00 am on the 1st of August. Bp Mar Gregory Karotemprepl CMI welcomed all the dignitaries and the participants to the seminar. Archbishop Mar Joseph Powathil, Archbishop Mar George Valiyamattam, Bishop Mar George Punnakkottil, Bishop Mar Paul Chittilapilly and Rev. Fr Jose Thachukunnel Ofm Cap., parish priest, Doha, Qatar also were present during the inaugural session on the stage and spoke to the participants of the seminar. Rev. Fr Pauly Kannookadan delivered the vote of thanks.

The four sessions on various topics related to the Syro-Malabar Church were led by Rev. Fr Jose Puthiyedath (*Faith Formation*), Rev. Fr Pauly Kannookadan (*History and Patrimony of the Syro-Malabar Church*), Rev. Fr Jolly Vadakkan, Irinjalakuda (*Media and Value Education*) and Rev. Fr Shaji Sasseril MST (*Missionary Achievements of the Syro-Malabar Church*). In the concluding session Bp Gregory Karotemprepl, Rev. Fr Jose Thachukunnel Ofm. Cap. and Rev. Fr Joby Kootumkal were present on the stage and clarified the doubts of the participants of the seminar. Fr Joby thanked Bp Gregory and the participants for the smooth conduct of the seminar. Mr Sonu Augustine from Doha, Qatar delivered the general vote of thanks. Rev. Fr Mathew Elappanickal, Rev. Fr Antony Kollannur, Rev. Sr Teresitta SH, the other sisters and the staff at Mount St Thomas worked hard in order to arrange the meeting perfectly and most beautifully.

7. **Other Activities**

The Commission has been successful in maintaining an effective correspondence with the emigrants of the Syro-Malabar Church, principally through e-mail. Correspondence is regular with almost
all the centres/places/countries of the Syro-Malabar emigrants. The Commission has a plan to organize an All India Syro-Malabar Migrants’ Meet by the beginning of the year 2009 in Bangalore. Letters are sent to all the concerned parties in order to gather suggestions.

8. Conclusion

The Commission for the Evangelisation and the Pastoral Care of the Migrants (CEPCM) has been blessed abundantly by God through out the year 2007-2008. The impact that the Global Meet 2006, Gulf Meet 2007 and the two Seminars on the Mission Policy of the Syro-Malabar Church together have created in the Church is enormous and beyond one’s imagination. The seminars on the Mission Policy have generated a renewed mission spirit and deep mission awareness and enthusiasm in the Church. We are grateful to Bishops Mar Vijay Anand Nedumpuram CMI and Mar Mathew Vaniakizhakkel VC as well for their co-operation as Bishop members of the Commission. We also make use of this opportunity to express our sincere thanks to Mar Varkey Cardinal Vithayathil, the Major Archbishop of the Syro-Malabar Church, all the members of the Synod of Bishops, members and the staff of Mount St Thomas, the Major Archiepiscopal Curia for the support and encouragement that they have been extending to the Commission.

Bp Gregory Karotemprel CMI Fr Joby Koottumkal MST
Chairman, CEPCM Secretary to CEPCM

Bp Vijay Anand Nedumpuram CMI
Bp Mathew Vaniakizhakkel VC
(Bishop Members of the CEPCM)
Report of the Commission for the Clergy and the Institutes of the Consecrated Life

September 2007 – August 2008

I. Meeting of the Representatives of the priests of the Syro-Malabar Church

As per the direction of the Major Archbishop and the Synod to conduct a Conference of the Representatives of the Priests to facilitate healthy interaction among them on liturgy and to arrive at greater understanding on liturgical matters, the Major Archiepiscopal Commission for Clergy in collaboration with the Major Archiepiscopal Commission for Liturgy organized a conference. The selection of priests from the dioceses was in the range of 3-7, proportionate to the number of priests in the dioceses. The conference of the Priests was from 17th June 2008 Tuesday to 18th June Wednesday. His Beatitude Cardinal Varkey Vithayathil, the Major Archbishop inaugurated the conference. Mar James Pazhayattil, Mar Paul Chittilapilly, Mar Joseph Powathil, Mar Mathew Moolakkatt, Mar Thomas Chakkiath, Bishop Mar Sebastian Adayanthurath presided over on various sessions. Fr Pauly Manniattu and Fr Antony Nariculam presented the papers. The representatives expressed their earnest desire to have unity in the Church. Eighty eight participants consisting 7 bishops and 81 representatives from 16 dioceses of the proper territory and 4 dioceses outside the proper territory participated in the meeting. The following are the suggestions made by them:

a. There should be clarity in the following elements of concelebration of the Holy Qurbana: Intention; Prayers; Vestments of the Concelebrants; Concelebration with the priests of other rites; Concelebration during Marriage blessing or Betrothal.
b. A serious and impartial study on the Holy *Qurbana* should be made regarding the proposed arguments on the theological inconsistencies in the liturgy, linguistic imperfections or inaccuracies, unnecessary repetitions etc.

c. Before revising the text of the Holy *Qurbana* there should be a comparative study of the liturgical texts between the traditions of the same liturgical family and also between the *Anaphorae* of the same tradition. In the revision of the *Qurbana*, make the text as simple as possible without losing the theological depth.

d. The revision of the vestments should be taken into consideration according to the tradition of the church, culture and climate of the place.

e. The liturgical songs should be simple as well as according to the spirit of the Liturgy. Overemphasis for musical instruments should be avoided. Fr Abel’s songs should be given as optional.

f. Encourage mystagogical catechesis in the Church

g. It is to be confirmed that the official manner of celebration of the *Qurbana* is that formula approved in July 2001.

h. We should have a new set of lectionary for our Church. The present set of the readings should be revised and consistency between the readings ensured.

i. Certain experimentation centres for liturgical celebrations should be constituted

j. There should be provisions to incorporate the intentions of the people in the priestly intercessory prayer.

**II. Conference of the Rectors of the Major Seminaries, Superior Generals and General Councilors for Formation of the Institutes of the Consecrated life and Rectors of the Diocesan Minor Seminaries**
As per the direction of the Synod the Commission for Clergy and Institutes of the Consecrated Life had organized a conference of the Rectors of the Major Seminaries, Superior Generals and General Councilors for Formation of the Institutes of the Consecrated life and Rectors of the Diocesan Minor Seminaries. This conference was held at Mount St. Thomas on 10-11 October 2007.

The Agenda of the Conference was as follows:

1. To discuss how to implement the Charter in the Syro-Malabar Seminaries.
2. To discuss a common syllabus for the minor Seminary Formation
3. Other common matters

Bishop Mar James Pazhayattil welcomed the participants. His Beatitude Cardinal Varkey Vithayathil, the Major Archbishop inaugurated the conference. Archbishop Joseph Powathil delivered the talk on the importance and relevance of the Charter for Priestly formation in the Syro-Malabar Church. Rev. Dr Thomas Srampical and Msgr Bosco Puthur explained the contents of the Charter for Priestly Formation. Bishop Thomas Chakiath, Fr Antony Kariyil CMI, and Fr George Madathikandathil moderated the discussions. Fr Kuriakose Puthenmanayil proposed a common syllabus for the minor seminaries. With the vote of thanks the meeting came to an end at 1PM.

Suggestions

The following are the main suggestions put forward by the participants of the meeting in the general and group discussions:

1. There should be a common syllabus for the minor seminaries of the Syro-Malabar Church. It was strongly recommended to start IV year minor seminary course in all dioceses. A committee consisting of Msgr Bosco Puthur, Fr. Antony Kariyil CMI Fr. Kuriakose Puthenmanayil, Fr. Thomas Moolayil,
Fr. Paul Alappatt, Fr. Pauly Kannoorkadan (convener) was nominated to draft a common syllabus and present them for opinion.

2. An orientation course to all major seminary staff members on the priestly formation in the Syro-Malabar Church on the basis of the Charter for Priestly Formation.

3. In the major seminary formation it is strongly suggested to develop academic seriousness.

4. A conference of the diocesan and religious minor and major seminary rectors of the Syro-Malabar Church should be convoked every year.

5. Another conference for the new formators of the major seminaries is also recommended to be convoked every year.

6. Arrange study classes in the diocesan presbyterium on the Charter for Priestly Formation.

III. Golden and Silver Jubilee Meet

The Commission organized a get-together of the eparchial priests of the Syro-Malabar Church celebrating the Golden and Silver Jubilee of their priestly ordination, at Mount St. Thomas from 16-17 (Tuesday & Wednesday) October 2007. Eleven Golden Jubilarians and 17 Silver Jubilarians participated in the meeting. The Gathering was intended:

1. to thank God with the Major Archbishop for the abundant graces given through them for the Church.

2. to share the pastoral and missionary experience of the Jubilarians for the building up of the Church.

3. to appreciate the pastoral ministry of the Jubilarians.

4. to revitalize them in their future priestly ministry.

5. to foster unity in the Church

Mar James Pazhayattil, Chairman of the Clergy Commission, inaugurated the Jubilee Get-together. Msgr Bosco Puthur took a
class for the Jubilarians on the Priestly Life and its present challenges. There followed self-introduction by the participants and the explanation of the general dynamics of the get-together. After supper at 8.00 p.m. and night prayers, there was a session of Sharing Pastoral Experience. On Wednesday 17th November after morning prayers and breakfast there was a session of sharing of Pastoral Experience moderated by Bp Mar Thomas Chakiath. After the coffee break, there was the Solemn Jubilee Eucharistic concelebration presided over by the Major Archbishop. During the homily the Major Archbishop stressed the importance of witness in the priestly life as well as the necessity to foster unity in the Church. There followed a group photo with the Major Archbishop. After dinner the participants gathered in the Conference hall and interacted with the Major Archbishop on recent challenges in the Christian Life. They made an evaluation of the get-together, in which without exception all the participants expressed their happiness about the get-together of both golden and silver Jubilarians. The care and concern they received here at Mount St. Thomas made them aware of the care and concern of the Church towards them. They unanimously proposed that such gatherings will foster unity in the Church.

IV. New Priests’ Meet

The New Priests’ Meet conducted on Wednesday, 23rd January, 2008 at Mount St. Thomas aimed to foster unity in the Church as well as to introduce them to the pastoral and missionary ministry of the Syro Malabar Church. One hundred and twenty newly ordained priests participated in the meeting from 11 dioceses (Thamarasserry, Irinjalakuda, Palakad, Ernakulam, Idukki, Kanjirapilly, Thalasserry, Kalyan, Ujjain, Palai, Kothamangalam) and 8 religious congregations (MCBS, CMI, CMF, CST, MST, La Salette, OFM Cap, SJ).

The Meet started with a prayer led by Sr Nirmala SH, Elsa SH, Ancin SH and Sr Linda SH. Bishop Mar James Pazhayattil
welcomed the new priests. His Beatitude Cardinal Varkey Vithayathil, the Major Archbishop inaugurated the meet lightening the Lamp with Mar James Pazhayattil, Fr Mathew Elapannickal, Fr Antony Kollannur, Sr Teresitta SH, Fr Joseph Powathil Idukki, Fr Mathew Chellamkottu Thalassery, Fr Liju Vargheses OFM.Cap, Fr George Madalkunnel CMI and Fr Pauly Kannookadan. The Major Archbishop then gave an orientation talk. Fr Antony Kollannur, the Chancellor of the Major Archdiocesan Curia congratulated the New Priests. Fr Pauly Kannookadan the secretary of the commission thanked the Major Archbishop and the New Priests. At 11.30 the new priests under the leadership of the Cardinal celebrated the Holy Qurbana. Fr Robin Vattathara Kanjirapilly, Fr James Ponkattil, Fr Kurian Areplackal MST, Fr Sharlo Ezhanikkatt CST were with the Cardinal at the sanctuary for the Holy Qurbana. Bishop Mar James Pazhayattil gave the homily. After the group photo there was the dinner. The Bishop candidate of Muvattupuzha Malankara Diocese Fr Abraham Kakkanatt also joined with them in the refectory.

In the concluding meeting the Major Archbishop gave them gifts and wished them successful pastoral ministry. Fr Shinto from Thalassery as representative of the new priests expressed vote of thanks. They were very much impressed by the gathering under the presidency of the Major Archbishop and Episcopal members of the Commission. The New priests expressed their feeling in the evaluation of the meeting that this helped them to be more aware of their belongingness to the one and same Church in spite of their belonging to particular dioceses or religious congregations, differences in their formation in various seminaries, difference in their pastoral and missionary activities, which they have now undertaken.

V. Survey on the Ministry and Life of the Priests of the Syro–Malabart Church Today

Purpose of the Survey

To know the present situation of the ministry and life of the Diocesan priests of the Syro-Malabar Church
To get feedback to prepare the Directory of the Syro-Malabar Church on the Ministry and life of the priests.

To empower the Priests in their ministry and to enrich them spiritually on the basis of the result of the survey.

The procedure of the survey

As suggested in the Synod held in November 1999 and July 2002, the Commission was taking steps to prepare a definitive text of the Directory on the Ministry and life of Priests. The first draft of the Directory had been sent for discussion among the Eparchial Clergy in April 2000. In the first meeting of the reconstituted Commission at Mount St. Thomas on Friday, 26th August 2004 it was decided to reformulate the draft of the Directory considering the suggestions received from the Eparchies as per the direction of the Synod. The Commission constituted a committee to redraft the directory. In preparation to reformulate the Directory it was decided to conduct a survey under the Guidance of Rev. Dr Paul Paratham, Pune.

a. Resource persons of the Survey

The same committee of the directory was constituted as resource persons to conduct the survey. The members of the committee are

1. Bishop Mar James Pazhayattil (Chairman)
2. Bishop Mar Thomas Chakiath
3. Bishop Mar Lawrance Mukkuzhy
4. Rev. Dr Paul Paratham, Pune
5. Msgr Raphael Thattil, Rector Mary Matha Seminary Thrissur (convener)
6. Rev. Dr Thomas Srampical, Kottayam Seminary,
7. Rev. Dr George Madathikandom, Rector, Kottayam Seminary,
8. Msgr Mathew Vellanickal, Syncellus Changanacherry,
9. Msgr Bosco Puthur, Rector Seminary, Aluva
10. Rev. Dr Antony Nariculam, Seminary Aluva
11. Rev. Msgr Philip Njaralakatt, Syncellus Palai
12. Rev. Dr George Oliapuram, Kothamangalam
13. Rev. Msgr George Njaralakatt, Syncellus, Manathavady
15. Rev. Fr Geo Pulickal, Good Shepherd Major Seminary, Kunnith
16. Rev. Fr. Sebastian Panjikaran, Rector, Minor Semianry Irinjalakuda
17. Fr Pauly Kannookadan (Secretary)

b. Preparation of the Questionnaire

The resource persons selected the areas of the questionnaire on the Ministry and Life of the Priests namely the identity, spirituality, ministry and ongoing formation of the diocesan priests. The questionnaire prepared in collaboration with Fr Paul Parathazham and in consultation with various spheres of the people was sent to all Bishops, Committee members and some of the selected experts and was presented in the XIII Synodal Session (August 2005) and XIV Synodal Session (January 2006). The committee met on 27th April 2006 incorporated the observations of the Synodal fathers and resource persons. The modified version was finalized by the Commission on 30th May 2006 at Mount St. Thomas. A project was sent to the CNEWA for financial help to conduct the survey and it was partially sanctioned. The survey was started in June 2007.

c. Circulation of the Questionnaire: The questionnaires were circulated among the following selected persons:
A. Diocesan Priests

The questionnaires were sent to all the diocesan priests of 26 dioceses of the Syro-Malabar Church in India.

Total Number of questionnaires sent to the Priests
3781

Total Number of questionnaires returned from the Priests
1445

Percentage 38.2%

B. Religious Priests, Sisters, Brothers and Deacons of the Diocesan Syro-Malabar Major Seminaries in Kerala

The questionnaire were sent to all the Major superiors, Councilors, one member each from all the houses of the Institutes of the consecrated life of the Syro-Malabar Church and Deacons of the of the Diocesan Syro-Malabar Major Seminaries in Kerala.

Total Number of questionnaires sent to the above mentioned category - 4040

Total Number of questionnaires returned from above mentioned Category 2286

Percentage 56.58%

C. Lay Faithful

One hundred and fifty questionnaires were sent to all the 13 dioceses of the Proper territory of the Syro-Malabar Church. Each diocese had selected one family unit each from 3 parishes of different nature namely one from the city, another from village and another from a middle class. Fifty Copies were sent to the dioceses of Kalyan, Thucklay, Belthangady and Badravathy. Thirty Copies were sent to the mission dioceses. Later, copies were sent to the Pastoral Council lay members of the dioceses of Changanacherry, Kothamangalam, Irinjalakuda, Trichur and Thalacherry.
Total Number of questionnaires sent to the above mentioned category 3280

Total Number of questionnaires returned from above mentioned Category 1090

**Percentage 33.23%**

**Total Number**

- Total Number of questionnaires sent to the Priests 3781
- Total Number of questionnaires returned from the Priests 1445
- Total Number of questionnaires sent to Religious 4040
- Total Number of questionnaires returned from Religious 2284
- Total Number of questionnaires sent to Laity 3280
- Total Number of questionnaires returned from Laity 1023

**Total** 11101 4752

**Percentage 42.80%**

d. **Scientific way of sorting the questionnaire**

Sr Nirmala SH and Amala SH made data entry of the returned questionnaire. Fr Paul Parathazham presented the interim report of the survey in the 2008 Synodal Session on 20th August 2008.

c. **Publication of the Directory**

The results will be made use to finalize the directory on the Ministry and Life of the priests.

VI. **A common syllabus for the minor seminaries of the Syro-Malabar Church**

A meeting of the committee for a common syllabus for the minor seminaries of the Syro Malabar Church was held at Mount St. Thomas on 23 July 2008, in which all the following members of the committee were present. Msgr Bosco Puthur, Fr. Antony Kariyil CMI, Fr. Kuriakose Puthenmanayil, Fr. Thomas Moolayil, Fr. Paul
Alappatt, Fr. Bosco Puthur and Fr. Pauly Kannookadan. The committee proposed a common syllabus and to send the draft to the Rectors of the Minor Seminaries for their comments, corrections and suggestions.

VIII. Finance

We remember with deep gratitude and appreciation the financial help the Commission for the Clergy and Institutes of Consecrated Life had received from CNEWA for the various programmes of the Commission. May I place on record our gratitude to the Director and to Mr. Thomas Varghese, the Regional Director and to all co – workers and to all benefactors of CNEWA.

IX. A Word of Thanks

The Commission has been striving in a modest way to create an atmosphere of unity in the Syro-Malabar Church especially among the Priests. Through its programs, the commission has been able prepare a venue for priests and religious to come together and deliberate about the challenges of our ministry in an atmosphere of fraternal cordiality and pastoral serenity. The Chairman and members of the Commission with the secretariat take this opportunity to place on record our gratitude to the Major Archbishop, Cardinal Varkey Vithayathil, to all the members of the Synod of Bishops and to all the members of the Curia and the whole staff at Mount St. Thomas for their love and concern towards the activities of the Commission for Liturgy. Our sincere thanks go to the office staff of the commission Sr. Nirmala SH. With deep gratitude to all, especially priests, sisters and staff of Mount St. Thomas who helped us in our different activities, the Commission presents this report.

Fr Pauly Kannookadan  
Secretary

Mar James Pazhayattil  
Chairman

The Syro-Malabar Major Archiepiscopal Commission for Doctrine had three sittings during this period. The commission discussed in detail the following suggestions of the joint meeting of the Syro-Malabar Synod and the members of the consultative body of the Doctrinal Commission held in August 2007.

1. A serious study regarding private revelations is an urgent need.

2. Bible study in small groups must be promoted and make the family-units more lively making it an occasion for Bible study in the presence of priests and sisters or lay people who are properly trained for the same.

3. We should try to discern and integrate the charisms of the laity.

4. Financial motives behind the charismatic movement and in the functioning of certain groups must be studied.

5. In the seminaries students must be taught the principles of interpretation of the Bible and application to life.

6. There is an urgent need to have a healthy interaction between the hierarchy and the leaders of the charismatic movements. The attitude of the official Church towards the charismatic movement shall be such that the positive elements and the fruits from these renewal movements are acknowledged and appreciated, while corrections are given wherever is necessary.

7. We must give more importance to the liturgy of the Word of God and make it an occasion to teach the people correct interpretation of the Scriptures and the Tradition of the Church.
8. The dissident group leaders must be confronted in a meaningful dialogue.

9. There are certain priests behind the dissident groups and it must be taken seriously by the hierarchy.

10. A proper interpretation of priesthood is an urgent need.

11. We should work seriously to form a basic Christian conscience. An ecclesial experience is lacking today.

12. The Doctrinal commission should try to prepare a catechetical leaflets that can be used in the family units to teach people about the current issues of faith and bible interpretation.

13. We must try to give the correct teaching regarding heaven, hell and purgatory.

The Commission found that there is an urgent need of a new catechesis today regarding many topics and that must be done continuously on a long term basis. The commission decided to concentrate on the problem of popular interpretations of the bible. The commission took seriously the findings of the scholars regarding this. Many problems arise because many preachers interpret the bible passage with little scientific knowledge and very little theological background. Very often personal likings and interests unduly enter into biblical interpretation. While accepting the positive contribution of the preachers necessary corrections should be given to them. Since many of the above mentioned suggestions do not come within the range of the Doctrinal Commission alone, we decided to concentrate on the following topics this year. The scholars are now preparing the leaflets.

1. Biblical Interpretation: Basic Principles

2. The Relationship between Jesus Christ and the Word

3. Historico-literal sense and theological-spiritual sense of the Bible
4. Sacred Scripture and Divine Tradition
5. Psychological Problems associated with popular interpretations
6. Charisms and gifts of the Holy Spirit
7. Prayers of the Church and its Importance
8. Life after Death
9. Sins of Ancestors, Curse of Generations
10. Private Revelations

The leaflets prepared by the scholars will be published only after due examination and consultation. We request the support and assistance of all the bishops to give wide publicity to the leaflets and see that they are discussed in detail in family units with seriousness.

Doctrinal Commission wishes to inform the honorable members of the Syro-Malabar Synod regarding the spread of and the harm being done by certain movements like Emmanuel Emperor Covenant Movement, Spirit in Jesus Movement, the Jose Anathanam group, the group led by Devassia Mullakkara etc. and request the Synodal Fathers that definite measures be undertaken to make our people aware of the dangers of these and if needed to ban these people and these movements officially. If required, the Doctrinal Commission shall prepare some case study of each of these movements and present to the Synod.

We would like to inform you also of the New Age Rosary which is being widely distributed among the faithful by a few people of doubtful credentials. Some members of the charismatic group have interpreted this New Age Rosary as a symbol of satanic worship since the symbols engraved on the rosary cross, according to them, are diabolic. Ordinary faithful, as they come to know of this, become totally upset and scrupulous over the fact that they have been using the rosary. Some details regarding this New Age Rosary and its occult implications are already on the website. It is a known fact
that some people are upset because of this New Age Rosary. Even some seminarians have developed scruples because they were wearing this rosary unknowingly.

We thank the Synodal Fathers very sincerely for your support and encouragement.

Bp. Gratian Mundadan CMI
(Chairman, Doctrinal Commission)

Fr. Siby Kurian Pulickal
(Secretary)

Mount St. Thomas
20th August 2008
REPORT OF THE COMMISSION FOR ECUMENISM

The Commission for Ecumenism is constituted to foster an atmosphere of mutual understanding and dialogue leading to true unity among the Churches.

We have identified areas and projects, which carry an identical social and Christian content wherein the different Christian denominations can work together free of inhibitions. I am glad to present here a brief report on the various ecumenical initiatives we could plan and start working together with the other Episcopal Churches.

1. Observance of Ecumenical Prayer Week:-

Ecumenical Prayer Week is observed each year wherein we beseech the Holy Spirit to move the hearts and minds of all who partake of the same Divine Gospel. This prayer week helps to promote abiding unity among followers of Christ. We have sent an English copy of Ecumenical Prayer prepared by CBCI Commission for Ecumenism and have suggested following the text of Propria of Unity Octave.

2. For promoting unity among various Christian denominations:

I. Santhome Ecumenical Centre, Nilackal:

The Nilackal Ecumenical Centre, dedicated to our Father, St. Thomas continues its quest to gather together the different Episcopal Churches with a ‘Marthoma’ history and to erase the mistrust and isolation that exist between the different churches. The Nilackal Ecumenical Trust and centre is 26 years old and looks forward to being a more effective influence in the World. Santhome Ecumenical Centre successfully facilitated many meetings and dialogue. The Centre is holding an elaborate and meaningful celebration of its Silver Jubilee as planned last year. The Nilackal
Ecumenical Committee met several times during the past one year and discussed current issues concerning Ecumenism.

Besides the member Bishops of Non-Catholic Churches, the following Catholic Bishops are Members of the Ecumenical Trust, Nilackal:

1. His Beatitude Baselios Mar Cleemis, Major Archbishop of the Malankara Church
2. His Grace Mar Joseph Powathil, Archbishop Emeritus of Changanacherry
3. His Grace Mar Mathew Moolakkatt, Archbishop of Kottayam
5. His Excellency Mar Mathew Arackal, Bishop of Kanjirapally.
6. Most Rev Joseph Kariyil, Bishop of Punalur
7. Most Rev Joshua Mar Ignathios, Bishop of Mavelikara

His Grace Philipose Mar Chrysostome, Chief Metropolitan of the Marthoma Church is the present Chairman of the Trust. Rt. Rev. Thomas Samuel, Bishop of the C.S.I. Madhya Kerala Diocese is the Secretary and Sri. P.C. Abraham, Padinjarakara is the Treasurer.

II. Ecumenical response to HIV +ve – Asha Kiran at Pampady

AIDS and its socio-human ramifications are not limited to any particular group or sect, but is a universal problem confronting the entire humanity. The Christian response to this tragic development is aimed at the most deserving among the afflicted, namely the children, who for no fault of theirs, find themselves isolated and discriminated against at an age when they should be really moving around freely. An Ecumenical Trust under the name of “ASHA KIRAN” extends rehabilitation and care to HIV +ve children. The Patron of the Trust is H.H. Moran Baselius Marthoma Didimos I,
the Catholicos of the East. Bishop Mathew Arackal is the Chairman and Bishop Rt. Rev. Sam Mathew of CSI Madhya Kerala Diocese and the Safragan Metropolitan of Marthoma Church is the other member. V. Rev. P.C. Yohanan Ramban of the Orthodox Church is the Secretary and Rev. Fr. Mathew Cheruthanicakal, Diocese of Kanjirapally is the Treasurer. The Trust has set up a fully furnished Centre at Velloor near Pampady, for rehabilitation of HIV +ve children with a capacity to care for after 30 children. At present the centre has 10 children. The Centre continues to receive more and more children and the ecumenical team headed by Rev. P.C. Yohanan Ramban is making every effort to provide the best care and support with the active involvement of the community. This is one of the best examples of Christian ecumenism, in real action.

An important issue to be addressed is the recent controversy about admitting HIV +ve children in the local schools. After a long feud and court actions, the children have been admitted to schools in Trichur managed by Catholic Archdiocese of Trichur.

III. Joint Ecumenical Commission on Environment and Ecology.

The Ecumenical Joint Commission on Environment and Ecology is a united movement of the Christian Churches to disseminate the message of a healthy environment for a vibrant and sustainable humanity. The Joint Commission concentrates on building up a deeper awareness and positive attitudes among the community members, on the sacred relation of humanity and ecology. “Green Parish” and “Green School” awards are given every year to institutions, which contribute significantly to development of environment consciousness.

IV. Ecumenical Conventions and Dialogue:

To foster Ecumenical interactions Conventions were held in various places such as Mundakayam, Ranni, Kottayam etc. All these places have good populations of faithful from different Episcopal Churches and are prime centres for ecumenical activities. The
conventions were attended by a large group of people representing all the Episcopal Churches. The Chairman of the Commission had a one-day dialogue with Marthoma Metropolitan Bishop Mar Athanasius on June 16th and they visited Kurisumala Ashram, Wagamon. The Ecumenical meeting for Priests was conducted on March 4th at Chingavanam

V. Directives for Inter-Church Marriage and Ecumenical Dialogue:

Last year we had circulated the draft of the directives for inter-Church Marriage and Ecumenical Dialogue. We are still waiting for comments and suggestions on the text of the above matter.

Conclusion

The Syro-Malabar Synodal Commission for Ecumenism has made some important strides in its attempts to develop a spirit of true unity and mutual understanding among the major Episcopal Churches. Our thrust has been to identify mutually acceptable areas of concern and collaboration, which has a direct bearing and beneficial influence upon humanity at large. Such a co-operation for the common cause, will pave the way for deeper unity and broader understanding of faith, historical events and developments surrounding every denomination. The Commission for Ecumenism achieves its real meaning and content when we are able to integrate ourselves with this objective.

Mar Joseph Perumthottam  Abp. of Changanacherry
Mar Mathew Arackal  Bishop of Kanjirapally
Mar Sebastian Adayanthrath  Aux. Bishop of Ernakulam
Report of the Syro-Malabar Liturgical Research Centre

September 2007 – August 2008

The activities of the LRC are categorized into the following four realms: 1) Research Seminars 2) LRC Publications 3) Library and Documentation Centre and 4) St. Thomas Christian Museum 5) Research Activities.

I. Research Seminars

1. Seminar on the Christology of the Syro-Malabar Church 18-20 December 2007 at Mount St. Thomas

The 31st seminar under the auspices of the Liturgical Research Centre on the Christology of the Syro-Malabar Church was conducted on 18th December, Tuesday and ended on 20th December, Thursday. The seminar was inaugurated by Bishop Mar Andrews Thazhath, Chairman of LRC. 70 experts in various fields including Abp. Mar Joseph Powathil, Abp Mar Andrews Thazhath, Bp Mar Joseph Kallarangatt Bp Mar George Alencherry, Bp Mar Joseph Arumachadath, Bp Mar Abraham Mattam, Mar Mathew Annikuzhikattil, participated in the seminar. There were five sessions in the seminar. They are the following:

First Session

Moderator Rev. Dr Mathew Manakatt
Paper - New Testament Christology Rev. Dr Joseph Pamplani
Response Rev. Dr Joseph Thondiparambil

Second Session

Moderator Rev. Fr Adappur SJ.
Paper - Christological Controversies in the Indian Context Rev. Dr Seby Chalakal
Response Rev. Dr Jose Palakkeel
Third Session
Moderator Bishop Mar Joseph Arumachadath
Paper - Liturgical Christology Rev. Dr Jose Kochuparambil
Response Rev. Dr Grace Thomas CMC

Fourth Session
Moderator: Archbishop Mar Joseph Powathil
Paper - Syro-Malabar Christology Bishop Mar George
Alencherry
Response Rev. Dr George Karakunnel

Concluding Session
Presided by Archbishop Mar Andrews Thazhath
Message Bishop Mar Joseph Kallarangatt.

After each paper and response there was one-hour discussion
on them. With the vote of thanks proposed by Fr Jose Kuriedath
CMI the seminar came to an end. The participants appreciated the
seminar. It was suggested that papers could be published with
necessary modifications.

2. Research Seminar on the Proclamation of the word of God
in the life and mission of the church held on 20 – 22 May 2008
at Mount St. Thomas, Kakkanad.

The thirty second research seminar on the Proclamation of
the Word of God in the Life and mission of the Church under the
auspices of the Liturgical Research Centre was held on 20 – 22
May 2008 at Mount St. Thomas, Kakkanad in connection with the
theme of the coming synod of the Bishops in Rome. The inaugural
session began with a prayer invoking the blessings upon the
Elsa S.H and Sr. Ancin S.H. at 5pm. Prayer was followed by a
cordial welcome speech by Fr Pauly Kannookadan Executive
Director, LRC. The inaugural session continued with the inaugural
address by Major Archbishop Mar Varkey Cardinal Vithayathil.
His Beatitude in his inaugural address underlined the importance of the Proclamation of the word of God. Every Christian is expected to receive the Word of God in faith, live it in his every day life and celebrate it in the liturgy of the Eucharist and the Sacraments. By lighting the Lamp His Beatitude formally inaugurated the seminar.

Archbishop Mar Andrews Thazhath, Chairman LRC delivered the presidential address. It was followed by the introductory speech by Bishop Mar Joseph Kallarangatt, Episcopal member LRC. Bishop Mar George Punnakottil presented the paper on Proclamation of the Word of God in the life of the Church for the first session of the seminar.

The second session of the seminar began at 9am. Prof. Dr. L. Legrand presented the paper, The Church responsibility as regards Biblical Interpretation, moderated by Rev. Dr. Mathew Manakatt. Bishop Mar Sebastian Vadakkel moderated the third session. Rev. Dr. Sebastian Kizhakkel presented the paper – The Proclamation of the Word of God and Evangelization for it.

The fourth session of the seminar was commenced by a Panel Discussion on the Pastoral Dimension of the Proclamation of the Word of God. Bishop Mar Sebastian Adayantharath moderated the session while Rev. Dr Vincent Alappatt, Rev. Dr Jose Vadakcedom. Rev. Dr Cyrus Velamparambil and Mr. Ignatius Gonsales presented - Popular Interpretations of the Bible and Misleading Interpretations, The Word of God in the Homiletic Proclamation, The Present Activities to Spread the Message of the Word of God and The Message of the Word of God through Communication Media, respectively.

Rev. Abbot John Kurichiani osb began the fifth session by presenting the paper on The Church, a people of God: Listening to the Word of God in the Christian Faith in the background of Today’s Atheistic and Materialistic Challenges.
The Concluding session was presided over by Archbishop Mar Andrews Thazhath. Chevalier Prof. George Menacherry who is a close collaborator of the LRC was congratulated on his Saptadi during Seminar by Archbishop Mar Andrews Thazhath who adorned him with a Ponnadaa. Bishop Mar A.D. Mattam enriched the participants with his message before Rev. Dr. Jose Kochuparambil gave Vote of Thanks. 120 experts from various fields participated in the seminar.

Suggestions of the Seminar

Proclamation of the Word of God by teaching and preaching

1. Revise the teaching of the Bible in the Seminaries so that the students can answer the questions arising from common people and other sects regarding the Word of God.

2. Publish a Bible handbook

3. There should be centers and even informal gatherings of various groups for learning the Word of God

3. Train the intellectuals to react against the social evils, atheistic and immoral literature.

4. Proclamation should be done in a clear, forceful, confident manner. It is a prophetic function.

5. In the proclamation of the Word of God, the teaching of Fathers should be included.

6. The Church should be vigilant to distinguish the teachings against the Christian message and be made ready to act against them.

7. Give formation to special team to help Christians to face daily problems.

8. Encourage the religious to enter into the field of spreading the Scriptural messages.
9. There should be occasional gatherings of those who have studied the Word of God
10. Make available the Papal Documents for the ordinary people
11. The study of the tradition of each Church also should be fostered to know the unwritten traditions.

Proclamation of the Word of God through Architecture, Art forms, Communication Media, Dance etc.

12. Make available the Bible through internet – audio and video version.
13. Through pictures, art works, stained glass, architecture, poetry, music, drama, Dance and Communication Media spread the Scriptural message in an attractive way.
14. Encourage Sanskrit and foster Sanskrit poems containing Bible messages.
15. Encourage the journalists to edit the news and documentations in accordance with values.
16. Train the journalists according to the Scriptural values. In the Text Book Committee make sure of the Christian presence.
17. Encourage good libraries

Preach the homily on the basis of the Word of God with due preparation

18. The homily must be based on the Word of God
19. Instruct the faithful to prepare for the homily by reading the passage beforehand and to pray for the preacher.
20. Let the preachers take enough time to read, reflect and study the passage for the homily.

Encourage inter religious dialogue and Ecumenism

21. In the Indian background our Church should take initiative for inter religious dialogue and ecumenism.
22. Widen the horizons and encourage inculturation with the view of the mission areas.

**Foster the Proclamation of the Word of God in the Liturgy**

23. The liturgical proclamation of the Word of God should be a treasure for the whole universal Church.

24. Trained persons should read the scriptural readings in the Liturgy

**Witness the word of God in the daily Life**

25. Through pastoral animation and family apostolate deepen the faith, teach the Word of God and foster unity among the Catholics through the co-operation of the religious and laity.

**Venerate the Bible**

26. Honour and Veneration must be accorded the Bible. Bible must be carried most solemnly with lighted candles and incense to the Bema. Sign of the Cross and lighted candles should be accompanied when hearing the Gospel. Let the Bible taken for procession be a precious one with decorations and ornamentations.

27. Distribute the Bible in subsidized price

28. Encourage the recitation of Psalms

29. Prepare a critical and modern translation of the *Peshitta* Bible

**Revise the present Lectionary and formulate new one**

30. Publish a lectionary with the revision of the present readings with inner consistency between readings.

31. Prepare a few more sets of lectionary for the Syro-Malabar Church.

32. Prepare a handbook of the official interpretation and inner consistency of the readings of the Lectionary incorporating the teachings of Fathers.

33. Publish *propria* of the Divine Office for festal celebrations.
3. Research Seminar on Role and mission of the Laity in the Syro- Malabar church on 11th and 12th Friday and Saturday July 2008

The seminar on the Role and mission of the Laity was held at Mount St. Thomas on 11th and 12th Friday and Saturday July 2008. Mar Andrews Thazhath the chairman of the Liturgical Research centre inaugurated the seminar. Then he gave a talk on the juridical dimensions of the role and mission of the laity. Mar Joseph Kallarangatt participated in the inaugural session as chairperson. In his presidential address he highlighted the theme on theological dimensions of the role and mission of the laity. Professor Cyriac Thomas presented the paper on the role and mission of the laity in the Syro-Malabar Church. Justice Sri Kurian Joseph, Mr. V.J. Kurian IAS, Prof. Beena Sebastian, Chevalier Prof. George Menacherry, Prof. K.M. Francis, and Prof. Aniyankunju presented papers on the Christian witness in the Family and Society, the Lay Leadership in National Development, on the role of lay women in the Church, the role of laity in the Cultural and Social sphere, the Lay leadership in Education, the lay leadership in Faith Formation, respectively. Bishop Sebastian Adayanthatrath moderated the session. Participants of the seminar were the selected persons from the Dioceses of the Syro Malabar Church. At the outset Fr Pauly Kannookadan the executive director gave a warm and cordial welcome to the seminar. And Fr Antony Kozhuvanal, member of the Board of Directors of LRC gave the vote of thanks.

Suggestions of the Seminar

1. Lay leadership training should be given to lay faithful on the role of laity in the Church as well as in the nation.

2. There could be a Think Tank and an Executive Team to plan and to implement the role of the laity in the society.

3. Suggestions of the lay leaders should be taken more seriously by the leaders of the church.
4. There should be a scientific data bank in the dioceses and in the central level (Church) about the outstanding experts of various fields in the society. And form a scientific Data bank for it.

5. There should be a planning to co-ordinate the experts who are retired from services and to make use of their available time for the betterment of the church.

6. Form a team of PRO (spoke person) from the think Tank or Executive. And they should have deeper study (and discussions) under an expert leader.

7. There should be a co-ordination of Christian associations in the Synodal level.

8. To form a pastoral council in the central level of the church

9. Form various (unification) associations according to the age group and coordinate their activities.

10. There must be 30% of representations of the women in all the councils and meetings of the church.

11. Form reconciliation councils in various realms with statutes/rules.

12. Give more attention to the pastoral care of the migrants. Try to keep them united with the church. Make use of their ability for the good of the church.

13. Have dialogue with the leaders at the political level.

14. To start a Deemed University under the leadership of the church.

15. To find out the experts who are in the fields of literature and culture. They must be accepted and encouraged by having communication with them from time to time.

16. Organizations/ Institutions run by various Religious Congregations must be brought under the same formulae and attitudes of the church.
17. There must be a better and pleasant relationship between the clergy and the laity. It should be included in the syllabus of the seminary.

18. More responsibilities of the church can be shared with the laity.

19. Encourage the laity to take up the missionary activities according to their individual aptitude and call.

20. Give opportunities to the laity to involve in the common activities with the leaders of the church.

21. Students of 9, 10, 11, 12 classes should be introduced various realms of life and their positive elements and the necessity of their involvement in these realms.

22. Family units should be strengthened.

23. Give formation to a small group who can learn and act about the current issues in the parishes and diocesan level.

24. Make sure that the lay leaders be persons who respect the teachings of the church and practice and receive sacraments.

25. When we think about the laity, take into consideration the persons who lead single life.


The Talk, Exhibition and Multi Media presentation under the auspices of the Liturgical Research Centre on the Two Millennium Christian Presence in India was conducted on 27 - 30 September 2007, at NBCLC, Bangalore in connection with the concluding function of the Ruby Jubilee celebrations of the National Biblical, Catechetical and Liturgical Centre (NBCLC) at Bangalore.

The Exhibition on the theme “Two Millennium Christian Presence in India - The Syro-Malabar Church” was inaugurated by
the Major Archbishop Cardinal Varkey Vithayathil. It was prepared on behalf of LRC by Fr Pauly Kannookadan, Fr Joby Koottungal and the Schoenstatt sisters, Bangalore. More than one thousand visited the Exhibition including the standing committee (all the Archbishops of India) members of the CBCI.

The Talk on Retelling the story of Jesus in the Syro-Malabar church: perspectives & prospects was delivered by Abp Andrews Thazhath. The Multi media Presentation on the Rctelling the story of Jesus through centuries till the present day – presented by Abp Andrews Thazhath, Fr Pauly Kannookadan and Fr Joby Koottungal.

II. LRC Publications

New Book published by LRC


Journal of LRC- Thomas Christian Heritage

The LRC plans to publish a Journal regarding the Liturgy, Theology, Spirituality and the particular canonical traditions of the Syro-Malabar Church by name Thomas Christian Heritage. It will be published in the Seminar at Delhi.

III. Documentation Centre and Library

1. Functioning of the New Documentation Centre attached to the Museum Building.

As per decision of the XIII Synod (August 2005), the Documentation Centre and the Office of LRC started to function in the Museum building.

2. Collection of Ancient Liturgical Books for the Documentation Centre

In this period we have added very good number of ancient liturgical books of our Church to the Library. They are an important
collection of documents for our library and documentation centre. We have added also more volumes of the recent publications to our library.

**IV. St. Thomas Christian Museum**

St. Thomas Christian Museum is an important milestone in the activities of the LRC. Mar Varkey Cardinal Vithayathil, the Major Archbishop, canonically erected St. Thomas Christian Museum on December 15, 2000 and formally inaugurated it on November 10, 2001. The museum is open to the public on all days from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

The following works were already completed during this year.

1. A section of rare books, Early Documents, Ancient manuscripts, Stamps, Coins, Stone inscriptions, Palm leave book and other valuable articles of historical value.

2. Another section of agricultural instruments.

3. Exhibition of the publications of LRC and other publishing agencies.

4. A big drum, used in ancient times for the announcements at royal palaces, temples or Churches and a good collection of rare musical instruments are exhibited in the Museum.

With gratitude we remember the benefactors who have donated valuable articles to the Museum.

**V. Research Activities**

**Preparation of the reference books of the liturgical texts of the Syro-Malabar Church after critical study:** The XIII Synod (August 2005) had decided to give LRC the mandate to make reference books of the liturgical texts of the Syro-Malabar Church after critical study, starting with the text of the Holy *Qurbana*. According to the direction of the Synod the LRC made a consultation meeting of the Experts in Liturgy on 16 August 2006. As per the
decision of the Board of Directors the Chairman of LRC in consultation with the Synod appointed Msgr Jacob Vellian, Fr Paul Kalluvettil and Fr Pauly Maniattu as the research fellows of LRC to make reference book of the Holy Qurbana of the Syro-Malabar Church after a critical study. In the meeting held on 22 August it was decided to invite some of the students in Syriac language to collaborate in this project.

Procedures of the New Project of the Preparation of the reference books of the liturgical texts of the Syro-Malabar Church after critical study.

1. Collect available source materials from India and abroad for research studies namely manuscripts, printed works, monographs, published and unpublished dissertations, internet access to the international libraries, recent publications and periodicals.

2. Publish the classified bibliography on Syro-Malabar Liturgy.

3. Entrust research study to the competent research fellows.

4. Start the research study with the history of the development of our Qurbana

5. Further study on Pastoral Liturgy and possibilities of Inculturation should be fostered

V. Finance

We remember with deep gratitude and appreciation for the financial help the LRC has received from both local and foreign benefactors for the various programmes. We acknowledge with gratitude the reception of the financial subsidy from Missio, Aachen in order to conduct the research seminars. Another of our benefactors is Oeuvre d’Orient of Paris, who gives us annual subsidy. May we place on record our gratitude to the Directors of Missio and Oeuvre d’Orient, all co-workers and to all benefactors for the financial subsidy they give annually for the Museum.
VIII. A Word of Thanks

First of all we thank God for His loving protection and wise guidance. We take this opportunity to place on record our gratitude to the Major Archbishop, Cardinal Varkey Vithayarathil, to all the members of the Synod of Bishops, and to all the members of the Curia and the whole staff at Mount St. Thomas for their love and concern towards the Liturgical Research Centre.

We acknowledge with gratitude the dedicated service of the Board of Directors. Our sincere thanks go to the Office Secretary and accountant of LRC Sr. Amala SH and to the ministerial staff Miss Maya. With deep gratitude to all, who helped us in our different activities, Liturgical Research Centre presents this report.

Fr Pauly Kannookadan                     Archbishop Andrews Thazhath
Executive Director                      Chairman
1. **Tribunal Personnel:** The members of the Ordinary Tribunal are as follows:

1. Rev. Dr. Mathew Kochupurackal - President & Judge
2. Rev. Dr. Jose Chiramel - Vice President & Judge
3. Rev. Dr. Joseph Varanath - Vice President & Judge
4. Rev. Dr. Joseph Pathiyamoola MCBS - Judge
5. Rev. Dr. Varghese Palathingal - Judge
6. Rev. Dr. John Kochupurackal CST - Judge
7. Rev. Dr. Joseph Thoompunkal - Judge
8. Rev. Dr. Joseph Mundakathil - Judge
9. Rev. Dr. Berchmans Kodackal - Judge
10. Rev. Dr. Remigius Inchananiyil - Judge
11. Rev. Dr. Michael Vattappalam - Judge
12. Rev. Dr. Paul Alappatt - Judge
13. Rev. Dr. Thomas Adoppillil - Judge
14. Rev. Dr. James Thalachelloor - Defender of Bond & Substitute Promoter of Justice
15. Rev. Dr. Mani Kuthodiputhenpurayil CST - Defender of Bond & Substitute Promoter of Justice
16. Rev. Fr. Thomas Pulikkan CMI - Notary
17. Rev. Sr. Linta Pulickathadathil SH - Notary
The **Advocates** accredited to the Major Archiepiscopal Tribunal are: (1) Rev. Fr. Jose Nellissery (Emakulam); (2) Rev. Fr. Gregory Naduviledom (Changanacherry), (3) Rev. Dr. Mathew Madathikunnel (Pala); (4) Rev. Dr. Sebastian Thayyil (Pala); (5) Mgr. Joseph Vilangadan (Trichur); (6) Rev. Dr. Raphael Thattil (Trichur); (7) Rev. Fr. Wilson Kannanaikal (Trichur); (8) Rev. Dr. George Kollakombil (Tellicherry); (9) Rev. Fr. Thomas Kalapurackal (Thamarassery); (10) Rev. Fr. Philip Thuruthimattom (CMI); (11) Rev. Dr. Varghese Koluthara (CMI); (12) Rev. Dr. Lawrence P. Thomas (OFM.Cap) and (13) Rev. Dr. Jose Koonamparambil (CMF).

2. **Office**: The Ordinary Tribunal is functioning at the major archiepiscopal curia. Conferences for the members of the Tribunal are conducted every month together with tribunal sittings.

3. **Competence**: This tribunal is competent for all causes as per CCEO canon 1063. This tribunal judges in first instance the causes of the Eparchies of the Syro-Malabar Church within its proper territory as per CCEO canon 1063 §4. This tribunal judges in second and subsequent instances the causes of the tribunals of the Syro-Malabar Church within its proper territory as per CCEO canon 1063 §3. The ordinary tribunal of appeal for this tribunal is the same tribunal as per CCEO canon 1063 §§ 3, 4.

4. **Tribunal Activities**

1. **i) Cases pending at the beginning of the year 2007**
   
   a) First instance
   
   b) Second Instance
   
   c) Third instance

   **Nil**

   **04**

   **01**

2. **ii) Cases newly introduced during the year 2007**

   a) First Instance
   
   b) Second Instance
   
   c) Third and subsequent instances

   **Nil**

   **110**

   **14**

   **Total**

   **129**
iii) Cases introduced in 2007 according to Eparchies

a) Changanacherry 23  
b) Ernakulam 33  
c) Kottayam 19  
d) Tellicherry 13  
e) Trichur 29  
f) Irinjalakuda 02  
g) Kanjirappally 04  
f) Pala 01  
Total 124

iv) Cases decided during 2007

a) In the Second Instance
   i) Decrees of Ratification 99  
   ii) Affirmative Sentence 03  
   iii) Negative Sentence 02  

b) In the Third and Subsequent Instances
   i) Decrees of Ratification 09  
   ii) Affirmative Sentence 04  
   iii) Negative Sentence 01  
Total 118

v) Cases abandoned through renunciation in the II instance

  03
### i) Grounds of Decrees and Sentences given during 2006

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Ground</th>
<th>Decree II Instance</th>
<th>Decree III &amp; subs. instances</th>
<th>Sentence Affirmative at II instance</th>
<th>Sentence Negative at II instance</th>
<th>Sentence Affirmative at III &amp; subs. instance</th>
<th>Sentence Negative at III &amp; subs. instance</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>CCEO c.801 Impotence</td>
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<td>-</td>
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<td>-</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>CCEO c.818,1 Lack of discretion</td>
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<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>CCEO c.818,2 Grave lack of discretion</td>
<td>08</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>09</td>
<td>-</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>CCEO c.818,3 Inability to assume</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>01</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>CCEO c.819 Ignorance</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>CCEO c.820 §2 Error of Quality</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>02</td>
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<td>01</td>
<td>03</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>CCEO c.821 Fraud</td>
<td>15</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>CCEO c.820-822 Fraudulent Error</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>CCEO c.824 Total Simulation</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>CCEO c.824 Intention against Fidei</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>02</td>
<td>18</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>CCEO c.824 Intention against Sacramenti</td>
<td>02</td>
<td>-</td>
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<td>-</td>
<td>02</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>CCEO c.824 Intention against bonum prollis</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>CCEO c.824 Intention against bonum coniugum</td>
<td>02</td>
<td>01</td>
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<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>04</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>CCEO c.825 Force and Fear</td>
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<td>05</td>
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<td>01</td>
<td>25</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>Condition CCEO c.826</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
<td><strong>11</strong></td>
<td><strong>03</strong></td>
<td><strong>04</strong></td>
<td><strong>04</strong></td>
<td><strong>04</strong></td>
<td><strong>126</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
i) Cases pending at the end of the year 2006
a) Second Instance 07
b) ThirdInstance 01
Total 08

Annual Eastern Legal Thought

Under the auspices of the Syro Malabar Major Archiepiscopal Ordinary Tribunal a periodical entitled Eastern Legal Thought on Church law and jurisprudence is published every year since its inception in 2002. The sixth volume of the annual published in 2007 contain seven articles, two decisions of the Major Archiepiscopal Ordinary Tribunal, News and Views and a Book Review. Dr Francis G Morrisey, Dr George Nedungatt, Adv K.C. George, Dr Varghese Palathingal and Dr Francis Eluvathingal are the contributors of the articles.

Seminar for the Tribunal Personnel

The Syro Malabar Major Archiepiscopal Ordinary Tribunal organized its annual seminar for the ministers working in various metropolitan and eparchial tribunals and curia in India from 28 to 30 May 2007. Seventy six persons who hold licentiate or doctorate in Canon Law participated in the seminar. The chief resource person was Prof. Augustine Mendonça from the St. Paul’s University Ottawa, Canada. Rev. Dr. Mathew Kochupurackal, the President of the Tribunal welcomed the participants. The seminar was inaugurated by His Beatitude Mar Varkey Cardinal Vithayathil, the Major Archbishop of the Syro Malabar Church. Mar Andrews Thazhath, the Metropolitan Archbishop of Trichur presided over the inaugural session. The topic of the seminar was: “The Latest Trends in Ecclesiastical Jurisprudence”. The concluding session was presided over by Mar Mathew Moolakatt, the Metropolitan Archbishop of Kottayam. Rev. Dr. Berchmans Kodackal was the convener of the seminar.

Activities of the Lower Tribunals in the Year 2007

There are 16 eparchies in four metropolitan provinces within the proper territory of the Syro Malabar Church. All the four metropolitan provinces have metropolitan tribunals and they function as the tribunals of appeal in the second instance as per c. 1064§1.
The metropolitan tribunal of Kottayam judges cases only of the eparchy of the metropolitan of Kottayam. The eparchies of Belthangady and Thuckalay have single judge tribunals, and the eparchy of Bhadravati has not yet erected a tribunal.

The activities of the eparchial and metropolitan tribunals during the year 2007 are briefly given in the following tables:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CASES PROCESSED BY THE TRIBUNALS OF FIRST INSTANCE DURING THE YEAR 2007</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>No.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
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**Total** | **345 285 205 11 216 40 17 - 1 274 356**
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No.</th>
<th>Metropolitan Tribunals (II instance)</th>
<th>Cases pending</th>
<th>Cases introduced</th>
<th>Decrees of Ratification</th>
<th>Sentences Given</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Cases pending</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Affirmative</td>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Changanacherry</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>42</td>
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<td>9</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Ernakulam</td>
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<td>21</td>
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<td>-</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Tellicherry</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
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<td>30</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Trichur</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>18</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>107</td>
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</table>

Mount St. Thomas  
15.01.2008  
Fr. Mathew Kochupurackal  
President

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Particulars</th>
<th>Receipts 2006-07</th>
<th>Receipts 2007-08</th>
<th>Payments 2007-08</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I. Income &amp; Expenditure</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mission Sunday Collection</td>
<td>259,140</td>
<td>718,000</td>
<td>2,338,821</td>
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<tr>
<td>Administrative Receipts</td>
<td>255,554</td>
<td>1,800,000</td>
<td>121,316</td>
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<tr>
<td>Syro Malabar Sabhadham Collection</td>
<td>774,593</td>
<td>39,100</td>
<td>163,537</td>
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<tr>
<td>Syria and Commission Meetings</td>
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<td>31,223</td>
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<tr>
<td>Agriculture Income</td>
<td></td>
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<td>163,931</td>
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<tr>
<td>Major Tribunal Income</td>
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<td></td>
<td>205,350</td>
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<tr>
<td>Liturgical Research Centre Income</td>
<td>154,330</td>
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<td>205,350</td>
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<tr>
<td>Commission for Liturgy Income</td>
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<td>111,392</td>
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<tr>
<td>Catechism Commission Income</td>
<td>97,215</td>
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<td>Catechism Commission Income</td>
<td>387,396</td>
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<tr>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Amount 1</td>
<td>Amount 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>1,975,079 Administrative Expenses</td>
<td></td>
<td>2,322,655</td>
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<tr>
<td>1,160,724 Synodal &amp; Commission Meetings</td>
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<td>580,380</td>
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<tr>
<td>83,137 Agricultural Expenses</td>
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<td>86,707</td>
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<tr>
<td>130,950 Donations &amp; Charity</td>
<td></td>
<td>22,095</td>
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<tr>
<td>164,306 Major Tribunal Expenses</td>
<td></td>
<td>351,332</td>
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<tr>
<td>51,874 Synodal News Expenses</td>
<td></td>
<td>24,191</td>
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<tr>
<td>298,704 Liturgical Research Centre Expenses</td>
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<td>456,215</td>
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<tr>
<td>Syro Malabar Internet Mission</td>
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<td>54,891</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Sub-Total</strong></td>
<td>4,562,638</td>
<td>3,898,466</td>
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**II. CAPITAL RECEIPTS & INVESTMENTS**

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<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount 1</th>
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<td>1,607,460 Foreign Contribution Received</td>
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<tr>
<td>740,297 Capital Fund &amp; Corpus Donation</td>
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<tr>
<td>560,676 Land Development</td>
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<td>343,647</td>
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<tr>
<td>113,764 Furniture &amp; Equipments</td>
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<td>115,722</td>
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<tr>
<td>218,610 Articles for Museum</td>
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<td>45,434</td>
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<tr>
<td>52,715 Library Books</td>
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<td>5,564</td>
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<tr>
<td>379,200 Vehicle</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Sub-Total</strong></td>
<td>2,347,757</td>
<td>510,367</td>
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### III. CURRENT LIABILITIES & ASSETS

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<tr>
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<td>100,000 Advance Account</td>
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<td>360,000 Advance and Loan</td>
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<tr>
<td>37,075 Sundry Debtors</td>
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<td>327,687 CNEWA - Cochin Office</td>
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<td>2,490,981</td>
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<td>992,514 CNEWA Fund</td>
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<td>992,514</td>
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<td>155,265 Commission for Liturgy</td>
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<td>611,491 Catechetical Centre</td>
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<td><strong>1,780,201</strong></td>
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<td><strong>4,247,940</strong></td>
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### IV. BANK & CASH BALANCES

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<td>40,456 Bank &amp; Cash : Synodal News</td>
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<td>64,239 Bank &amp; Cash : Tribunal</td>
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<td>206,208 Bank &amp; Cash : LRC</td>
<td>323,404</td>
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<td>13,233 Cash In Hand</td>
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**GRAND TOTAL**

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Sd/-
C.J. Romid FCA
Chartered Accountant

Sd/-
Fr. Mathew Elappanikkal
Finance Officer