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DOCUMENTATION

NEWS

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Editorial

It was our promise to publish *Synodal News* after each Synodal assembly. But we failed to keep up that promise. After the last issue (No. 6) two Synodal assemblies were held: from 8 to 22 November at Palarivattam and from 8 to 16 January 1996 in the Vatican. Obviously there was very little time between the two assemblies. Therefore we decided to publish one volume with the documents of both the assemblies. Even so there has been some inevitable delay. We hope that our readers will bear with us.

In this issue we are publishing many important documents. However, owing to some particular reasons, the papers presented in the Synod held in the Vatican will not be published in *Synodal News*. Instead, they will be published as a separate volume which can be ordered from the office of *Synodal News*.

After the sudden and unexpected death of Mar Abraham Kattumannah, the late Pontifical Delegate to the Syro-Malabar Church, the Holy See has invested the Major Archbishop, Cardinal Antony Padiyara, with the same powers, keeping, however, the status quo with regard to the reserved ones. He has been given an assistant also in the person of Mar James Pazhayatil, bishop of Irinjalakuda. We are ever grateful to the Major Archbishop as well as to his assistant for their constant support and encouragement given to us in publishing *Synodal News*. Recently His Eminence Cardinal Padiyara celebrated the 50th anniversary of his sacerdotal ordination. While congratulating him on this occasion we pray that the Lord enable him to guide the Church ever more efficiently.

It is our hope that you, our esteemed readers, will continue to support *Synodal News*.

Editors
FIFTH ASSEMBLY OF THE SECOND SYNOD
OPENING ADDRESS

by
Mar James Pazhayattil

Your Eminence the Major Archbishop, Your Graces, Your Excellencies,

I extend a hearty welcome to all of you to this 5th assembly of the second Synod of Bishops of the Syro-Malabar Major Archiepiscopcal Church of Ernakulam-Angamaly. Mar Gregory Karotemprel and Mar Sebastian Valloppilly are not with us today owing to ill health. Mar Karotemprel had an eye surgery recently. He is convalescing at Rajkot. Let us pray that these fathers may be able to join us soon. I welcome in a special way Mar Mathew Vattakuzhy who was absent at the last assembly after a major surgery. In the same way a special welcome is extended to Msgr. Joseph Kaniyattam, the administrator of Mananthavady. He is attending the sessions with the permission of the Permanent Synod.

As I stand before you today to inaugurate this synodal assembly I cannot but remember that mighty leadership in the person of Mar Abraham Kattumana who was called for his eternal reward on 4 April last. Indeed, Mar Kattumana led our Church very efficiently for the last two years. As he himself told us in his inaugural speech of the last assembly, he carried out all the instructions he was given and even more within the short span of two years. It is no small achievement. But he vanished into the history without waiting for his works to fructify. Now it is our turn to continue the path trodden by him. May his soul rest in peace. Before we start the deliberations we shall have a short prayer service for his repose.

Following the death of Mar Kattumana there was a sort of uncertainty in our Church. We all felt the pang of that uncertainty. Finally we were happy when that uncertainty was removed by permitting the Major Archbishop to take his rightful place even though with the reservation of powers as before. The events that took place after His Eminence the Major Archbishop assumed powers are known to you. The Permanent
Synod was invited to Rome by the Congregation for the Oriental Churches to think about the future course of action in our Church. In that meeting there was a decision to appoint an assistant to the Major Archbishop until the next Major Archbishop takes charge. And as you know, I was appointed Assistant to the Major Archbishop. The faculties and duties of this Assistant are already let known to you. It is expected that the new Major Archbishop will take charge in February 1996.

Then there was a decision to hold a meeting of the Synodal Commission for Liturgy together with two experts representing the two prevalent views regarding liturgy in our Church and the Officials of the Congregation for the Oriental Churches in Rome in mid June. Unfortunately that meeting, though was held in a limited manner, did not take place as it should have been. Under these circumstances another meeting that was proposed by the Congregation for early September was not held.

Another decision of the Permanent Synod was to hold an assembly of the Synod in Rome in January 1996. As you know, a delegation sent by the Congregation for the Oriental Churches was in Kerala to prepare the agenda of this assembly in collaboration with the Commission. Details of their meetings and the items to be included on the agenda have already been communicated to you. The persons to present the position papers on various subjects also are assigned. The drafts of the papers are ready; they will be discussed in this assembly before finalizing them.

Soon after the meeting of the Permanent Synod in Rome came also some of the decisions of the Holy See that brought about certain changes in the hierarchy. Bishop Jacob Thoomkuzhy was transferred to Thamarassery and Msgr. Kaniamattam took charge as administrator in Mananthavady; Trichur and Tellicherry were made Metropolitan Sees and their occupants, Bishops Joseph Kundukulam and George Valiamattam, were raised to the rank and dignity of Metropolitan Archbishops. As you know some of these decisions were wholeheartedly welcomed by the faithful in general while some others were not. There
were allegations and counter allegations in this regard. I do not know how much the allegations were founded. In any case without entering into the right or wrong of those decisions and the way the faithful reacted to them I would say that they created a very unpleasant situation in our Church. The faithful, to a certain extent, with or without reason, have lost their confidence in us. Let us unite to restore the lost confidence of our faithful in their pastors.

The suspicions are to be removed, mutual trust is to be fostered and a proper consensus has to be arrived at on many issues. Our Church has to be full-fledged in all ways at the earliest, being at the service of the people, with a mission thrust and spirit of evangelization, rooted in the tradition, at the same time looking forward with renewal, adaptation and inculturation as envisaged in the Council documents. For this let us work together. May God’s will be done.

In the meantime some informal meetings of the delegates from different categories of our Church have taken place. They were meant to establish a better understanding and harmony in our Church.

In last September I was invited by the Congregation for the Oriental Churches to Rome. I had the opportunity to let the Cardinal Prefect and the officials of the Congregation know of the anxieties and hopes and to realize an objective picture of our Church.

We have completed a lot of work in the past assemblies. But we have yet a long distance to cover. We should have met in Synod in last May. Unfortunately that was cancelled because of the sudden demise of the Pontifical Delegate. In this assembly the agenda is mainly the items that were to be discussed in the May assembly. In addition, as I mentioned before, we have to finalize the draft of the position papers to be presented in the Roman assembly also. The Commission for Liturgy has submitted already a few of the propria of the Divine Liturgy. I am sure that it alone will consume much of our time in this assembly. Then we have the drafts of the particular laws. They were to be discussed in a meeting of the representatives of the eparchial Pastoral and Presbyteral Councils and as well as of the Major Superiors and the representatives
of the Institutes of Consecrated Life. That meeting too has been postponed. However there will be a meeting with the SMRC to discuss various issues related to the consecrated communities in our Church.

Venerable Fathers, may I request on behalf of the Major Archbishop, your co-operation and collaboration in conducting this synodal assembly fruitfully and peacefully. May God bless you all. May Mary, the Mother of Christ and St Thomas, our Father in faith, intercede for us. With these words I declare this assembly of the second Synod of the Syro-Malabar Church open.
**REPORT**

**Introduction**

The fifth assembly of the Second Synod of Bishops of the Syro-Malabar Church was held at Pastoral Orientation Centre, Palarivattam from 6 to 18 November 1995 under the chairmanship of Cardinal Antony Padiyara, the Major Archbishop of the Syro-Malabar Church. On Monday, 6 November at 10.30 a.m. Mar James Pazhayattil, the Major Archiepiscopal Assistant, opened the assembly after the opening prayer-service. In his opening address Mar Pazhayattil welcomed in particular Mar Mathew Vattakuzhy who was absent in the previous assembly and Msgr. Joseph Kaniamattam, the Major Archiepiscopal administrator of Mananthavady, who attended the Synod as observer-participant. Mar Pazhayattil remembered the mighty leadership given by the late Pontifical Delegate, Mar Abraham Kattumana, to the Syro-Malabar Church and praised his achievements. Referring to the sharp difference of opinion among the members of the hierarchy Mar Pazhayattil said that the need of the time was to work in unity and to restore the confidence of the faithful in their pastors.

A recollection led by Fr George Oliapuram, Rector of St Joseph’s Pontifical Seminary, Alwaye, followed the inaugural address. In his talk Fr Oliapuram said that unless the Synodal Fathers learn to become the sons of the Eternal Father and to put Him in their midst they would not be able to sort out the differences among them. He also said that the good of the faithful should be their ultimate aim in everything. The recollection ended at 12.30 p.m. with the adoration of the Blessed Sacrament and an office of the dead for the repose of the late Pontifical Delegate. In the beginning of the second session Mar James Pazhayattil remembered also the late bishop of Chanda, Mar Januarius Palathurthy, and prayed for the repose of his soul.
Sessions

Every day there were four sessions of an average of one hour and a half each, starting at 9.00 a.m. and ending at 6.00 p.m. On the final day the sessions ended at 12.30 p.m. Every day the session began with a prayer followed by the presentation by the Secretary of the minutes of the previous day’s sessions. The minutes were approved by the house. Each day’s sessions ended with a short prayer.

Participants

Besides Mar Antony Padiyara, the Major Archbishop and Mar James Pazarayattil, his assistant, Mar Joseph Kundukulam (Trissur), Mar Joseph Powathil (Changanacherry), Mar George Valiamattam (Tellicherry), Mar Kuriakose Kunnacherry (Kottayam), Mar Jacob Thoomkuzhy (Thamarassery), Mar Joseph Pallikaparampil (Palai), Mar George Punnakottil (Kothamangalam), Mar A.D. Mattam (Satna), Mar John Perumattam (Ujjain), Mar Gratian Mundadan (Bijnor), Mar Dominic Kokkatt (Gorakhpur), Mar Joseph Pastor Neelankavil (Sagar), Mar Paul Chittilapilly (Kalyan), Mar Mathew Vattakuzhy (Kanjirapally), Mar Vijay Anand Nedumpuram (Chanda), Mar Simon Stock Palathara (Jagdalpur), Mar Jacob Manathodath (Aux. Ernakulam) and Mar Joseph Irimpen (Palakkad) were present. Rev Msgr. Joseph Veliyathil, and Rev Msgr. Joseph Kaniyamattam, the Major Archepiscopal Administrators of Palghat and Mananthavady respectively, also participated as observers with the consent of the Permanent Synod. Mar Gregory Karotempreel (Rajkot) and Mar Sebastian Velloppilly (Tellicherry - retired) were absent owing to ill-health. Mar Joseph Powathil, Mar Joseph Pallikaparampil and Mar Mathew Vattakuzhy could not attend the sessions on the first day owing to a threat of road block. Mar Mathew Vattakuzhy, who was convalescing after a major surgery, left the assembly after the first week. Fr Jose Porunnedom, the assistant secretary of the Synod was also present throughout the sessions. Fr Mathew Madathikunnel, the Finance Officer of the Curia, took care of the organisation of the Synod.
The Synodal Fathers were accommodated at Pastoral Orientation Centre where the Synod was held.

**Experts**

Fr Antony Nariculam, Secretary of the Central Liturgical Committee, and Fr Thomas Mannooramparampill were present at two of the sessions in which the proposals for the liturgical texts for the entry into the Great Fast, Holy Week and Christmas were discussed.

**DISCUSSIONS**

The following are the main topics that were discussed or, on which decisions were taken.

**Position papers**

The position papers prepared for presenting in the Synodal assembly to be held in Rome in early January 1996 were discussed and amendments were proposed. The papers were on: 1) *Synodal functioning in the Syro-Malabar Church* (Mar Mathew Vattakuzhy); 2) *Identity of the Syro-Malabar Church* (Mar Joseph Powathil); 3) *Syro-Malabar Church and Ecumenism* (Mar Joseph Powathil); 4) *Liturgy of the Syro-Malabar Church* (Mar Jacob Thoomkuzhy); 5) *Pastoral Care of the Syro-Malabar migrants* (Mar Gregory Karotemprel); 6) *Missions* (Mar Gratian Mundadan); 7) *Clerical formation* (Mar Joseph Pallikaparampil); 8) *Role of the Religious in the Syro-Malabar Church* (Mar James Pazhayattil); and 9) *Formation of the Laity* (Mar Jacob Manathodath).

**New Eparchies at Bhadravathy and Belthangady**

The assembly considered the requests to give its consent for new eparchies at Bhadravathy and Belthangady and discussed at length. As there was a suggestion to constitute a special commission of the Synod to study such requests and recommend the requests, Bishops Joseph Pastor Neelankavil, Paul Chittilapilly and Simon Stock Palathara were entrusted with the task of drafting the statutes of the Commission. The
house, however, decided to take up for discussion the draft at a later stage. At the same time the Synod authorised the hierarchs of the Province of Tellicherry to study the above mentioned requests and present a report to the Synod.

**Congratulations for the Government of Kerala**

The Synod decided to include a reference in the final press release congratulating the government of Kerala for its decision to prohibit the sale of arrack and to recommend the issuing of an ordinance revoking the law to probate the last wills of Christians for their valid execution.

**Common Minor Seminary for Missions**

After evaluating the various aspects of the proposal to found a common minor seminary for the missions the Fathers opted not to do so. Instead the resolution to give more mission orientation in the Seminaries in Kerala and to admit students in the minor Seminaries in Kerala, if Bishops from the missions request for doing so, was adopted.

**Change of date of Syro-Malabar Mission Sunday**

With regard to the earlier proposal to change the date of the Syro-Malabar mission Sunday the Synod decided not to change the date given that a more convenient date is not available.

**Twinnage for mission eparchies**

As a provision for giving more support to the mission eparchies the Synod opted for a twinnage programme as follows:-

- Bijnor : Thamarassery & Mananthavady
- Chanda : Kanjirapally
- Gorakhpur : Ernakulam
- Jagdalpur : Changanacherry
- Kalyan : Trichur, Tellicherry & Palghat
- Rajkot : Kottayam
Sagar : Irinalakuda
Satna : Kothamangalam
Ujjain : Palai

**Full time editor for Mission India**

In conformity with the desire expressed by some of the Fathers a full time editor for *Mission India* will be appointed in consultation with the Syro-Malabar religious Conference (SMRC). The same person will be the editor of the *SYNODAL NEWS* also.

**Request of the Institutes of Religious Brothers for a Common Study House**

The assembly discussed the request of Bro. Joseph Mundumoozhikkara CST, the co-ordinate of the various Congregations of Brothers, to do the necessary for setting up a common study house for the Brothers’ Congregations. However, since the nature of the request was not clear enough the assembly decided to seek more clarification in this matter from the petitioner.

**Reprinting of Taksas & Liturgy of the Hours**

The the non-availability of taksas and the texts of the Liturgy of the Hours was brought to the attention of the assembly. The Major Archiepiscopal Assistant asked the chairman of the Liturgical Commission to make them available as early as possible.

**Statutes of Hermitage**

After a short discussion the Synod decided to hand over the draft statutes of Hermitage prepared by Mar Gregory Karotemprel to the Commission for Particular Law for further study. The Synod permitted also to make use of the same draft, in the meantime, for regulating the life of the Hermit in the eparchy of Rajkot.

**Accounts, internal auditors**

Fr Mathew Madathikunnel, the Finance Officer of the Major
Archiepiscopal Curia, presented the report of the financial administration for the year 1994-95 as well as the list of collections received so far from the eparchies, Institutes of Consecrated Life and eparchial priests.

For the financial administration of the Curia the Synod decided the following: 1) That two internal auditors (one priest and one lay person) are to be appointed by the Major Archbishop to audit the accounts of the Curia on a quarterly basis. 2) In the new curial building construction of the rooms for the bishops within the *territorium proprium* will be financed by the respective eparchies except Palghat; the eparchies outside the *territorium proprium* and Palghat will contribute to this purpose according to their financial capability. 3) A list of prospective donors who can contribute substantial amounts are to be prepared by the Finance Officer in co-operation with the eparchial finance officers. 4) A priest engineer (Fr Joseph Makkothakkatt) and a lay supervisor for the construction of the new curial building are to be appointed. 5) A common circular is to be read out in the Churches requesting the faithful to contribute for the construction. 6) If necessary, an over draft not exceeding one crore rupees may be availed of from bank. 7) The amount collected on the Syro-Malabar Mission Sunday is to be distributed equally among the Syro-Malabar mission eparchies. 8) The office of the proposed “Mission India” will co-ordinate the visit of the bishops or other representatives from the mission eparchies to the other eparchies for mission appeal.

**Dalith question**

The Synod decided to close down the educational institutions run by the Church on 21 November in protest against the policy of the government with regard to the Dalith Christians and to give a press release about it. However, in order that the students may not suffer, the lost working day will be compensated with class on a Saturday.

**Tribunal fee**

As requested by the president of the Finance Council the fees for
the appeal cases in second instance in the Major Archiepiscopal Tribunal was raised to Rs. 600/- per case.

**Evangelization Committee of the CBCI**

The Synod resolved to take necessary steps to reactivate the Committee for Evangelization under the Catholic Bishops’ Conference of India (CBCI). Bishop Gratian Mundadan with the Major Archbishop will represent the Syro-Malabar Church in this Committee. In response to the letter of the President of the Conference of the Catholic Bishops of India - Latin Rite (CCBI) the house decided to propose that a meeting of this Committee be convened after the next CBCI meeting at Trivandrum. The following items may be included on the agenda: 1) Role and potential of the Syro-Malabar Church in the evangelizing activity in India. 2) Urgency of evangelization and possible guidelines for the smooth functioning of all the three Churches in evangelization. 3) Role of the Committee in conscientizing the Latin faithful and hierarchy of the need to share the evangelizing activity with the Oriental Churches. 4) Possibility of reconstituting the evangelization Committee as an inter ecclesial Committee.

**Liturgical Texts for the entry into Great Fast, Holy Week and Christmas**

With regard to the services for the Entry into the great Fast and Holy Week the assembly decided the following:

a) **Entry into the Great Fast**: A penitential service with the signing with ashes may be prepared. It will be integrated with the Divine Liturgy after the Liturgy of the Word. It will be prepared in such a way that the service can be conducted outside Divine Liturgy also. b) **Hosanna**: Blessing of Palms may be made in such way that it can be used together with the Divine Liturgy or outside it. c) **Holy Thursday, Passion Friday and Great Saturday**: The liturgical services for these days are to be in the evening normally but may also be conducted in the morning. d) **Easter service** is to begin with the vigil on Saturday evening.
Committee to study the Propria

In order to streamline the finalization of the text of the Propria of the Divine Liturgy a Committee consisting of the Synodal Commission for Liturgy, Mar George Punnakottil, Mar Jacob Manathodath, Frs Antony Nariculam and Thomas Mannooramparampil was constituted. Only those points on which the members do not come to an agreement will be brought to the Synod for a decision.

Compromise formula for celebrating the Divine Liturgy

While looking for ways to arrive at a convergence of ideas in liturgical matters a compromise formula that the divine liturgy may be celebrated 'until the liturgy of the word facing the people and the rest facing the altar' was suggested by one member. However, no agreement was reached in this matter.

Confidentiality of the Major Archiepiscopal Curia and personal attack in the press

At the request of one of the Fathers the necessity of maintaining the confidentiality of the Curia was brought to the attention of the Synodal members and there was an exchange of ideas in this regard.

Meeting with Malankara Hierarchs

Regarding the proposed meeting with the hierarchs of the Syro-Malankara Church the Synodal Secretary was asked to contact the concerned Bishops and arrange it during the Synod in November 1996, if possible.

Mission Sunday Collection

The Fathers were reminded that the collection taken from the parishes in connection with the Syro-Malabar Mission Sunday should reach the Major Archiepiscopal Curia before 30th May 1996.
Second Assembly in 1996

The second assembly in 1996 will be held from Monday, 28th October to Friday 15th November. There will not be sessions on 2 November.

Conclusion

The assembly ended at 12.30 p.m. on 18th November 1995 with the vote of thanks by the Major Archbishop and his assistant. The Major Archbishop said that the people were expecting an agreement in liturgical matters, but he was sorry that it was not achieved. In his brief address the Major Archiepiscopal Assistant thanked all the Synodal members for their active participation and sincere collaboration.
DECISIONS

1. To write to the Government of Kerala congratulating it on the step taken to prohibit the sale of arrack in Kerala from 1 April 1996 and for passing an ordinance revoking the law requiring that the last wills of Christians be probated to have legal validity.

2. To give more mission orientation in the Minor Seminaries in Kerala, to help the mission eparchies recruit candidates for the missions and to admit as far as possible students in the minor seminaries in Kerala for mission eparchies.

3. To appoint a full time editor for “Mission India”.

4. That the eparchies in the territorium proprium adopt the eparchies outside the territorium proprium as follows:
   Bijnor : Thamarassery & Mananthavady
   Chanda : Kanjirapally
   Gorakhpur : Ernakulam
   Jagdalpur : Changanacherry
   Kalyan : Trichur, Tellicherry & Palghat
   Rajkot : Kottayam
   Sagar : Irinjalakuda
   Satna : Kothamangalam
   Ujjain : Palai

5. To hand over to the Commission for Particular Law for further study the draft statutes of Hermitage.

6. To issue a common circular letter to be read in the churches and in the institutions in connection with the ad limina visit and the Synodal meeting in Rome in January 1996.

7. To prepare the lectionary in such a way that each day should have several options for readings and to print it separately, one for the
Gospel readings, another for the rest of the NT readings and the third one for the OT readings. If one or other of them need to be printed in two or three volumes it could also be done.

8. To close down the educational institutions on November 21 in protest against the policy of the Government of India regarding the Dalit Christians.

9. To consider that the period of fasting and abstinence in preparation for Christmas begins on 1 December and to permit marriages until the first Sunday inclusive, on which day the period of annunciation begins.

10. To commemorate the departed souls on the last Friday of Denha as well as on November 2 and to indicate these two dates in the liturgical Calendar.

11. To prepare a penitential service with the signing of ashes for the entry into the great Fast and to integrate this service into the Divine Liturgy. This service should be such that it can be conducted also outside the Divine Liturgy.

12. To prepare the service for the blessing of palms in such a way that it can be used together with the Divine Liturgy or outside it.

13. To conduct the liturgical services for the days of Holy Thursday, Passion Friday and Great Saturday in the evening. They may also be conducted in the morning. To begin the Easter vigil on Saturday evening and to begin the Easter service very early morning on Easter Sunday, preferably at 3.00 a.m.

14. To appoint two internal auditors (one priest and a lay man) to audit the accounts of the Major Archiepiscopal Curia on a quarterly basis and to depute Bishop Jacob Manathodath and the Finance Officer to find out suitable persons.

15. That each eparchy in the territorium proprium except the eparchy of Palghat meet the cost of construction of a room in the block for the residence of the bishops in the new curial building at Mount St
Thomas and that the eparchies outside the *territorium proprium* and Palghat contribute for this purpose according to their financial capability.

16. To appoint a priest engineer, Fr Joseph Makkothakkatt, and a lay person to supervise the construction of the new curial building.

17. To issue a common circular letter to be read out in the churches and institutions requesting the faithful to contribute for the construction of the new curial building.

18. To distribute equally among the Syro-Malabar mission eparchies the amount collected on the Syro-Malabar Mission Sunday.

19. That the "Mission India" office should coordinate the visit for mission appeal of the bishops or other representatives from the mission eparchies to the eparchies in the *territorium proprium*.

20. To entrust for the study of the Bishops of the Province of Tellicherry, the projects for the erection of the dioceses of Belthangady and Bhadravathy and to report about them at the next meeting of the Synod of Bishops.

21. To hold the second assembly in 1996 from the 28 October 1996 to 15 November 1996. On Mondays the session begins at 10.00 a.m. there will be no sessions on Saturday 2 November. On Saturday, November 9, the session ends at 12.30 p.m. The Synod ends at 4.00 p.m. on 15 November.

22. To appoint a Commission to study the projects for the erection and reorganization of eparchies.

23. To appoint an Ad Hoc Committee consisting of Bishops Joseph Pastor Neelankavil, Paul Chittilapilly and Simon Stock Palathara to draft the procedure guidelines and the terms of reference of the proposed Commission.

24. To entrust to a special Committee consisting of the Synodal Commission for Liturgy, Bishop George Punnakkottil, Bishop Jacob Manathodath, Fr Thomas Mannooramparampil and Fr
Antony Nariculam to examine the propria and to approve them. Only the issues that this committee fails to come to an agreement will be brought to the Synod for a decision.

25. To propose to revive the Evangelization Committee and to have its next meeting after the CBCI meeting in Trivandrum. The Major Archbishop and Mar Gratian Mundadan will represent the Syro-Malabar Church in this committee.
FIRST ASSEMBLY OF THE THIRD SYNOD
PREPARATION FOR THE SYNOD

I. Visit of the Roman Delegation

A delegation consisting of Rev Abbot Michel Van Parys (Abbot, Chevtogne Benedictine Monastery, Belgium), Msgr. Claudio Gugerotti (Official, Congregation for the Oriental Churches) and Rev Michael Mulhall (Official, Congregation for the Oriental Churches) sent by the Congregation for the Oriental Churches was at Mount St Thomas, the Major Archiepiscopal Curia, from 25 September to 7 October 1995. The aim of the visit was to prepare the agenda of the Synod of bishops to be held in the Vatican from 8 to 15 January 1996.

In the beginning of the week long stay, the delegation met the Major Archbishop together with his assistant, Mar James Pazhayattil and the curial officials for preparing the time-table for meeting the various groups. The delegation met most of the bishops within the territorium proprium and a few from outside, the Permanent Synod, the Synodal Commission for Liturgy, representatives of the eparchial pastoral and presbyteral councils and the representatives of the institutes of consecrated life as well as the preparatory commission for the Roman Synod, consisting of Mar James Pazhayattil, Mar Kuriakose Kunnacherry and Mar Jacob Thoomkuzhy. As requested by the delegation itself meetings were restricted strictly to the various official bodies. All the meetings were held at Mount St. Thomas.

In accordance with desire expressed by the delegation it was decided to present the following position papers in the Synod for discussion and the persons to present them also were chosen: Synodal functioning (Mar Mathew Vattakuzhy), identity of the Syro-Malabar Church (Mar Joseph Powathil), Liturgy (Mar Jacob Thoomkuzhy), Pastoral Care of the Syro-Malabar Migrants (Mar Gregory Karotemprel), Missions (Mar Gratian Mundadan), Ecumenism (Mar Joseph Powathil), Formation for the Clergy (Mar Joseph Pallikaparampil), Role of the Religious (Mar James Pazhayattil) and
Formation of the Laity (Mar Jacob Manathodath). The delegation suggested that the full text or at least a detailed summary of the papers be sent to the Congregation by the end of November 1996 and that the Preparatory Commission meet at the Congregation for finalizing the texts from 27 to 29 November 1995.

The following proposals also were put forward by the delegation: 1) the Congregation for the Oriental Churches will be present at the Synod in the person of the Cardinal Prefect and of those who are designated by him. 2) that the Congregation reserve to itself the right to make further intervention entrusted by it to an official after that of the report of the bishop who is entrusted with the task and to invite the Superiors of the competent Roman Dicasteries for the points on the agenda. 3) that both their own representatives and the superiors of the other Dicasteries may take part in the discussions.

The delegation left Mount St. Thomas on 7 October with the understanding to meet in Rome with the Preparatory Commission in late November 1995.

II. Meeting of the Preparatory Commission in Rome

Though the Delegation had suggested late November for the meeting of the Preparatory Commission in Rome it was held on 4 and 5 December 1995 because of some unforeseen inconveniences at the Congregation. In the two-day meeting besides the members of the Preparatory Commission and the Major Archbishop, the Cardinal Prefect and the concerned officials of the Congregation also took part. The position papers were read through and the representatives of the Congregation suggested a few changes in some of the papers.
REPORT & DECISIONS

Introduction

The first assembly of the third Synod of Bishops of the Syro-Malabar Church was held in the Vatican from 8 to 16 January 1996. His Eminence Cardinal Antony Padiyara, the Major Archbishop of the Syro-Malabar Church, presided over the assembly. On Monday, 8 January at 8.00 a.m. the Synodal Fathers concelebrated the Holy Raza in St. Peter’s Basilica. Many priests of the Syro-Malabar Church residing in Rome also concelebrated. His Eminence Cardinal Achille Silvestrini, prefect of the Congregation for the Oriental Churches, the officials of the same Congregation, representatives of the various Vatican Dicasteries, many other distinguished guests, hundreds of religious men and women and a large community of Syro-Malabar faithful residing in Rome attended the sacred function. His Excellency Mar Paul Chittilapilly, bishop of Kalyan, preached the Homily during the Raza. Cardinal Achille Silvestrini also addressed the congregation.

At 11.00 a.m. after the welcome speech of Mar James Pazhayattil, the Major Archepiscopal Assistant, His Holiness Pope John Paul II opened the assembly in the Old Synod Hall near the papal palace. In his speech the Pope said that the successor of Peter will not leave the Syro-Malabar Church alone and that he will walk along with her. The Pope also hinted that within two years he will call the Synod once more in the Vatican. After the inaugural address of the Pope, Cardinal Achille Silvestrini, Prefect of the Congregation for the Oriental Churches, addressed the assembly. He said that the pope has authorised the convocation of the Synod of the Syro-Malabar Bishops in the Vatican within two years and that the Holy See, in the meantime, will strive to grasp all of those elements which may be useful to guide this Church in its continuing progress in communion. The address of the Cardinal Prefect was followed by the welcome speech of Cardinal Antony Padiyara, the Major Archbishop. He said that the best way to reduce the
tension in the Syro-Malabar Church with regard to the functioning of the Synod and to streamline other canonical matters as well as to hasten the ecumenical movement in our country is the implementation of the council directives as early as possible and in its fullness.

Sessions

Every day there were four sessions of an average of one hour and a half each, starting at 9.00 a.m. and ending at 7.00 p.m. On Wednesday, 10 January in place of the second session, the Synodal fathers and the other participants attended the General Audience of the Holy Father held in the aula Paulo VI.

Though the assembly was scheduled to be over on 15 January, for allowing more time for discussions, it was extended to 16 January also. However there were no sessions in the morning on 16 January. The last session on 16 January went up to 8.00 p.m. without interruption.

Participants

Besides Mar Antony Padiyara, the Major Archbishop and Mar James Pazhayattil, his assistant, Mar Joseph Kundukulam (Trissur), Mar Joseph Powathil (Changanacherry), Mar George Valiamattam (Tellicherry), Mar Kuriakose Kunnacherry (Kottayam), Mar Jacob Thoomkuzhy (Thamarassery), Mar Joseph Pallikaparampil (Palai), Mar George Punnakkottil (Kothamangalam), Mar A.D. Mattam (Satna), Mar John Perumattam (Ujjain), Mar Gratian Mundadan (Bijnor), Mar Dominic Kokkatt (Gorakhpur), Mar Gregory Karotemprel (Rajkot), Mar Joseph Pastor Neelankavil (Sagar), Mar Paul Chittilapilly (Kalyan), Mar Mathew Vattakuzhy (Kanjirapally), Mar Vijay Anand Nedumpuram (Chanda), Mar Simon Stock Palathara (Jagdalpur) and Mar Jacob Manathodath (Aux. Ernakulam) were present. Rev Msgr. Joseph Veliyathil, and Rev Msgr. Joseph Kaniamattam, the Major Archbishop of Palghat and Mananthavady respectively, also participated as observers with the consent of the Permanent Synod. Mar Joseph Irimpenn (Palakkad) and Mar Sebastian Valloppilly (Tellicherry - retired) were absent owing to ill-health.
Experts

Fr Antony Nariculam (Secretary of the Central Liturgical Committee) and Fr Thomas Mannooramparambil (Professor, Paurastya Vidyapitham, Kottayam) participated in the Sessions as experts of the Synod. The following experts represented the Congregation for the Oriental Churches: Fr Ivan Zuzek SJ (consultor for Canon Law), Rev Ephrem Carr OSB (consultor for liturgy), Rev Manel Nin OSB (consultor for liturgy), Msgr. Walter Edyvean (head of Office, Congregation for Catholic Education: consultor for formation of the clergy).

Observers

Fr Antony Plackal VC (President of the Syro-Malabar Religious Conference and Superior General of the Vincentian Congregation), Sr Mary Benitia CHF (Vice-President of the Syro-Malabar Religious Conference and Superior General of the Congregation fo the Holy Family) and Advocate Kurian Joseph Manickathan (Vice-President of the Catholic Council of India and additional advocate general of the government of Kerala) represented the Institutes of Consecrated Life and the Laity respectively in the Synod. Fr Robert Taft SJ (Professor, Pontificio Istituto Orientale, Rome) participated on special invitation from the Major Archbishop. Representing the Congregation for the Oriental Churches, Cardinal Achille Silvestrini, Rev Marco Brogi Ofm (undersecretary), Msgr. George Mifsud (Head of office of the Congregation), Msgr. Claudio Gugerotti (official), Rev Michael Mulhall (Official) and Rev Abbot Michel Van Parys OSB (Member, preparatory Commission) and Msgr. Silvano Tommasi M. (Secretary, Pontifical Council for Migrants) were present throughout the sessions.

Moderators

The sessions were moderated by the following persons: Mar Joseph Powathil (Synodal functioning in the Syro-Malabar Church), Mar Kuriaikose Kunnacherry (Identity), Mar Gratian Mundadan (Liturgy), Mar Joseph Pallikaparambil (Ecumenism), Mar George

A committee consisting of Mar Joseph Powathil, Mar Kuriakose Kunnacherry, Mar Jacob Thoomkuzhy, Mar Joseph Pallikaparampil and Mar Gratian Mundadan was constituted to sort out the concrete issues, particularly regarding liturgy, and to present them to the assembly for discussion. This committee met several times with and without the participation of the representatives of the Congregation for the Oriental Churches.

**Agenda**

Since the agenda of the assembly was already fixed there was no formal act in this regard in the first session. Because of limited secretarial facilities reading and approving of the minitues as done in the previous assemblies was not done in this assembly.

**Position Papers**

As agreed upon previously, nine papers were presented in the Synod. Each paper was presented by a Synodal member. In conformity with the desire of the Congregation for the Oriental Churches papers were presented on each of the topics by one or two representatives of the Congregation also. The papers and the persons who presented them were the following:-


Other topics

Besides the papers some other items such as nomination of apostolic visitators for Europe and USA, extending the territorium proprium, metropolitan sees outside the territorium proprium etc. also were discussed. Mar Gregory Karotemprel was elected as the apostolic visitator for USA and Mar Joseph Pallikaparampil for Europe.

Resolutions

In the end the following statement was approved by the assembly:-

"It was the aim of this Synodal assembly to have a general consensus regarding the functioning of the Synod in the Syro-Malabar Church, the identity of this Church, liturgy and clerical formation as well as to discuss the questions of the pastoral care of the Syro-Malabar migrants, missions, role of the religious in the Syro-Malabar Church and the formation of the laity. This synodal assembly aimed also at drawing a plan of action for improving the spirit of communion among the members of the hierarchy of the Syro-Malabar Church as well as to further the understanding between the Congregation for the Oriental Churches and the Synod of Bishops.

With regard to the liturgical order there has to be a gradual progress towards homogeneity in conception and celebration especially
of the Divine Liturgy. While we strive towards that goal the Synod wishes to take the following as intermediate steps:

1) Erect a centre at Mount St Thomas under the auspices of the Syro-Malabar Bishops' Synod to make research into the Syro-Malabar liturgy and its relationship to the contemporary Indian culture, and its pastoral needs, giving particular attention to the local languages wherever the Syro-Malabar liturgy is used.

2) Establish wherever possible places of prayer in which the Syro-Malabar liturgy in its integrity can be celebrated with solemnity and available for the faithful for participation.

3) Publish the other liturgical texts with the privileged procedure proposed by the Cardinal Prefect of the Congregation for the Oriental Churches in his opening address of the Synod.¹

4) Publish the translation of the two remaining anaphoras and prepare new ones under the auspices of the Central Liturgical Committee.

5) Have the Holy Qurbana celebrated in the Major Seminaries, and as far as possible, in the other houses of formation, as per the Taksa, experimenting the Bema in the middle of the Church. On Sundays and feast days normally Qurbana should be celebrated in its full solemnity in these places.²

6) As soon as the Malayalam texts of the Divine Office are officially published, they should be introduced for daily use.

7) For the next two years the Holy Qurbana will be celebrated according to the existing legislation as we move towards

¹ The privileged procedure announced by the Cardinal Prefect: "To publish and use the texts without presenting their English translation first to the Holy See for approval, if there is a consensus in the Synod regarding the Malayalam texts."

² "On Sundays and feast days the Holy Qurbana should be celebrated in its full solemnity" does not necessarily mean the celebration of Raza.
convergence on the basis of the other decisions taken by the Synod. ³

8) Prepare a text for liturgical catechesis approved by the synod. The Synod decided that these norms should be promulgated by the Major Archbishop and are to be read out in all the Churches and other institutions.

For the Pastoral care of the Syro-Malabar Migrants and to promote the missionary enterprise of the Syro-Malabar Church the Synod renews the requests to the Holy Father:

1) that the entire India be declared multijurisdictional in order to facilitate the pastoral care of the Syro-Malabarians who are at present living outside the *territorium proprium*, and as a first step to appoint an Apostolic Visitor who will study the matter and refer it to the Holy See and the Major Archbishop;

2) to declare the eparchies that are at present outside the *territorium proprium* as *territorium proprium* in view of granting the request No. 1;

3) to establish an eparchy each in New Delhi and Bangalore;

4) to appoint two Apostolic Visitators, namely, one for the Syro-Malabar migrants in USA and Canada in view of erecting an eparchy there and the other for those in Europe;

5) to regroup the Syro-Malabar eparchies which are at present outside the *territorium proprium* under two Syro-Malabar Metropolitans and

³ "For the next two years the Holy Qurbana will be celebrated according to the existing legislation" means that all the options and dispensations will continue as now. "Experimenting with the bema in the middle of the church" is applicable only to the Major Seminaries and "as far as possible" to other houses of formation.
6) to entrust more areas for undertaking missionary work by the Syro-Malabar Church. The Synod decides also to form a Commission for Missions in which there will be the representatives of the various Institutes of Consecrated Life in the Syro-Malabar Church and qualified lay persons.

**Conclusion**

The assembly concluded with the concluding speech of Cardinal Antony Padiyara the Major Archbishop. Cardinal Achille Silvestrini also addressed the assembly. In his speech he expressed satisfaction over the outcome of the assembly. Mar Jacob Manathodath, secretary of the Synod, thanked the participants as well as the assistants for their active participation and selfless help. He remembered with gratitude also all those who contributed in some way or other for conducting the Synod.
HOMILY

by

Mar Paul Chittilapilly

In the august presence of the Major Archbishop with the entire hierarchy of Syro-Malabar Church and of His Eminence Cardinal Silvestrini and the Prelates of the Roman Curia, may I be permitted to address you all:

Dear sisters and brothers in Jesus Christ,

We are gathered here to offer an acceptable Qurbana to God the Father through Jesus Christ as a beginning of the historic synod of the Syro-Malabar Church being conducted for the first time in this eternal city of Rome, in the Basilica where the tomb of St. Peter exists. This tomb is a source of inspiration for us. As St. Peter, his successors too were able to confirm the followers of Jesus Christ in faith. Ex Cathedra of this Basilica came the law of Peter.

When we stand here I am reminded of another tomb, the tomb of St. Thomas, the apostle of India at Mylapore. We always considered St. Thomas as our father of faith. Our forefathers drew courage and inspiration from the tomb of St. Thomas, as we believed in the “law of Thomas” as the patrimony of our ancient Church. We also understood that the “law of Thomas” is not contradictory to the “law of Peter”, but we understood and lived as they are complementary. St. Thomas was one of the twelve apostles while Peter was the head of the apostolic college. Both of them had the very same source for their witness of Jesus Christ.

The sacred readings which are proclaimed today invite us to ponder upon the life-witnesses given by the apostles. As St. Paul recalled to us today, “we are built upon the foundations laid by the apostles and prophets, the corner stone being Christ Jesus Himself” (Eph. 2:20). Particularly I would draw attention to today’s gospel which throws much light to our present situation.
The sisters of Lazarus sent Jesus a message about the illness of Lazarus, his friend. This message was considered by Jesus as very important. He knew the final result of this illness will not be the death of Lazarus, but the glory of God (Jn. 11:4). Jesus wanted to go to Judea, the very place from where he had to flee with his disciples as his life was threatened there.

The Apostles themselves were frightened by the suggestion to go back to Judea. They did not want to risk their lives again. Therefore they argued and found reasons to avoid the same. When Jesus said clearly that Lazarus is dead that was sufficient reason for them not to go. Who can bring a dead man to life again? According to them it must have been useless to go to Bethania. It was already four days since Lazarus died. Even Martha, the sister of Lazarus, could not grasp the words of Jesus (Jn. 11, 39). According to her his body must have started decomposing.

This was a critical moment for Thomas. He thought that if Jesus wanted to go, then there is no reason why he should stay back. He showed courage and was willing to take the risk. But it is important that he did not want to show that he alone is more reliable than others. He did not suggest that he is prepared to come even if others did not. Instead he encouraged all his fellow brothers to go together with Jesus. His words “let us also go and die with Him” were strong enough to change their minds and to bring about a conversion and put them to action with Jesus.

As you are well aware, the synodal meeting that is going to be opened by our Holy Father soon after this Divine Liturgy, is going to be a historic event in the history of our Church. As is known to all, our Church is going through an important phase in her history. The pangs of growth and vitality is felt everywhere. It has also shown tensions and anxieties and sometimes it is pictured as a very difficult and critical situation. Most of you know well the reasons for the existence of such a situation.
The table of Our Lord which is to be a table of unity and harmony of those who believe in Him has become a bone of contention and great scandal. It has become a scandal in the name of tradition, identity, inculturation and a host of other things. All of us claim that we love our Church and I believe that we do love our Church. We say that whatever we do, we are doing for the sake of our Church. But then why this disunity? It is because, I believe, that each one is trying to go ahead with his or her own idea about the Church, tradition, identity and so on, often without Jesus and the fellow believers. It is not only an embarrassing but also a frightening situation.

Let us remember that as intelligent beings we all have our own ideas about our Church and it is right to be so. We have to remember also that each one will stress one or other aspect of the Church. That does not necessarily mean that those ideas are contrary or opposing to one another. What we have to look for is to respect all those ideas and to blend them together in the right proportion. One should not stick to his own pet ideas at the risk of disunity; but must face the challenges of the situation together to achieve the common goal. Jesus, together with the apostles, ventured to go to Judea when a higher cause, namely, of bringing his friend to life, was his concern. I am sure that if we are genuinely concerned about the unity of our Church we will be able to make any amount of sacrifice for it.

There are people in our Church who think as the disciples did in the case of Lazarus. Lazarus was already dead and the disciples could not believe that he could be brought to life again. But Jesus is doing precisely that. He is going to raise him. God can do what is impossible for man. Some tend to think that the unity of the Syro-Malabar Church is dead and none can do anything to restore it. Some even have gone to the extent of saying that this Synod is going to be a futile exercise. But Jesus can work miracles. He invites us to forget our own self and our differences for the sake of a greater cause, namely, the unity of the Church.
Let us be reassured that we are not alone in this task of ours. We have received the message from our people to save our Church. Alone we will not find any solution for our problems. We have to go together with Jesus, we have to be united with the trunk of the vine that is Jesus. I am sure he had been with us in all our trials and tribulations in the past, he is with us and he will be with us. It is a question of convincing ourselves about his presence amidst us.

Secondly, we are not looking for solutions as individuals but as a community of believers in Jesus Christ. Let no one think that he or she can face this situation alone or find out the right solution without the cooperation and collaboration of others. We as believers in Jesus Christ are called to be in communion with him and with our fellow believers. It is that communion that brings us to the right solution for our present problems of which we are concerned.

Thirdly, it is up to us to decide whether to accept or to refuse the invitation to go with Jesus as a community. It is a big challenge. It is a challenge to open ourselves to Jesus; it is also a challenge to shed our egos and identify ourselves with the community of faithful. Once we open ourselves and decide to go with Jesus as a community of faithful, I am sure, we will reach our destination safe.

I invite all of you to pray to the Lord that He may illumine our hearts, particularly, of the participants of this Synod to open themselves to the Spirit, that they may go with Jesus and achieve that harmony and unity which they are longing for. May God bless you all. Amen.
WELCOME TO THE HOLY FATHER

by

Mar James Pazhayattil

Most Blessed Father,

Today we feel greatly honoured by your presence among our midst. It had been a long cherished wish of ours that this Holy Synod of the Syro-Malabar Church be celebrated together with the successor of the blessed Apostle Peter who presides over the Church of Christ in charity and who inherited his holy see in Rome. We had written in one voice for a day to be set apart for this historic meeting. The late Archbishop Abraham Kattumana, your special delegate to our Church, had already initiated the arrangements. But God called him for his eternal reward before he could see this beautiful day. May his soul rest in peace.

In this synodal assembly are present His Eminence Cardinal Antony Pandiara, the Major Archbishop of our Church, and all the other hierarchs of the Syro-Malabar Church including the major archiepiscopal administrators of Palghat and Mananthavady. Even though members of the Synod, the two retired bishops in our Church could not come because of advanced age and ill health. Besides the Synodal Fathers, there are present also two representatives, one from the women's Institutes and one from the men's Institutes, of Consecrated Life. They are the president and the vice-president of the Syro-Malabar Religious Conference respectively. There is one representative of the laity also. He is the vice-president of the Catholic Council of India, which is an organ of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of India. As Your Holiness is well aware, the representatives of the various Roman dicasteries, particularly of the Congregation for the Oriental Churches, are also participating in this Synodal assembly.

Even while we are gathered here as a Synod of a Major Archiepiscopal sui iuris Church in conformity with the norms of the Code of
Canons of the Oriental Churches, I should say with regret that she has not yet become a full fledged Major Archiepiscopal Church with the legitimate “sui iuris” nature. When a Church that is as ancient as Christianity itself and founded by an apostle is deprived of its legitimate rights, it becomes an object of ridicule before the Catholics and the non-Catholics alike. In sacri canones Your Holiness wrote: “In these Churches the Patriarchs and the Synods are by canon law sharers in the supreme authority of the Church. By these structures, delineated under their own title at the opening of the code, there is immediately evident both the proper countenance of each and every one of the Eastern Churches sanctioned by canon law and their sui iuris status, and full communion with the Roman Pontiff, Successor St Peter” (para. 12). We would wish that our Church be enabled to appear with its proper countenance as said by Your Holiness at the earliest. Your presence here today is reassuring us of the commitment of the Holy See of Blessed Peter in respecting the sui iuris nature of the Eastern Churches.

Most blessed father, we promise that our prayers will always accompany you. We also request for your apostolic blessing. With these words, we welcome you most cordially to this meeting of the Holy Synod of the Syro-Malabar Church.
INAUGURAL ADDRESS

by
His Holiness Pope John Paul II

Your Eminence, Dear Brother Bishops,

1. Today the Bishop of Rome rejoices with the Bishops of the Syro-Malabar Church, gathered around your Major Archbishop, Cardinal Antony Padiyara, for the celebration of your Synod meeting. I welcome each one of you with the prayer of the Apostle Paul: “Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ” (Rom 1:7). I have followed the preparation of this Synod with fraternal and pastoral interest, conscious that the Petrine ministry constitutes a “permanent and visible source and foundation of unity of faith and fellowship” (Lumen gentium, n.18). In the Communion of Saints, I make prayerful remembrance of the late Archbishop Mar Abraham Kattumana who devoted his best energies to serving the Church, and the Syro-Malabar Church in particular, sparing no pains until the very last. I cherish a vivid memory of our meeting a few hours before his death, as sudden as it was unexpected.

2. The Syro-Malabar Church, born into the faith from the preaching of the Apostle Thomas, is one of the ecclesial families in which the rich variety of the Christian East is articulated. The East Syrian tradition was distinguished for the preservation of the Christian faith, sometimes at the price of relentless persecution, for the wealth of its monastic life, for its schools and academies where Christian doctrine was explained and sung with marvelous inspiration, as well as for a missionary zeal which brought the Good News of salvation in Jesus Christ all the way to your native India, and even to distant China. For many centuries you lived this ecclesial heritage with pride and enthusiasm, enriching it with specific and original aspects of your own culture and sensitivity.

When other Christians from the West reached your lands, you gave them generous hospitality. For you, they represented a new open-
ness to the Church’s universality. At the same time, however, a lack of understanding of your cultural and religious heritage caused much suffering and inflicted a wound which has only been partially healed, and which today still requires a very high degree of holiness and wisdom on the part of the Pastors of the Church, chiefly responsible for building peace and fellowship among all Christ’s followers.

After the reconstitution at the beginning of this century of a hierarchy formed by Pastors from your own lands, the Syro-Malabar Church set out with determination to fulfil its role as a part of the heritage of the Christian East, on which I recently reflected in my Apostolic Letter Orientale lumen. Recognition of your Church’s achievements led me, in December 1992, to consider that the time was ripe to raise your Church to the rank of a Major Archiepiscopal Church. That act was meant as an expression of gratitude for what you are and for your commitment to grow still further in fidelity to the Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have all received reconciliation (cf. Rom 5:11). I have desired to be particularly close to you during these years. As the one who “presides over the whole assembly of charity” (cf. Lumen gentium, n.13), my affectionate attention towards you has the sole purpose of helping you to take the steps needed to overcome the difficulties of the present.

4. The Synodal structure of the Eastern Churches is a particularly eloquent way of living and manifesting the mystery of the Church as communion. Communion is a gift of the Holy Spirit; it is participation in the life of the Trinity. It therefore has to be the fruit of prayer, and requires great effort. It is built up day after day. To leave someone behind on the way is a failure for all. To walk together in step is a victory for all, and a victory for faith and love. The Bishop of Rome does not wish to leave you alone on this path. He wants to be a help, a bridge, a means of communion. He will continue to walk each step with you, not in order to deny you your just autonomy, but to fulfil to the utmost the ministry which Christ entrusted to Peter: to strengthen the brethren and to confirm them in faith and communion (cf. Lk 22:32).
This Synod thus marks an important though not a definitive stage in the process of your Church’s growth towards ever greater union and peace, towards the sharing of a common journey. In the not too distant future I shall ask you to return here to Rome, to share the fruit of your work with the Pope, to evaluate together the path undertaken.

5. During the Synod you will give careful attention to many fundamental questions, including the place of the Liturgy in the education of the faithful, especially in the training of future priests, and of men and women religious. With regard to your missionary commitment, the universal Church cannot but be grateful for the dedication of the many sons and daughters of the Syro-Malabar Church who are generously involved in proclaiming the Gospel, often in difficult circumstances. This they do through the Religious Institutes belonging to your own Church as well as in Latin-rite Institutes. Herein lies a further fruitful expression of ecclesial communion, as I recalled in my Letter to the Bishops of India, of 28 May 1987: “In (the) process of evangelization there has always existed a generous collaboration on the part of priests, religious and laity baptized in the Syro-Malabar rite, and in recent years also on the part of the Syro-Malabar Church herself in certain areas of the north. This collaboration should not be forgotten, for it points to a willingness, on the part of all concerned, to accept the age-old adage: ‘salus animarum suprema lex’ (n.2).

6. Also of great importance is the question of spiritual assistance to the Syro-Malabar faithful living outside the territory over which your direct jurisdiction is exercised. In my letter quoted above, I recalled how important it is to provide such assistance, in constant dialogue with the Bishops of the Latin Church in India. Great availability and reciprocal understanding are imperative. The first form of communion is that which unites all believers in Christ, children of the one Church of Christ. All things must be undertaken in an atmosphere of trust and common purpose, examining the various situations with objectivity and seeking to resolve them in a spirit of heartfelt collaboration. Conflicts must be banned, since no good can come except from love. Only thus will the Lord bless our efforts.
It is my intention to share these, and other aspects of your pastoral work with you, gathered at the Synod, but also with each one of you individually on the occasion of your visit ad Limina Apostolorum. May Mary, Mother of the Church, protect and help you. May Elias Kuriakose and Alphonsa, whom I had the joy to add to the number of the Beati in the land which gave them birth, intercede for you and for the beloved priests, religious and laity of the Syro-Malabar Church, God bless your Synodal labours!
INTRODUCTORY SPEECH

by

Cardinal Achille Silvestrini

This morning, in a striking sign of the unity of the Church, the Synod of Bishops of the Syro-Malabar Church is opened in the presence of the Bishop of Rome, His Holiness Pope Paul II. The Opening of this Synod also coincides with the visit "Ad limina Apostolorum" of the Bishops to the city of Sts. Peter and Paul, a visit to pray at the tombs of the Apostles and to "strengthen the relationship between the pastors of each particular Church with the Roman Pontiff" (Pastor Bonus, 29). The importance of these two events should not escape us.

Today, the Hierarchy of a Church which traces the beginning of its ecclesial life back to the Apostolic preaching of St. Thomas, has come to Rome, that it may convene a Synod in the presence of the successor of St. Peter. This Synod is convoked with the hope that it will strengthen the communion among its members, confirm and enrich the communion that this Church shares with the Holy Father and his representatives, and foster the communion shared by all members of the College of Bishops.

And so the aim of these two events—the opening of the Synod and the Visit "Ad limina"—may be seen in the same context. The Constitution "Pastor Bonus", in describing the purpose of the "Ad limina" Visit, also expresses our aspirations for the meeting of this Synod in Rome. "For the Holy Father meets with his brother Bishops and deals with them about matters concerning the good of the Churches and the Bishops' role as shepherds, and he confirms and supports them in faith and charity. This strengthens the bonds of the hierarchical communion and openly manifests the catholicity of the Church and the unity of the episcopal college" (Pastor Bonus, 29).

This morning I wish to express the gratitude of the Congregation for the Oriental Churches, and my own personal gratitude, to His Holi-
ness Pope John Paul II for having accepted the invitation to be present at the opening of this Synod. I wish also to recognize the presence of the Prefects and representatives of the Roman Curia who have taken the time to be a part of this Synod and to offer their help in the work which lies before us. Finally, I wish to thank His Eminence Antony Cardinal Padiyara, the Major Archbishop of the Syro-Malabar Church for the enthusiasm that he has shown for this Synod in Rome, an enthusiasm which speaks so eloquently of his care and love for the Church.

In a very special way, I wish to recall the memory of His Excellency Archbishop Abraham Kattumana, the late Pontifical Delegate of the Syro-Malabar Church who accomplished so much towards the upbuilding of the Syro-Malabar Church in the initial stages of its life as a Major Archiepiscopal Church. But for his untimely death in April 1995, he would be taking his rightful place here in this Synod, a Synod which owes its canonical implementation to his tireless effort. May the memory of his labour and self sacrifice be an example for each of us during these important days.

It was during meetings with the Permanent Synod of the Syro-Malabar Church in May 1995, shortly after the death of the Pontifical Delegate, Archbishop Kattumana, that the idea of convoking a Synod in Rome was first introduced. This month, January 1996, was chosen for the fact that it would coincide with the Visit “Ad limina” of the Oriental Bishops of India. The intention then and now is that a Special Synod held in Rome with the Holy Father would permit the Bishops to continue a process which could address those topics relative to the life of the Church. The hope that Rome would offer an atmosphere conducive to constructive dialogue made this an attractive location for the Synod. Even the short amount of time available for the preparations for the Synod did not dampen this enthusiasm and hope. Therefore, in May 1995, a Joint Preparatory Commission was appointed by the Congregation for Oriental Churches and the Permanent Synod of the Syro-Malabar Church. This Commission first met in Kerala in September 1995 and again in Rome in early December 1995. During these meetings an agenda was formulated which attempted to clarify the areas of Church
life which would require the most detailed attention. This agenda and the drafts of the presentations to be made in Rome were reviewed by the Syro-Malabar Bishops during their Synod in Kerala in November.

It is in the context of these topics that I wish to offer some thoughts at the opening of this Synod.

The first topic chosen for discussion is entitled “Synodal Functioning and Communion among the Bishops”. In choosing this topic as the first for discussion, the Bishops have identified their Synod as the primary instrument to foster a genuine communion among the Bishops. Such a communion which allow the Synod to function properly and in turn will facilitate the Synod’s role in the governance and pastoral care of the Syro-Malabar Church. The first steps towards such a communion can begin today in the manner in which we dispose ourselves to these meetings. That each of us be sincere, docile to the truth, and willing to listen to one another with respect is very important. For a Church which has recently received Major Archiepiscopal status, it cannot be expected that a full appreciation of the working of a Synod will exist immediately. This is an appreciation which takes time and patience for those directly involved.

Great attention should also be given to the concepts and categories which we use when referring to the workings of this Synod. The terms “majority” and “minority” can often lead to the concepts of “victory” and “defeat”, concepts which are foreign to and extremely dangerous for a fraternal communion. As has been repeated on many occasions, if winners and losers emerge from an encounter among parties in the Church, then it is the Church that loses and in such a situation there are, in fact, no winners. We must always remember that the reality at the essence of proper Synod Functioning far surpasses the concept of governance found in contemporary political theories. In fact, the communion inherent in genuine Synodal functioning speaks of a participation in the communion and charity of God.

Though not an end in itself the concept of consensus can be very helpful, because it implies a genuine concern to include the legitimate
viewpoints of all parties in the final decisions of the group. Such an attitude is indispensable for a group of Bishops charged with the pastoral responsibility of a Church. The words of St. Paul can always be a guide for us in this matter. "If I have the gift of prophecy and, with full knowledge comprehend all mysteries, if I have faith enough to move mountains, but have not love, I am nothing" (I Cor. 13:2) A charity directed towards God, his Church and our Brothers and Sisters should always be the basis of our Christian actions.

Therefore, this Synod in Rome marks an important though, not a definitive stage in the process of your Church’s growth towards communion. The Holy See, desiring always to support such a spirit of communion, will endeavor to keep watch over your Church. For this reason the Holy Father, on the 21st of December 1995, has decided to continue to reserve to his person for a certain time the nomination of Bishops and the liturgy. He has also authorized a convocation of the Synod of the Syro-Malabar Church here in the Vatican within the next two years, in order to support the process which you have begun. In the meantime, the Holy See will strive to grasp all of those elements which may be useful to guide you in the continuing progress of your Church in communion.

Closely related to the topic of "Synodal Functioning and communion" is the discussion which will follow regarding the "Identity of the Syro-Malabar Church". Any discussion of this topic must begin with an assumption that this flourishing Church is Oriental. An investigation of the Oriental nature of a Church must naturally include a reflection on the nature of Oriental liturgy, theology, discipline and spirituality, the essential components of ecclesial life. We cannot forget that it is precisely because of this Oriental nature, that the Holy Father chose to raise the Syro-Malabar Church to the status of a Major Archiepiscopal Church in December 1992.

The Documents of the Second Vatican Council are an important point of reference for your discussion. These teachings speak of how "highly valued" are the institutions of the Oriental Churches, the liturgi-
cal rites, ecclesiastical traditions and unique ordering of Christian life. “For in these Oriental Churches, which are distinguished by their venerable antiquity, there is clearly evident the tradition which has come from the Apostles through the Fathers and which is part of the divinely revealed, undivided heritage of the Universal Church” (*Orientalium Ecclesiarum*, n.1). This teaching is the basis of the often repeated phrase, that the “variety in the Universal Church, so far from diminishing its unity, rather serves to emphasize it” (*Orientalium Ecclesiarum*, n.2). And thus the traditions of the Oriental Churches, are a heritage of the Church Universal, a sign of the mystery of the Divine plan of salvation and a present witness to the successful inculturation of the faith.

As Bishops, your discussion of the identity of the Syro-Malabar Church will be very important and it will require of you a patient attentiveness to the thoughts and reflections of your brother Bishops. To apply the fruits of the earlier discussion regarding the communion among the Bishops could prove to be very helpful to the treatment of this topic.

Discussions related to the liturgy of the Church have occupied a great amount of time and energy in the past number of years. This effort has not been in vain, because, in fact, great progress has been made in the liturgical field. Through a process of study, reflection and dialogue, a basic agreement has been reached with regard to the text for the Qurbana. I do not mean to say that the remaining areas are insignificant, however the progress which has been made should be the starting point for further discussion. As an aid to this further discussion, the Congregation for Oriental Churches has recently published a Liturgical Instruction for the Oriental Churches which will serve as a guide for each Church in the preparation of its own Liturgical Instruction. This Instruction, copies of which will be made available to the Bishops of the Synod, will provide the essential principles of the liturgy and the guidelines for further adaption to each unique pastoral situation. This Instruction is an invitation to the Synod of Syro-Malabar to begin to reflect on the process which should be adopted for the preparation of a Liturgical
Instruction for the Syro-Malabar liturgy. To begin such a reflection in these days would be very helpful.

The topic of the liturgy cannot be separated from the previous discussion of the identity of the Church. As was so clearly stated by my predecessor, His Eminence Cardinal Lourduzamy, the Church must remember that the point of reference to begin to understand and appreciate the richness of the liturgy must be the patristic and spiritual patrimony which has been given to this Church by tradition. In a letter addressed to the Hierarchy of the Syro-Malabar Church dated 5 May 1988, Cardinal Lourduzamy wrote. “Moreover, importance must be given to the study of the Syriac language, for the purpose of penetrating the heart of the liturgical and patristic sources of the tradition in their full, rich sense. Only through a knowledge of the total ecclesial and theological context of the tradition can be liturgy itself be properly understood”. Without such a basis, any future pastoral adaptation of the liturgy to the contemporary situation in any country or region will prove to be fruitless.

One obligation which we cannot neglect is the task of preparing the other liturgical books of the Syro-Malabar Church. For too long, the Church has been left without this precious heritage which is both enriching and indispensable to the life of a full-fledged community of faith. This Congregation is willing to facilitate and shorten the time of approval of the liturgical books which will be prepared, if approved by the consensus of the Bishops. An experimental approval will be given under this condition, even before the translation of the text into English. It is my sincere wish that this task be addressed as soon as possible.

It cannot be doubted that the task which lies ahead for the Syro-Malabar Church in the field of liturgy is tremendous. Though this task may seem difficult as we look at the work to be done, we should receive great confidence from both the work and results which have been attained thus far, and from the obvious vitality and ability of this Church to tackle this important and necessary work. In this ongoing work, I wish to offer to you the full support and the assistance of the Congrega-
tion for Oriental Churches as the Syro-Malabar Church addresses this challenge in the months ahead.

The topic of the Care of Syro-Malabar Migrants living outside of the Proper Territory of the Church is an issue which we must address immediately. The Bishops of the Syro-Malabar Church have been concerned that the faithful of this Church who have migrated to other regions of India in order to find employment have not received adequate pastoral care in their own rite. Unfortunately, this issue have been the cause of a certain degree of friction between the Latin and Oriental Bishops in India. In both the Documents of the Second Vatican Council and in the recent Letter of the Holy Father addressed to the Bishops of India, the teaching of the Church in this regard has been made abundantly clear. The faithful of each rite should be given pastoral care according to their own tradition and rite wherever and whenever this is possible. On this level of principle, there is very little misunderstanding and disagreement. However, it is the pastoral application of this principle that has been cause of the differences of opinion that we now see. The complexity of the Church in India makes this challenge even more difficult.

In December 1995, the Congregation for Oriental Churches met with several groups of Latin Bishops during their “Ad limina” Visit in Rome. These visits afforded both parties the opportunity to discuss this issue with frankness and attention. It quickly became evident from these discussions that the area to which we must concentrate our efforts is precisely the pastoral application of the care of Syro-Malabar Migrants. A suggestion which emerged from our discussions was the creation of a commission of the CBCI, equally representing the three Catholic Churches in India, to investigate with accuracy and precision the situation of the Syro-Malabar migrants living outside the Proper Territory. Such a joint commission, it seems, will be able to earn the respect of all parties concerned, and thus coordinate an effective program which will ensure the pastoral care of the these faithful. This Congregation would greatly appreciate the thoughts and suggestions of the Syro-Malabar Bishops to this proposal.
In the meantime, where sufficient numbers warrant, these Syro-Malabar faithful should be given Chaplains, parishes and possibly a Vicar General for their spiritual well-being. These ordinary measures are the steps provided for both in the Documents of the Church and the recent Letter of the Holy Father.

On 12 January, the day that this topic receives the attention of the Synod, His Eminence Cardinal Tomko, Prefect of the Congregation for the Evangelization of People, has graciously agreed to be present in the Synod Hall. In recent meetings between these two dicasteries in December of 1995, it was agreed that this issue would receive the full attention of the respective Dicasteries after all the Bishops have had an opportunity to make their opinions heard during the "Ad limina" visits of the Bishops of India. Based upon the co-operation which this Congregation has received in recent months, I have great confidence that this difficulty will receive the attention that it deserves.

The topic of the Missionary activity of the Syro-Malabar Church addresses another issue of tension and friction with the Latin Bishops of India. I fully understand the complaints and problems raised with regard to the Proper Territory. No Church should have difficulty in the exercise of its spirit of evangelization. The Congregation for Oriental Churches is pleased that in the past, certain missionary territories of India have been granted to the Syro-Malabar Church. If the proper conditions are fulfilled in the future the Congregation hopes that even more territories can be granted to the Church for missionary work both in India and in other countries.

A further point which I wish to address is the co-ordination needed between the Syro-Malabar Bishops and the many religious who presently work in the missionary field of North India. A healthy atmosphere of co-operation and mutual respect will greatly help the efforts of the Church in this field. This co-ordination is warmly desired by the Syro-Malabar religious in India.

This final point concerning the missions leads me to add several suggestions with regard to the Religious of the Syro-Malabar Church. I
am delighted that representatives of the numerous men and women religious of this Church are present in Rome to attend this Synod.

As I mentioned above with regard to the co-operation between religious and the Bishops, the Congregation advises that some form of permanent Committee or Commission be erected which could serve as a means for the Bishops and the religious to develop policies and directions for future work. This cooperation and assistance is essential, especially in a Church which has such an enormous number of religious available to the work and mission of the Church. The full appreciation of this unique gift to the Church will bear great fruit in the future.

It is also the hope of this Congregation that in the near future, a document will be published in conjunction with the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life which will address the situation of religious born in an Oriental Church who join a Latin Rite Congregation. Hopefully, such a document could be a guide for all involved in the formation of men and women religious, especially those working with novices and candidates from other rites.

The final topic, the formation of the clergy holds a crucial place of importance in the life of a Church. The Holy Father’s recent Apostolic Exhortation, *Pastores Dabo Vobis* is a comprehensive guide to the formation of the clergy in our times. Central to the Church’s teaching in this field is the fact that during the precious time given for the formation of the clergy, a coherent spiritual, liturgical, pastoral and academic formation is indispensable. The time of formation is not a time for experimentation or conflict between different tendencies.

The time of formation is in fact a special time in the life of the Church when the future of its ordained ministry is given the special care of the Church in order to ensure that the Church of the future will be able to fulfil the commandment of the Lord to proclaim the rich mystery of the Gospel. To transport the tensions, struggles and conflicts of a Church to the place where future priests are being formed is to risk the very future of a vibrant and growing Church. The Congregation strongly recommends that the Bishops address this problem of division in the Schools and Seminaries with great urgency. A seminary formation free
from division and acrimony will allow those young men who have generously given their lives to Christ and the Church to become faithful servants in the sacramental ministry of the priesthood. This principle holds equally true for the formation of religious.

I well remember that when I was appointed Prefect of the Congregation for Oriental Churches, I was first introduced to the complexity of the challenges facing the Syro-Malabar Church. It took time to fully grasp the issues at hand. The situation has seen significant progress in the past few years: the Syro-Malabar Church has been raised to the status of a Major Archiepiscopal Church, the canonical structures of this status have been carefully established and the Bishops have made enormous progress in the exercise of the Synod as the instrument of the pastoral care of the Church. With the resources available to this Church, resources granted to it through the providence of God, there is no reason to think that the present difficulties of this Church cannot be addressed in a manner which will provide for lasting solutions. Of course the present Synod will be of the utmost importance for the future of this Apostolic Church to which the Holy Spirit has established you as Pastors of Christ’s flock. Every Church passes through times of trial, but the valley of tears becomes a harvest of joy if we accept the moment of crisis as a pressing invitation to strong communion. And here, in this very fact, rests the importance of this Synod, the forum in which the Bishops of this Church can strengthen a communion which will in itself solve many of these difficulties.

It is to this point that I address my final exhortation to you, the Bishops of the Syro-Malabar Church. Here also I address my fervent prayer, that the blessings of Almighty God may dispose each of us to work faithfully for His Church in these days and that we may experience the presence of his care and love in the work before us.

In closing, I quote the words of the Apostle Paul, addressed to the people of Ephesus:

“I therefore, a prisoner of the Lord, exhort you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you were called, with all humility and meekness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, careful to observe the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace” (Eph 4:1-3).
WELCOME SPEECH

by

Cardinal Antony Padiyara

Your Eminences, Your Excellencies, Monsignori, Rev Fathers, Sisters, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a pleasure for me to welcome all of you to this synodal assembly of the bishops of the Syro-Malabar Church. I welcome whole heartedly the Synodal Fathers, the delegates from our Church and the experts who have spared no pains to be present here. Unlike in the previous assemblies we are honoured by the presence of the representatives of the Holy See, particularly of His Eminence Cardinal Achille Silvestrini and the officials of the Congregation for the Oriental Churches. There are also the eminent speakers, consultors and experts present at the invitation of the Congregation for the Oriental Churches. I extend most cordial welcome to all of you.

Pope Pius XI of venerable memory wrote in his bull Romani Pontifices:

This (Syro-Malabar) Church has a noble place among all the Oriental Churches, because its origins are traced back to the most ancient Christian communities who received the light of the Gospel from Apostle Thomas.¹

Indeed, we are ever grateful to God Almighty for his special love for his sons and daughters in India for sending none other than one of the apostles of His Beloved Son with the Good News of the Kingdom. The fire of faith kindled in the hearts of our forefathers by Apostle Thomas remained and remains intact in spite of the trials and tribulations which this community had to undergo during the past two thousand years. De-

¹ Ecclesia illa nobilém inter Orientales obtinet locum, quum originem ducat ex antiquissimis christianis communitatibus, quae a Thoma Apostolo lucem Evangelií receperunt. AAS 7 (1924) 257.
spite the long distance and the absence of effective communication, the Church of St Thomas Christians ever maintained its communion with the See of Blessed Apostle Peter. We, as representatives of that community of faithful, witness to that faith and communion. We treasure this moment, the moment of meeting in Synod together with the successor of Apostle Peter, who presides over the Church of Christ in charity and who has received the mandate from our Lord to confirm his brethren in faith. We see this synodal assembly convened near the tomb of St Peter and in the presence of his successor as a part of his ministry of confirming his brethren in faith. On this occasion I bring to him the greetings of our faithful and in the name of the entire Syro-Malabar Church I thank His Holiness for this petrine ministry.

Today Thomas is meeting Peter. The Law of Thomas meets the Law of Peter. However, what matters is neither Thomas nor Peter, but Jesus Christ. We have our differences, of faith expression, of culture, of language, of race, but we are one with the Universal Church; we are united in the faith in Jesus Christ who became man to redeem the mankind irrespective of caste, culture and colour. Therefore, we, the participants of this Synod too, share the sentiments expressed by our Holy Father in his apostolic letter Orientale Lumen:

*Going beyond our own frailties, we must turn to him, the one Teacher, sharing in his death so as to purify ourselves from the jealous attachment to feelings and memories, not of the great things God has done for us, but of the human affairs of a past that still weighs heavily on our hearts. May the Spirit clarify our gaze so that together we may reach out to contemporary man who is waiting for the good news. If we make a harmonious, illuminating, life-giving response to the world’s expectations and sufferings, we will truly contribute to a more effective proclamation of the Gospel among the people of our time.” (No. 4)*

The task of this Synodal assembly is to show to our brethren, Catholic and non-Catholic, Christian and non-Christian, that the Cross of Christ is not emptied of its power (cf. 1 Cor. 1:17). As the Holy
Father wrote in *Orientale Lumen*, “if the Cross of Christ is emptied of its power, man no longer has roots, he no longer has prospects: he is destroyed” (No. 3).

I say this because, I am afraid, the recent developments in our Church give the impression that the Cross of Christ is slowly losing its power and that the ways of the world are growingly gaining control. But “the women and men of today are asking us to show them Christ, who knows the Father and who has revealed him (cf. Jn 8:55; 14:8-11)” [OL No. 4]. My wish and prayer is that this Synodal assembly enable us to respond to that question effectively.

The whole question is about regaining the allegedly lost identity of the Syro-Malabar Church by restoring its liturgy and customs to their pristine purity by shedding all the so-called Latin elements. There is tension because of this: some want a thorough purification and restoration of the customs and traditions, while others want to purify them and adapt them to the present day situations. Regarding Traditions in the Church our Holy Father wrote in *Orientale Lumen*:

*Tradition is the heritage of Christ’s Church. This is a living memory of the Risen One met and witnessed to by the Apostles who passed on his living memory to their successors in an uninterrupted line, guaranteed by the apostolic succession through the laying of hands, down to the Bishops today. This is articulated in the historical and cultural patrimony of each Church, shaped by the witness of the martyrs, fathers and saints, as well as by the living faith of all Christians down the centuries to our own day. It is not an unchanging repetition of formulas, but a heritage which preserves its original, living kerygmatic core. It is Tradition that preserves the Church from the danger of gathering only changing opinions, and guarantees her certitude and continuity. When the uses and customs belonging to each Church are considered as absolutely unchangeable, there is a sure risk of Tradition losing that feature of a living reality which grows and develops, and which the Spirit guarantees pre-
cisely because it has something to say to the people of every age. As Scripture is increasingly understood by those who read it, every other element of the Church's living heritage is increasingly understood by believers and is enriched by new contributions, in fidelity and in continuity. Only a religious assimilation, in the obedience of faith, of what the Church calls "Tradition" will enable Tradition to be embodied in different cultural and historical situations and conditions. Tradition is never pure nostalgia for things or forms of past, nor regret for lost privileges, but the living memory of the Bride, kept eternally youthful by the Love that dwells within her. (No. 8).

I believe that what His Holiness wrote was an explanation of what Vatican II said in its decree on Eastern Churches (OE) No. 2:

The Catholic Church wishes the traditions of each particular church or rite to remain whole and entire, and it likewise wishes to adapt its own way of life to the needs of different times and places.

I am convinced that what His Holiness wrote about tradition is more than enough to remove the present tension in the Syro-Malabar Church regarding its identity and liturgy about which papers will be presented in the Synodal assembly. Let the Spirit of the Lord guide us in discerning the genuine traditions and to restore them for the benefit of His People.

The Council solemnly declared that "the Churches of the East like those of the West have the right and duty to govern themselves according to their own special disciplines" because the ecclesiastical and spiritual heritage of the Eastern Churches is the common heritage of the Universal Church (OE No. 5). The Council further said:

The Patriarchs with their Synods are the highest authority for all business of the patriarchate, not excepting the right of setting up new eparchies, and appointing bishops of
their rite within the patriarchal territory, without prejudice to the inalienable right of the Roman Pontiff to intervene in any particular case (No. 9).

The best way to reduce the tension in our Church with regard to the functioning of the Synod and to streamline other canonical matters as well as to hasten the ecumenical movement in our country is the implementation of these council directives as early as possible and in its fullness. It will also be a proof of the commitment of all persons concerned to implement the prescriptions of canon law (CCEO, cc. 55 - 113) promulgated by the supreme authority of the Church.

In *Orientalium Ecclesiarum* we read:

*The holy Catholic Church... is made up of the faithful who are organically united in the Holy Spirit... They combine into different groups, which are held together by their hierarchy, and so form particular churches or rites... (OE No. 2) ... Provision must be made therefore everywhere in the world to protect and advance all these individual churches. For this purpose, each should organize its own parishes and hierarchy, where the spiritual good of the faithful requires it (No. 4).*

Pastoral care of the Syro-Malabar migrants within and outside India has been a growing concern of this Church. But unless due cooperation is had from all including the Roman dicasteries by imbibing the spirit behind these proclamations the Syro-Malabar hierarchy is in a helpless situation. I appeal to His Holiness to take immediate steps for the implementation of the Council directives in this regard.

The same is to be said also of the missionary enterprise of the Syro-Malabar Church. The Council said:

*These individual churches both Eastern and Western... are equally entrusted to the pastoral guidance of the Roman Pontiff... Therefore these churches are of equal rank, so that none of them is superior to the others... They have the*
same rights and obligations, even with regard to the preaching of the Gospel to the whole world, under the direction of the Roman Pontiff (OE No. 3).

As the history of the discussions in the Council shows, this passage was added specifically in view of the Syro-Malabar Church. More than 30 years have passed since this declaration was made. But progress of its implementation has not been very much encouraging. In order that it be not too late and that the enormous potential of the Syro-Malabar Church may not be wasted steps are to be taken for the expansion of the missionary enterprises of the Syro-Malabar Church, not only within India but also outside. It will also be a proof for the commitment of the See of Peter to protect and promote the Oriental Churches.

The Syro-Malabar Church is blessed with vocations to priesthood and other consecrated forms of life. I believe that it is the result of the deep religiosity of our faithful. It is essential that these vocations are properly taken care of and the candidates are given adequate training. I am confident that we have the facilities for that too. However, it is unfortunate that the spirit of antagonism and rivalry in the liturgical field has its hold in this field too. It goes without saying that a clerical formation that is not based on the message of the Gospel of Jesus is no formation at all. Vatican II says:

Superiors and professors should be keenly aware of the extent to which their mental outlook and conduct affects the formation of their students. Under the guidance of the rector they should cultivate the closest harmony of spirit and action, and should form with one another and with the students such a family as corresponds to our Divine Lord’s prayer; “that they may be one” (cf. Jn 17:11), and quickness in the student’s hearts a sense of joy in their vocation” (OT No. 5).

I believe that not only the superiors and professors in our seminaries and faculties, but also their authorities who entrust them with that delicate and noble task, are to meditate on this council declaration,
particularly in the present situation in our Church so that their service may not become a disservice.

Paper will be presented on the role of the Institutes of Consecrated Life in the Syro-Malabar Church. I would again call your attention to the documents of Vatican II. In *Perfectae Caritatis* No. 1 we read the following:

*This (religious life) has considerably contributed towards enabling the Church not merely to be equipped for every good work and to be prepared for the work of the ministry unto the building up of the Body of Christ, but also to appear adorned with the manifold gifts of her children, like a bride adorned for her husband, and to manifest in herself the multiform wisdom of God.*

The religious, then, are not outside of or parallel to the Church but within the Church and forms one with it. It is my wish and prayer that the discussions in this Synod where we have also representatives from the Religious Institutes, be fruitful and effective and lead to a better understanding of their role in the Church.

Church is the People of God (LG 1) and the largest part of this people of God is neither the hierarchy, nor the ordained ministers nor the members of the Institutes of Consecrated life, but the laity. If that portion is neglected all other portions will have it is consequences. Unless there are good families there will not be any vocation to priesthood or religious life. It will also affect adversely the apostolate specific to the laity. The absence of good ministers in turn will affect the Christian formation of the laity. Therefore it is essential to ensure an adequate formation of the laity. We shall listen to the ideas about this too during this assembly.

May the Spirit of the Lord guide us throughout this assembly. May the protection of Mary the Mother of Christ and of St Thomas, Our Father in faith, be with us all.
CONCLUDING SPEECH

by
Cardinal Antony Padiyara

Your Eminence, Your Excellencies, Rev Monsignori, Rev Fathers, Sisters and brothers,

We have come to the end of the week long assembly of our Synod held in this city where the head of the apostolic college has his Holy See. We came to this eternal city for this Holy Synod with a specific aim: to find solutions, together with the representatives of the Holy See, for the problems that beset our Church since a few years. As you are well aware, these problems concern mainly the identity and liturgy of our Church. In our attempt, we thought over and discussed the various aspects of the problem. We identified the problems and proposed various solutions, particularly in the field of liturgical celebration. We have also decided to accept a few of those proposals for the sake of unity of our Church which is very much in the heart of all of us. It goes without saying that they will not be acceptable to all of us in the same measure. But we accept them because we know that it is the salvation of the people of God that directs the actions in the Church of Christ.

Our Lord wants us to be of one mind and one heart. He prayed for us: “Holy father, keep them in thy name, which thou hast given me, that they may be one, even as we are one” (Jn 17: 11). Indeed, God is one and triune at the same time. There are no three Gods, even though there are three persons in the Holy Trinity. Each person of the Holy Trinity maintains his identity even while the Godhead keeps the unity. This is what God demands from us today. We, as human individuals, are different one from the other. But that does not mean that, as members of his mystical body, we can be independent. That trinitarian unity should reflect in us without losing the identity of any one of us. That is a challenge which we have to take up.
We too ardently desire for unity among us, as was made clear abundantly during the last one week. But how are we going to arrive at this unity? It is by putting ourselves as the sons of the Eternal Father. People call us fathers and we do are and should be so. They, as our spiritual children, come to us for solace and comfort and we have a duty to give them what they aspire for. Then, unless we pose ourselves as children of someone, the Eternal Father, we will not be able to get that solace and comfort in our own lives. Unless we ourselves have it, how are we going to transmit it to others? So let us ask our Father as His children to be present in our midst. I am sure, he as a loving father, will only be too happy to do so. What is required is the openness of our hearts, our readiness to leave to God to arbiter for us.

Our faithful, who look to us for leadership and guidance, expect us to be united in mind and heart. I believe that our very existence is dependent on them. Every one of us was ordained bishop for one or other eparchy. There is no bishop without an eparchy. Even the so called titular bishops have an eparchy even though that exists only in title. An eparchy is a portion of the people of God (CCEO, c.177§1). That shows that without the people of God a bishop has no existence. It also shows that their salvation must be our first motive in doing anything.

I am fully conscious that the resolutions that we took in this Synod are extremely difficult to put into practice, particularly for those who are not convinced of them. It is also a question of going against one’s own conscience. I understand the agony of you, my brothers, of both sides. But then, we are reminded of the words of Jesus: “When a women is in travail she has sorrow, because her hour has come; but when she is delivered of the child, she no longer remembers the anguish, for joy that a child is born into the world. So you have sorrow now, but I will see you again and your hearts will rejoice, and none will take your joy from you” (Jn 16:22). Will it not be great relief for all of us when we have found a solution for the liturgical problem which has been plaguing our Church for such a long time and that has caused enormous scandal to the faithful? Indeed, there can be a sense of victory or defeat in you depending on the stand you took. That is very human. But who are we?
We are only servants, useless servants. It is the victory or defeat of the Master that counts. I would repeat what I said in my introductory speech: "It is neither Peter nor Thomas that counts but Jesus Christ." It is the people of God that matters for us.

At this juncture I am reminded of the words of Jesus to His Father: "I do not pray that thou shouldst take them out of the world, but thou shouldst keep them from the evil one. They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. Sanctify them in the truth, thy word is truth" (Jn.17:16-17). I believe and am convinced that the prayer of the Lord will not go unanswered. We are still to live in the world and manifest the glory of Christ to it as He himself manifested the glory of the Father to us. We are to be sanctified in the truth which is the Word of God made flesh, Jesus Christ. We are not alone in this task of ours for Jesus says "I will not leave you desolate, I will come to you" (Jn. 14: 18). O Lord, come to us. Please do not leave us desolate in our search for unity.

We are not alone in our search; we are part of that mystical body of the Lord of which he made Peter the head to confirm his brethren in faith. As our Holy Father Pope John Paul II said in his opening address to us: "To walk together in step is a victory for all, and a victory for faith and love. The Bishop of Rome does not wish to leave you alone on this path. He wants to be a help, a bridge, a means of communion. He will continue to walk each step with you, not in order to deny you your just autonomy, but to fulfill to the utmost the ministry which Christ entrusted to Peter: to strengthen the brethren and to confirm them in faith and communion (Lk. 22:32)." We have no reason to disbelieve the words of the Successor of Blessed apostle Peter to whom our Lord entrusted the Church; on whom the Church is built up.

It is up to us now to choose. Jesus says: "If a man does not abide in me, he is cast forth as a branch and withers, and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire and burned" (Jn. 15. 6). Indeed, we are not isolated branches of a tree and we cannot afford to be so for the simple reason that it is a concept foreign to the Church of Christ. In this
regard I recall your attention to the what Mar Paul Chittilapilly said in his homily on the opening day: "We are not looking for solutions as individuals but as a community of believers in Jesus Christ. Let no one think that he or she can face this situation alone or find out the right solution without the cooperation and collaboration of others. We as believers in Jesus Christ are called to be in communion with him and with our fellow believers. It is that communion that brings us to the right solution for our present problems of which we are concerned." We were doing that in this Synod. Even though canonically only the bishops are members of the Synod of an Oriental Church we have had here representatives of the Insitutes of Consecrated Life as well as the laity in our Church. We have had the presence of the representatives of the Holy See also. It is beyond doubt that they have made their own contributions in our search.

Then, how are we to know whether we have made the right choice in our search for unity? Jesus says: "If you love me you will keep my commandments" (Jn 14:14). What is that commandment? "Love your God with all your heart. So also love your neighbour as yourself." "So if you are offering your gift at the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar and go, first be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift" (Mt. 5: 24). Jesus again says: "Not everyone who says to me 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of my Father in heaven" (Mt. 7:21).

As someone remarked during this Synod, neither canon law nor the exact observance of the rubrics in liturgy, can unite us. Only a genuine conversion of our hearts can accomplish that unity. It is my wish and prayer that we leave this Synodal hall with converted hearts which will bring about reconciliation and unity in our Church. May Mary the Mother of Christ and St Thomas, our father in faith be with us in this effort of ours. With these words I declare the works of this third Synod of the Syro-Malabar Major Archbishopal Church of Ernakulam-Angamaly as concluded. May God bless you all.
Thanksgiving Address

by

Mar Jacob Manathodath

Your Eminences, Your Excellencies, Rev. Monsignori, Rev. Fathers, sister and brother,

It is always a great relief when we come to the end of meetings of this sort. Our relief, certainly, is much more as we conclude this synodal session on a happy note. We have achieved, at least partially, the aim of our coming together. It has strengthened the communion among ourselves, enriched the communion of our Church with the head of the universal Church and with his representatives. We are in a position to take back to our people a message of unity and reconciliation among the members of the hierarchy.

As secretary of the Synod of Bishops of the Syro-Malabar Church, and on behalf of the Major Archbishop, His Eminence Cardinal Antony Padiyara, it is my privilege to thank all those who have contributed in one way or other for the successful completion of the Synod.

Let us, first of all, thank God who brought us together here near the tomb of Saint Peter, the head of the Apostolic College. Never in the history of our Church has such an event taken place: a full week synodal assembly in the presence of the Holy Father in the City of Rome. We were deeply honoured by the presence of the Holy Father at the inaugural session and were encouraged by his words of confirmation and support in our faith. From the bottom of our heart we thank him for his love and concern for our Church.

Our heartfelt thanks go also to the Congregation for the Oriental Churches and in particular to His Eminence Cardinal Achille Silvestrini, the Prefect, for letting us hold this synod in Rome and for having offered all the assistance for its successful arrangement. His Eminence attended all the sessions of the Synod. We cannot thank him enough for his genuine interest in the welfare of our Church. We ex-
press our sincere thanks also to all the other officials of the Congrega-
tion for their help and support.

If the meeting of the synod went of well, it is due, to a large
extent, to the hard work done by the members of the Joint Preparatory
Commission and by Fr. Jose Porunnedom, the chancellor of the Major
Archiepiscopal Curia. We thank them for their service. We extend our
thanks to all those who presented the papers, especially to the Cardinal
Prefects of other Dicasteries and to those who moderated the sessions,
and in particular to Bishop James Pazhayattil, the Assistant to the Ma-
jor Archbishop. The papers were well prepared. They have helped us to
discuss various issues with frankness and attention.

Our special thanks go to the Delegates of the Syro-Malabar Reli-
gious Conference and of the Syro-Malabar laity. We also thank the
experts for their active presence and timely and scholarly interventions.
We cannot but express our gratitude to the members of the Steering
Committee who keenly followed the discussions and has worked hard to
sort out the issues and present them for our consideration.

As you know, any meeting of this sort will not be a success
without a good team of people behind the scene. We thank our three
Assistants to the synod, the translators, the technicians responsible for
the light, sound, heating etc. and the supervisors of this hall. Our thanks
also to those who served us refreshments and to the press which gave
due coverage to the synod. And finally we thank all of you dear Synodal
Fathers, for your patient and active presence and participation.
SPEECH OF THE HOLY FATHER
AT THE AD LIMINA VISIT

Your Eminence, Dear Brother Bishops,

1. At the conclusion of your ad limina visit, I wish to assure you again of the heartfelt affection and fraternal esteem in which I hold the venerable Oriental Catholic Churches present in India, the Syro-Malabar Church and the Syro-Malankara Church. Your common origins go back to the very beginnings of Christianity, to the preaching of the glorious Apostle Thomas. Today, the dynamic nature of your communities bears witness to the continual presence of the Holy Spirit in the life of each particular Church founded on and sustained by the apostolic tradition. “We are bound to give thanks to God always for you, brethren loved by the Lord, because God chose you from the beginning to be saved, through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth” (2 Thes 2:13). With affection in the Lord, I Congratulate Cardinal Antony Padiyara, the Major Archbishop of the Syro-Malabar Church, who in December celebrated the 50th anniversary of this ordination to the priesthood.

I extend a special welcome to Cyril Mar Baselios, recently appointed Metropolitan Archbishop of Trivandrum of the Syro-Malankara Church. In your Person I greet the whole Syro-Malankara Church, which so effectively blends fidelity to its Oriental tradition with a vigorous commitment to the apostolate. Present in our thoughts at this happy moment are the figures of two unforgettable Pastors, Mar Ivanios, who led you on the path of rediscovered full communion with the See of Peter, and Mar Gregorios, who so wisely directed the development of your Church. I am confident that you will follow in their footsteps, guiding your Church “fortiter et suaviter”.
Hierarchical communion demands a juridical form

2. In his wisdom the Lord has granted to your Churches many signs of His benevolence. Among these we must count the abundant vocations to the priesthood and religious life which He continues to raise up in your families and communities. This gift constitutes a fundamental challenge and responsibility for you as Pastors. It calls for judicious selection of candidates, careful attention to their training, in harmony with your oriental tradition and in accordance with the guidelines issued in recent years by the competent Congregations of the Holy See. Priestly formation should be a precious time of prayer in a peaceful atmosphere of study, reflection and fraternal charity. In such surroundings a vocation flourishes and progresses daily in freedom marked by complete self-giving in response of God's constant fidelity. I exhort you to guard these vocations with great care, never allowing conflicts within a community to affect the integrity of the formation process. I appreciate the fact that an important point has been reached in the Syro-Malabar Synod, which has just taken place, namely, agreement on the need to give special care, solemnity and completeness to the liturgy in your seminaries, with a view to the homogeneous and consistent formation of the clergy.

3. I have followed with keen interest the work of the Synod of the Syro-Malabar Church. You have examined the Synod procedure itself and the all-important question of the nature of communion among its members. An enhanced understanding of the “organic” nature of hierarchical communion, which demands a juridical form and is simultaneously animated by charity (cf. Lumen gentium, Preliminary Explanatory Note), is the proper context in which to address the difficulties which present themselves along the path of your Church’s growth and development.

Persevere in dialogue with separated brethren

There is one result of your Synod which I have noted with particular joy and for which I give you my full support: the unanimous agreement of all the Bishops regarding the steps to be taken by all in
order to foster greater unity in conceiving and celebrating the liturgy. I am grateful to you for the efforts you have made in order to reach this point, and I encourage you to do everything necessary to make this agreement a reality in all your Eparchies.

4. You have also reached further consensus regarding missionary activity and the pastoral care of the faithful in other parts of India and elsewhere in the world. My Letter to the Bishops of India of 28 May 1987 had already given certain indications in this regard. At that time, the dicasteries involved worked with common accord, and concrete results were achieved. It is now necessary to continue the work, in constant dialogue with the Latin-rite Bishops of India. Great openness and mutual understanding are required on the part of all concerned, in the knowledge that the salvation of souls - salus animarum - is the supreme law of pastoral action.

5. Today marks the beginning of this year's Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. Your Churches themselves are living proof of the fact that "legitimate diversity is in no way opposed to the Church's unity, but rather enhances her splendor and contributes greatly to the fulfillment of her mission" (Ut unum sint, n.50). I encourage you to persevere in the dialogue of love and the theological dialogue with your brethren not in full communion with us. In the end, the unity of all Christ's followers is a grace which we must ardently pray for and which we must strive to merit through humble and generous fidelity to the Gospel.

Problems can be solved by listening to the Spirit

6. During your *ad limina* visit you have made present, at the tombs of the Princes of the Apostles, Peter and Paul, and to the heart of the Successor of Peter, the achievements, the hopes and the generous commitment of the priests, religious and lay faithful of the Syro-Malabar and Syro-Malankara Churches. As you return to your Eparchies and seek, through the generous fulfillment of your spiritual and pastoral mission, to strengthen the Christian life of your communities, I exhort you to put all your trust in the Lord: "Unless the
Lord builds the house, those who build it labour in vain. Unless the Lord watches over the city, the watchman stays awake in vain” (Ps 127:1). Let us never forget that the Holy Spirit is the principal architect of the Church’s life amid the vicissitudes of history and the events of every day. Perhaps it is not superfluous to recall that the solution of many problems affecting the Church in every time and place lies in listening intently to the voice of the Holy Spirit as he guides us to the whole truth (cf. Jn 16:13). He makes known that truth to the simple of heart, whose eyes of faith see that which remains hidden to the “wise and understanding” (cf. Mt. 11:25).

May the intercession of Mary, Mother of the Church, strengthen you and all the faithful for the important work that still lies before you. May the Lord sustain you “in such harmony with one another, in accord with Christ Jesus, that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ” (Rom 15:5-6).
MEETING OF THE PERMANENT SYNOD IN ROME
(8-12 May 1995)

I
WELCOME ADDRESS

by
Cardinal Achille Silvestrini

Your Eminence, Your Excellencies,

It is with joy and cordiality that I extend to you the welcome of the Congregation for the Oriental Churches.

As we begin our meetings together, I offer to you first of all, my heartfelt condolences for the death of His Excellency Archbishop Abraham Kattumana. The significant participation at the Memorial Mass at St Peter’s and still more the gathering of the faithful at the Funeral Mass celebrated in your own country—at which we wished to be present the Under Secretary of this Decastery, Father Marco Brogi - demonstrates to all the extent to which the faithful remain close to one who has spent his life in the service of the Church.

We have wanted to organize this meeting in order to share together our thoughts and desires for the future of the Syro-Malabar Church. This desire to meet together carries with it our conviction to be fully available to the common care of the Church, and fulfills the expectations of the Holy Father to strive for an ever-increasing collegiality.

The erection of the Syro-Malabar Church as a Major Archiepiscopal Church in December 1992 was not simply a bureaucratic exercise: it was made in the sincere recognition and conviction of the extraordinary apostolic vitality which distinguishes this Church. The Holy Father is deeply proud of such evangelical ardour.

It is clear, likewise, that the elevation to Major Archiepiscopal status implies the recognition of the full oriental nature of your Church:
it involves, in fact, a canonical status only possible within the ecclesiological and disciplinary guidelines of the Churches of the orient.

Therefore, it will be our common task to work together in order that the lived reality of the Suyro-Malabar Church may continue to respond and grow in the status of the canonical guidelines which it has received. The Holy Father, in the recent Apostolic Letter Orientale Lumen has given to us several indications of great clarity and inspiration regarding this "orientality."

Therefore, the point of departure for our meeting must be a practical plan for the near future: in fact the untimely death of Archbishop Kattumana has created a vacuum which we must fill.

It is the desire of the Congregation for Oriental Churches that together we concentrate our efforts and strengths in order to create a climate of fraternity and unity of intent, so that, as soon as possible, we may be able to witness the nomination of a new Archbishop Major. It is necessary that this nomination be guided by a high sense of ecclesial responsibility for the shared good of your community, the bearer of a tradition which is the patrimony of the Universal Church. Such a decision will then be an expression of your collegial witness, so that in diversity of your personal convictions, your pastoral care and your attentiveness to build up the charity within your particular Church, will demonstrate that you have been called to a defense of the faith and a communal discipline (cf. Lumen gentium, 23).

It is, therefore, an event for which we must prepare, and we desire to prepare for it together. It would be a great achievement, if, on the occasion of the ad limina visit of the Episcopacy of the Syro-Malabar Church, we would be able to confirm, in an appropriate manner, such a nomination in a climate of full unity.

If such were to be the case, it could be hoped that a re-union of the Synod of the Syro-Malabar Church could meet in Rome on the occasion of the next ad limina visit, and thus be able to finalize certain endeavours previously elaborated and to conclude with certain important operative choices.
In order to guarantee the full success of such a meeting, God willing, it will be necessary to choose certain persons who will be able to help the Major Archbishop to promote and maintain close cooperation between the Holy See and the Synod of the Syro-Malabar Church in a manner which will permit the study of various questions in common examination and to treat certain important pre-determined projects.

It is clear that in this ambience some time would need to be reserved for two themes of particular importance: the liturgical prospectives and the formation of the clergy. This involves, in fact, the two focal points in the development of the vitality of a Church.

In the liturgical sector, a plan for the work of the future will need to be undertaken which should be directed, above all else to two ends.

- to guarantee to the Syro-Malabar Church, in the shortest possible time, a complete series of liturgical books, because one cannot have a true identity if one does not have at his disposal the instruments for a global celebration, consistent with the Mystery of Christ, in its various components. With time, this liturgical prospective will need to be founded on the oriental identity, according to the tradition of the Syro-Malabar Church, and yet be open to those adaptations which would be respectful of a truly authentic inculturation. It must be prudent, consistent with the rite, expressive of the novelty of the Christian reality which naturally springs forth from the reality of your Church. Free to experience the creativity of the Spirit which fully corresponds to the teachings of the Second Vatican Council, such an exercise will need to be preceded by an accurate theological, historical and pastoral investigation such that “any new forms adopted should in some way grow organically from forms already existing” (Sacro sacrum Concilium, 23).

- to provide instruments and catechetical guidelines capable of guaranteeing a liturgical and spiritual assimilation appropriate to the Syro-Malabar Church.
In the area of the formation of the clergy certain indications must be made evident in order to facilitate a common approach to the challenge of formation. Such indications make it possible for us to overcome every sterile contradiction and hostility which does nothing but impoverish the apostolic testimony proper to the heart of the evangelical message, that is, charity. The Apostle reminds us that we may even be able to give our body to be burnt, but without charity, such action has no value.

The Oriental Congregation, convinced of the capital importance of this aspect in the life of the Church, continues to devote its attention to the formation of the clergy, making it the centre of its work and service to the Oriental Churches.

Other themes pertaining to the organization of your Church and to pastoral care will be placed on the agenda for a common reflection in accordance both of the proposals which will emerge from our common work in these days and from your preparatory work for these meetings. This common work we wish to see sustained by the prayers of the Christian faithful. In this way such prayers will accompany the pastors until, having come to Rome "videre Petrum", they might be able to leave this city with the joy of heart which is confirmed in faith and is rendered an instrument of peace and unity to the advantage of the Holy Church of God. This we hope and pray with all our hearts.

Concerning these proposals and the expectations of the Synod of the Syro-Malabar Church, I am now ready, with the collaborators of the Congregation, to receive with gratitude the thoughts of Your Eminence and Your Excellencies, the Members of the Permanent Synod, who again I thank for having accepted our invitation.
II

COMMON STATEMENT

His Eminence Antony Cardinal Padiyara, Major Archbishop of the Syro-Malabar Church, and the members of the Permanent Synod of the Syro-Malabar Church, His Excellency Joseph Powathil, Archbishop of Changanacherry, His Excellency Kuriakose Kunnacherry, Bishop of Kottayam, His Excellency Joseph Kundukulam, Bishop of Trichur, and His Excellency Gratian Mundadan, Bishop of Bijnor, have come to Rome at the invitation of His Eminence Achille Cardinal Silvestrini, Prefect of the Congregation for the Oriental Churches. After the sudden death of the Pontifical Delegate to the Syro-Malabar Church, Archbishop Abraham Kattumana, it seemed proper to discuss together the matters relating to the future governance and the continued liturgical restoration and renewal of the Syro-Malabar Church, as well as other important issues such as the formation of the clergy and catechesis.

His Eminence Achille Cardinal Silvestrini welcomed His Eminence Antony Cardinal Padiyara and the members of the Permanent Synod to the Congregation and pledged the full availability of the Congregation to the continued development of the Syro-Malabar Church as a Major Archiepiscopal Church. The Cardinal Prefect expressed great appreciation for the extraordinary vitality, the missionary spirit and the number and quality of vocations of the Syro-Malabar Church. Welcoming the invitation and pledge of availability, the representatives of the Syro-Malabar Church pledged themselves to continue to work to foster the unity of their hierarchy. These same representatives propose to arrive at this unity and communion by their efforts within the Synod. If agreement on particular points is not reached, the Major Archbishop

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1 This the common statement signed by the Major Archbishop with the Permanent Synod of the Syro-Malabar Church and the Congregation for the Oriental Churches at the end of the meeting of Permanent Synod held at the Congregation for the Oriental Churches in Rome from 8 to 12 May 1995.
will refer the difficulty to the Holy See. After a full consultation with the members of the Synod by the Congregation, the Congregation shall arrive at their decision thus solving any outstanding difficulty. In doing so, the congregation and the Synod will act on common desire for the communion and supported by mutual confidence which the Congregation will do its best to increase. The Cardinal Prefect stressed the need to make every effort to reach a convergence and deeper communion which means as effort of good will directed at incorporating as much as possible of the different opinions or desiderata expressed in the Synod.

1. Governance of the Syro-Malabar Church

In 1992, the Holy Father raised the Syro-Malabar Church to the status of a Major Archiepiscopal Church. In doing so, the Holy Father appointed Antony Cardinal Padiyara as the first Archbishop Major, reserving to himself and entrusting the functions of pastoral governance proper to the Major Archbishop to a special Delegate in the person of the late Archbishop Abraham Kattumana.

With the death of Archbishop Kattumana in April 1995, the Holy Father entrusted the function of pastoral governance to Antony Cardinal Padiyara, reserving to himself again the matters concerning episcopal appointments and the liturgical order.

His Eminence Antony Cardinal Padiyara has asked for assistance in order to carry out the functions of pastoral governance in the interim period until a new Archbishop Major takes office. This proposal having been accepted, it was resolved to provide the Major Archbishop with special assistance in the form of a Major Archiepiscopal Assistant appointed by the Holy Father, from among the Bishops of the Syro-Malabar Synod. The appointment will be made by the Holy Father on the basis of names proposed confidentially and individually by the Major Archbishop and the Members of the Permanent Synod, with the view to foster the unity of orientation and intent among the Synod.
2. A Commission for the Synod in Rome

A meeting of the Synod of the Syro-Malabar Church will be convoked by the Major Archbishop and held in Rome at the time of the next “ad limina” visit of the Syro-Malabar hierarchy in January 1996. In order to coordinate the work for this Synod, a special Commission will be created. The President of this Commission will be the Major Archiepiscopal Assistant. This Commission will be composed of the President, two Bishops chosen by the Major Archbishop with the Permanent Synod and two persons appointed by the Holy See.

3. Meeting of the Liturgical Commission

The Congregation for Oriental Churches has invited the Members of the Liturgy Commission of the Syro-Malabar Church to Rome in June 1995 to share the conclusions of the study of the Liturgical Committee of the Congregation on the proposals submitted on the text of the Qurbana. The members of the Liturgical Commission of the Syro-Malabar Synod will be accompanied by two experts, chosen by the Major Archbishop with the permanent Synod as representatives of the prevailing viewpoints.

sd/-  sd/-

* Antony Cardinal Padiyara  * Achille Cardinal Silvestrini

sd/-  sd/-

* Joseph Powathil  * Kuriakose Kunnacherry

sd/-  sd/-

* Joseph Kundukulam  * Gratian Mundadan

At the Congregation for Oriental Churches, 12 May 1995.
NEW PROVISIONS

I

Erection of the Metropolitan See of Trichur

Sacra Congregatio Pro Ecclesiis Orientalibus

DECRETUM

Prot. N. 109/75

Ad augendum bonum spiritualis fidelium Ecclesiae Syro-
malabarensis Apostolica Sedes, anno millesimo octogentesimo
septimo, instituit Exarchiam Apostolicam Trichuriensem, quae non ita
pridem, anno videlicet millesimo nongentesimo vigesimo tertio, ad
gradum Eparchiae evecta est.

Anno millesimo nongentesimo septuagesimo quarto, ab Eparchia
Trichuriensi Eparchia Palghatensis seluncta est. Nuperrime praeterea,
eadem Eparchia Trichuriensis denuo divisa est, cum Eparchia
Irinjalakudensis erecta est.

Ut tres praefatae Eparchiae inter se arctiore vinculo coalescant et
efficaci conspiratione operentur nunc opportunum visum est eas in
Ecclesiasticam Provinciam erigere.

In Audientia die 18 mensis maii anni 1995 ab infrascripto
Cardinali Praefecto Congregationis pro Ecclesiis Orientalibus habita,
Summus Pontifex IOANNES PAULUS II, Eparchiam
TRICHURIENSEM evehere dignatur est ad gradum et dignitatem Sedis
Metropolitanae cum omnibus iuribus officiis et privilegiis adnexis simul
statuens Eparchias PALGHATENSEM et IRINJALAKUDENSEM
suffraganeas esse et in futurum habendas praefatae nuper erectae Sedis
Metropolitanae Trichuriensis.
Idem Summus Pontifex his de rebus praesens Decretum fieri et Litteras Apostolicas sub plumbo mitti iussit.

Datum Romae, ex aedibus Congregationis pro Ecclesiis Orientalibus, die 18 mensis maii anno 1995.

sd/-
Achilles Card. Silvestrini
Praefectus

sd/-
+ Miroslaus S. Marusyn
a secretis
II
Appointment of the Metropolitan of Trichur

Sacra Congregatio Pro Ecclesiis Orientalibus

DECRETUM

Prot. N. 172/70

Summus Pontifex IOANNES PAULUS PP. II.

In Audientia mihi infrascripto Cardinali Praefecto die 18 mensis maii hoc vertente anno concessa Sua sollicitudine pastorali ductus ad munus Archeepiscopi Metropolitae Trichurensis evehere dignatus est Exc.mum ac Rev.mum IOSEPHEM KUNDUKULAM qui adhuc eidem Sedi episcopali praefuit, cum omnibus iuribus, oneribus et facultatibus tali muneri adnexis ad normam Codicis Canonum Ecclesiarum Orientalium.

Idem Summus Pontifex hoc Decretum fieri et Litteras Apostolicas mitti iussit.

Contrariis quibuslibet minime obstantibus.

Datum Romae, ex Aedibus Congregationis pro Ecclesiis Orientalibus, die 18 mensis Maii anno 1995.

sd/-
Achilles Card. Silvestrini
Praefectus

Sd/-
+ Miroslaus S. Marusyn
a secretis
III
Erection of the Metropolitan See of Tellicherry

Sacra Congregatio Pro Ecclesiis Orientalibus

DECRETUM

Prot. N. 294/75

Bono spirituali fidelium Ecclesiae Syro-malabarensis providere cupiens, Apostolica Sedes anno millesimo nongentesimo quinquagesimo terto instituit Eparchiam Tellicherriensem.


Nunc vero preopportunum visum est tres illas Eparchiales in Ecclesiastican Provinciam erigere, ut, tali provisione, potiori vinculo inter se cohaereant ac simul honorem dignitatemque Metropolitanae Sedis augeant.

In Audientia die 18 mensis maii anni 1995 ab infrascripto Cardinali Praefecto Congregationis pro Ecclesiis Orientalibus habita, Summus Pontifex IOANNES PAULUS II, Eparchiam TELLICHERRYIENSEM evehere dignatus est ad gradum et dignitatem Sedis Metropolitanae cum omnibus iuribus, officiis et privilegiis adnexis simul statuens Eparchias MANANTODDIENSEM ET THAMARASSERRENSEM suffraganeas esse et in futurum habendas praefatae nuper erectae Sedis Metropolitanae Tellicherriensis.

Idem Summus Pontifex his de rebus praesens Decretum fieri et Litteras Apostolicas sub plumbo mitti iussit.
Datum Romae, ex aedibus Congregationis pro Ecclesiis Orientalibus, die 18 mensis maii anno 1995.

sd/-
Achilles Card. Silvestrini
Praefectus

sd/-
+ Miroslaus S. Marusyn
a secretis
IV
Appointment of the Metropolitan of Tellicherry

Sacra Congregatio Pro Ecclesiis Orientalibus

DECRETUM

Prot. N. 7/89

Summus Pontifex IOANNES PAULUS PP. II.

In Audientia mihi infrascripto Cardinale Praefecto die 18 mensis maii hoc vertente anno concessa Sua sollicitudine pastorali ductus, promovere et nominare dignatus est ad munus Archeepiscopi Sedis Metropolitanae Tellicherriensis Exc.mum ac Rev.mum GEORGIUM VALIAMATTAM adhuc episcopum eiusdem Sedis episcopalis, cum omnibus iuribus, oneribus et facultatibus tali muneri adnexis ad normam Codicis Canonum Ecclesiarum Orientalium.

Idem Summus Pontifex hoc Decretum fieri et Litteras Apostolicas mitti iussit.

Contrariis quibuslibet minime obstantibus.

Datum Romae, ex Aedibus Congregationis pro Ecclesiis Orientalibus, die 18 mensii Maii anno 1995.

sd/
Achilles Card. Silvestrini
Praefectus

Sd/
+ Miroslaus S. Marusyn
a secretis
Letter of Authorization
for the Bishop of Thamarassery

Apostolic Nunciature
In India

N. 14616

To His Lordship
Right Reverend Mar Jacob Thoomkuzhy
Bishop Elect of Thamarassery
Respectful greetings in Christ!

Whereas His Holiness Pope John Paul II on the 7th of June of the year of the Lord 1995, the 17th of his Pontificate, has appointed You Bishop of Thamarassery,

considering that Holy Church, aiming at the good of the Souls, wishes its new Bishops to take possession of their Sees without any great delay,

making use of the special faculties with which I am invested in virtue of my charge as Papal Representative in India,

I hereby resolve and decree that Your Lordship is authorized to occupy the Episcopal See of Thamarassery even before having received the solemn Papal Bull of your appointment.

Your Lordship will present this document of mine for the purpose of taking canonical possession of the Diocese.

May Christ, the Supreme Shepherd, keep and guide Your Lordship always!
Given in New Delhi at the Apostolic Nunciature, on the 24th day of July of the year of the Lord 1995.

(seal)  

sd/-

+ G. ZUR  
Titular Archbishop of Sesta  
Apostolic Pro-Nuncio in  
India and Nepal
VI
Appointment of
the Administrator of Mananthavady

The Syro-Malabar Major Archiepiscopal Church of Ernakulam-Angamaly

Cardinal Antony Padiyara
Major Archbishop
No. 105/94

Greetings and blessings in the Lord Jesus Christ to

Very Rev. Fr. Joseph Kaniamattam

priest of the eparchy of Mananthavady, until now Syncellus of Mar Jacob Thoomkuzhy, who was transferred recently by the Roman Pontiff to the See of Thamarassery.

In order that the people of God of every eparchy may grow and further in faith and that they may not be left without a pastor of their own in the event of a vacant See the norms of law prescribe that the Major Archbishop should appoint administrators to such eparchies within the stipulated time. After mature reflection and lawful consultations I have found in you the most fitting person to be the administrator of the eparchy of Mananthavady, now vacant because of the transfer of its legitimate pastor. Therefore, taking into consideration your personal virtues and with the consent of the Permanent Synod, I, the Major Archbishop of the Syro-Malabar Church of Ernakulam-Angamaly, in conformity with CCEO, cc. 220 §2, 3 and c.226, appoint you as

THE ADMINISTRATOR OF
THE EPARCHY OF MANANTHAVADY

with all the rights and obligations attached thereto.
This appointment becomes effective on 27 July 1995. However, the authority should be exercised only after taking possession of the office by showing this letter of appointment to the college of consultors of the said eparchy (CCEO, c.220 §4). You are further advised to make known this appointment of you to the entire people of Mananthavady and to observe strictly the norms of law, particularly, CCEO, cc.228 §1 & 2 and c. 229.

I wish and pray that the spirit of the Lord guide and lead you in discharging the duties of your new office.

Given from the Major Archiepiscopal Curia of the Syro-Malabar Church of Ernakulam-Angamaly on Friday, the twenty first day of the month of July of the year one thousand nine hundred and ninety five.

Sd/-

Mar James Pazhayattil
Major Archiepiscopal Assistant

Cardinal Antony Padiyara
Major Archbishop of the Syro-Malabar Church

Sd/-

Chancellor
VII
Appointment of the Major Archiepiscopal Assistant

Sacra Congregatio Pro Ecclesiis Orientalibus

DECRETUM

Prot. N. 99/95

At the audience granted to the undersigned, Cardinal Prefect of the Congregation for the Oriental Churches, on the 18th day of May, 1995,

HIS HOLINESS POPE JOHN PAUL II

in order to facilitate the pastoral governance of the Major Archbishop of the Syro-Malabar Church, approved the proposal of His Eminence Antony Cardinal Padiyara, Major Archbishop of Ernakulam-Angamaly, and the Members of the Permanent Synod of the Syro-Malabar Church, to name an Assistant to the Major Archbishop.

At the same audience, His Holiness, all things pondered, appointed as Assistant to the Major Archbishop, His Excellency the Most Reverend Monsignor James Pazhayattil, Bishop of Irinjalakuda.

For the duration of his mandate, the Assistant to the Major Archbishop shall exercise, in conjunction with the Major Archbishop of Ernakulam-Angamaly, the functions of pastoral governance proper to the Major Archbishop according to the faculties granted and herein enclosed. The Roman Pontiff, however, continues to reserve to His own person all that concerns episcopal elections and the liturgical order.

The Holy Father has established that the aforesaid decision be published and observed by all those concerned.
Given at the Officic of the Congregation for the Oriental Churches, Vatican City, on the 31 day of May, 1995.

sd/-
Achilles Card. Silvestrini
Praefectus

sd/
Miroslaus S. Marusyn
a secretis
Faculties of the Major Archiepiscopal Assistant

Congregatio pro Ecclesiis Orientalibus
Prot. N. 99/95

Faculties of the Assistant to the Major Archbishop of the Syro-Malabar Church

I. The Assistant to the Major Archbishop of the Syro-Malabar Church will have the following faculties:

1. To appoint the date and set the agenda for the Permanent Synod (can. 116, par.1).

2. To appoint the date and set the agenda for the Synod of Bishops (can. 103), with the exception of the Synod to be held in Rome on the occasion of the next ad limina visit of the Syro-Malabar Bishops according to the wish of the Holy Father; to prepare the necessary material, to preside at the meetings of the Preparatory Commission of the Synod and to forsee any other means of preparation (can. 113).

3. To act as moderator of the Synod of Bishops, and of the Permanent Synod.

4. To convoke and preside over the Commissions of the Major Archiepiscopal Curia.

5. To keep the Holy See and the Bishops informed both individually and as a whole, of the activities of the Permanent Synod and the Commissions of the Major Archiepiscopal Curia, and of all other sectors relevant to the state of the Church.
6. To foster the relations between the Liturgical Commission of the Synod and the Liturgical Commission of the Congregation for the Oriental Churches.

7. To organize and implement the program of permanent formation of the clergy.

8. To coordinate charitable activities, in particular, the pastoral care of the Syro-Malabar faithful living outside the proper territory.

9. To foster the relations and to treat the affairs within the competence of the Major Archbishop with the Religious Congregations of the Syro-Malabar Church.

10. To fulfil the duties of the Chancellor of the Paurastya Vidyapitham.

11. To sign together with the Major Archbishop "ad validitatem actus" the documents proper to the office of the Major Archbishop, including Encyclical letters.
IX

Appointment of the Apostolic Visitor for
USA & Canada

Sacra Congregatio Pro Ecclesiis Orientalibus

DECRETUM

Prot. N. 27/83

At the audience granted to the undersigned, Cardinal Prefect of the Congregation for the Oriental Churches, on the 3rd day of February, 1996,

HIS HOLINESS POPE JOHN PAUL II

in order to ensure the appropriate pastoral care of Syro-Malabar faithful living in the United States of America and Canada, approved the proposal of the Synod of the Syro-Malabar Church held in the Vatican in January 1996, to name His Excellency Bishop Gregory Karotemprel, C.M.I., Bishop of Rajkot, as Apostolic Visitor “ad referendum” to the Syro-Malabar faithful living in the United States of America and Canada.

In his capacity as Apostolic Visitor, His Excellency Bishop Karotemprel is asked to determine the number of Syro-Malabar faithful living in these countries and to investigate the state of the pastoral care which they presently receive.

In accordance with CCEO Can 148 § 2, His Excellency is asked to present this Decree of appointment to the Bishop of each Diocese to which these faithful belong.

Upon completion of his visit, His Excellency Bishop Karotemprel is asked to submit a report to the Prefect of the Congregation for the Oriental Churches.
The Holy Father has established that the aforesaid decision be published and observed by all those concerned.

Given at the Office of the Congregation for the Oriental Churches, Vatican City, on the 23rd day of February 1996.

sd/-
Achille Cardinal silvestrini
Prefect

sd/-
+ Miroslav Marusyn
Secretary
Appointment of the Apostolic Visitor for Europe

Sacra Congregatio Pro Ecclesiis Orientalibus

DECRETUM

Prot. N. 82/73

At the audience granted to the undersigned, Cardinal Prefect of the Congregation for the Oriental Churches, on the 3rd day of February, 1996,

HIS HOLINESS POPE JOHN PAUL II

in order to ensure the appropriate pastoral care of Syro-Malabar faithful living in Europe, approved the proposal of the Synod of the Syro-Malabar Church held in the Vatican in January 1996, to name His Excellency Bishop Joseph Pallikaparampil, Bishop of Palai, as Apostolic Visitor "ad referendum" to the Syro-Malabar faithful living in Europe.

In his capacity as Apostolic Visitor, His Excellency Bishop Pallikaparampil is asked to determine the number of Syro-Malabar faithful living in the countries of Europe and to investigate the state of the pastoral care which they presently receive.

In accordance with CCEO Can 148 § 2, His Excellency is asked to present this Decree of appointment to the Bishop of each Diocese to which these faithful belong.

Upon completion of his visit, His Excellency Bishop Pallikaparampil is asked to submit a report to the Prefect of the Congregation for the Oriental Churches.

The Holy Father has established that the aforesaid decision be published and observed by all those concerned.
Given at the Office of the Congregation for the Oriental Churches, Vatican City, on the 23rd day of February 1996.

sd/-
Achille Cardinal silvestrini
Prefect

sd/-
+ Miroslav Marusyn
Secretary
To the People of God in the Syro-Malabar Church, in particular to the venerable members of the Synod of Bishops, the Major Archiepiscopal Administrators, and the Major Superiors of the Institutes of Consecrated Life.

Grace and love from God the Father and Our Lord Jesus Christ.

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Our Lord,

As you are well aware an assembly of the Synod of bishops of the Syro-Malabar Church was held in the Vatican from 8 to 16 January 1996. This was already agreed upon in the meeting of the Permanent Synod held in May 1995 in Rome. In early October a delegation from the Congregation for the Oriental Churches was at the Major Archiepiscopal Curia at Mount St Thomas, for the preparation of this Synod. The delegation met almost all our bishops within the territorium proprium as well as a few from outside. Discussions were held also with the Preparatory Commission for the Synod and the representatives of the various canonical bodies in our Church.

In early December 1995 the Preparatory Commission consisting of three members of the Synod again met in Rome together with the Major Archbishop and the officials of the Congregation for the Oriental Churches and finalized the agenda for the Roman Synod. Accordingly nine papers were prepared. Agreement was reached as to the persons to present them also. They were the following: Synodal functioning (Mar Mathew Vattakuzhy), identity of the Syro-Malabar Church (Mar Joseph Powathil), Liturgy (Mar Jacob Thoomkuzhy), Pastoral Care of the Syro-Malabar Migrants (Mar Gregory Karotemprel), Missions (Mar Gratian Mundadan), Ecumenism (Mar Joseph Powathil), Formation of the Clergy (Mar Joseph Pallikaparampil), Role of the Religious...
(Mar James Pazhayattil) and *Formation of the Laity* (Mar Jacob Manathodath).

The officials of the Congregation for the Oriental Churches proposed that a paper or two on each of these topics may be presented by its representatives also. They were the following: *Synodal functioning* (Cardinal Josef Ratzinger), *Identity* (Rev Fr Peter-Hans Kolvenbach S.J.), *Liturgy* (Rev Fr Olivier Raquez OSB), *Pastoral Care of the Syro-Malabar Migrants* (Cardinal Josef Tomko, Rev Fr Marco Brogi Ofm), *Missions* (Cardinal Josef Tomko, Msgr. George Mifsud), *Ecumenism* (Cardinal Edward I. Cassidy), *Formation of the Clergy* (Cardinal Pio Laghi, Rev Abbot Michel Van Parys), *Role of the Religious* (Rev Fr Innocenzo Gargano, Rev Abbot Jean Tabet OSB) and *Formation of the Laity* (Cardinal Eduardo Pironio).

Besides the Synodal members, the two administrators of the vacant Sees in our Church participated in the assembly. Representing the Institutes of Consecrated Life there were the president and the vice-president of the *Syro-Malabar Religious Conference* while the vice-president of the *Catholic Council of India* represented the laity. Representatives of the various Vatican Dicasteries, particularly that of the Congregation for the Oriental Churches, also attended the sessions. Two experts in matters of liturgy nominated from our Church and a few other experts nominated by the Congregation for the Oriental Churches were present throughout the assembly.

On the opening day morning, that is on Monday, 8 January 1996, there was the celebration of the Holy Raza at St Peter's Basilica. All the Synodal members and many a Syro-Malabar priest residing in Rome concelebrated. There was a large community of the Syro-Malabar faithful living in Rome for the celebration. Though our Holy Father had promised to be present at the Divine Liturgy, owing to his heavy schedule he could not attend the sacred ceremony. The Prefect of the Congregation for the Oriental Churches, Cardinal Achille Silvestrini and many other eminent persons from the Vatican Curia attended the celebration.
The Divine Liturgy was organized in the collaboration with the Syro-Malabar Mission in Rome.

Soon after the liturgical celebration His Holiness Pope John Paul II inaugurated the Synod. Cardinal Achille Silvestrini also addressed the opening session followed by the introductory address of the Major Archbishop. The following seven days were of intense work and deliberations. Even though, according to the original schedule, the assembly had to be over on 15 January, it was extended to 16 January also, for allowing more time for discussions. The Synod ended on 16th January evening with the concluding speech of the Major Archbishop. In order to sort out concrete issues and to present them to the assembly a five-member ad hoc committee also was constituted. This committee too had its own sessions together with and without the participation of the officials and the representatives of the Congregation for the Oriental Churches.

After the Synod was over the Synodal participants had an audience with the Holy Father. In his address to us he expressed his satisfaction over the outcome of the synod.

It was the aim of this Synodal assembly to have a general consensus regarding the functioning of the Synod in the Syro-Malabar Church, the identity of this Church, liturgy and clerical formation as well as to discuss the questions of the pastoral care of the Syro-Malabar migrants, missions, role of the religious in the Syro-Malabar Church and the formation of the laity. This synodal assembly aimed also at drawing a plan of action for improving the spirit of communion among the members of the hierarchy of the Syro-Malabar Church as well as to further the understanding between the Congregation for the Oriental Churches and the Synod of Bishops.

Among all the topics discussed liturgy took a considerable amount of time for obvious reasons. In the end some practical measures were adopted by the Synod for immediate implementation. Issues related to pastoral care of the Syro-Malabar migrants and the obligation of the
Syro-Malabar Church for evangelization also were discussed at length. The Synod put forward some proposals in this field too.

As to the conception and celebration of the Divine Liturgy the participants realized that the existing differences in this matter have their origin in the different interpretation given to the very history of our Church and particularly of the development of its liturgy. The difference of opinion about the role of the Syro-Malabar Church in the contemporary society, in particular of India, also reflected in the difference in viewing the celebration of the Divine Liturgy.

With regard to the liturgical order in our Church all agreed that there has to be a gradual progress towards homogeneity in conception and celebration especially of the Divine Liturgy. While we strive towards that goal the Synod wishes to take the following as intermediate steps: 1) Erect a centre at Mount St Thomas under the auspices of the Syro-Malabar Bishops’ Synod to make research into the Syro-Malabar liturgy and its relationship to the contemporary Indian culture, and its pastoral needs, giving particular attention to the local languages wherever the Syro-Malabar liturgy is used. 2) Establish wherever possible places of prayer in which the Syro-Malabar liturgy in its integrity can be celebrated with solemnity and available for the faithful for participation. 3) Publish the other liturgical texts with the privileged procedure proposed by the Cardinal Prefect of the Congregation for the Oriental Churches in his opening address of the Synod. 4) Publish the translation of the two remaining anaphoras and prepare new ones under the auspices of the Central Liturgical Committee. 5) Have the Holy Qurbana celebrated in the Major Seminaries, and as far as possible, in the other houses of formation, as per the Taksa, experimenting the Bema in the middle of the Church. On Sundays and feast days normally Qurbana should be celebrated in its full solemnity in these places. 6)

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1 The privileged procedure announced by the Cardinal Prefect: “To publish and use the texts without presenting their English translation first to the Holy See for approval, if there is a general consensus in the Synod regarding the Malayalam texts.”

2 “On Sundays and feast days the Holy Qurbana should be celebrated in its full solemnity” does not necessarily mean the celebration of Raza.
As soon as the Malayalam texts of the Divine Office are officially published, they should be introduced for daily use. 7) For the next two years the Holy Qurbana will be celebrated according to the existing legislation as we move towards convergence on the basis of the other decisions taken by the Synod. 8) Prepare a text for liturgical catechesis approved by the synod. The Synod decided that these norms should be promulgated by the Major Archbishop and are to be read out in all the Churches and other institutions.

For the Pastoral care of the Syro-Malabar Migrants and to promote the missionary enterprise of the Syro-Malabar Church the Synod renewed the requests to the Holy Father 1) that the entire India be declared multijurisdictional in order to facilitate the pastoral care of the Syro-Malabarians who are at present living outside the territorium proprium, and as a first step to appoint an apostolic visitator who will study the matter and refer it to the Holy See and the Major Archbishop; 2) to declare the eparchies that are at present outside the territorium proprium as territorium proprium in view of granting the request No. 1; 3) to establish an eparchy each in New Delhi and Bangalore; 4) to appoint two apostolic visitators, namely one for the Syro-Malabar migrants in USA and Canada in view of erecting an eparchy there and the other for those in Europe; 5) to regroup the Syro-Malabar eparchies which are at present outside the territorium proprium under two Syro-Malabar Metropolitans and 6) to entrust more areas for undertaking missionary work by the Syro-Malabar Church. Among them the requests regarding USA and Canada and Europe have already been granted. Details will be worked out very soon. The Synod decided also to form a Commission for Missions in which there will be the representatives of the various Institutes of Consecrated Life in the Syro-Malabar Church and qualified lay persons.

3 "For the next two years the Holy Qurbana will be celebrated according to the existing legislation" means that all the options and dispensations will continue as now. "Experimenting with the bema in the middle of the church" is applicable only to the Major Seminaries and "as far as possible" to other houses of formation.
As you can see from the dispositions of the Synod enumerated above, there are more than one concrete proposals with regard to the liturgical order. It has been hoped that the much desired unity in liturgical matters and the homogeneity in the conception and celebration of the Divine Liturgy in our Church will be a reality through the implementation of these dispositions. May I request your collaboration and cooperation in this matter.

In implementing the synodal dispositions let us not, however, forget the most important principle, namely salvation of the People of God. Unless we are very careful there is a sure risk that this vital principle is pushed to oblivion. As you are aware the difference of opinion in the liturgical field is mostly around the question of “authentic tradition” and the present synodal dispositions are meant to preserve that tradition. I would like to conclude this letter with the words of our Holy Father John Paul II. He wrote in his recent apostolic letter Orientale lumen:

Tradition is the heritage of Christ’s Church. This is a living memory of the Risen One met and witnessed to by the Apostles who passed on his living memory to their successors in an uninterrupted line, guaranteed by the apostolic succession through the laying of hands, down to the Bishops today. This is articulated in the historical and cultural patrimony of each Church, shaped by the witness of the martyrs, fathers and saints, as well as by the living faith of all Christians down the centuries to our own day. It is not an unchanging repetition of formulas, but a heritage which preserves its original, living kerygmatic core. It is Tradition that preserves the Church from the danger of gathering only changing opinions, and guarantees her certitude and continuity. When the uses and customs belonging to each Church are considered as absolutely unchangeable, there is a sure risk of Tradition losing that feature of a living reality which grows and develops, and which the Spirit guarantees precisely because it has something to say to the people of every age. As Scripture is increasingly
understood by those who read it, every other element of
the Church's living heritage is increasingly understood by
believers and is enriched by new contributions, in fidelity
and in continuity. Only a religious assimilation, in the obe-
dience of faith, of what the Church calls "Tradition" will
enable Tradition to be embodied in different cultural and
historical situations and conditions. Tradition is never
pure nostalgia for things or forms of past, nor regret for
lost privileges, but the living memory of the Bride, kept
eternally youthful by the Love that dwells within her."
(Orientale Lumen, No. 8).

Indeed, our challenge today is to keep up that living memory of
the Bride in fidelity and continuity and at the same time through a
religious assimilation of what we call tradition which is "articulated in
the historical and cultural patrimony of each Church, shaped by the
witness of the martyrs, fathers and saints, as well as by the living faith
of all Christians down the centuries to our own day." May the Spirit of
God continue to illumine us to meet this challenge courageously and
successfully.

Given from the Major Archiepiscopal Curia at Ernakulam on 1st
March 1996.

sd/-
Cardinal Antony Padiyara

sd/-
Mar James Pazhayattil
Major Archbishop of the
Major Archiepiscopal Assistant
Syro-Malabar Church

Note: This circular letter, together with the explanations given in
the foot notes, is to be published in all the eparchial bulletins.
നിരോധം അഭയമായി മാറിയ ക്രമേണ വിപുലജന്യത ഉയർന്നു. പരിസ്ഥിതിയിൽ നിന്ന് ഉറപ്പ് വന്നതാൽ പരിപുലജന്യയും കായികാവലിയും അഠാലപ്രസ്ഥാനമാക്കിയിട്ടുള്ള നിരോധതയ്യാവുകളെ ക്രമേണ പെടുത്തിയ പരിശീലനാവിധേയങ്ങളില്‍ നിരോധതായി നിരോധതയ്യാവുകളെ പെടുത്തിയ പരിശീലനാവിധേയങ്ങളില്‍ നിരോധതയ്യാവുകളെ പെടുത്തിയ പരിശീലനാവിധേയങ്ങളില്‍ നിരോധതയ്യാവുകളെ പെടുത്തിയ പരിശീലനാവിധേയങ്ങളില്‍

നിരോധതയ്യാവുകളെ പെടുത്തിയ പരിശീലനാവിധേയങ്ങളില്‍

എന്തെങ്കിലും അബദ്ധതയും പ്രയോജനമാണ്‌ത്തിന്റെ വൃദ്ധിയെന്തെങ്കിലും അബദ്ധതയും പ്രയോജനമാണ്‌ത്തിന്റെ വൃദ്ധി

1944 ലെ വിനോദത്തിൽ 21-00 വിവാഹമാക്കിയിരുന്ന എല്ലാവരും കാലാവധി പൂർണ്ണമായും വാഴ്ത്തുന്ന സാമ്പത്തിക പ്രയോജനമാക്കിയിരുന്ന എല്ലാവരും നോക്കിയെതിരായി വാഴ്ത്തുന്ന സാമ്പത്തിക പ്രയോജനമാക്കിയിരുന്ന എല്ലാവരും നോക്കിയെതിരായി വാഴ്ത്തുന്ന സാമ്പത്തിക പ്രയോജനമാക്കിയിരുന്ന എല്ലാവരും നോക്കിയെതിരായി വാഴ്ത്തുന്ന സാമ്പത്തിക പ്രയോജനമാക്കിയിരുന്ന എല്ലാവരും നോക്കിയെതിരായി വാഴ്ത്തുന്ന സാമ്പത്തിക പ്രയോജനമാക്കിയിരുന്ന എല്ലാവരും നോക്കിയെതിരായി വാഴ്ത്തുന്ന സാമ്പത്തിക പ്രയോജനമാക്കിയിരുന്ന എല്ലാവരും നോക്കിയെതിരായി വാഴ്ത്തുന്ന സാമ്പത്തിക പ്രയോജനമാക്കിയിരുന്ന എല്ലാവരും നോക്കിയെതിരായി വാഴ്ത്തുന്ന സാമ്പത്തിക പ്രയോജനമാക്കിയിരുന്ന എല്ലാവരും 

1991-ലെ വിവാഹങ്ങളുടെ കാലാവധി വൃദ്ധിക്കും മാലിന്യം വൃദ്ധിക്കും സാമ്പത്തിക പ്രയോജനമാക്കിയിരുന്ന എല്ലാവരും നോക്കിയെതിരായി വാഴ്ത്തുന്ന സാമ്പത്തിക പ്രയോജനമാക്കിയിരുന്ന എല്ലാവരും 

എന്തെങ്കിലും അബദ്ധതയും പ്രയോജനമാണ്‌ത്തിന്റെ വൃദ്ധി
കോഞ്ചയാത്രയുടെ വിധം. കുടാലങ്ങൾ മുക്തയും പ്രാന്തങ്ങളിലെ വിദ്യാഭ്യാസകേന്ദ്രങ്ങൾ നിവാരണത്തിലെ പ്രാചക്രകളും അടുത്തു കാലത്തുമുണ്ടായിരുന്നു എന്ന് പറയാം. പ്രാചക്രകളിൽ ലഭിച്ച മനോരാജ്യത്തിന്റെ വിദ്യാഭ്യാസം രേഖകളും കുടാലങ്ങളും (എന്നിങ്ങനെ) അടുത്തു ഒരു കലാസിദ്ധാന്തിക പിന്തുണയും സമാപ്തി ചെയ്തു. കുടാലകൾ പിന്തുണയുടെ കാര്യാലിയിലും അനുയോജ്യമായി നിൽക്കുമെന്ന് പ്രാചക്രകളുടെ വിദ്യാഭ്യാസം രേഖകളിൽ പ്രാമാരികമായി അഭിപ്രായം പ്രകടമാക്കുന്നു.

കുടാലുകളുടെ പിന്തുണയുടെ കാലത്ത് 4-30 വയസ്സിനു കൂടുതൽ കൂടെയുള്ള കലാസിദ്ധാന്തിക പിന്തുണയുടെ കാലത്ത് നടന്ന മൂന്നായും നൂറ്റാണ്ടുകളിലെ അഞ്ചാം നൂറ്റാണ്ടിന്റെ രണ്ടാം ശതകം വരെയുള്ള കാലത്തിനകത്ത് കുടാലങ്ങളുടെ നിവാരണത്തിന്റെ വിദ്യാഭ്യാസം (അർത്ഥമായി നിവാരണത്തിനെ രേഖക്കുന്നു) പ്രചരിപ്പിച്ചു. കുടാലം കാലായോഗ്യമായ കുടാലസിദ്ധാന്തിക പിന്തുണയുടെ കാലത്ത് 15-30 വയസ്സിൽ നിന്ന് വരെ കുടാലം നിൽക്കുന്നെന്ന് നിവാരണത്തിന്റെ വിദ്യാഭ്യാസം (സിദ്ധാന്തിക പിന്തുണയുടെ) പ്രവൃത്തിയും കാര്യങ്ങളും സമരപ്പിക്കപ്പെടുന്നു.

അനുസരിച്ചിലേയ്ക്ക് യാതൊരു പ്രാചക്രകളുടെ വിദ്യാഭ്യാസം കുടാലം പ്രാചക്രകളുടെ കാലത്ത് കുടാലം പ്രാചക്രകളുടെ നിവാരണത്തിന്റെ വിദ്യാഭ്യാസം രേഖകളും പ്രായമൂലമായാണ് കുടാലത്തിന്റെ വിദ്യാഭ്യാസം രേഖകളും കുടാലം പ്രാചക്രകളിലെ കലാസിദ്ധാന്തിക പിന്തുണയുടെ അഞ്ചാം നൂറ്റാണ്ടിലും (അർത്ഥമായി)

ഏകാധിപത്യത്തിന്റെ കാലത്ത് (കഴിഞ്ഞത്) കുടാലം പ്രാചക്രകളുടെ വിദ്യാഭ്യാസം രേഖകളും കുടാലം സിദ്ധാന്തിക പേരുകളും 1996 വേദന മാസത്തിൽ 15-30 വയസ്സിൽ.
SYRO-MALABAR CHURCH ABROAD

ST Thomas India Catholic Mission—Detroit (USA)

The Syro-Malabar families in Detroit, numbering more than 140, formed themselves into a community in 1980. In order to provide better pastoral care for these faithful a Syro-Malabar priest in the person of Rev Fr Joseph Nagaroor was appointed 1986 as chaplain by the archbishop of Detroit in consultation with the erstwhile Syro-Malabar Bishops’ Conference. On 30 January 1995 the chaplaincy was raised to the status of a mission. The mission has its own directives, parish council and administrative council, approved by the archdiocese of Detroit.

His Eminence Cardinal Adam Maida appointed Fr John Melepuram as the administrator of the new Mission on recommendation of the Syro-Malabar Synodal Commission for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Missions. He is at the same associate pastor of St Mary Magdalene Parish at Melvindale, also.

The mission has its disposal the facilities of St Mary Magdalene Parish, Melvindale, for use. The Syro-Malabar community meets together every alternative Sundays in the parish church for Divine Liturgy and for a social gathering and cultural programmes.

St Thomas India Catholic Mission for the Syro-Malabarians was formally inaugurated on 5 August 1995 by His Eminence Cardinal Antony Padiyara, the Major Archbishop of the Syro-Malabar Church. His Eminence Cardinal Adam Maida, Archbishop Joseph Kundukulam (Trichur), Bishop Ibrahim N. Ibrahim (Chaldean Bishop of Detroit) and Bishop Walter J. Schoenherr (Auxiliary Bishop of Detroit), Fr Jim Curtin (Parish Priest) and the entire Syro-Malabar Community of the Mission were present on the occasion.
Speech of Cardinal Maida at the Inaugural Function

Your beatitude Anthony Cardinal Padiyara, Archbishop Joseph Kundukulam, Bishops Ibrahim and Schoenherr, Father John Melepuram and members of the St Thomas Catholic Mission for Kerala Catholics, Father Curtin and members of St Mary Magdalene Parish and friends all:

This is a very historic and symbolic moment in the life of the Church of Detroit and the Church of the Syro-Malabar Rite here in the Archdiocese and throughout the world. We have present with us two members of the College of Cardinals—Cardinal Padiyara, Major Archbishop of the Syro-Malabar Church throughout the world and myself, representing the Archdiocese of Detroit. This is a moment of special ecclesial communion as we solemnize in Word and Sacrament, in formal decree and celebration the establishment of the St Thomas Indian Catholic Mission for the Syro-Malabar Community in the Archdiocese of Detroit.

Technically, this community was already given its official status in the Church earlier this year with the official appointment of Father John Melepuram as Administrator. Today's celebration is an opportunity to formally recognize this new development in your history with the official leaders of both of our communities. Since 1980, the Archdiocese of Detroit has been blessed with the presence of the Kerala Catholic Association and the very fervent faith of so many Indian Catholic people who have helped your organization to grow.

From 1986 until 1994, Fr Joseph Nagaroor has served as chaplain to your community, having given loving and patient service. With the transfer of Fr Nagaroor and the arrival of Father Melepuram, it became clear enough to me and to many others within your community that it would be timely to change the status of your association, making your relationship to the Church more ecclesiastically proper and appropriate. You are now officially sanctioned as a Catholic Mission, headed by a priest.
This change in status is certainly symbolic of your growth and the confidence that I and others have in the potential that you have to continue to grow. It also marks significant transition in that a priest is now clearly the head of your group. While Father Joseph Nagaroor was your chaplain, Father Melepuram is your administrator; thus, he is responsible for overseeing all aspects of the life of your community in the same way that a pastor would be in a normal parish community. Perhaps some day, in due course, you will be able to become a full parish. Such a dream will have to wait, however, until sufficient funds and property are available. Hopefully, that day will come before too long.

In the meanwhile, it is important that Your Mission continue to grow in size and strength—not only in terms of numbers but, above all, in term its spiritual sense of communion with each other, always under the leadership of your administrator and in harmony with the leadership of the Syro-Malabar Church and our Holy Father, Pope John Paul II.

My experience with many different ethnic groups here and throughout the country is that there can often be division and rivalry and even a certain lack of loyalty to one another and to those who have been charged with the oversight of the community. I ask you to take the occasion of today’s celebration to make a new beginning for your community, setting aside any past differences, disappointments or resentments and focusing instead on a desire for collaboration and mutual respect. It is all too easy to divide and destroy; even though it is sometimes difficult and challenging, it is ultimately much more fulfilling to build up the well-being of the whole community, the common good. The traditions and culture will survive and even grow stronger to the extent that each and every one of you are in harmony with your shepherd as members of one flock. Remember that the marks of the Holy Spirit are always joy and peace, the fruits of patient endurance.

The Archdiocese of Detroit is very blessed to have over a hundred different ethnic communities which form a mosaic of cultures and
diverse traditions. We are made the richer and the stronger because of communities such as yours. I thank you for your presence among us and I want to assure you of the support and encouragement of the Archdiocese in whatever way we can help you to continue to grow and become stronger. I also thank you for the way that you are involved in so many of our Latin Rite parishes in your geographic neighborhood and for your support of the work of the entire Archdiocese in generous contribution of time and talent to the work of our CSA, our Archdiocesan Endowment and so many other charitable organizations and efforts.

A sign of the communion of life and faith that we share in the Catholic Church is the very presence of Bishop Ibrahim with us today. As Bishop of the Chaldean Catholic diocese, he reminds us of the fact that the Syro-Malabar Rite has its roots in the Chaldean Church. You look back to the apostle, St Thomas, and the wonderful tradition of faith that goes back to the Apostolic Age itself. In a very real way, therefore, we here in the Archdiocese could be considered your younger brothers or sisters in the faith; we too have much to learn and receive from you and are indeed grateful for the giving and receiving that we experience because of our common faith.

This brings to mind the presence among us of Father Curtin and the people of St Mary Magdalene Parish here in Melvindale. For the last seven or eight years, your communities have been interwoven in a very real and tangible way as you share facilities here at the parish. You have come to know and respect one another, sharing your traditions, joys and sorrows. What a beautiful and powerful example of communion!

As I offer these comments, I cannot help but remember some of the very beautiful and powerful words of the Council Fathers of Vatican II in the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, Lumen Gentium, Article 13, when they wrote: "It follows that among all the nations of the earth there is but one people of God which takes its citizens from every race, making them citizens of the Kingdom which
is of a heavenly and not an earthly nature. For all the faithful, scattered throughout the world, are in communion with each other in the Holy Spirit so that ‘he who occupies the See of Rome knows the people of India are his members....’ In virtue of this catholicity, each individual part of the Church contributes through its special gifts, to the good of the other parts of the whole Church. Thus, through the common sharing of gifts and through the common effort to attain fullness and unity, the whole and each of the parts receive increase.”

By happy providence, today’s gathering and celebration coincide with a feast that is very significant in the western calendar, the Dedication of the Church of St Mary Major in Rome. We are reminded that one of the great treasures that we share between the Church of the East and the West is the gift of the Blessed Virgin Mary. On this day so specially dedicated to her, let us re-dedicate ourselves to a ministry of communion, being humble servants like her and with her for the salvation of the world.

May God bless each and every one of you and may we, together, begin to experience even now the mystery of the Kingdom of God as we live in loving communion with one another. Amen

Thanks-giving Speech of Cardinal Antony Padiyara

Your Eminence Cardinal Maida, Archbishop Joseph Kundukulam, Bishops Ibrahim and Schoenherr, Father Curtin, Father John Melepuram, Members of the St Mary Magdalene Parish community, members of the Syro-Malabar community of Detroit and my dear friends,

I consider this a unique privilege to be present on this solemn occasion of the inauguration of the St Thomas India Catholic Mission in Detroit. First and foremost I would like to congratulate the Syro-Malabar community here and in a special way, Fr John Melepuram who is the present administrator. Let us also remember with thanks all those who have endeavoured for the development of the community since its formation in 1980.
On behalf of the whole Syro-Malabar community I would like to express the deep appreciation we have for the good will and cooperation of Adam Cardinal Maida and the archdiocese of Detroit. The fact that the third Syro-Malabar Catholic Mission was opened here in Detroit, is reflective of the solicitude that the Cardinal has for the Syro-Malabar Catholic community living here. We are also indebted to the parishioners of St Mary Magdelene Church and especially to Fr Jim Curtin for providing the facilities here for the functioning of the mission here and for offering services of Fr John Melepuram, the associate pastor here for the welfare of the Indian community.

I hasten to add that we continue to need the support of all of you for the further progress of this mission, in keeping with the identity, tradition and liturgy of the Syro-Malabar Church. I am sure that with the intercessory prayers of St Thomas the Apostle, and the patronage Cardinal Maida and the Archdiocese of Detroit, this mission will achieve greater success. That is also my prayer on this occasion. I feel also grateful to Mar Ibrahim the Bishop of the Chaldean Church in USA for his presence here with us. The encouragement of this sister Church of the orient is of value for the development of this mission.

II

CHICAGO (USA)

Since a couple of years the Syro-Malabar faithful living in and around Chicago have been coming together at Mar Thoma Sleeha Church, Bellwood in the archdiocese of Chicago for their Sunday Divine Liturgy. Fr Mathew Panthalanickal was responsible for the pastoral care of the community until recently. On 1995 he was replaced by Fr Jose Kandathikudy giving him the charge of the entire Syro-Malabar community in the archdiocese of Chicago. He is at the same in charge Mar Thoma Sleeha church also.
For the first time a unit of the Society St Vincent De Paul was started in Bellwood with 44 members. The office bearers were elected for a temporary period of three months. The main aim of the unit is to help the units in India. Likewise a youth wing of the Society also was started. 60 youngsters took membership. An association of the altar boys also was started. Every third Wednesday from 7.30 p.m. to 9.00 p.m. Bible classes are offered for the grown ups. 27 men and women are attending the classes regularly. Every Friday from 7.00 p.m. to 9.00 p.m. there is a prayer meeting in the parish church.

III

ROME

The Syro-Malabar community in Rome was officially recognized by the Vicariate of Rome about two years ago. On recommendation by the late Pontifical Delegate, Mar Abraham Kattumana, Rev Fr George Nedungatt S.J. was appointed as the priest-in-charge of the pastoral care of the community by the Vicariate. He was given also an assistant in the person of Rev Fr Jose Kaniamparampil. In late 1995 Fr Kaniamparampil was replaced by Fr Sebastian Kalapurayil. The community has been given also a church in the heart of Rome, Basilica of Santa Cecilia in Trastevere, for use. They come together every Sunday at Santa Cecilia for Divine Liturgy and a social gathering. There exists also a Pastoral Council for looking after the needs of the community.
NEWS

Visit of Cardinal Silvestrini

In connection with the centenary celebrations of the archeparchy of Ernakulam and the golden jubilee of the priestly ordination of Cardinal Antony Padiyara, Cardinal Achille Silvestrini, prefect of the Congregation for the Oriental Churches, was in Kerala from 7 to 14 February 1996. He was accompanied by Msgr. Claudio Gugerotti, Rev Michael Mulhall and Don Maurizio Malvestiti. In the week-long stay the Cardinal and team attended a number of functions, besides the centenary and golden jubilee celebrations. They include the inauguration of the international dialogue centre at Nilackal and the CBCI meeting at Trivandrum. The Cardinal and team visited also the eparchies of Kottayam, Changanacherry, Trichur and Irinjalakuda as well as St Thomas Apostolic Seminary at Vadavathoor and St Joseph’s Pontifical Seminary at Alwaye.

Centenary of Ernakulam & Silver Jubilee of Cardinal Padiyara

The centenary celebrations of the archeparchy of Ernakulam and the golden jubilee of the priestly ordination of Cardinal Antony Padiyara were concluded on 11 February at Ernakulam. In the solemn Divine Liturgy and at the public meeting His Eminence Cardinal Achille Silvestrini, His Beatitude Raphael I Bidawid, Patriarch of Babylonina and Sri A.K. Antony, Chief Minister of Kerala, were among the chief guests.

Death anniversary of Mar Abraham Kattumana

The first death anniversary of Mar Abraham Kattumana, the late Pontifical Delegate to the Syro-Malabar Church, was commemorated on Saturday 13 April 1996. The requiem Mass, celebrated at St Mary’s Basilica, Ernakulam was presided over by the Major Archbishop. Many bishops and priests concelebrated. Representatives from the Syro-Malabar eparchies within the territorium proprium as well as a large congregation attended the ceremonies.
CST becomes Pontifical

The Congregation of St Therese which was until now an eparchial Congregation of Priests has been made a Congregation of Pontifical Status by Pope John Paul II. In a simple function presided over by the Major Archbishop Cardinal Antony Padiyara, on 16 March 1996 the news was announced by the Major Archbishop.

Foundation stone laid

The foundation stone for the new curial building at Mount St Thomas was laid by the Major Archbishop on 17 November 1996. All the Synodal members were present on the occasion.

New Provisions

a) Metropolitan Sees: The episcopal Sees of Trichur and Tellicherry were raised to the status of Metropolitan Sees and their occupants Mar Joseph Kundukulam and Mar George Valiamattam were raised to the rank and dignity of Metropolitans. Mar Valiamattam was installed on 24 July 1995 and Mar Kundukulam on 27 August 1996 by Cardinal Antony Padiyara, the Major Archbishop.

b) Bishop for Thamarassery: Mar Jacob Thoomkuzhy was transferred from Mananthavady to Thamarassery. He was installed by the Major Archbishop on 28 July 1995.

c) Apostolic Visitators: Bishops Mar Joseph Pallikaparampil (Pala) and Mar Gregory Karotemprel (Rajkot) were appointed by His Holiness Pope John Paul II as apostolic visitators for the Syro-Malabarians in USA and Canada and countries in Europe respectively. They are to investigate the state of pastoral care that the Syro-Malabarinas in these contries receive at present and submit a report to the Pope in the same regard.

d) Administrator for Mananthavady: Msgr. Joseph Kaniamattam from the eparchial clergy of Mananthavady was appointed as the Major Archiepiscopal Administratort of the vacant See of Mananthavady by the Major Archbishop. He took charge of the eparchy on 27 July 1995 after making the profession of faith before Mar James Pazhayattil, the Major Archiepiscopal Assistant.
Information for Subscribers

As you can read in the report of the fifth assembly of the second Synod, we are constrained to increase the subscription rate of SYNODAL NEWS to Rs.50/- per annum (Overseas US$15.00). The rising cost of printing and printing materials makes it difficult not to increase the rate. Hopefully our esteemed readers will understand the situation and continue to support us by their subscriptions.

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