

THE MALANKARA SYRIAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

THE EPHREMITES



BULLETIN OF THE EXARCHATE OF ST. EPHREM KHADKI - PUNE

VOL II | NO. 1 | May 2016

Suloko - Ascension of our Lord



The Exarchate welcomes Fr. Sunil Maria Benedict, his family and the faithful to the Catholic Communion



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VOICE OF THE EXARCH



Dear All,

We observed the Holy Week in which we fervently commemorated the triumphant entry of Jesus into Jerusalem (*Hosana*), the passion of Jesus, the institution of the Holy Qurbano (*Pesaha*), the crucifixion, death and burial of Jesus (*Dukhavelli*) the descent of Jesus to the world of the dead (*Dukha Sani*) and the glorious resurrection of Jesus (*Qyomtho*), his final victory over death and sin. Thus, He is our Lord and Saviour. I am given to understand that all our parishes and communities fervently observed these salvific events. “Peace be with you!” May this greeting of the Risen Lord indwell in our hearts and in the world now and in the days to come!

I was with you in spirit and prayer during the holy season. I prayed for you all. For the liturgical celebrations of the Holy Week and Easter, I was with our Malankara Catholic Community in Doha, Qatar. It was a wonderful experience to be with this vibrant migrant community in the Gulf region. They, as a community, and many individual families, gave me a good amount of money as their offering to build up the initial infrastructure of our Exarchate. Joining you all, I express our gratitude to the Faithful of our Church in Doha, especially to Rev. Fr Varghese Koothaneth.

May I share with you some of my thoughts and events of the month of May?

1. EASTER BLESSING OF OUR HOMES: It is our tradition that our homes are blessed during the Easter Season. I hope the priests have done this or are doing this.

2. LAITY DAY. This year we celebrate the LAITY DAY in our Church on 01 May itself, the feast of St Joseph the Worker. Most Rev. Joshua Mar Ignathios, the Chairman of the Synodal Commission for the Laity has sent us a circular for the occasion (The circular is reprinted in this bulletin). In accordance with the spirit of the circular, let us celebrate the Laity Day this year. It should renew the commitment of the Laity for the apostolates of the Church.

3. ANNUAL GENERAL BODY MEETINGS AND THE FOLLOW UP. On the election of the Itavaka Committee the law says, “The new committee shall be elected every year before the thirtieth of April and shall take charge in May” (CPCSMCC c 165). What I could experience

in the last one year is that, our Itavaka Committees with their respective parish priests have functioned very well. They have given an effective leadership in the spiritual, pastoral and economic well-being of our parishes. It is a characteristic trait of our ecclesial life that we have a committed LAITY who takes care of our ecclesial life along with the priests and religious. If at all, human frailties have crept in somewhere, the concerned shall rectify it through a renewed dedication. I thank everyone of the office bearers of the Itavaka Committee for this. I exhort all parishes to faithfully continue this legacy of ours and I invoke God's abundant grace to the newly elected committees to fulfil their given responsibilities.

I have delegated our Protosyncellus Rt Rev Msgr Varghese Mattamana and Finance Officer Rev. Fr Varghese Kaithon to follow up the rest of canonical proceedings. They have designated the places and dates they will be available to facilitate the formalities of the approval of the election and the new Itavaka Committee.

I remind you that in the years to come we have to abide by the letter and spirit of the civil law concerning the functioning of our parishes, trusts and properties, as the governments, for reasons they know best, will be ruthless in applying them on us. Hence, on the part of the Exarchial Curia every attempt will be made to assist you to keep up all records concerning our parishes, trusts, societies and their properties, without any lacuna. All dues and taxes shall be cleared in time. All legal rectifications pending shall be followed up.

4. THE FIRST ANNIVERSARY OF THE ERECTION OF THE EXARCHATE: The First Anniversary of the erection of the Exarchate of St Ephrem and the Eparchy of St John Chrysostom was on 26 March 2016. It was on Holy Saturday. I deliberately did not call for any commemorative service due to the circumstances and to avoid celebrations that would affect the spiritual fervour of the season. But it was a day to thank the Lord for his providence. A brief report of activities of the last one year is given on page 24 of this “Ephremite”.

5. COMMUNION OF REV. FR SUNIL MARIA BENEDICT: I am happy to announce to you that, following the foot-steps of the Servant of God Archbishop Mar Ivanios, Rev. Fr Sunil Maria Benedict came into communion with the Malankara Syrian Catholic Church. He belonged to the Australia-New Zealand Diocese of the Russian Orthodox Church. He

hails from Bengaluru. He had been prayerfully preparing for this for the last two years. I, with the guidance of His Beatitude our Catholicos, had been accompanying him. On 01 April 2016 he made his Profession of Faith at St Mary's Cathedral Khadki-Pune. On behalf of the Church I extended him a "Welcome, a big Welcome!". He was welcomed into our Exarchate at a concelebrated Holy Qurbano at Hennur Parish in Bengaluru on 10 April 2016. With him 12 people of 3 families communed with the Holy Catholic Church on that day. More about Fr Benedict is given on page 39 of this "Ephremite". Fr Sunil is appointed Assistant Parish Priest of our Hennur Church and in-charge of the work of Evangelisation in and around Bengaluru. Fr Sunil is talented to give classes to our Youth and to other gatherings of our associations and apostolates. You can invite him to all our parishes in our Exarchate.

It is a season of general summer holidays in the country. But, it is for us, also a season of intense ecclesial life.

1. JIVAN DARSHAN CAMP: In the months of April-May we plan to organise Jivan Darshan Camp/Vocation Camp in all the Ecclesiastical Districts of our Exarchate for boys and girls of classes 8 to 12. The camp is to be held every year in addition to the Sunday School camps held during Dussehra/Diwali holidays. The purpose of the camp is to guide our children to choose their state of life in the future. The camp will also focus on the promotion of vocations to priesthood and religious life (both men and women) in our Exarchate. I urge all parents to encourage their children to participate in the camp. The dates will be announced in the respective Ecclesiastical District. The participation guarantees an orientation of the life of our children in view of their future.

2. VESTITION OF OUR SEMINARIANS: I am happy to share with you once again that this year, our Exarchate has a total of 14 Seminarians. Of these seven joined our Exarchate during the current academic year. Three are minor seminarians fresh from their homes. 2 joined after their Philosophy Studies and are from other sui iuris Churches. Two Regents from the Eparchy of Bathery opted to dedicate themselves to the service of the Lord in the Exarchate. We thank Most Rev. Joseph Mar Thomas Thirumeni and the Eparchy of Bathery for this generous gesture. Next year, there will be five seminarians from our Exarchate doing their First Year of Theology in St Mary's Malankara Seminary. They will be initiated to priestly life giving them the priestly garb on 28 May 2016 at

our Cathedral Church. This will be followed by a gathering of the parents of the Seminarians. I request all of you to pray for them.

3. MINOR SEMINARY: This year our Minor Seminarians continued their formation at Mar Ivanios Minor Seminary of the Eparchy of Gurgaon. Since the infrastructure of the seminary cannot hold more students, we have to erect a seminary of our own. All of you know the condition of our Exarchate now. However, the Diocese of Poona has graciously agreed to let us use Nirmal Bhavan at Pulgate (Solapur Bazar), a bungalow, which we can be used for the next three years for the formation of our Minor Seminarians. We hope to inaugurate our seminary in this bungalow in June 2016.

I also request everyone: 1. To promote vocations to our Seminary from the families of our Exarchate as well as from the families of our Eparchies in Kerala and elsewhere. 2. To assist the formation of our Seminarians through Sponsorships. A brochure giving details will be published soon. I am reminded of a citation from Cardinal Faulhaber: "To help a person called by Jesus to ascend the threshold of the Altar is more than constructing a cathedral." Do you or your family want to be a recipient of this blessing?

4. VARIOUS MEETINGS. The Priest Meet, the gathering of all parish priests and other priests who hold charge of various apostolates of our Exarchate, is fixed to take place on 25 May 2016. Similarly on 26 May will be the Religious Meet of our Exarchate with our Major Superiors. The Pastoral Council and the Finance Council Meetings are scheduled on 27 May 2015. These organs of our Exarchate represent the participation of all in the life and administration of our Exarchate.

5. OBSERVANCE OF THE HOLY YEAR: The observance of the Holy Year of Mercy is midway. How far and wide and deep have we fathomed to imbibe the Mercy of the Heavenly Father and to share it with others? How did our parishes organise the Lenten Campaign in conjunction with the Holy Year of Mercy? I am keenly interested in knowing our activities in this regard. It seems to me that, we, as individuals and parish communities, have to be more attentive to receive the blessings of the year.

6. BEST WISHES TO THE NEW PROVINCIAL SUPERIORS OF BETHANY CONVENT: The Synaxes of the provinces of the Sisters of

the Imitation of Christ (Bethany Sisters) had been held in the month of April. The Exarchate wishes and prays the best with God's abundant blessings to the new and re-elected Provincial Superiors and their teams to lead the congregation in the Church and in the Exarchate. Special congrats to Very Rev. Mother Gladys SIC of the Bethany Convent of Dehu Road (Pune) of our Exarchate who is elected the Provincial Superior of Muvattupuzha.

7. AMORIS LAETITIA, the Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation on LOVE IN THE FAMILY has been published by the Holy Father. As a contemporary teaching of the Pope on the renewal of our families, it is very important. A first glimpse through the pages of the exhortation has filled my heart with joy. The English and Malayalam versions of the Exhortation will be made available in our Exarchate as soon as they are published in India.

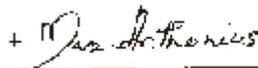
8. FEASTS OF ASCENSION AND PENTECOST. Dear beloved in Jesus! We will celebrate the Feast of the Ascension of Lord into heaven (Suloko) on 05 May. The ten days thereafter, kathirupukalam, in preparation of the Feast of Pentecost, has to be spent in intense spiritual preparation to receive the Holy Spirit in our life and in the Church and the world. Let us observe these feasts with great fervour and devotion in the Holy Year.

9. THE EXARCH'S FIRST VISIT TO THE HOLY FATHER: Dear Brothers and Sisters, on behalf of the Exarchate, I will be making my first visit to the Holy Father to convey our obsequium, obedience, communion and filial devotion to the Holy Father, the Roman Pontiff, the Successor of St Peter, the Vicar of Christ. Please do join me prayerfully. It will be on 11 May 2016 at 13:00 hours IST. I request all of you to join me prayerfully on that day. I will be requesting the Holy Father to bless our families and parishes and our Exarchate.

Thereafter, I will administer the sacrament of confirmation in a parish in Switzerland and return on 17 May 2016.

Requesting your continued prayers for me, I pray for you all,

Lovingly your Aboon,

+ 

✠ **Thomas Mar Antonios OIC**
Apostolic Exarch

MESSAGE OF HIS HOLINESS POPE FRANCIS FOR THE 50th WORLD COMMUNICATIONS DAY

Communication and Mercy: A Fruitful Encounter

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

The Holy Year of Mercy invites all of us to reflect on the relationship between communication and mercy. The Church, in union with Christ, the living incarnation of the Father of Mercies, is called to practise mercy as the distinctive trait of all that she is and does. What we say and how we say it, our every word and gesture, ought to express God's compassion, tenderness and forgiveness for all. Love, by its nature, is communication; it leads to openness and sharing. If our hearts and actions are inspired by charity, by divine love, then our communication will be touched by God's own power.

As sons and daughters of God, we are called to communicate with everyone, without exception. In a particular way, the Church's words and actions are all meant to convey mercy, to touch people's hearts and to sustain them on their journey to that fullness of life which Jesus Christ was sent by the Father to bring to all. This means that we ourselves must be willing to accept the warmth of Mother Church and to share that warmth with others, so that Jesus may be known and loved. That warmth is what gives substance to the word of faith; by our preaching and witness, it ignites the "spark" which gives them life.

Communication has the power to build bridges, to enable encounter and inclusion, and thus to enrich society. How beautiful it is when people select their words and actions with care, in the effort to avoid misunderstandings, to heal wounded memories and to build peace and harmony. Words can build bridges between individuals and within families, social groups and peoples. This is possible both in the material world and the digital world. Our words and actions should be such as to help us all escape the vicious circles of condemnation and vengeance which continue to ensnare individuals and nations, encouraging expressions of hatred. The words of Christians ought to be a constant encouragement to communion and, even in those cases where they must firmly condemn evil, they should never try to rupture relationships and communication.

For this reason, I would like to invite all people of good will to rediscover the power of mercy to heal wounded relationships and to restore peace and harmony to families and communities. All of us know how many ways ancient wounds and lingering resentments can entrap individuals and stand in the way of communication and reconciliation. The same holds true for relationships between peoples. In every case, mercy is able to create a new kind of speech and

dialogue. Shakespeare put it eloquently when he said: “The quality of mercy is not strained. It droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven upon the place beneath. It is twice blessed: it blesseth him that gives and him that takes” (The Merchant of Venice, Act IV, Scene I).

Our political and diplomatic language would do well to be inspired by mercy, which never loses hope. I ask those with institutional and political responsibility, and those charged with forming public opinion, to remain especially attentive to the way they speak of those who think or act differently or those who may have made mistakes. It is easy to yield to the temptation to exploit such situations to stoke the flames of mistrust, fear and hatred. Instead, courage is needed to guide people towards processes of reconciliation. It is precisely such positive and creative boldness which offers real solutions to ancient conflicts and the opportunity to build lasting peace. “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God” (Mt 5:7-9)

How I wish that our own way of communicating, as well as our service as pastors of the Church, may never suggest a prideful and triumphant superiority over an enemy, or demean those whom the world considers lost and easily discarded. Mercy can help mitigate life's troubles and offer warmth to those who have known only the coldness of judgment. May our way of communicating help to overcome the mindset that neatly separates sinners from the righteous. We can and we must judge situations of sin such as violence, corruption and exploitation but we may not judge individuals, since only God can see into the depths of their hearts. It is our task to admonish those who err and to denounce the evil and injustice of certain ways of acting, for the sake of setting victims free and raising up those who have fallen. The Gospel of John tells us that “the truth will make you free” (Jn 8:32). The truth is ultimately Christ himself, whose gentle mercy is the yardstick for measuring the way we proclaim the truth and condemn injustice. Our primary task is to uphold the truth with love (cf. Eph 4:15). Only words spoken with love and accompanied by meekness and mercy can touch our sinful hearts. Harsh and moralistic words and actions risk further alienating those whom we wish to lead to conversion and freedom, reinforcing their sense of rejection and defensiveness.

Some feel that a vision of society rooted in mercy is hopelessly idealistic or excessively indulgent. But let us try and recall our first experience of relationships, within our families. Our parents loved us and valued us for who we are more than for our abilities and achievements. Parents naturally want the best for their children, but that love is never dependent on their meeting certain conditions. The family home is one place where we are always welcome (cf. Lk 15:11-32). I would like to encourage everyone to see society not as a forum where strangers compete and try to come out on top, but above all as a home or a family, where the door is always open and where everyone feels welcome.

For this to happen, we must first listen. Communicating means sharing, and sharing demands listening and acceptance. Listening is much more than simply hearing. Hearing is about receiving information, while listening is about communication, and calls for closeness. Listening allows us to get things right, and not simply to be passive onlookers, users or consumers. Listening also means being able to share questions and doubts, to journey side by side, to banish all claims to absolute power and to put our abilities and gifts at the service of the common good.

Listening is never easy. Many times it is easier to play deaf. Listening means paying attention, wanting to understand, to value, to respect and to ponder what the other person says. It involves a sort of martyrdom or self-sacrifice, as we try to imitate Moses before the burning bush: we have to remove our sandals when standing on the “holy ground” of our encounter with the one who speaks to me (cf. Ex 3:5). Knowing how to listen is an immense grace, it is a gift which we need to ask for and then make every effort to practice.

Emails, text messages, social networks and chats can also be fully human forms of communication. It is not technology which determines whether or not communication is authentic, but rather the human heart and our capacity to use wisely the means at our disposal. Social networks can facilitate relationships and promote the good of society, but they can also lead to further polarization and division between individuals and groups. The digital world is a public square, a meeting-place where we can either encourage or demean one another, engage in a meaningful discussion or unfair attacks. I pray that this Jubilee Year, lived in mercy, “may open us to even more fervent dialogue so that we might know and understand one another better; and that it may eliminate every form of closed-mindedness and disrespect, and drive out every form of violence and discrimination” (*Misericordiae Vultus*, 23). The internet can help us to be better citizens. Access to digital networks entails a responsibility for our neighbour whom we do not see but who is nonetheless real and has a dignity which must be respected. The internet can be used wisely to build a society which is healthy and open to sharing.

Communication, wherever and however it takes place, has opened up broader horizons for many people. This is a gift of God which involves a great responsibility. I like to refer to this power of communication as “closeness”. The encounter between communication and mercy will be fruitful to the degree that it generates a closeness which cares, comforts, heals, accompanies and celebrates. In a broken, fragmented and polarized world, to communicate with mercy means to help create a healthy, free and fraternal closeness between the children of God and all our brothers and sisters in the one human family.

From the Vatican, 24 January 2016

Francis

Circular on Laity Day



മലങ്കര സുറിയാനി കത്തോലിക്കാ സഭ
2016- ലെ അൽമായ ദിനത്തോടനുബന്ധിച്ച്,
അൽമായർക്കുവേണ്ടിയുള്ള സുന്നഹദോസ് കമ്മീഷൻ
ചെയർമാൻ
അഭിവന്ദ്യ ഡോ. ജോഷ്യാ മാർ ഇഗ്നാത്തിയോസ്
മെത്രാപ്പോലീത്താ
പുറപ്പെടുവിക്കുന്ന സർക്കുലർ

ബഹു. വൈദികരേ, സന്യസ്തരേ, കർത്താവിൽ പ്രിയ വിശ്വാസികളേ,

മലങ്കര സുറിയാനി കത്തോലിക്കാസഭ അൽമായ ദിനം ഈ വർഷം ആചരിക്കുന്നതിന് തൊഴിലാളികളുടെ മദ്ധ്യസ്ഥനായ വി. യൗസേഫ് പിതാവിന്റെ തിരുനാൾ ദിനമായ മെയ് 1-നാണ്. സാർവ്വദേശീയ തൊഴിലാളി ദിനത്തിന്റെയും അൽമായ ദിനത്തിന്റെയും സവിശേഷമായ പ്രാർത്ഥനാശംസകൾ എല്ലാ അൽമായ സഹോദരങ്ങൾക്കും സമൃദ്ധമായി നേരുന്നു.

മിശിഹായുടെ കരം പിടിച്ചുകൊണ്ട് ലോകത്തിലായിരിക്കുക, അവിടെ സുവിശേഷ സാക്ഷ്യത്തിന്റെ വെളിച്ചം പകരുക എന്നതാണ് അൽമായരുടെ പ്രത്യേക ദൗത്യം. തിരുസഭയെക്കുറിച്ചുള്ള കോൺസ്റ്റിറ്റ്യൂഷൻ 2,4 അധ്യായങ്ങൾ, അൽമായ പ്രേഷിതത്വം, സഭ ആധുനിക ലോകത്തിൽ, എക്യുമെനിസം, ആരാധനക്രമം, പ്രേഷിത പ്രവർത്തനം, എന്നീ പ്രമാണ രേഖകളിലൂടെ അൽമായരുടെ വിളിയെയും ദൗത്യത്തെയും കുറിച്ച് തിരുസഭാമാതാവ് നമ്മെ പഠിപ്പിക്കുന്നു. മിശിഹായുടെ മൗതിക ശരീരത്തിലെ സജീവാംഗമായി നിലനിന്നുകൊണ്ട് ലോകത്തിലെ വിവിധ സംസ്കാരങ്ങളിലും വൈവിധ്യമാർന്ന പ്രവർത്തന രംഗങ്ങളിലും മിശിഹായുടെ പ്രകാശം ചൊരിയുക എന്നതാണ് അൽമായ ദൗത്യങ്ങളിൽ പ്രധാനപ്പെട്ടത് (അൽമായ പ്രേഷിതത്വം 7). ആരാധനക്രമത്തിലുള്ള സജീവ ഭാഗഭാഗിത്വത്തിൽ പരിപൂർണ്ണമാക്കപ്പെടും (അൽമായ പ്രേഷിതത്വം 4), സ്വന്തം ഇടവകയോടും ഭദ്രാസനത്തോടും ചേർന്നുമാണ് (അൽമായ പ്രേഷിതത്വം 10) ഈ ദൗത്യം നിർവ്വഹിക്കാൻ അൽമായർ പ്രാപ്തരാകേണ്ടതെന്ന് കൗൺസിൽ പഠിപ്പിക്കുന്നു. ഇടവകയുടെ എല്ലാ പ്രേഷിത പ്രവർത്തനങ്ങളിലും സഹകരിക്കാനും (അൽമായ പ്രേഷിതത്വം 10), വൈദികർ ചെന്നെത്താൻ കഴിയാത്ത രംഗങ്ങളിലൊക്കെ മിശിഹായ്ക്ക്

സാക്ഷ്യം വഹിക്കാനും (തിരുസഭ 33) അൽമായർക്ക് സാധിക്കണം.

വിവിധങ്ങളായ ശുശ്രൂഷകൾ അൽമായർ നിർവ്വഹിക്കുന്നത് ഒറ്റ തിരിഞ്ഞോ സഭാ ജീവിതത്തിൽ നിന്ന് അകന്നുമാറിയോ ആയിരിക്കരുതെന്ന് തിരുസഭ നിഷ്കർഷിക്കുന്നുണ്ട്. അതേ സമയം തന്നെ, സഭയെ സംബന്ധിച്ച് കാര്യക്ഷമവും പക്വവുമായ അഭിപ്രായങ്ങൾ പ്രകടിപ്പിക്കുവാൻ അൽമായ സഹോദരങ്ങൾക്ക് കടമയും അവകാശവുമുണ്ട്. പക്ഷെ, അത് നിർവ്വഹിക്കേണ്ടത് അതിനുള്ള അവസരങ്ങൾ സംജാതമാകുമ്പോൾ, സഭ നിശ്ചയിക്കുന്ന മാർഗ്ഗങ്ങളിൽ കൂടിയായിരിക്കണമെന്ന് മാത്രം (തിരുസഭ 37). മിശിഹായുടെ പ്രതിപുരുഷന്മാരും സഭയിലെ ഉപദേശിമാരും ഭരണ കർത്താക്കളുമെന്ന നിലയ്ക്ക് അജപാലകർ നിശ്ചയിക്കുന്ന തെല്ലാം, ക്രിസ്തീയമായ അനുസരണത്തോടെ അൽമായരും മറ്റൊല്ലാ വിശ്വാസികളുപോലെയെന്ന സോത്സാഹം സ്വീകരിക്കണം (തിരുസഭ 37). സഭയുടെ മടിത്തട്ടിൽ ആന്തരികമായി വസിക്കാതെ ബാഹ്യമാത്രമായി കഴിഞ്ഞു കൂടുന്നവരും (തിരുസഭ 14), സഭയുടെ നൈയാമിക അധികാരികൾ അംഗീകരിക്കാത്ത പ്രസ്ഥാനങ്ങളിൽ നിലനില്ക്കുന്നവരും തങ്ങളുടെ ദൗത്യത്തിൽനിന്ന് വളരെയേറെ ദൂരെയാണ് കഴിഞ്ഞുകൂടുന്നത്. കൗൺസിൽ പ്രബോധനങ്ങളുടെ വീക്ഷണത്തിൽ ഭാവാത്മകമായ അൽമായ ശുശ്രൂഷ ഇന്ന് സഭാ മണ്ഡലങ്ങളിലും സാമൂഹ്യ മണ്ഡലങ്ങളിലും സംലഭ്യമാകേണ്ടിയിരിക്കുന്നു.

ഓരോ മനുഷ്യ ജീവിയുടെയും വ്യക്തി മാഹാത്മ്യം അംഗീകരിക്കാനും ജീവനുവേണ്ടിയുള്ള അവകാശം സംരക്ഷിക്കാനും എല്ലാവർക്കും ദൗത്യവും ചുമതലയുമുണ്ടെങ്കിലും അൽമായ വിശ്വാസികൾക്ക് ഇക്കാര്യത്തിൽ പ്രത്യേക ചുമതലയുണ്ട്. ഉദാ: മാതാപിതാക്കന്മാർ, അധ്യാപകർ, ആരോഗ്യ പ്രവർത്തകർ, സാമ്പത്തിക രാഷ്ട്രീയ ശക്തികളുടെ ചുമതലക്കാർ മുതലായവർ. സ്നേഹത്തോടും ഉദാരതയോടും കൂടെ എല്ലാ മനുഷ്യരെയും പ്രത്യേകിച്ച് ദുർബലരും രോഗികളുമായവരെ ഉൾക്കൊള്ളുന്ന കാര്യത്തിൽ സഭ ഇന്ന് തന്റെ മുഖ്യമായ ദൗത്യം നിറവേറ്റുന്നത് പ്രധാനമായും അൽമായ സഹോദരങ്ങളിലൂടെയാണ്. മരണസംസ്കാരം (ഔഹര്യേലീള റലമവേ) ലോകത്തെ കീഴടക്കാൻ വെമ്പുന്ന വർത്തമാനകാലഘട്ടത്തിൽ അൽമായരുടെ നിതാന്ത ജാഗ്രതയോടെയുള്ള ജീവന്റെ സംസ്കാരം ദൗത്യങ്ങൾ അത്യന്താപേക്ഷിതമായിരിക്കുന്നു. ലോകത്തിനുമേൽ നിഴൽ വീശുന്ന അശുഭ വിശ്വാസത്തിനും സ്വാർത്ഥതയ്ക്കുമെതിരെ സഭ ജീവനുവേണ്ടി നിലകൊള്ളുന്നു. ഓരോ അൽമായ വിശ്വാസിയും ജീവന്റെ സംരക്ഷണവും കാവലാളുമാണ്. മനുഷ്യ ജീവനോടുള്ള സഭയുടെ ഭാവാത്മകമായ നിലപാടും സമീപനവും സമുദായവും ഫലപ്രദവുമാക്കേണ്ടത് അൽമായ വിശ്വാസികളുടെ ഉത്തരവാദിത്വമാണ്.

അൽമായ വിശ്വാസികൾക്ക് സമൂഹത്തോടുള്ള കടമ ആരംഭിക്കുന്നത് പ്രധാനമായും വിവാഹത്തിലും കുടുംബത്തിലുമാണ്. സമൂഹത്തിന്റെയും സഭയുടെ തന്നെയും വികസനത്തിൽ കുടുംബത്തിനുള്ള അനുപമവും അനുപേക്ഷണീയവുമായ മുല്യത്തെപ്പറ്റി ബോധ്യമുണ്ടെങ്കിലേ ആ കടമ വേണ്ടവിധം നിറവേറ്റാൻ സാധിക്കുകയുള്ളൂ. സമൂഹത്തിന്റെ അടി

സ്ഥാനകോശമാണ് കുടുംബം. ഇത് ജീവന്റെയും സ്നേഹത്തിന്റെയും പിള്ളത്തൊട്ടിലാണ്. ഒരു വ്യക്തി ജനിക്കുകയും വളരുകയും സംരക്ഷിക്കപ്പെടുകയും കരുതപ്പെടുകയും ചെയ്യുന്നിടം. ഒരു പ്രഥമ സാമൂഹിക കേന്ദ്രം എന്ന നിലയിലുള്ള കുടുംബത്തിന്റെ തനിമയെപ്പറ്റിയും സമൂഹത്തിൽ അതിന്റെ അടിസ്ഥാനപങ്കിനെപ്പറ്റിയുമുള്ള അവബോധം കുടുംബത്തിനുണ്ടാക്കുക എന്നത് അൽമായ വിശ്വാസികളുടെ പ്രേഷിതത്വത്തിൽപ്പെട്ട കടമയാണ്. അങ്ങനെ, സാമൂഹിക ജീവിതത്തിൽ ഉചിതമായ പങ്കാളിത്തത്തിനും വളർച്ചയ്ക്കും വേണ്ടിയുള്ള സജീവവും ഉത്തരവാദിത്വ പൂർണ്ണവുമായ വേദിയാകുന്നു കുടുംബം (അൽമായ വിശ്വാസികൾ 40). കുടുംബത്തിന്റെ ആവശ്യങ്ങളിലും മൂല്യങ്ങളിലും തൽപ്പരരും കാര്യസ്ഥരുമാകണം അൽമായർ എന്ന് തിരുസഭാമാതാവ് ആഗ്രഹിക്കുന്നു. ഭാവിയിലേക്കുള്ള പാത കുടുംബത്തിലൂടെയാണ് കടന്നുപോകുന്നത് (കുടുംബം ഒരു കൂട്ടായ്മ 188) എന്ന് തിരുസഭ പരിപൂർണ്ണമായി ബോധവതിയാണ്.

പരസ്നേഹപരമായ സേവനത്തിനായി മുഴുവൻ സഭയും നേരിട്ട് വിളിക്കപ്പെട്ടിരിക്കുന്നു. നിഷ്കളങ്കമായ സ്നേഹമാണ് എക്കാലത്തും സഭയുടെ പ്രത്യേക ലക്ഷണം. പരസ്നേഹ പ്രവർത്തനങ്ങൾ സഭയുടെ സ്വന്തവും അന്യാധീനപ്പെടുത്താനാവാത്തതുമായ അവകാശവും ഉത്തരവാദിത്വവുമാണ്. ഇക്കാരണത്താലാണ് അഗതികളോടും രോഗികളോടുമുള്ള അനുകമ്പയും പരസ്നേഹ പ്രവർത്തനങ്ങളും സഭ വളരെയേറെ വിലമതിക്കുന്നത് (അൽമായ പ്രേഷിതത്വം 8). ഭൗതിക വ്യവസ്ഥിതിയിൽ ക്രൈസ്തവ ചൈതന്യം നിറയ്ക്കുകയെന്ന അൽമായ വിശ്വാസികളുടെ സവിശേഷമായ ചുമതല നിർവ്വഹിക്കുവാൻ തന്റെ മക്കളെ എന്നും പ്രതീക്ഷയോടെ സഭാമാതാവ് ക്ഷണിക്കുന്നു. അയല്ക്കാരനോടുള്ള സ്നേഹം വഴി അൽമായ വിശ്വാസികൾ ക്രിസ്തുവിന്റെ രാജ്യത്തിലുള്ള പങ്കാളിത്വം (രജ്യ. മർക്കോസ് 10, 45) അനുഷ്ഠിക്കുകയും വെളിവാക്കുകയും ചെയ്യുന്നു.

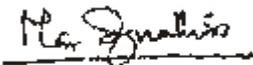
തിരുസഭയിൽ രക്ഷാകരമായ സുവിശേഷം പ്രഘോഷിക്കുവാൻ എല്ലാവരും വിളിക്കപ്പെട്ടിരിക്കുന്നു. ഓരോ വ്യക്തിയും തങ്ങളുടെ വിളികളുടെയും സാഹചര്യങ്ങളുടെയും ശൃശൃഷകളുടെയും വൈവിധ്യമനുസരിച്ച് ദൈവരാജ്യത്തിന്റെ വരവിനുവേണ്ടി ജോലി ചെയ്യാൻ വിളിക്കപ്പെട്ടിരിക്കുന്നു. പരിശുദ്ധാത്മാവിന്റെ ശക്തിയിൽ പണിയപ്പെട്ട കർത്താവിന്റെ ഏക ശരീരത്തിലെ സജീവ അവയവങ്ങളാണ് എല്ലാവരും. സഭാകൂട്ടയ്മയിൽ ഒന്ന് മറ്റൊന്നിന് വേണ്ടിയെന്നവണ്ണമുള്ള ജീവിതാവസ്ഥകൾ പരസ്പരം ബന്ധപ്പെട്ടിരിക്കുന്നു. ഗാർഹിക സഭയെന്ന നിലയിൽ ക്രൈസ്തവ കുടുംബം വിശ്വാസ രൂപവത്കരണത്തിന്റെ സ്വാഭാവികവും അടിസ്ഥാനപരവുമായ വിദ്യാലയമാണ്. ഗാർഹിക സഭ സാർവ്വത്രിക സഭയുടെ ജീവിതത്തിലും ദൗത്യത്തിലും പങ്കുകൊള്ളുന്നു എന്ന അവബോധം ക്രൈസ്തവ ദമ്പതികൾക്കും മാതാപിതാക്കൾക്കും എത്രമാത്രം കൂടുതലാണോ അത്രമാത്രം അവരുടെ സന്താനങ്ങളും സഭാവബോധത്തിൽ വളർന്നുവരും. അങ്ങനെയൊരു ജനസമൂഹം തയ്യാറെടുത്താൽ ദൈവരാജ്യം ശൃശൃഷ്ടയ്ക്കായി തങ്ങളെത്തന്നെ സമർപ്പിക്കുകയും ചെയ്യും. വിശുദ്ധ സഭയിൽ തങ്ങളുടെ വിളിയും ദൗത്യവും വിലയിരുത്തുവാനും

വിലമതിക്കുവാനും അൽമായ ദിനം അൽമായ സഹോദരങ്ങളെ പ്രാപ്തരാക്കുന്നു.

കരുണാവർഷാചാരണത്തിന്റെ പശ്ചാത്തലത്തിലാണ് ഈ വർഷത്തെ അൽമായദിനം നാം ആചരിക്കുന്നത്. ദൈവപിതാവിന്റെ കരുണയുടെ മുഖമായ യേശുനാഥൻ കാരൂണ്യ പ്രവർത്തികളാൽ നമ്മുടെ ജീവിതത്തെ ദൈവികവും അർത്ഥപൂർണ്ണവുമാക്കാൻ സ്നേഹപൂർവ്വം ക്ഷണിക്കുന്നു. കരുണയോടെ നമ്മുടെ ജീവിതം നമുക്ക് കരുപിടിപ്പിക്കാം. നസ്രത്തിലെ തിരുക്രൂരപ്പാലത്തിന്റെ വത്സലപിതാവും അൽമായ പ്രസ്ഥാനങ്ങളുടെയെല്ലാം സ്വർഗ്ഗീയ മദ്ധ്യസ്ഥനും കാവൽപിതാവുമായ വി. യൗസേഫ് പിതാവിന്റെ അനുഗ്രഹിത സാന്നിധ്യവും മദ്ധ്യസ്ഥതയും നമ്മുടെ പ്രവർത്തനങ്ങളെ ദീപ്തമാക്കട്ടെ. സുവിശേഷവാഹിനിയായ മലങ്കര സുറിയാനി കത്തോലിക്കാ സഭയുടെ അഭിമാനഭാജനങ്ങളായി നമുക്ക് ജീവിക്കാം. ഉത്ഥിതനായ കർത്താവ് നമുക്ക് നിത്യമായ സമാധാനവും സമൃദ്ധമായ ജീവനും നല്കട്ടെ.

അൽമായദിനം മലങ്കര സുറിയാനി കത്തോലിക്കാ സഭയിലെ അൽമായരുടെ പൊതു ആഘോഷമാണ്. എം.സി.എ, മാത്യുസംഘം, പിതൃസംഘം, വിൻസന്റ് ഡി. പോൾ, ലീജിയൻ ഓഫ് മേരി തുടങ്ങിയ എല്ലാ അൽമായ സംഘടനകളും ഒരുമിച്ച് ഈ ദിനം സമുചിതമായി ആഘോഷിക്കുമല്ലോ. സഭയുടെ വളർച്ചയ്ക്കും പൊതു സമൂഹത്തിന്റെ വികസനത്തിനും വേണ്ടി എല്ലാ അൽമായ പ്രസ്ഥാനങ്ങളും നൽകുന്ന പങ്കാളിത്തവും സഹകരണവും ഞാൻ നന്ദിയോടെ ഇത്തരുന്നത്തിൽ സ്മരിക്കുകയും വിലമതിക്കുകയും ചെയ്യുന്നു. അൽമായദിനത്തിലെ വിശുദ്ധ കുർബാനയുടെ സ്തോത്രകാഴ്ച നമ്മുടെ സഭയിലെ അൽമായ ശുശ്രൂഷയ്ക്കുവേണ്ടിയാണല്ലോ നാം വിനിയോഗിക്കുന്നത്. അന്നേ ദിവസം ഉദാരമായി സ്തോത്ര കാഴ്ച നൽകി അനുഗ്രഹീതരാകുവാൻ ഏവരെയും ഞാൻ ആഹ്വാനം ചെയ്യുന്നു. നമ്മുടെ സഭയുടെ പ്രത്യേക കാനോൻ 601 പ്രകാരം പ്രസ്തുത സ്തോത്രകാഴ്ച സമാഹരിച്ച് ബഹു. വികാരിയച്ചന്മാർ അതത് ഭദ്രാസന, എക്സാർക്കേറ്റ് പ്രൊക്കുറേറ്റർമാരുടെ പേർക്ക് അയച്ചുകൊടുക്കേണ്ടതും പ്രൊക്കുറേറ്റർമാർ ശേഖരിച്ച തുക കത്തോലിക്കേറ്റ് സെന്ററിൽ പ്രവർത്തിക്കുന്ന അൽമായ കമ്മീഷൻ ഓഫീസിൽ എത്തിക്കേണ്ടതുമാണ്. അൽമായ പ്രസ്ഥാനങ്ങളുടെ സ്വർഗ്ഗീയ മദ്ധ്യസ്ഥനായ വി. യൗസേഫ് പിതാവ് നമുക്ക് തുണയും മദ്ധ്യസ്ഥനുമായിരിക്കട്ടെ.

ഉത്ഥിതനായ യേശു നമ്മെ അനുഗ്രഹിക്കട്ടെ എന്ന്,



✠ ഡോ. ജോഷ്യാ കാർ ഗുസാന്തിയോസ് അൽമായർക്കുവേണ്ടിയുള്ള സുന്നഹദോസ് കമ്മീഷൻ ചെയർമാൻ & മാവേലിക്കര ഭദ്രാസനാദ്ധ്യക്ഷൻ

കത്തോലിക്കേറ്റ് സെന്റർ പട്ടം, തിരുവനന്തപുരം ഈസ്റ്റർ 2016

N.B. ഈ സർക്കുലർ അല്മായ ദിനമായ മെയ് 1-ാം തീയതി ഞായറാഴ്ച വി. കുർബാന മദ്ധ്യേ നമ്മുടെ എല്ലാ പള്ളികളിലും മിഷൻ കേന്ദ്രങ്ങളിലും വായിക്കേണ്ടതാണ്.

**Final Statement Of The 32nd Plenary Assembly Of
The Catholic Bishops' Conference Of India (CBCI),
Held At St. John's, Bangalore, From 2nd To 9th
March, 2016, With The Main Theme
“Response Of The Church In India To The Present
Day Challenges”**

1.0. PREAMBLE

The Second Vatican Council declared in the Pastoral Constitution of the Church in the Modern World: “The joys and the hopes, the griefs and the anxieties of the men of this age, especially those who are poor or in any way afflicted, are the joys and hopes, the griefs and anxieties of the followers of Christ.” (Gaudium et Spes, no. 1). Jesus proclaimed the Kingdom of God (Mark 1: 14-15) and called upon His followers to pray and work (Matthew 6: 9-13) for the realization of the Kingdom of God. As sacrament of salvation, the Church is a sign and instrument of communion with God and with humanity (Lumen Gentium, no. 1:1). In this YEAR OF MERCY, in communion with the Universal Church, let us be channels of God's mercy to one and all, especially the poor, the deprived, the sick and suffering. And thus, making our contribution to our beloved nation.

As leaders of the Church, 182 Bishops from 170 Dioceses of the Church in India are gathered at St. John's National Academy of Health Sciences, Bangalore, from 02 to 09 March 2016 to deliberate on “The Response of the Church in India to the Present Day Challenges” during the 32nd Plenary Assembly of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of India (CBCI). The Church in India is a vibrant community making significant contribution to nation building through education, social development, health care and service, especially to the poor. The CBCI appreciates the spirit of understanding and collaboration among the three Sui Iuris Churches. The composite culture of India has noble values of religiosity, peace, simplicity and tolerance as lived by Mahatma Gandhi and various Indian sages. We, however, express our sorrow over the killing of innocent people by extremists in India and in various parts of the world. We are shocked by the recent killing of the nuns of the Missionaries of Charity and their collaborators in Yemen.

The Bishops have resolved to respond to the challenges facing the Church in India, identifying the following:

2.0. Challenges Within The Church And Within The Country

2.1. Challenges Within The Church

- i. Declining family values tensions and break ups in families, an increasing number of divorces, abortions and a lack of understanding of marriage as a sacrament.
- ii. Growing materialism, consumerism and addiction to social media, due to decline of spiritual and moral values.
- iii. Growing indifference and lack of commitment to the Christian vocation.
- iv. Insensitivity regarding gender, caste, language, creed, status and region.
- v. Lack of commitment to Ecumenical unity
- vi. Excessive preoccupation with institutionalization.
- vii. Insufficient zeal and fear of proclaiming Christ as unique Saviour.
- viii. Large scale migration of families affecting community life.

2.2. Challenges Within The Country

- i. Large scale poverty and growing gap between the rich and the poor
- ii. Corruption, illiteracy, child labour, increasing unemployment, growing addiction to alcohol and drugs.
- iii. Atheistic Secularism (and practical atheism)
- iv. Narrow unitary cultural Nationalism
- v. Sensationalism and dictatorship of a section of the media.
- vi. Systematic concerted effort to manipulate the education system
- vii. Opposition to the fundamental human right of every person to convert.
- viii. Widespread intolerance, religious fanaticism and fundamentalism, attacks and atrocities against intellectuals, social activists, religious personnel and institutions.
- ix. Violation of Fundamental Rights enshrined in the Constitution, esp. minority rights
- x. Growing criminalization and terrorism.
- xi. Denial of SC status to Christian Dalits.

3.0. Restating the Vision and Mission

3.1. VISION: As a community of Christ's disciples, the Church is at the service of the Kingdom of God. As an inclusive and welcoming community, the Church which is a continued presence of Christ, actualizes the values of love, justice, equality, mercy and peace. As light, salt and leaven of society,

she lives in total solidarity with people, especially the poor.

3.2. MISSION: The Church is called to lead people to an encounter with Christ, practising the Gospel values and living for the wellbeing of people without fear and discrimination on the basis of caste, creed, gender, language, culture or status in society.

4.0. The Response of the Church in India to the Present Day Challenges

The following areas were chosen by the Bishops for review and for an appropriate response: i) Family Life Today ii) Renewal of Consecrated Life iii) The Lay Faithful and the Mission of the Church iv) Ecumenism v) Inter-religious Dialogue vi) The Education Apostolate and vii) Care of the Earth, our Common Home and viii) A New Way of Being Church for an effective response

4.1. FAMILY LIFE

The well-being of the Church and the society at large are intimately linked with the nurturing of the family. It is the lifeline of the Church and society (Instrumentum Laboris, nos. 32, 38). However, “married love is too often dishonoured by selfishness, hedonism and unlawful contraceptive practices” (Gaudium et Spes, no. 47). The two recent Synods on the Family, held in Rome, have drawn attention to the urgency of providing sustained pastoral care to families.

Proposals:

1. Frequent visits of Parish Priests to the families
2. Organizing Marriage Encounter and Marriage Enrichment Programmes.
3. Educating families to live in unity and to reach out to others.
4. Responding to the challenges, the media and society pose for family life. e.g. prolife issues, issues in human sexuality, pornography and marital fidelity.
5. Promoting Family counselling centres and Diocesan Family Commissions, training seminarians and priests to be family counsellors, accompanying them constantly.
6. Promoting family values, family prayer, family meals, family outings and use of bible sharing methods through SCC's.
7. Creating facilities for care of the elderly, respecting them and learning from them.

4.2. Renewal Of Consecrated Persons

The Catholic Church in India is blessed with over one hundred and twenty five

thousand religious priests, religious brothers and religious sisters, who serve the Church significantly through a large network of educational, health care and social service institutions. Even as we greatly appreciate the selfless and dedicated life of the consecrated persons, in recent times, there is a decrease in the number of candidates opting for consecrated life. A fresh, creative and a self-critical approach is needed in order to make this gift of God more attractive and relevant. While appreciating the generous commitment of thousands of clergy who are witnessing the mercy of God through parish community and their attached apostolate, we are of the opinion that priestly life needs a thorough renewal and updating.

Proposals:

1. Rediscovering the Founder's charism and rededicating oneself to pastoral ministry with a clear shift of emphasis from maintenance to mission.
2. Consecrated way of life should be a combination of contemplation and active service, as recommended by St. John Paul II.
3. Maintaining the quality of Consecrated life by careful selection of candidates and Christ centred formation and commitment to the poor.
4. Participating in the mission of the Church through greater collaboration with the Bishop and integration into the pastoral life of the parish community.

4.3. The Lay Faithful And The Mission Of The Church

The lay faithful have a distinct role in the spreading of the Gospel, which the Church really needs them to carry out with the authority, creativity, and power that the Holy Spirit has given them in Baptism. *Lumen Gentium* no. 31 states: “the laity, by their very vocation, seek the kingdom of God by engaging in temporal affairs and by ordering them according to the plan of God. They live in the world, that is, in each and in all of the secular professions and occupations. ... They are called there by God that by exercising their proper function and led by the spirit of the Gospel they may work for the sanctification of the world from within as a leaven”. The laity likewise share in the priestly, prophetic, and royal office of Christ (*Apostolicam Actuositatem*, no. 2).

Proposals:

1. Accepting the dignity, role and importance of the role of the lay faithful in the Church
2. Encouraging the laity to involve themselves in the Church and temporal order, through the Small Christian Communities (SCC's).

3. Undertaking faith formation and professional training programmes.
4. Encouraging our laity to take up important leadership positions in the Parliament, Assemblies, Civil Services, Entrepreneurship in business and in the judiciary.
5. Recognizing the dignity of labour by providing just wages and social security.
6. Helping and encouraging lay faithful by providing them with scholarships and facilities and promoting lay participation in the life and mission of the Church.

4.3.1. The Marginalized And Weaker Sections Within The Christian Community (viz. The Dalits, Tribals, Differently Abled And Women)

The Church commits herself to the liberation of the weaker sections, like tribals, women and dalits. She wants to reach out more to the unorganized groups like fisher-flock, farmers, migrants, domestic workers, victims of trafficking, through advocacy and networking with NGO's and other like-minded groups and individuals, dedicated to the cause of the poor.

Proposals:

1. Realizing that caste system is a reality in India, which has also crept in certain parts of the Church, we need to pursue with the Government that Christian Dalits be treated on par with the Hindu Dalits.
2. Introducing positive measures to integrate Christians of Dalit origin along with others in the Church through education and employment.
3. Strengthening advocacy on the socio-political, economic and cultural rights of Tribals, enshrined in the Constitution of India.
4. Fostering advocacy and networking to address the issues of land alienation, induced displacement, human trafficking and migration.
5. Showing sensitivity to the differently abled by providing facilities that suit their needs.
6. Alleviating the plight of the farmers in distress and preventing suicide of our farmers.
7. Fostering gender equity and providing a greater role of women in our collaborative structures.
8. Establishing/ Revitalizing Grievance Cells to address women's issues to protect their rights.

4.3.2. Youth Apostolate:

Recognizing that India is predominantly young, so is the Church in India, there is an urgent need to prepare tomorrow's leaders today.

Proposals:

1. Promoting youth apostolate at all levels, such as the Jesus Youth, YCS/YSM, ICYM and AICUF and Youth Associations of the Sui Juris Churches (SMYM and MCYM) in all parishes and institutions.
2. Encouraging faith formation for youth through YOUCAT, DOCAT and Youth Bible, fostering ethical and moral values, enhancing critical thinking and problem solving.
3. Promoting young talents for leadership roles in the Church and society, particularly in political life and civil service.

4.4.1. Ecumenism

Our common faith in God through Baptism is the foundation for us to overcome divisions among Christians and to promote mutual relations, friendship and collaboration. “The restoration of unity among all Christians is one of the principal concerns of the Second Vatican Council. Christ the Lord founded one Church and one Church only...However, many Christians...differ in mind and go their different ways, as if Christ Himself were divided” (Unitatis Redintegratio, no. 1). Therefore, the need of the hour is to take initiatives to foster better cooperation among Christians through dialogue and common ecumenical services.

Proposals:

1. Creating ecumenical bodies such as Inter-Church Councils and United Christian Groups (at Regional and National Level)
2. Dialoguing with ecumenical groups to study social and legal issues (such as environmental issues human rights and legal issues).
3. Organizing of special programmes for training seminarians, priests, religious and laity in Ecumenism.
4. Reaching out and dialoguing with fundamentalist groups and sects.
5. Promoting Spiritual Ecumenism - common prayers, using common ecumenical bibles and sharing spiritual riches.

4.4.2. Inter-religious Dialogue:

Inter-religious dialogue has become an urgent priority today. The goal of dialogue is to establish friendship, peace and harmony and to share spiritual and moral values and experiences in a spirit of truth and love. Redemptoris Missio clearly states that “inter-religious dialogue is part of the Church's evangelizing

mission”. “In the light of the economy of salvation, the Church sees no conflict between proclaiming Christ and engaging in interreligious dialogue... Each member of the faithful and all Christian communities are called to practice dialogue. Dialogue is a path toward the kingdom” (Redemptoris Missio, no. 56, 57).

Proposals:

1. Introducing Formation Programmes on inter-religious dialogue in our institutions, seminaries and formation houses.
2. Including Inter-religious dialogue as a subject in school catechism classes.
3. Promoting Inter-religious dialogue through SCC's.
4. Respecting the sentiments of the people of other religions.
5. Using Catholic Guilds and other Associations to promote dialogue with businessmen, politicians, journalists.
6. Organizing training programmes for promoting justice and peace.
7. Promoting religious harmony and National Integration through a proactive and conciliatory role.
8. Breaking the divisive and intolerant walls of caste, language and ethnicity.

4.5. The Education Apostolate

Educational Institutions need to rise above the maintenance mode to impart holistic education with a heart for the poor and the marginalized. The CBCI Education Policy has clearly stated: “The Catholic educational institutions are to provide inclusive and holistic education especially for the marginalized and girls enabling them to live life to the full and responsibly, thus transforming the individual and society” (AICEP 2007).

Proposals:

1. Having recourse to legal action when Constitutional rights are violated and the appointment/approval of staff, issue of Minority certificate, grant in aid, scholarships and other support systems are denied.
2. Promoting Faith formation of Christian students and value education, reaching out to those living in “social and geographical periphery” and providing quality education in the slums and rural areas.
3. Recognizing the need to positively promote higher education institutions, to form persons of character and conviction, capable of delivering quality leadership and administrative service, upholding the constitutional values and the socialistic, secular and democratic character of our country (National Education Coordinators' Meet, 18 December 2015).

4. Networking with local, district and state leaders and administrators and befriending people of the neighbourhood and all people of good will to ensure administrative autonomy, proper to the Minority institutions.
5. Providing educational opportunities, especially to the socially backward and girl children, and ensuring administrative transparency, financial accountability and participatory management.

4.6. Care Of The Earth, Our Common Home

The ruthless exploitation of the earth's resources has adverse effects on humanity. Pope Francis affirmed: "As stewards of God's creation, we are called to make the earth a beautiful garden for the human family. When we destroy our forests, ravage our soil and pollute our seas, we betray that noble calling" (Speech, Manila, Philippines, January 18, 2015). In this regard, we must go to the heart of the ecological degradation and advocate an education in ecological responsibility because "we are all really responsible for all".

Proposals:

1. Every Diocese and Parish to draw up an Environment (Green) Policy.
2. Organizing programmes for protecting the environment and fostering love for nature.
3. Encouraging use of solar energy, rain-water harvesting, and use of bio-gas plants.
4. Promoting sustainable development through change of lifestyle (reuse, reduce, recycle).
5. Encouraging organic farming and say no to pesticides and plastics.
6. Facilitating Environmental Education and Ecological Conversion

4.7. A New Way Of Being Church For An Effective Response

Both Blessed Mother Teresa and Pope Francis are exemplary models for living with such a vision and mission. Mother Teresa changed her routine way of living and made a radical decision for living her religious / consecrated life in a thoroughly new way. So also, the lifestyle of Pope Francis challenges us to be authentic in our Christian vocation, by freeing ourselves of traditional structures, institutionalisation and to break new ground, shedding the comforts and privileges of office and status, embodying the gracious mercifulness and love of Christ and bringing the joy of the Gospel to one and all. "...All of us are asked to obey his call (the Lord's) to go forth from our own comfort zones in order to reach all the "peripheries" in the light of the Gospel" (Evangelii Gaudium, no. 20). We are also challenged and inspired by the exemplary life of

the Saints of India, namely, St. Thomas the Apostle, St. Francis Xavier, St. Gonsalo Garcia, St. Alphonsa, St. Kuriakose Elias Chavara, St. Euphrasia, St. Joseph Vaz, Blessed Mother Teresa, Blessed Devasahayam Pillai, Blessed Maria Theresa Chiramel, Blessed Augustine Thevarparampil (Kunjachan), Servant of God, Father Constant Lievens and others.

4.7.1. Bishops And Priests:

Bishops and priests, while exercising their role as administrators, should be first and foremost, shepherds of the flock, available and service minded. Their lifestyle should be an example of simplicity and spirituality that can be an inspiration to everyone.

Proposals:

1. Shunning excessive institutionalization, clericalism and extravaganza.
2. Animating pastoral structures, such as Diocesan/Parish Pastoral Councils and Finance Committees, etc.
3. Adopting simple lifestyle, following the example of the Good Shepherd and opening our houses and our institutions to the poor.
4. Rediscovering the power of the Word of God and prayer
5. Making apostolates, such as healthcare, social development and education into agents of evangelisation.
6. Refashioning the formation of priests and religious, enabling them to respond to the challenges of our times with faith and courage.
7. Promoting transparency and accountability at all levels of Church's administration.

5.0. Conclusion:

As authentic citizens of the country, we repose our confidence in the democratic values and the Constitution of India. Trusting in God's grace, love and mercy, we march ahead to carry out our God-given mission, confident of the goodwill and support of our people everywhere. We appeal to all people of goodwill in India to join hands with us in solidarity to work for a better Church and a better society. May Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of Mercy and Star of Evangelization, who brought joy and hope to the world, guide us and help us to fulfil our mission.

09.03.2016
Bangalore

Sd/-
✠ **Baselios Cardinal Cleemis**
President, CBCI

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE EXARCHATE 2015 - 16

Establishment of any entity, especially those of a religious nature, would invariably start with the aspirations of the People of God. The aspirations of thousands of Malankarites became a reality with the reading of the Papal Bulls on 26 March 2015 at St. Mary's Cathedral, Trivandrum, notifying the establishment of the Exarchate of St Ephrem, Khadki-Pune, and the appointment of His Excellency Thomas Mar Anthonios Valiavilayil OIC as its first Apostolic Exarch.

A cursory look at the events that followed would testify that no efforts were spared to start the functioning of the Exarchate with immediate effect. In the second week of April 2015 itself, the Exarch designate visited Pune to meet priests working here in Pune, the Sub-regional Pastoral Council of the erstwhile members of the ETRI and other Lay-leaders. On 21 April His Beatitude Moran Mor Baselios Cardinal Cleemis Catholicos, in the presence of Most Rev. Jacob Mar Barnabas and Most Rev. Thomas Mar Anthonios, convened a committee at Bengaluru, comprising of all parish priests and pastoral council members of the Exarchate to chalk out the program for the inauguration of the Exarchate and the Installation (Sunthroniso) of the Exarch, scheduled on 30 May 2015.

The Inauguration and Installation ceremonies were truly a moment of great joy for the entire Church. It started with liturgical reception to Moran Mor Baselios Cardinal Cleemis Catholicos, His Grace Salvatore Pennachio (Apostolic Nuncio), Most Rev. Thomas Dabre, the Bishop of Pune, the Exarch-designate His Excellency Thomas Mar Anthonios, other Malankara Catholic Bishops and Bishops of the Sister Churches at 8.30 am on 30 May 2015, followed by concelebrated Holy Qurbano with Sunthroniso, a Public Meeting felicitating the new Exarch and Agape. Rev. Priests, Sisters and Lay-members from various States of India graced the occasion.

On the same day the Monthly Bulletin of the Exarchate "The Ephramite" was launched.

11 and 12 June 2015, witnessed the first Pastoral Council Meeting and first Meeting of the Priests and Religious. At the start of the meetings the appointments of the Protosyncellus and other Curia members were announced and they were in sworn in office. Also the College of Exarchial Consultors and various Exarchial Commissions were constituted. The PC elected Mr Babu Daniel as its Secretary. A total of 99 members were present.

Parishes and Missions

At the time of the creation of the Exarchate, there were 27 personal parishes in the territory of the Exarchate. For better pastoral care and for unity and unification of activities the Ecclesiastical Districts were created and Protospesbyters were designated. The need of an “outgoing attitude” to identify the MSCC faithful still not registered in parishes was stressed. Similarly the importance to take up works of evangelisation was highlighted by the first Pastoral Council Meeting held on 11 June 2015.

Thereafter, new missions were started in Goa, Nanganallur and Tambaram in Chennai and Carmalaram in Bengaluru. It was a felt need that a new parish has to be formed in Dombivli. At a meeting of the parishioners of Ulhasnagar (Mumbai) with the Exarch, the decision was taken. The inauguration of the parish is fixed to take place on 01 May 2016. We are also exploring possibilities of evangelisation and missions in Ramakundam, Bengaluru, Vijayawada, Vishakapatanam, Gulbarga, etc. Some outreaches are being initiated.

Priests

At the time of the inauguration of the Exarchate, only 4 priests serving in the ETRI opted for the Exarchate. Hence there was (still now) dire need of priests to be appointed as parish priests in the Exarchate. Due to repeated and incessant requests we have so far received 6 more priests from our Eparchies. Fr. Ranjith Madathirambil from the Archieparchy of Tiruvalla served the Exarchate, in Nasik, for a brief period of six months; however went back to Kerala to pursue higher studies. We express our appreciation and gratitude to him The Exarchate is ever grateful to the priests of the OIC who serve in the parishes of the Exarchate now. Besides that Bethany Navajyothi Province of Bethany Ashram has lent the services of Rev. Fr George Mathew OIC to the Exarchial Curia. We place on record our gratitude to the provinces of Bethany Ashram for strengthening our Exarchate through the service of the priests from the Congregation.

Religious Congregations:

There are five Bethany Ashrams, including Bethany Scholasticate, Pune, in the Exarchate. There are ten Bethany Convents and four DM Convents in the Exarchate. The pastoral services rendered by the Rev. Sisters in the parishes and through their institutions add to the vivbrancy of the Exarchate. They are remembered with gratitude. The convents of Holy Spirit Sisters and Vincentian Sisters in the territory of the Exarchate also lend their services to the Exarchate.

Seminarians & Religious Vocation

With the formation of the Exarchate, of the eight of the seminarians of the ETRI studying at Nagpur and Delhi, opted for Exarchate of St. Ephrem. Three new Aspirants joined the Minor Seminary for the Exarchate in the beginning of the academic year 2015-16. 2 Regents from the Eparchy of Bathery and 2 Regents from other sui iuris Churches have joined the Seminary of the Exarchate. Now, at the end of the first year of the Exarchate, we have 14 Seminarians. Vocation promotion for the coming academic year is showing a positive trend. Two youngsters have already come in. Congrats to our young seminarians, the future of Exarchate!

Vocations are also promoted to Bethany Ashram and Convents from the Exarchate.

We are happy that the DM Sisters' Province of Chanda held its Religious Profession here in our Cathedral at Khadki on 28 April 2016.

Exarchial Curia, Commissions and Apostolate

The Protosyncellus (Rt Rev. Msgr Varghese Mattamana), Eparchial Finance Officer (Rev Fr Varghese Kaithon) Chancellor (Rev. Fr George Mathew OIC), Coordinator of the Exarchial Commissions (Rev Fr Varghese Valikodath) and the Vicar of the Cathedral (Rev. Fr Mathew Varikkatt) now form the Exarchial Curia. Other offices of the Curia lie vacant as there is great lack of priests and other competent personnel. The present office-bearers are doing a wonderful work along with the Exarch to build up the Exarchate.

The Presbyteral Council, the Pastoral Council, the Finance Council and the Religious met twice by this time. They all add to the life of the Exarchate through their committed participatory role.

Rev. Fr Varghese Valikodath who is the Coordinator of the Exarchial Commissions is also the Exarchial Director of the various Associations of the Exarchate. Under his guidance, all our associations got a good start as our Exarchate began to come alive.

Suvisesha Sangham

Suvisesha Sangham is not an organisation like MCA or MCYM. It is a gathering of the Faithful dedicated to lead an intense Christian life according to the charism of the Servant of God Mar Ivanios rooted in the liturgical spirituality of the MSCC and to spread the Gospel through their word and deeds. It was a blessing of the Lord that 7 members of the Suviseshasangham received

'Kaiveppu' in July 2015 on completion of the formation classes. Around 25 members of Exarchate are attending formation classes being conducted by Dr. Antony Kakkanat, the Executive Director of Suvishesha Sangham. Thanks and best wishes to all of them. Now, we have to concentrate on the formation of the Sangham in all parishes

MCYM

The MCYM in our Exarchate began to function under the Presidentship of Mr Saju John (Pune District) and his team. It is blessed with talented and devoted leadership and various activities such as cultural and sports programs, relaxation camps to the HSC/SSC students and many other events are being organised. The formation of Resources Team is a welcome innovation to guide the youth on challenges and identity crisis, to imbue leadership qualities etc.

MCA

In accordance with the decision of the Exarchial Consultors held at Khadki Cathedral on 21 July 2016, MCA has been initiated at all levels. The Pithruvedi, which was in a dormant stage in most of the parishes has been merged with the MCA. Elections of Exarchial level and District level office bearers have been held. The process of enrolment of members in MCA is in progress in many of the Districts. A circular, enumerating activities envisaged in District and Parish levels for the years 2015-17 has been issued by the Aboon and the Co-ordinator of Exarchial Commissions. The MCA is led by Mr TM Johnson (Bengaluru) and his team at the Exarchial level.

Mathrusangham

The Mathrusangham has been active and vibrant in most of the parishes, ever since the establishment of Personal Parishes in the ETRI. With the inauguration of the Exarchate, it is poised to be more efficient and supportive to the faith-life of the parishioners. Elections have been held in all levels of functioning such as exarchial, districts and parishes. In many parishes, members of Mathrusangham are the main-stay of the Suvisheshasangham. Ms Lizy Koshy (Mumbai) and team leads the Mathrusangham in our Exarchate.

MCCL

Attempts were being made in the ETRI to form an organisation (viz. Baldeep) which would help the intellectual and spiritual growth of the children. However, with the Exarchate in place and the formation of the ecclesial level MCCL, the catechism students can now look forward in developing their leadership qualities, skills and talents through the Malankara Catholic

Children's League. Elections in Districts and Parish levels have been conducted.

Catechism

There is continuity in the faith formation programme of our children. Basically the policies of the ETRI are carried forward. The text books and syllabus remain the same. A website created by Rev. Fr Varghese Valikodath for the official announcement and happenings of the Exarchial Commissions have been launched by Most Rev. Thomas Mar Anthonios on 1 Sept. 2015. Circulars, syllabus, transliterated version of liturgical hymns, question bank, names of headmasters etc. are available on the website. Jeevan Darshan Camps, Bible Camps etc. have been organised in various Districts.

We place on record the relentless hard work undertaken by Rev. Fr Varghese Valikodath, the Secretary and Coordinator of various Exarchial Commissions, to keep abreast the life of all the associations, Exarchial Commissions and apostolates of our Exarchate.

Social Service & Charitable Activities

To reach out to the poor and marginalised is carrying forward the ministry of Jesus by the Church. The Exarchate is also erected for the same. With this vision, on 12 March 2016, the Social Service Society of the Exarchate named SEVA (short for 'Sant EphremVikas Ayojan') was inaugurated by Shri. Prashant Jagtap, Worshipful Mayor of Pune Municipal Corporation, in the presence of our Aboon Mar Anthonios and other dignitaries. Msgr Varghese Mattamana is appointed the Director of SEVA. The services of SEVA will be expanded soon.

We intervened well in the flood calamity in Chennai. Various parishes of the Exarchate had contributed in large quantity, money and material, to the people suffering from the flood.

Infra-structure development:

Experience dictates that we have to aim at the infrastructural development of the Exarchate both at the Ecclesiastical District level and at the Exarchial level, the one not at the cost of the other. That was also the wish and directive of the first joint meeting of the Pastoral Council and the Finance Council. Infra-structure is the platform needed for the enhancement and sustenance of spiritual growth. At present institutional and infrastructural developmental activities are planned in all Ecclesiastical Districts. New churches are being constructed at Padi and Ayyapakkam in Chennai, Singsandra and Carmelaram in Bengaluru Districts

At the common level, the Exarchate is registered as a Religious Trust in Bengaluru with its outreach to the whole country. Prime requirement of any

infrastructure development is possession of land. By the Grace of God, we have been able to purchase over 6 acres of land near Khopoli, on the way to Mumbai. As part of the same plan, another 6 acres which is of the property held by the same seller Mr Jacob Oommen, a Faithful of the Orthodox Church is to be acquired further. Here we will plan a common school and junior college, pastoral centre, Bishop's House, Minor Seminary, Social Service Centre, etc. It is our desire that our religious congregations and the Faithful shall also acquire some land in the proximity.

The Exarchate will always remember the donors and those who gave loan towards the realization of the project. The leadership given by the some of our Lay Leaders from Mumbai District with others from all ecclesiastical districts is praiseworthy.

The Muvattupuzha Province of Bethany Sisters kindly gifted an adjacent plot of land admeasuring 2.5 cents to our Church in Dehu Road, Pune. So also we have been gifted with a small plot of land by Mrs. Elikutty Thomas and Family in memory of Late Mr. C P Thomas for the use of our community in Nagpur. We owe our gratitude to these our donors and benefactors.

Pastoral Visits

Ever since the announcement of the erection of the Exarchate, His Excellency Mar Anthonios, has been making pastoral visits to the parishes under the Exarchate. In most of the parishes he has completed the second round of visits. In addition, he also visited our parishes and communities in the USA, Germany, and Switzerland and lately in Doha. The offerings he received from the Faithful goes into the day to day maintenance of the Exarchate. A big “thank you” to all our benefactors!

Relationship with other Catholic and Christian Communities

His Excellency the Exarch is keep to foster good, ecclesial and ecumenical relationships with the Catholic Churches of India and other Churches and Christian denomination in the region of the Exarchate. Besides participating in the CBCI, he is in regular contact with Catholic Bishops of Western Region and other Catholic Bishops who are in the territory of the Exarchate. The Exarch is also on the Board of Directors of the National Biblical Catechetical and Liturgical Centre (NBCLC), a common institution of the CBCI.

He is in regular contact with the ecumenical gatherings of Churches in Pune and Mumbai. He gave the key note address at inauguration of the St Thomas Ecumenical Fellowship of Pune on 3 July 2015.

Pilgrimage to the Holy Land

Under the leadership of the Exarch, a Pilgrimage of 49 people were undertaken to the Holy Land, in the month of November 2015.

Other Events

Events like the Feast of Commemoration of the Servant of God Archbishop Mar Ivanios, Reunion-day, Birth Centenary of Archbishop Mar Gregorios etc. have been observed in different parts of the Exarchate. Extraordinary Jubilee of the Year of Mercy was initiated with the opening of the 'Door of Mercy' at St. Mary's Cathedral Church, Pune on 8 December 2015. The Exarch participated in events like National Youth Convention & National Charismatic Convention and Golden Jubilee celebrations of the 38 International Eucharistic Convention held in Mumbai.

Obituary

We mourn the death of our Faithful who went to their eternal reward and place on record our condolences to the bereaved family. May they rest in peace!

Summing-up

The EPHREMITÉ is the true monthly reporter of our activities. Hence, for any elaborate knowledge of the events of the year, one has to follow the bulletin. As we sum up this brief highlights, we are reminded of the appeal Jesus had made in Mt.9:37-38 "The harvest is plentiful, but the labourers are few; therefore ask the Lord of the harvest to send out labourers into his harvest".

Any stock-taking reminds us of the depleted reserves which master of the house would attempt to replenish. That is what we would be doing in the Exarchate

We are the Church; the People of God is the Church! The Lord builds His Church, our Exarchate too. We are HIS co-workers. Let us thank the Lord!

Besides the Holy Father who erected the Exarchate and appointed an Apostolic Exarch, we remember with gratitude His Beatitude Moran Mor Baselios Cardinal Cleemis Catholicos, the Father and Head of the MSCC and members of the Holy Episcopal Synod, especially those bishops who support the Exarchate supplying priests from their Eparchies and the Major Superiors of the Religious Congregations of Church deserve our gratitude.

We thank one another!

- Fr George Mathew OIC
Chancellor

EXARCHIAL DISTRICT NEWS**Pune District****1. St Mary's Malankara Cathedral Church, Khadki**

During Holy week a three day Gospel Preaching was carried out in the evening on 21st, 22nd and 23rd March 2016 by Bros. Paul Peter and Thomas Attumallil, doing regency at the Bishop's House at Khadki and Mr. T M Johnson from Bengaluru.

2. St Antony's Malankara Syrian Catholic Church, Vishrantwadi

Vade Dalmino Service: This year St Antony's Church witnessed for the first time the service of 'Vade Dalmino'. This service based on the parable of the ten virgins was conducted on the first day of the Passion Week.

Holy Week Services: Lenten prayers were conducted on Tuesday and Wednesday Evenings. Maundy Thursday services began with 3 hrs. Adoration of Holy Eucharist. The Movie "The Passion of Christ" was also shown after the services in the church which was well received. The services of Good Friday began with the Holy Qurbono, it being the feast of the Annunciation as well. Easter services began on Saturday evening and Easter Eggs were distributed to all the parishioners. The 20th Anniversary of the Priestly Ordination of our Vicar Fr Varghese Kaithon was also celebrated on this day.

Annual General Body Meeting (AGM): The AGM of the parish was held on 10 April 2016 with election of new committee members.

3. Holy Redeemer's Malankara Syrian Catholic Church, Pimpri

St Joseph Day Celebration: Rev. Fr. Noble Joseph OIC, the Vicar celebrated St Joseph's Day on 19th March 2016 with Holy Qurbono in the parish. The faithful were also given *nerchapaisam*.

Holy Week Services: The Holy week services were led by Rev Fr. Noble Joseph OIC, the vicar. On Maundy Thursday, Eucharistic Adoration was held after the Holy Qurbono and Night vigil was conducted by the MCYM members after Good Friday services. Special attraction of the Easter celebrations was Easter Eggs brought by parish members inscribing Bible verses on it and distributing it among the parishioners.

Retreat: One day Spiritual Renewal Retreat was conducted by Rev Fr. Jinto Edattukunnel, Director Charismatic Movement Kalyan Diocese on 7 April 2016. It was decided that every month 1st Thursday one day

retreat will be conducted in HRMSCC.

SEVA Food for Hunger: During the Lent, the MCYM members collected grocery items with the help of parishioners and distributed the same to the poor families in the locality.

Annual General Body Meeting (AGM): The AGM was conducted on Sunday 10th April 2016 after the Holy Qurbano with the election of new Committee Members.

4. St. Mary's Malankara Syrian Catholic Church, Aurangabad

Holy Week: The parish observed the Great Lent with Evening Prayers and Way of the Cross on Fridays, at the Church. Palm Sunday Service was conducted by Msgr Varghese Mattamana, while Fr. George Mathew OIC conducted Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and Easter services assisted by Bro. Paul Peter. It was a wonderful experience for all the parishioners.

5. St. Mary's Malankara Syrian Catholic Church, Warje Malwadi

Holy Week Services: Rev. Fr. Cyril Anand OIC gave leadership for the Holy Week service. This year we had large crowd participating for the prayer service throughout the week with many locals participating for the Good Friday and Easter service.

Annual General Body Meeting (AGM): The AGM for the year 2015-16 was conducted on 10th April after the Holy Qurbano under the leadership of Fr. George Mathew OIC the Vicar. The last year activities conducted were evaluated and plan for the coming year was briefly discussed, followed by election of new Committee members.

Mumbai District

1. St. Mary's Malankara Syrian Catholic Church, Sakinaka

Holy Week Services: Sakinaka Parish Holy week services were led by Fr. Philip Pulipra and Fr. Moncy. The entire parishioner's participated devoutly for the Lenten services.

Annual General Body Meeting (AGM): Various office bearers in the committee and prayer group leaders for the financial year 2016-2017 were elected in the presence of Rev. Fr. Philip Pulipra, the vicar.

2. Holy Family Malankara Syrian Catholic Church, Vikhroli

MCA Inauguration: In accordance with the Exarchial decision to merge the Pithruvedi with MCA, the Mumbai Zonal MCA Secretariat took the

initiative of formally inaugurating the MCA at HFMSCC, on 13 March 2016. After the Holy Qurbono, a meeting was held which was attended by the members of the Mumbai Zonal MCA Secretariat who shared their views about the need of MCA and its role in the church and society.

Holy Week Services: Preceding the Holy Week, a 24-Hours Adoration was held on 40th Friday and ended with Benediction of the Holy Eucharist on Saturday morning. Unit members living in different areas came for prayers during their allotted timings. The Holy week was observed with Way of the Cross, evening prayers and Holy Qurbono. Rev Fr. Moncy Kaleeckal celebrated the Holy Qurbono of Pesaha and on Holy Saturday, while Rev Fr Philip Pulipra, the Vicar, conducted the Good Friday and Easter services. This year instead of the Easter Cake, Easter Eggs were given to the parishioners as an observation of beginning of a new life.

Annual General Body Meeting (AGM): The AGM at HFMSCC was held in 2 parts this year. In the first part held on 3 April 2016 the Parish Council Elections for 2016 - 17 were held, while the second part was held on 10 April 2016 for the presentation of the Annual Accounts and the Annual Activity Report of 2015 - 16.

3. St. Mary's Malankara Syrian Catholic Church, Kharghar

Holy Week Services: A three-day retreat day was conducted from 18 - 20 March by Rev Fr Vincent Kundukulam of Pontifical Seminary, Aluva, Kerala. This was followed by 24 hours Vigil-prayers on 23-24 March, with deep involvement of people of all ages. Good Friday and Easter services were conducted by the Vicar Rev Fr. Mathai Iranathara OIC.

Annual General Body Meeting (AGM): The new committee for the Kharghar parish for the year 2016-17 was formed and inaugurated on 10th April 2016.

4. St. Mary's Malankara Syrian Catholic Church, BARC

Annual General Body Meeting (AGM): The Annual General Body Meeting of BARC unit was held on Sunday, April 10, 2016 after the Holy Qurbono. Rev. Fr. Mathai Iranathara OIC, the vicar presided over the meeting with presentation of annual report and the annual accounts of the parish.

5. St. John the Baptist Malankara Syrian Catholic Church, Vasai

Lenten Retreat: The yearly Lenten retreat of the year was conducted on

06 March 2016 by Rev. Fr. Shibu Pullickal from Kalyan Diocese. The retreat was enlightening and refreshing to all as if it was related to our life's incidents and also a beautiful message on self-realization, accepting our mistakes, pray for our sins and how to lead a good family life.

Special Congratulations: The parish specially congratulated Ms. Ashwini Varghese for winning the 'Best Paper Award' on a study of Employee Engagement in M&M in an International Conference in the University of Mumbai.

BANGALORE DISTRICT

1. St. Joseph's Malankara Catholic Church, Mathikere

MCYM Resource Team Meet: The first session of the resource team at Mathikere was held on the 10 April. The session was conducted on the topic "The Struggles and Challenges of Adolescence". The Meeting had an active participation of 30 youths along with the animators and promotor Mr. Jacob Daniel and Mrs. Dency Mathew. Rev Fr. Abraham from Puthoor diocese and Sr. Preethi helped in the organizing of the event. After the introduction, the members were divided into three groups. The teams were shown the videos of the parable of the prodigal son and were asked to discuss among themselves on a list of questions given to them, based on the characters of the parable and then to present their views. The next section was a presentation about 'The Identity states and the changes during adolescence' which was handled by Ms. Jinu Sara. The session ended with evaluation and a feedback given by Rev. Fr. Abraham.

CHENNAI DISTRICT

1. St. Thomas Malankara Syrian Catholic Church, Padi

Retreat: The holy week retreat was conducted at the parish from 21st - 23rd March 2016 by Rev. Sr. Mary Prasad DM.

Way of the Cross: On 40th Friday, the parish members lead the way of the cross from Padi Church to St. Thomas Mount, covering a distance of about 19 Kms. It started at 5.30 a.m., and the group reached St. Thomas Mount church by 9.00 am, and celebrated Holy Qurbono.

Holy Week Services: The Holy Week programs began with the Palm Sunday morning prayers at the Bethany Convent premises and then

moving in procession to the church to celebrate the Holy Qurbano. The Maundy Thursday Holy Qurbano was preceded by 24 Hrs. Eucharistic Adoration. On the day of Good Friday the Holy Qurbano was celebrated on account of the Annunciation followed by Good Friday services. After the Easter Services, Easter Eggs were distributed to all.

Inauguration of a New Tamil Malankara Community: A new Tamil Malankara Community was formed in Thamparam, Chennai on 10 April. The mission was inaugurated with the solemn celebration of Holy Qurbano. This is the second Tamil Malankara Community in Chennai.

INSTITUTION NEWS

Mar Gregorios College of Arts & Science

Ordination Day Celebrations: The staff of MGC organized a program to felicitate the 23rd ordination day of Secretary, Rev. Fr. Sabu M George on 29 Marc, 2016. Rev. Fr. Sabu expressed his gratitude for the love and affection shown by the entire team of Principal staff and students. The program ended with a cutting of the cake.

Cordial Invitation for the Vestition of Seminarians on 28 May at St Mary's Malankara Cathedral Church, Khadki



Joseph Dinakaran



Paul Peter



Justin John



Thomas Attumalil



Paul Vettikatil

Decree of Erection of St Ephrem Malankara Syrian Catholic Church, Goa

It is the desire of the Mother Church to see to the spiritual well being of her sons and daughters everywhere in the world and to foster their liturgical, theological, spiritual and disciplinary patrimony in accordance with their history and circumstances of life. Attentive to the needs of our faithful in Goa and after having consulted with the Curia of the Exarchate of St Ephrem Khadki-Pune, I now deem it fitting to establish **St Ephrem Malankara Syrian Catholic Church** in the Exarchate of St Ephrem as a personal parish, to serve the needs of the Malankara Syrian Catholic Faithful in the State of Goa.

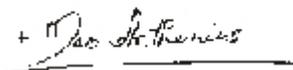
This personal parish is erected as per CCEO cc 279 and 280 and will be governed by all other canons of the Code of Canons of the Oriental Churches and the Code of Particular Canons of the Syro-Malankara Catholic Church relating to parishes, as well as the particular norms of the Exarchate of St Ephrem. Until other arrangements are done, the liturgical services of the parish will be organized at the Chapel of Sacred Heart of Jesus at Cortalim, belonging to the Archdiocese of Goa and Daman.

We also take this opportunity to name **Rev. Fr. Varghese Valikkodath** of our Exarchate, as the first Parish Priest of St Ephrem Malankara Syrian Catholic Church, Goa and we commend him, his successors and all the Malankara Syrian Catholic Families and Faithful in Goa to the guidance of the Holy Spirit and the protection of the Blessed and Ever Virgin Mary Mother of our Lord Jesus Christ and to the intercessory patronage of St Ephrem, the patron of our Exarchate and the Parish.

This Decree will take effect on **13 March, the Sixth Sunday of the Great Lent 2016.**

This Decree shall be considered promulgated by its publication and will be read on **Sunday, 13 March 2016**, in the presence of the parishioners of St Ephrem Parish Goa.

Given at St Mary's Cathedral Church, on **Tuesday, the first day of the month of March, in the year two thousand and sixteen** of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.



Thomas Mar Anthonios OIC
Apostolic Exarch

Fr George Mathew Kaithakakathu OIC
Chancellor

Decree of Erection of St Mary's Malankara Syrian Catholic Church, Dombivili

It is the desire of the Mother Church to see to the spiritual well being of her sons and daughters everywhere in the world and to foster their liturgical, theological, spiritual and disciplinary patrimony in accordance with their culture and historical circumstances of life. Attentive to the needs of our faithful in the Church of St Joseph Malankara Syrian Catholic at Ulhasnagar, expressed at an assembly of the parishioners presided over by me in the presence of Rev. Fr Jaison John OIC (John Britto OIC), the Parish Priest on 08 November 2015 and after having consulted with the Curia of the Exarchate of St Ephrem Khadki-Pune, I now deem it fitting to establish the parish **St Mary's Malankara Syrian Catholic Church in the Ecclesial District of Mumbai** of the Exarchate of St Ephrem, to serve the ecclesial needs of the Malankara Syrian Catholic Faithful residing in places like Dombivili East, Dombivili West, Takurli East, Takurli West, Kopar and Diva and any other adjacent places that would be logistically accessible to the parish.

This parish is erected as per CCEO cc 279 and 280 and will be governed by all other canons of the Code of Canons of the Oriental Churches and the Code of Particular Canons of the Syro-Malankara Catholic Church relating to parishes, as well as the particular norms of the Exarchate of St Ephrem. Until other arrangements are done, the liturgical services of the parish will be organized at St Peter's Jacobite Syrian Church, Dombivili, belonging to the Diocese of Mumbai of our Sister Church, the Malankara Syrian Orthodox Church.

I also name **Rev. Fr Jaison John OIC (John Britto OIC)** as the first Parish Priest of St Mary's Malankara Syrian Catholic Church, Dombivili and I commend him, his successors and all the Malankara Syrian Catholic Families and Faithful of the new parish of Dombivili to the guidance of the Holy Spirit and the protection of the Blessed and Ever Virgin Mary, the Mother of our Lord Jesus Christ and to the intercessory patronage of St Ephrem, the patron of our Exarchate.

This Decree will take retrospective effect from 01 April 2016, the Hevoro Friday after Easter 2016.

This Decree shall be considered promulgated by being read on Sunday, 01 May 2016, the Fifth Sunday after Easter, the day of the Feast of St Joseph the Worker and the Laity Day in the Syro-Malankara Catholic Church, in the presence of the parishioners of St Joseph MSCC Ulhasnagar and the members of the new parish

of St Mary's MSCC, Dombivili, during the Holy Qurbano.

Given at St Mary's Cathedral Church, on the Feast of St Joseph, the nineteenth day of the month of March, in the year two thousand and sixteen of our Lord and

+ *Thomas Mar Antonios*

Fr George Mathew Kaithakakathu

✠ **Thomas Mar Antonios OIC**
Apostolic Exarch

Fr George Mathew Kaithakakathu OIC
Chancellor

DAYS OF REMEMBRANCE

- May 1 : Laity Day, St. Joseph Patron of the Worker, Prophet Jeremiah
 May 5 : Suloko (Ascension of Our Lord)
 May 7 : Finding of the Cross of Our Lord
 May 15 : The Great Sunday of Pentecost
 May 29 : Vocation Day
 May 30 : Feast of Bp. Thomas Mar Eusebius

OBITUARY

The exarchate expresses deepest condolences on the demise of Mr. M. V. Thomas (62) from St Mary's MSCC, Nagpur & Mrs. Mariyamma Abraham (82) from St Joseph's MSCC, Dehu Road.

NEW APPOINTMENTS

- 1) Fr Jose Konnathuvila - Vicar St Mary's MSCC, Aurungabad & St Thomas MSCC, Nashik
- 2) Fr Samuel Thopil - Bishop's House, Khadki

Introducing Rev. Fr. Sunil Maria Benedict

LegalName : Sunil Maria Benedict
Date of Birth : 05-June-1976
Father's Name : Selvanathan John Bosco
Mother's Name : Sheila Assumptha
John Bosco
Wife's Name : Jennifer Nisha Sunil
Elder Daughter : Sarah Irene Sunil, 5thStd
Younger Daughter : Joella Seraphina Sunil, Nursery
Address : No 1, 2nd Cross, Munithayappa
Layout, Opposite to. Banaswadi Railway
Station, St. Thomas Town Post,
Lingarajapuram, Bangalore 560084.



Ordination Summary

Reader : 14-Jan-2013 (Mumbai)
Sub-Deacon & Deacon : 04-Jan-2014(NSW, Australia)
Holy Ordination : 05-Jan-2014(NSW, Australia)

Qualifications Summary

Bachelors Degree in Theology
Bachelors in Economics, Political Science, Sociology (Sociology Honours)
MBA in Finance and Marketing
Risk Management and Financial Engineering
Master Finance Professional
Project Management
Project Management Professional
Certified Lead Auditor
Documentation of Business Requirements

Current Spiritual Assignments:

- Assistant Vicar - St. Mary's MSCC, Hennur
- Internet Ministry on Spiritual themes Youtube Channel -
https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCiww_CzVCAITLMJKe91X4HA?spfreload=10
- Evangelization Activities in Bengaluru
- Animation of Youth in Bengaluru
- Weekly ministry at Shalom Grace Home 35 people every week.
- Pastoral Care of Re-united Russian Orthodox Christians to the Malankara Syrian Catholic Church in Bangalore.

BISHOP'S DIARY - MAY 2016

Date	: Function / Venue
May 1	: BARC, Ulhasnagar, Mumbai
May 2	: Chinchwad, Pune
May 3-6	: Trivandrum
May 7	: Bengaluru
May 8	: Pune & Mumbai
May 9	: Switzerland
May 10	: Rome
May 11	: Visiting the Holy Father
May 12	: Visiting the Congregation for the Oriental Church
May 13	: Back to Switzerland
May 17	: Back to Mumbai
May 18	: Trivandrum
May 19-24:	Kerala
May 25	: Priest's Meet in Pune
May 26	: Religious Meet in Pune
May 27	: Pastoral Council Meet in Pune
May 28	: Vestition of Seminarians in Pune Blessing of Marriage in Thane (Evening)
May 29	: Kerala
May 30	: Chennai
May 31	: Pune



**Festal Greetings
and Prayers
Bishop Thomas
Mar Eusebius.
30 May**



The New Malankara Community at Thamparam, Chennai



Aurangabad Parish Community on Easter Day Celebration



Resource Team Meet - Matikkare



Holy Week Service at Warje Malwadi

Bishop Thomas Mar Antonios with the Malankara Community in Doha celebrates Holy Week Service.

