

THE SYRO-MALANKARA CATHOLIC CHURCH
MAJOR ARCHIEPISCOPAL CURIA

CATHOLICATE CENTRE, TRIVANDRUM - 695004, KERALA, INDIA

Fifteenth Ordinary Holy Episcopal Synod

(10 to 14 March 2014)

REPORT

His Beatitude Baselios Cardinal Cleemis Catholicos convoked the Fifteenth Ordinary Holy Episcopal Synod of the Syro-Malankara Catholic Church at the Blessed John Paul II Synod Hall of the Major Archiepiscopal Curia at the Catholicate Centre, Pattom, Trivandrum from 10 to 14 March 2014. The Holy Episcopal Synod (HES) began at 3.00 p. M. on Monday, 10 March.

The members present at the Synod were: Moran Mor Baselios Cardinal Cleemis Catholicos (President of the Synod), Most Rev. Thomas Mar Koorilos (Secretary of the Synod), Most Rev. Geevarghese Mar Divannasios, Most Rev. Yoohanon Mar Chrysostom, Most Rev. Joshua Mar Ignathios, Most Rev. Joseph Mar Thomas, Most Rev. Abraham Mar Julios, Most Rev. Vincent Mar Paulos, Most Rev. Thomas Mar Eusebios, Most Rev. Jacob Mar Barnabas OIC, Most Rev. Thomas Mar Anthonios OIC, Most Rev. Samuel Mar Irenios and Most Rev. Philipos Mar Stephanos.

Most Rev. Geevarghese Mar Timotheos, the Bishop Emeritus of Tiruvalla is granted permanent leave of absence due to his old age health conditions.

Most Rev. Thomas Mar Anthonios OIC, the Curia Bishop and the Chancellor of the Major Archiepiscopal Curia, recorded the minutes.

The opening session began with a hymn, reading a Gospel passage (Jn 6:37-40) and reciting the *Kaumo*.

His Beatitude gavethe opening address. He based his message on the Gospel passage read for the prayer. He said that the members of the Synod were brought together by the Holy Spirit and urged the Bishops to pray to the same Holy Spirit to shower his graces and gifts on the Synod-in-session.HB reminded the Synod, the promise of Jesus: “All that the Father gives me will come to me; and him who comes to me I will not cast out. For I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will, but the will of him who sent me; and this is the will of him who sent me, that I should lose nothing of all that he has given me, but raise it up at the last day” (Jn 6:36-39). As the Father has sent the Son, and as the Son accomplishes the will of the Father who sent him, so are we to continue the work of salvation the Son has entrusted to the Church through the Apostles. The Holy Episcopal Synod continues the same work of salvation brought by the Son.HB wished that the activities of the Holy Episcopal Synod be for the spread and propagation of the Kingdom of God. HB continued, “Venerable Brethren, I welcome you all to this fifteenth Ordinary Holy Episcopal Synod of our Church. As a Church, we are constantly being

strengthened by the divine providence, by the Grace of God. In very, very small things and in the great events of our Church, we can continuously see that the hand of God is strengthening us. We are a small Church, a tiny folk; but a folk constantly held in the palm of the Lord”.

Delving on the recent responsibilities the Father and Head of the SMCC is called to shoulder, HB said, “In the recent times, the Father and Head of this Church was elected President of the KCBC and the CBCI. The Lord wants this small Church to give a leadership to the Church in Kerala, to the Church in India. Though small in number, the Lord has called us to give a witness of our own in His Church in India. After the 31st Plenary Assembly of the CBCI, we are gathering together for the first time. Let us accept the gifts of the Lord with true and genuine humility; let us be proud that the Lord ‘has done great things for us’ (Lk 1:49)”.

His Beatitude also correlated the synodal activities of our Church with that of the Holy Father Pope Francis: “Our Episcopal leadership and Synodal activities are in a special way communion with the leadership and service of His Holiness Pope Francis. The call of Pope Francis remains before us as a challenge. Pope John Paul II was considered a great Pope. Pope Benedict XVI gave us an authentic testimony of Christian Catholic faith. Pope Francis is a gift of the Lord for the Church in the modern world. The Syro-Malankara Catholic Church is blessed to have an intimate collaboration with the Petrine ministry of the present Pope”.

HB also invited the attention of the Synod Fathers to the agenda of the Synod-in-session and said, “Venerable Brethren, the uniqueness of this HES gathering is our meeting with the Major Superiors of the Institutes of Consecrated Life in the SMCC. The meeting with the Secretaries of the Synodal Commissions will be another highlight of this HES. Our proposed meeting with the Rector, Staff and Students of our Seminary will motivate all concerned in the important task of forming the future priests of our Church. All these will open up the Synod to a wider spectrum of participation of the People of God in the life of our Church”.

His Beatitude expressed condolence to Most Rev. Abraham Mar Julios at the demise of his brother Rev. Fr Stanislaus who went to his eternal reward on 16 February 2014. HB also expressed condolence at the demise of Chev. V. P. Thomas who was a pioneer member of our Church in Delhi. HB appreciated the deceased as an Ambassador of our Church in the ETRI.

10 March is the Episcopal Ordination Day of Most Rev. Jacob Mar Barnabas. His Beatitude, on behalf of the Synod, congratulated him and appreciated his ministry in the ETRI. HB also conveyed his greetings, congratulations and appreciation to Mr Abraham Pattiyani, a member of our Church in Delhi and Advocate of the Supreme Court, on his appointment as a member of the Minority Commission for the State of Delhi. HB also expressed the gratitude of the Church to Most Rev. Anil Couto, the Archbishop of Delhi who supported the appointment.

The Catholicos placed on record the appreciation of the Church at the nomination of Rev. Fr Mathew Varikattu and Ms Advocate Annamma George to the National Monitoring Committee for the notified Minorities (NMCM).

The Catholicos assured the Church’s solidarity and empathy with all our people and all affected by the implementation of the recommendations of the Kasturirangan Commission constituted by the Government of India. Not only our people but also all who are affected by it deserve our solidarity. The Catholicos said, “I convey our prayers to all those families affected by the decision of the Government. The political impact of the decision is tremendous. I congratulate the prudent intervention of our Bishops. We will face this situation and solve this

problem in accordance with the guideline given by the KCBC. We are expecting a government notification to rectify the situation and to allay the anxieties and fears of the people”.

Praying for the descend of the Holy Spirit on the Synod-in-session, the Catholicos declared the Fifteenth Ordinary Holy Episcopal Synod of the Syro-Malankara Catholic Church open.

His Grace Thomas Mar Koorilos congratulated His Beatitude on his being elected the President of the KCBC, the President of the CBCI and being appointed a member of the National Integration Council by the honourable Prime Minister of India, Mr Manmohan Singh. The triple recognition in the ecclesial and national sphere is an honour to the Catholicos personally and to the SMCC in general. His Grace said, “Young in age but mature, firm but loving leadership make Bavathirumeni a unique personality acceptable to all. The Church and the nation placed great confidence in the personality of our Catholicos. His Grace Benedict Mar Gregorios of happy memory was a member of the NIC. After him, the Prime Minister again granted this recognition to our Catholicos”. On behalf of the HES and the Church, His Grace conveyed hearty congratulations, appreciation and prayers to the Catholicos.

Submission of the Catholicos Day Offering

Next on the Agenda was the submission of the Catholicos Day Offerings. All the Bishops submitted to His Beatitude the Catholicos, the collections from their respective Eparchy/Region. The following list gives their contributions:

1. Major Archieparchy of Trivandrum	-	Rs	232,840/-
2. Archieparchy of Tiruvalla	-	Rs	150,000/-
3. Eparchy of Marthandom	-	Rs	35,000/-
4. Eparchy of Muvattupuzha	-	Rs	50,000/-
5. Eparchy of Mavelikara	-	Rs	65,000/-
6. Eparchy of Bathery	-	Rs	200,000/-
7. Eparchy of Puttur	-	Rs	19,750/-
8. Eparchy of Pathanamthitta	-	Rs	50,000/-
9. ETRI	-	Rs	<u>75,000/-</u>
TOTAL	-	Rs	877,590/-
10. Exarchate in USA	-	US \$	10,196/-

It was also informed to the HES that a total of Rs 674,500/- was received so far from the Religious Congregations and the self-financing institutions of the SMCC as per the letter sent to them on the occasion.

THE PRESENTATION OF THE AGENDA

His Beatitude, the President of the HES, presented the following proposed agenda of the Synod:

1. Prayer
2. Inaugural Address by His Beatitude
3. Submission of the Catholicos Day Collection of the Year 2014
4. Report of the Fourteenth Holy Episcopal Synod

5. Decisions of the Fourteenth Holy Episcopal Synod
6. Meeting with the Major Superiors
7. Meeting with the Secretaries of the Synodal Commissions
8. Meeting with the Rector, Staff and Students of St Mary's Malankara Seminary
9. Appointment of the new Rector and staff of St. Mary's Malankara Seminary
10. Evaluation of the follow-up programmes of the First Malankara Catholic Assembly
11. Common celebrations – 61st Feast of Commemoration of Servant of God Abp. Mar Ivanios, 84th Reunion Day Celebration, etc.
12. The progress of the Cause of Canonisation of Servant of God Abp. Mar Ivanios
13. Gulf-Meet in Trivandrum (15-16 July 2014)
14. Gulf: Appointments in Doha, Saudi Arabia
15. Sharing of the Eparchs about their respective Eparchies/ Exarchate/ ETRI
16. Other relevant matters, if any, with the consent of the President

The Synod Fathers proposed to add the following topics:

1. The forthcoming General Election and Farmers' issue
2. Canonical matters concerning the alienation of properties
3. Investiture of titles of Ramban and Corepiscopo
4. *Thukkasa*

The Synod Fathers approved the proposed agenda with the above additions.

Presentation of Reports

The Report and Decisions of the Fourteenth Ordinary Holy Episcopal Synod convoked on 22 and 23 September 2013 was read out. Observations of the members and corrections proposed by them were recorded. The report was proposed to be passed by Most Rev. Joshua Mar Ignathios. The proposal was supported by Most Rev. Yoohanon Mar Chrysostom and they were passed.

Points Arising out of the Reports

1. **On Preparing and Printing a Picture of the Servant of God:** His Beatitude informed the HES that a full-size painting of the Servant of God was getting finished and that the Bishops also could give their suggestions to improve it. As soon as it is finalised, it would be printed and the pictures made available as decided earlier.
2. **Catholicos Day Offerings:** The decision of the Fourteenth Ordinary HES was being implemented. Most of the religious congregations and their provinces sent their offerings. There are others yet to make their offerings.
3. **Fr Crispin's Ashram:** Most Rev. Vincent Mar Paulos had informed the mind of the HES to Fr Crispin. But he is still hesitant to accept the proposals. He is not ready to accept any control (canonical) of the Eparchial Bishop over the Ashram. The Synod proposed that Most Rev. Geevarghese Mar Divannasios and Most Rev. Joshua Mar Ignathios, who have many years of acquaintance with Fr Crispin, to contact him and persuade him to understand the mind of the Eparchial Bishop and the HES on the matter. The Bishops agreed. During the course of the Synod, the Bishops met him personally and talked to him. Fr Crispin agreed to the proposals of the HES. It was informed to the Synod.
4. **Kurisumala Ashram:** Most Rev. Philipos Mar Stephanos was asked to share his experience of the recent interaction with the members of the Kurisumala Ashram. He expressed

satisfaction at the progress of the life in the Ashram. As an Ashram founded in the SMCC and living the liturgy and spirituality of this Church, the Synod also evaluated the *de facto* juridical status of the Ashram. The Synod asked Most Rev. Thomas Mar Koorilos in whose canonical jurisdiction and patronage the Ashram is, to see to the well-being of the Ashram. The Synod also wanted that vocations to the Ashram been encouraged from the SMCC.

Meeting with the Major Superiors of the Institutes of Consecrated life

This meeting was scheduled to take place from 9 to 10.30 am on Tuesday, 11 March 2014 at the Old Synod Hall of the Major Archbishopial Curia according to the agenda already given to them. Six Major Superiors were invited to the meeting. All the Institutes were represented. The members present at the meeting were:

1. Very Rev. Fr Yesudas Thelliyil, Abbot Kurisumala Ashram
2. Rev. Fr Premanand Purackal OIC, representing the Superior General of the OIC
3. Rev. Mother Benjamin SIC, Superior General of the Congregation of the Sisters of the Imitation of Christ
4. Rev. Mother Roseline DM, Superior General of the Congregation of the Daughters of Mary
5. Rev. Sr Sosamma OSS, representing the Regional Leader of the Holy Spirit Sisters
6. Rev. Sr Mary Veronica SMT, Superior, Sisters of Mount Tabore

The Agenda:

1. Propose new ways and means to strengthen the apostolic activities of the SMCC in this age of New Evangelisation
2. Share the issues and concerns of the Institutes of Consecrated Life that are to be addressed by the SMCC
3. Propose ways and means by which the Institutes of Consecrated Life in the SMCC can live the lifestyle and spirituality proposed by His Holiness Pope Francis.

His Beatitude the Catholicos welcomed all the Major Superiors to the meeting with the HES and invited them to an open sharing in the light of the agenda given. His Beatitude reminded that the charism of a religious institute is a charism given in the Church and for the Church. It is to nurture the various apostolates of our Church. HB remembered with gratitude the service rendered to the SMCC by the Institutes of Consecrated Life in the Church. HB also said that the HES is meeting the Major Superiors as it welcomes and cherishes their service in the life of the Church.

Each Major Superior/Representative presented his/her written suggestions and observations. The suggestions echoed the spirit of the present day in the light of the demands of the age of New Evangelisation and the witness of simplicity of life and message of Pope Francis. The following is a summary of proposals (for details see the write-ups presented by the Major Superiors / Representative).

I. New ways and means to strengthen the apostolic activities of the SMCC in this age of New Evangelisation

1. Devotions like Adoration of the Holy Qurbano and Rosary must be encouraged.
2. Encourage families to participate in Retreats, renewal programmes.
3. Encourage youth ministry – MCYM, MCA, MCCL, etc.

4. Encourage Pro-life movements, etc.
5. Encourage mission work in remote areas of underdeveloped countries and build up such aptitudes in the seminarians and young priests.
6. Come to the protection of families through counselling centres, anti-alcohol/de-addiction centres, etc.
7. Safeguard the youth from the evils of mass media.

II. The issues and concerns of the Institutes of Consecrated Life that are to be addressed by the SMCC

1. Decrease in vocations; need to encourage vocations.
2. Institutions run by the Religious are criticised as income generating sources, etc.
3. Pro-poor policies to be encouraged in our institutions.
4. Priests should encourage vocations to Religious Life.
5. Religious should be respected; consider their prayer life and security when engaged in parish activities; give them necessary leave, holidays, etc; keep a record of the religious sisters who serve the parishes as done in the case of priests and *upadeshis*.
6. Increase women's representations in ecclesial bodies; include sisters in parish committees.
7. Individual-oriented life style is a danger. Don't encourage such tendencies.

III. Ways and means by which the Institutes of Consecrated Life in the SMCC can live the lifestyle and spirituality proposed by His Holiness Pope Francis.

1. Cultivate simplicity of life and abhor authoritarianism; cultivate humanness in behaviour; encourage brotherliness in human relationships; speak in the language of the common man. Follow the approach as Pope Francis in these areas of our life.
2. Give just wages to our employees.
3. Give food for the poor.
4. Establish homes to take care of the poor.
5. Build houses for the poor.
6. Encourage family apostolate, house visiting, home mission, etc.
7. Shun luxury, celebrity and extravagance in *perunals*, institutions, other celebrations like baptism, birthdays, jubilees, marriages, ordinations, First Holy Qurbano, etc. Set apart a portion of such expenses for the poor.
8. Be down-to-earth in attitude and behaviour; mingle with the poor, sick and needy. In word, deed, gestures, body-language convey love, brotherliness, mercy, etc. of the Lord to people with whom we relate.
9. Desist to compete with the international multi-speciality institutions

The Synod Fathers also gave some of their observations. They include:

1. Superiors should instruct the members of their respective institute to participate in the meetings and canonical councils convened at the ecclesial, eparchial, district and parish levels of the Church. This enhances communication and participation in ecclesial life.
2. Superiors must take firm decisions when they are called for it.
3. The religious has to accept sufferings and self-sacrifice. By vocation it is so.

4. Religious may feel side-lined. But it should be taken as a challenge and as a martyrdom experience.
5. The religious of an Eparchy must be called together for meetings at least once in a year.
6. We have to lead a simple life-style in the manner of Pope Francis. Avoid luxurious celebrations, *perunals*, flex boards, bouquets, draperies (*ponnada*), etc. that are harmful to nature as well (to the eco-system).
7. Follow the life of the Servant of God Archbishop Mar Ivanios, Acharya Francis, Msgr Kuzhijalil, etc.
8. Have the Religious increased in fervour and commitment in Religious Life?
9. Are we projecting ourselves or Jesus Christ through our life and ministry? Are we fostering individualism in Religious Life?
10. Vocations are decreasing. In this context effectiveness is very important. Vocations should be promoted from traditional families founded on firm spirituality.
11. Strengthen the evangelisation activities of our Church in North India.
12. Set apart a portion of our income for the missions
13. In an age of decrease of vocations, share prudently the personnel we have for the different ministries of our Church
14. The sharing also highlighted the need of active participation of the Religious Institutes in the formation of the *SuviseshaSangham* of the SMCC and the Cause of Canonisation of the Servant of God Archbishop Mar Ivanios.

The sharing converged on the need of implementing the suggestions made at the meeting. The Major Superiors also urged the Catholicos to inform these suggestions to the whole Church in a timely manner and through appropriate means of communication.

The Catholicos concluded the meeting with a note of gratitude to the contribution of the Religious Congregations to the life of the SMCC. HB said, “We always live as a Church imbibing an ecclesial spirit. The Religious communities are an indispensable spiritual and missionary source of the Church”. His Beatitude added a special note of the contributions of the Kurisumala Ashram to the spiritual and monastic life of the SMCC. He lauded the strong bond of communion the members of the Ashram fosters with the SMCC in spite of their ascription as members of other *suiiuris* Churches.

The meeting concluded at 11.00 a.m. with a prayer and the apostolic blessing imparted by the Catholicos.

The Meeting with the Secretaries of the Synodal Commissions and Presentation of their Reports

As scheduled, the meeting of the Secretaries of the Synodal Commissions of our Church with the Holy Episcopal Synod began after 11.00 a.m. on 11 March 2014. It was arranged at the Patriarch Moussa Daoud Hall of the Major Archiepiscopal Curia. All the Secretaries except one were present at the meeting:

1. Rev. Dr Isaac Parappallil (SC for Liturgy)
2. Rev. Dr Devadas Thenguvilayil (SC for Bible Apostolate)
3. Rev. Sr Dr Namitha SIC (SC for Evangelisation)
4. Rev. Dr Antony Kakkanatt (Executive Secretary for the SC for Evangelisation)

5. Rev. Dr Cheriyan Kottayil (SC for Theology)
6. Rev. Dr James Puthuparampil OIC (SC for Publications and History of the SMCC)
7. Rev. Dr Varghese Madathikkunnath (SC for Ecumenism and Dialogue)
8. Rev. Fr John Thundiyath (SC for the Clergy)
9. Rev. Fr Thomas Sajeev Thekkecharuvil OIC (SC for the Religious)
10. Prof. Dr Thomaskutty Panachickal (SC for the Laity)
11. Rev. Fr Thomas Kayyalackal (SC for the Youth)
12. Rt Rev. Msgr Chacko Thadathil (SC for the Family)
13. Rev. Dr Thomas Kanjiramukalil (SC for Faith Formation)
14. Rev. Fr Joseph Poovathumtharayil (SC for Vocation)
15. Rev. Sr Dr Ardra SIC (SC for Vocation)
16. Rev. Dr John Kochuthundil (SC for Seminary Formation)
17. Prof. Dr Thomaskutty Kaimalayil (SC for Education)
18. Rev. Fr Varghese Mattamana (SC for Social Apostolate and Dalit Christians)
19. Rev. Sr Lilly Thomas DM (SC for Health Services)
20. Prof. Dr Abraham Joseph (SC for Communication Media and Public Relations)

Absent

1. Rev. Dr Saji Mukkoottumannil (SC for Pastoral Care of the Faithful Outside India)

All the Synod Fathers were present. The Catholicos welcomed everyone. HB briefly explained the rationale of the Synodal Commissions and asked Most Rev. Thomas Mar Anthonios, the Co-ordinator of the Synodal Commissions to moderate the sessions and discussions. The Bishop Chairman and the Secretary of each SC were called to the dais. Each SC had 15 to 20 Minutes at their disposal to present the report. After a brief introduction by the Chairman, the Secretary presented the report in 5 to 7 minutes. This was followed by questions and observations from the floor. The meeting took more than three sessions and got over by 8 p.m.

For follow-up, the detailed minutes of the meeting is appended extra.

Matters Concerning the St Mary's Malankara Seminary

In view of the meeting with the Rector, Staff and Students of St Mary's Malankara Seminary, the Synod Fathers met at the library of the said seminary for the seventh session of the Synod that was scheduled at 9 a.m. on Wednesday, 12 March 2014. The matters concerning the seminary were the points for consideration of the Synod.

1. Appointment of a New Rector: Rev. Fr Daniel Manikulam, a priest of the Eparchy of Pathanamthitta, was proposed as the New Rector. His name was already proposed for consideration at other meetings of the Bishops. The HES also considered the impact of appointing a person as Rector from outside the members of the present Staff of the Seminary. Considering all the pros and cons, the HES unanimously gave their consent to the appointment of Rev. Fr Daniel Manikulam as the New Rector of the Seminary.
2. The HES also recommended Rev. Fr Isaac Parappallil to be appointed the Vice-Rector, taking into consideration his request for transfer after one year.
3. Other members of the Staff:

- a. Fr Varghese Madathikunnath needs to be dropped from the membership of the staff of the Seminary. He will be relieved.
 - b. Fr Abraham Charivupurayidathil from the Archieparchy of Trivandrum could be considered for appointment on the Staff of the Seminary. However, since he was now fully occupied with the pastoral activities in the High Ranges, his inclusion on the Staff could be considered later.
 - c. Rev. Fr Thomas Kodinattumkunnel, a senior priest of the Archieparchy of Tiruvalla, a former Professor of Syriac in SB College Changanachery, former Vicar General of Tiruvalla and who holds a doctorate in Patrology and is now returning from Canada, was considered for appointment on the Staff of the Seminary. It was opined that his name shall be considered after consulting him after his return to India.
 - d. Fr John Padipurackal, who would be returning after his pastoral assignments in Kuwait, was considered for appointment as professor of Moral Theology.
 - e. Fr. Thonippara CMI was suggested as Professor for Church History.
 - f. Rev. Fr S Varghese, the present Procurator of the Seminary could continue. Most Rev. Abraham Mar Julios, the Chairman of the Seminary Commission would meet and discuss with him ways of improving the financial management of the seminary under his leadership.
4. In general, it was recommended that whoever is appointed to the Staff of the Seminary has to go through a year of probation before he is confirmed in the assignment.
 5. To the request of the Rector to increase the honorarium of the non-teaching and domestic Staff of the Seminary, it was made clear that their salary should be increased in accordance with the minimum salary fixed by the HES earlier. The Seminary Commission was asked to see to the execution of the decision.
 6. To the request to increase the allowance of the resident teaching Staff of the Seminary, it was opined that, as all the priests helping out in the parishes of the Major Archieparchy of Trivandrum receive the allowance from the Archieparchy too, the per month income of the Staff of the Seminary is double that of a priest serving as a parish priest. Hence, there is no need of an increase of their allowance now.
 7. Taking into consideration the financial situation of the Seminary, it was decided that the Eparchies shall pay Rs 2000/- per student, per month, at par with the payment for students sent to other Seminaries.
 8. It was suggested that we should try to find benefactors from India for our Seminarians. It was also opined that we should organise the “The Friends of the Seminary” for this.

Meetings with the Rector, Staff and Students of St Mary’s Malankara Seminary

The meeting of the HES with the Rector and the Staff of the Seminary began at 10:45 a.m. His Beatitude the Catholicos welcomed the Rector and the Staff of the Seminary to the meeting. HB said that the seminary formation programmes and academic activities are oriented towards bringing out exemplary priests. He said that, as formators, the Staff of the Seminary is engaged in one of the important ministries of the Church and that they deserve the appreciation

and gratitude of HES and the Church. HB expressed the deep relationship and gratitude of the Church to the Rector and Staff of the Seminary.

In response to the words of welcome from HB, Rev. Fr John Kochuthundil, the Rector of the Seminary thanked the Catholicos and Bishops for the decision to hold a session of the ongoing HES in the Seminary itself and to meet the Staff and Students. They take this gesture as a symbol of the importance the HES gives to the Seminary in the life of the Church. Fr Rector also brought to the attention of the HES the need of a Spiritual Father in the place of Fr Kurisinkal. He also informed everyone that HB the Catholicos has submitted an application in the Congregation for Catholic Education for recognition of a faculty in our Seminary. He also brought to the attention of the HES that the salary of the ministerial staff should be increased.

Now was the time for open sharing and feed-back. They could be summarised as follows:

1. **Lack of “fire” and motivation in the students:** An observation made at the meeting of the Secretaries of the Synodal Commissions is noteworthy: “The Pentecostals, by their formation for a couple of years brings out firebrand evangelisers, while after 12 years of formation in the Seminary, the priests who pass out are like dampened wicks that does not get inflamed! What is the cause of this lack of “fire” and motivation in our people?” It was opined that our Seminarians do not develop clarity of thought. They should learn to pray and meditate on what is taught. It should lead to ‘fire’. One Bishop pondered why there is no sufficient motivation among our seminarians. It seems that they easily get tired. But on the other side, it was noted, “In fact, we have formed excellent priests. The priests of our Eparchies are mostly formed in this seminary”. So, where do we lag now?

The gift of the Spirit can give “fire” to knowledge given in the class.

2. **Lack of academic motivation:** There is a lack of interest in the students. They do not manifest their interests. There is indifference. They do not even want to play. Our students do not learn scientific academic skills like methodology of writing a scientific paper and presenting it. In this age of computer technology, plagiarism, copying and cut and paste are the skills they develop.

It was observed that motivation is more important than academic performance. It is observed that the students try to go by the minimum in matters concerning prayers, study and spiritual life. There is a trend like this. One has to evaluate the quality and stuff of the candidates to priesthood.

Our Seminary is affiliated to the Urbanian University, Rome. They have a different grading system than ours- the pass mark of this University is 60. Ours is 40 at the Philosophy level. This creates confusion among the students. An academically challenging situation is needed.

It was also pointed out that the Professors should set examples, models and challenges before the students. They should see that they write a number of solid articles and they are published in journals, both international and local. This will motivate the students.

3. **Lack of human formation:** We have to concentrate on human formation as well. From the academic sphere, from head level, it should descend into the level of the heart through prayer, through personal contact, etc.

4. **Need to reschedule the courses/credits:** Fr Rector brought to the attention of all that there is a need to reschedule courses and to bring down the number of credits. He opined that there is a need of a scientific evaluation of the formation programme. Rev. Fr. CherianKottayil, the Dean of the Faculty of Theology, also supported this opinion.

Deliberating on this, it was decided that the matter of credits/curriculum shall be studied by the Academic Council and proposals must be drafted. The Rector, the Dean and the other members of the Staff can do this study and proposal shall be drafted by the end of the month.

5. **Exposure to mission:** It was suggested that our students should have a guided exposure to mission field. However, there are instances of indifference when options are given.
6. **Need of continuity in formation:** Motivation should begin from the Minor Seminary. There should be a continuity of formation from the minor seminary to the major seminary.
7. **Holidays and Ordinations:** The staff of the Seminary drew the attention of the Bishops to the timing of the priestly ordinations in the Eparchies. This affects the discipline and order of the Seminary as students are sent to participate in the events.

To this it was decided that the Christmas holidays are fixed to be between 20 December and 10 January. The priestly ordinations will be fixed within these holidays. There are no home-holidays during the first semester holidays. Semester holidays are for exposure programmes like “Exodus”, which is part of the curriculum.

8. **What is the impact of the new discipline of pastoral exposure?** It was pointed out that the impact is not positive. The parish priests do not welcome the new arrangement. However, it was convincingly made clear that the discipline on this matter will remain unchanged as we have learned it from experience.
9. **Spiritual Direction:** The Spiritual Father is now overburdened as the number of students frequenting him is very huge. Hence there is need to appoint more Spiritual Fathers.
10. **Advancement of money** to the Seminarians: The discipline enforced in this matter shall be continued.
11. **Can we ask for the financial contribution** of the students or their families towards the formation of the students? Will it affect the students? The answer was in the negative. It was informed to the Staff that the contribution of each Eparchy for each student would be Rs 2000/- per month.

The meeting with the staff ended with an expression of gratitude and appreciation from His Beatitude the Catholicos. They were also informed that Rev. Fr Daniel Manikulam from the Eparchy of Pathanamthittawill be appointed the new Rector of our Seminary. The Catholicos thanked the outgoing Rector Rev. Fr John Kochuthundil, for his four-years of dedicated service to the Seminary. He saw to the overall development of the Seminary.

The Synod Fathers went to the Chapel for the Noon Prayers with the Staff and Students of the Seminary. After the prayers, on behalf of the HES, His Beatitude addressed the students. In his address he highlighted the aim and objectives of formation in our Seminary. He also declared the appointment of the new Rector and Vice-Rector of the Seminary. At the end of the

address, the Catholicos, together with the Synod Fathers, imparted Apostolic Blessing to the Staff and Students.

The Synod Fathers had lunch with the Staff and Students of the Seminary. At the end of the lunch, the Catholicos and all the Bishops met the non-teaching and domestic staff of the Seminary and thanked them for their service and the share they have in the life of the Seminary and of the Church.

THE DELIBERATIONS

After the visit to the Seminary and the sessions there, the Synod resumed its sessions at the Blessed John Paul II Synod Hall at 3.00 p.m.

Gulf Meet

A convention of the representatives of the Faithful of our Church working in the Gulf region is planned for 15 and 16 July 2014. The St Mary's Malankara Seminary is the venue of the convention. HB the Catholicos proposed that the presence of all the Bishops of our Church would be ideal and welcome.

Appointments in the Gulf

We have priests in five countries of the Gulf regions. The term of service of the following priests has ended or they have asked for transfer:

Rev. Fr John Padipurackal in Kuwait

Rev. Fr Cherian Manapurath in Qatar

Rev. Fr Shaji Makkappally

HB the Catholicos also shared with the Synod Fathers that there is a positive change of attitude of the Bishops/Apostolic Vicars of the Gulf region. There is a proposal to the Holy See to appoint an Apostolic Vicar for all the Orientals working/residing in the region.

In general there is spiritual fervour and growth in the ecclesial life of our Faithful in the Gulf region. However, certain aspects of relationship in ecclesial life need improvement.

Common Celebrations

The Annual Malankara *SabhaSanghamam* and the 84th Reunion Day Celebrations

Most Rev. Joseph Mar Thomas submitted to the HES a tentative programme of the Annual *Sabhasanghamam* to be hosted by the Eparchy of Bathery at Bathery on the occasion of the 84th Reunion Day Celebrations and the Consecration of the newly constructed Cathedral of the Eparchy. The three-day programme begins at 2.00 p.m. on Thursday, 18 September 2014 and ends with the *Preshitha Rally* beginning at 2.30 p.m. on Saturday, 20 September 2014. On 18th September will be the *Vilambara Rally*, the Inaugural Meeting and cultural evening to which will be invited guests and other very important religious, social and political leaders of Bathery. The forenoon of 19th September is set apart for the conventions of MCCL, MCYM and MCA. This is followed by the first part of the liturgy of consecration of the Cathedral of Bathery beginning at 2.30 p.m. 5.00-8.00 p.m. is earmarked for *Suviseshasangham* Convention. At 8.00 p.m. will be supper followed by MCYM Quiz Programme. The third day of the *Sabhasanghamam* begins with the second part of the Consecration of the Cathedral followed by the Solemn Pontifical Holy Qurbano of the Reunion Day led by the Father and Head of our Church. 11.00 a.m. to 12.30 p.m. is the Public Meeting. Thereafter lunch and *Preshitha Rally* will follow.

The Dignataries invited for the *Sanghamam* are:

- His Beatitude **Ibrahim Isaac Sidrak**, Coptic Catholic Patriarch
- His Beatitude **Sviatoslav Shevchuk**, the Major Archbishop of the Ukrainian Catholic Church
- His Beatitude Cardinal Mar George Alanchery, the Major Archbishop of the Syro-Malabar Church
- His Grace Archbishop Salvatore Pennachio, the Apostolic Nuncio in India
- His Eminence Cardinal Oswald Gracious, the President of the Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences and the Archbishop of Mumbai
- Bishops of Syro-Malabar and Latin Churches
- Social, Cultural and Political Leaders

In general, it was opined that the common celebrations shall be simple. Flex boards and arches should be restricted to the least minimum or avoided. It should be also an occasion for common conscientisation on the evils of using them.

There was a request from the KCYM to be part of our MCYM programme. It is welcome as they could be observers at our functions.

A separate meeting of the *Mathrusanghamam* would be held during the 84th Reunion Day celebrations as planned, with another occasion for men and women of the MCA to meet together.

61st Feast of Commemoration of the Servant of God Archbishop Mar Ivanios

This feast will be celebrated this year as usual.

The Progress of the *Suvisesha Sangham*

Rev. Fr Antony Kakkanat was invited to the HES to report the progress of implanting the *Suvisesha Sangham* in our Church and in our Eparchies. He distributed a file to the Synod Fathers containing 10 items - report, bylaws, evaluation, etc, - and introduced their contents. He narrated the activities of the SS. In all Eparchies except one, the SS was introduced to priests. In all religious congregations and their provinces, the SS was introduced to all the religious of our Church. The SS members at the Ecclesial level have been formed well and they have imbibed its Spirit. The District level formation is being carried out. The lay people are co-operating and they imbibe a "fire" for preaching the Word of God.

Fr Antony stressed the need to consolidate the SS at the Eparchial level, setting apart the full time service of a priest. He also thanked all the Bishops for their active support for the formation of the SS. HB the Catholicos initiated a discussion on, "Can we set apart a priest from each Eparchy for the formation of the SS there?" Concluding the discussion, the HES decided that in each Eparchy, at the time of the next transfer after Easter, a priest should be assigned for a period of two years, free of the office of the parish priest, to establish the SS in the Eparchy.

Towards the Conclusion of the Eparchial Phase of the Cause of Canonisation of the SG Mar Ivanios

Most Rev. Thomas Mar Anthonios, the Postulator of the Cause of Canonisation of the SG Archbishop Mar Ivanios, was asked to present the report of the Cause to the HES. He submitted a brief written report of the work of the Cause with emphasis on its concluding phase. He presented the details of the exhumation of the mortal remains of the SG and how to proceed with

it. He also presented a step by step move towards the conclusion of the Eparchial phase of the Cause. He clarified the queries of the Bishop on canonical implications of the devotion and veneration shown by the Faithful towards the SG in accordance with the liturgical and spiritual practices and ethos of the Oriental Church. He pointed out that the spontaneous veneration shown by the people and people privately taking refuge in the intercession of the SG is supportive of the Cause. In fact, one should leave no stone unturned, in propagating the fragrance of sanctity and the charism of the SG. However, what one should avoid is the deliberate official promotion of the cult of the Servant of God.

At the end of the discussion, HB the Catholicos told the Synod Fathers that 23, 24 June 2014 is fixed as the days for the exhumation of the mortal remains of the SG Mar Ivanios, for which we have received the permission from the Congregation for the Causes of Saints. HB also informed that the whole Church would be informed of it through a common pastoral letter. HB invited all the Bishops to be present at that time and to witness the exhumation.

At 9.00 a.m. on 13 June 2014, HES assembled at the Synod Hall after the celebration of the Holy Qurbono at the tomb of the SG Mar Ivanios. It was also the fourth Episcopal Ordination Day of Most Rev. Vincent Mar Paulos, Most Rev. Samuel Mar Irenios, Most Rev. Philipos Mar Stephanos and Most Rev. Thomas Mar Anthonios. The Catholicos felicitated them.

Fr Daniel Manikulam, the Rector Designate is informed of his new ministry in the Church

Rev. Fr Daniel Manikulam, the Rector Designate of SMMS, was called in to the HES and he was officially told of his appointment as the Rector of St Mary's Malankara Seminary. HB the Catholicos felicitated Fr Daniel on his new ministry in the Church and wished him the best. HB also reminded the new Rector the obligations of the office entrusted to him and the confidence the HES has placed in him. Fr Daniel on his part accepted the appointment and thanked HB and all the Bishops for the new appointment and the confidence and the trust, the HES placed on him.

Revision of the Value of Goods for Alienation

It was found that the value of goods for alienation fixed as per the norms of CCEO c 1036 by the First Ordinary Holy Episcopal Synod of our Church held from 16 to 18 August 2005 needs to be revised in the light of the present day standards. The present directive read: "In the alienation of temporal goods, if the amount exceeds one million US Dollars, the permission of the Holy Synod of our Church is required. The minimum amount referred in CCEO canon 1036 §1 for alienation of properties is fixed to US \$ 50,000/- which the Eparchial Bishop may sanction by himself, and for the alienation of any goods that amounts up to one million US Dollars the consent of the finance council and the college of eparchial consulters is required" (MALANKARA Vol 1, no. 2, December 2005, page 38). After due evaluation of the proposal it was decided:

- i. If the value of goods whose alienation is proposed exceeds Rupees hundred millions (10 crores), the Eparchial Bishop shall obtain the consent of the Holy Episcopal Synod of our Church requested with the consent of the Eparchial Finance Council and the College of Eparchial Consultors of the Eparchy. This is applicable for a period of two years.
- ii. In cases of taking loans from banks, if the amount exceeds Rupees hundred millions (10 crores), the Eparchial Bishop shall obtain the consent of the Holy Episcopal Synod

of our Church requested with the consent of the Eparchial Finance Council and the College of Eparchial Consulters. This is applicable for a period of one year.

The proposal was made by Most Rev. Geevarghese Mar Divannasios and supported by Most Rev. Joshua Mar Ignathios and unanimously passed by the HES.

Evaluation of the Synodal Commissions

The HES took for consideration the reports of the Synodal Commissions of our Church presented at the meeting of the Secretaries of the SCs with the HES.

- a. **SC for Liturgy:** The Chairman of the Commission, His Grace Mar Koorilos said that the revised *Thukkasa* is ready for publication soon. The members of the HES opined that when the revised *Thukkasa* is introduced, an orientation on it should be given to our priests in all Eparchies. The text should be included in the curriculum of our Seminary.

The priestly ordinations shall not be conducted in the afternoon

Can we cancel the omologion and the tonsure service when giving minor orders?

For diaconal and priestly ordination, the question on celibacy should be added in the questionnaire for the candidates.

- b. **SC for Ecumenism and Dialogue:** Most Rev. Mar Koorilos, the Chairman of the Commission suggested that Unity Octave Prayers should be introduced in all parishes

He also brought to the attention of the HES that the programmes organised by the Pro-Oriente are done without proper representation of the Catholic Churches in Kerala.

- c. **SC for Social Apostolate and Dalit Christians:** Most Rev. Joshua Mar Ignathios introduced the bylaws of the Caritas Malankara, an umbrella organisation for the Social Service Societies of our Church. The HES, due to lack of time, postponed the study of the bylaws to the next HES.

- d. **SC for the Laity:** Certain amendments of the bylaws of the MCA were proposed.

It was decided that an Ecclesial level association of the Syro-Malankara Catholic *Mathrusangham* shall be organised. For this, the names of the President and Secretary of the Eparchial level *Mathrusangham* shall be sent to the Catholicos and he shall appoint a President and Secretary for the Ecclesial level *Mathrusangham*, from the list.

It was also suggested that MCA and MCYM should have a Woman President at least after every two terms if the Presidents during the time were men.

- e. **SC for Theology:** The Chairman of this SC, Most Rev. Abraham Mar Julios opined that our Church in its theologising should foster relations and collaboration with the Oriental Churches, especially the Antiochian Church. The sources of this Church are found in the monasteries like the Sharfe Monastery Beirut and St. Mark's Monastery of Turkey

The Chairman also shared with the HES the queries of those searching for finances to publish their doctoral thesis. Can the commission do something about it?

The Chairman of the SC also suggested that there is a need of drawing up a Charter of Priestly Formation. Most Rev. Bishops Mar Julios, Mar Ignathios, Mar Stephanos, Mar Eusebios and Mar Koorilos were named to be members of the board who will draft the Charter. It is to be presented in the HES to be convoked in March 2015.

The possibility of collaboration of our Seminary and SEERI was also put forward.

- f. **SC for Publication and History of the SMCC:** First of all it was clarified that this could be a SC independent of the SC for Theology to which it was a sub-section so far. The Chairman of the Commission Most Rev. Thomas Mar Eusebios presented to the HES some of the proposals of the said commission: Formation of Writers' Forum, Writers' Publication Forum, monitoring the archives of the Eparchies, training in keeping the archives, etc. A meeting of the Chancellors of the Eparchies was also suggested to conscientise them and to devise a scientific approach for the up-keep of the archives.
- g. **SC for Bible Apostolate:** The SC led by Most Rev. Samuel Mar Irenios, proposes a few programmes for effective propagation of the Word of God and life in it. The Bible Week proposed by the KCBC shall be observed as the Bible Week in our Church too. The SC proposes to begin a Bible Bank, Bible inspired creative writings, to institute awards to Bible Preachers and to encourage the Faithful to enrol as members of the Bible Society of KCBC. It was also proposed that Mr A. M. Mathew, one of the greatest Bible Preachers, could be honoured by our Church.

It was also decided that Rev. Fr Kurian Valuparampil shall be appointed to represent our Church in the Bible Commission of the KCBC.

- h. **SC Commission for Communication Media:** Most Rev. Samuel Mar Irenios, the Chairman of the Commission, enquired whether the scope of the activities of the Commission could be broadened to include literature and culture. A meeting of the Eparchial Media Commission is slated for June. The Commission also plans a "Malankara Digest", an e-journal. To upload our prayers and liturgical services in the android system of the web is also another proposal.

HB and Most Rev. Thomas Mar Anthonios wanted that the SC to come to the aid of maintaining our official website and an e-journal like www.marpapa.com to bring all the news of the interventions of our Catholicos in the ecclesial, social and political sphere and all the events of SMCC in the Eparchies, Exarchate, ETRI, ETROI and Religious Congregations.

- i. **SC for the Catechism:** The MBOC text on "Baptism" is prepared for the academic year 2014. The next text for the year 2015 would be on the "Sacrament of Reconciliation".

Most Rev. Philipos Mar Stephanos brought to the attention of the HES that MCCL needs a new Director, as the present Director, overburdened with other apostolates is unable to devote time for MCCL. It was opined that the Sunday School Director of the Eparchy could also be appointed Director of MCCL in the Eparchy.

HB reminded that instruction be given to recite the prayer for the Cause of Canonisation of the SG Mar Ivanios by the Sunday School Students before they begin the classes. It was pointed out that it could be included in a common pastoral letter from the Catholicos.

Secretary of the SC should have more time available to provide his services to the Church. The present Secretary, Dr Kanjiramukalil finds it difficult. Hence an assistant who would work along with him could be appointed, and who could eventually take over the post of the Secretary. HB said that a priest from the Major Archieparchy would be given for the service.

It was also suggested that the activities of the Mission League under the KCBC be clubbed with the activities of MCCL. Thus duplication of organizations could be avoided.

- j. **SC for Priests:** The Commission has to be revived appointing the Protosyncelli of the Eparchies as Consultors.
- k. **SC for the Religious:** The SC will be activated as per the programme of action presented in the report of the Commission.
- l. **SC for Vocation:** The SC plans to call together a meeting of the vocation promoters of the Eparchies and of the Religious Congregations.
- m. **SC for the Family:** The SC plans to organise the widows, anti-alcohol drives, premarital courses, pastoral care of single parents, etc. The Commission will also liaison its activities with those of the *SuviseshaSangham*.

The Commission was urged to activate the existing Matrimonial Website of our Church.

- n. **SC for Health Service:** The Commission plans to encourage health insurance for our employees. This can be done in collaboration with the SC for Social Action
Organisation of medical camps for the detection of cancer etc. could be done.

It was agreed that the possibility of admitting students from our Church outside Kerala in our Medical College would be studied.

Our People should own up our institutions. So PR work should be co-ordinated

- o. **SC Commission for Education:** The SC plans to execute the programmes as presented in its report. They include mainly the Catholic Accreditation Programme, an approved handbook of educational institutions of our Church, HR data bank, support programmes for appearing for IAS and IPS exams, etc.

It was informed to the HES that the Archieparchy of Tiruvalla has begun the ground work for establishing an Arts and Science College in Kumily. The College is named "Sahyajyothi.

- p. **SC for the Youth:** Most Rev. Vincent Mar Paulos introduced the proposed amendments to the bylaw of the MCYM.

This being the Silver Jubilee Year of the formation of the Central Secretariat of the MCYM, there are plans to organise programmes like "Fides" organised last year. The MCYM will also try to imbibe the spirit of the SS and liaison its activities with that of the SS.

Campus ministry for the youth who emigrate to other cities of India and outside India for higher studies is to begun and co-ordinated.

The Regional Directors of MCYM have to become effective.

The problems of the lack of acceptance of our Youth in the parishes etc. were also taken note of. Youth should become active in the Church. Youth ministry should be included in the curriculum of the Seminary.

- q. **SC for Evangelisation:** Besides what had been discussed in the meeting of the Secretaries with the HES and what Fr Antony Kakkanat shared with the HES, it was

discussed how the SS could be organised outside India. The financial difficulties faced by the Protospresbyters of the ecclesiastical districts to organise the programmes of the SS was also brought to the attention of the Bishops.

- r. **Common Concerns of the SCs:** When the sharing on individual SCs ended, some common concerns were discussed.
 - a. **Commission Offices:** His Beatitude the Catholicos assured the HES that he would see to it that basic infrastructure/office will be provided for the SCs
 - b. **The Term of the Commissions:** The term of office of the present members of the Synodal Commissions expires in 2015. However, since the SCs could not so far start functioning full-fledged, the term of office of the members shall be extended for two more years after 2015..
 - c. **The Laity Day and Youth Day** Holy Qurbano offerings to support the activities of the respective commissions shall continue as per the earlier decision of the HES.

The HES approved, in general, the report of the SC and asked the Chairmen to go ahead with the proposed programmes of each SC.

Sharing from the Eparchies

Each Eparchial Bishop, Exarch and the Apostolic Visitor was given chance to brief the HES some of the notable events or policies in their respective domain. Accordingly the sharing began.

1. **Eparchy of Puttur:** Most Rev. Geevarghese Mar Divannasios said that the *status quo* of the Eparchy is maintained. The financial deed to buy a plot of land is still pending. All activities are progressing. Of the 15 Eparchial priests, two are serving in Germany. The Minor Seminary formation is progressing with 7 students in Puttur and 1 at Tiruvalla. There are 3 Seminarians doing Philosophy and 2 doing Theology. The Eparchy needs more vocations to the Seminary.
2. **Eparchy of Pathanamthitta:** We are now known in Pathanamthitta. An Arts and Science College is being established in Adoor. The Seminary obtained permission for its building. A few churches are under construction. The frontage of the Cathedral is given a good facelift with a *kurisadi*. Madonna School is progressing. The Eparchy has 61 Seminarians. Priests' Home is under construction.
- **Eparchy of Bathery:** Preparations for the Annual *Sabha Sanghamam* and 84th Reunion Day celebrations and the consecration of the Eparchial Cathedral are progressing. 'A House for All' (*Sampurna Bahavana Padhathi*), 'Education for All' (*Sampurna Vidyabhyasa Padhathi*) and 'Employment for All' (*Sampurna Thozhil Padhathi*) are progressing. Five colleges were established so far. All PG holders have been employed. A programme to ensure the financial self-reliance of the parishes is initiated. The Bishop of the Eparchy has begun a programme to visit all the houses of the Eparchy. 'The Kannur-centred-mission' is progressing. The Eparchy has financial constraints, but the Spirit of the Lord is at work...
3. **Eparchy of Marthandam:** The parishes are becoming active. Two mission centres—Tuthukudy and Madurai – have been started outside the Eparchy. A church is built alongside the four-lane road at Kumarapuram. The place of Blessed Devasahayam Pillai

near Nagercoil is developed as a social service centre as that is the only alternative. The Colleges run by the Eparchy are functioning well. The St Paul's Academy for coaching classes for IAS aspirants has 77 students now. The Eparchy has 59 Seminarians. Santhi Ashram will be established as a Pious Association. The auditing of the accounts of the parish is introduced.

4. **ETRI:** Most Rev. Jacob Mar Barnabas, the Apostolic Visitor submitted in writing the "New Mission Initiative" undertaken in the state of Orissa. He also highlighted the same possibilities in other states also. He pointed out a three-point challenge we face in the endeavour: lack of priests, sisters and lay people to work; lack of motivation; and lack of finance. His suggestions and requests were that this mission should be accepted as a mission of the Church; our Eparchies should take special care for our missions supplying priests; the Religious Congregations have to supply religious priests and sisters; provision has to be made to meet the financial needs of the mission cutting down 'golden *kodimarams*' etc.

He expressed disappointment that the challenges were not addressed seriously!

5. **Exarchate of USA:** We have 14 communities in America. The Exarchate is in the process of buying a church and presbytery to be used as the Cathedral and Bishop's House. There will be a priestly ordination in July 2014. We have one Seminarian studying Theology and another one doing Philosophy.
6. **Eparchy of Muvattupuzha:** There is no Bishop's House for the Eparchy. One is planned to be constructed at a cost of five crores. At Vadacode is opened a house for the mentally challenged. At Muringur a Malankara Catholic community is formed. On 2 February 2014, a Bethany Convent was started in the suburb of Coimbatore. There is scope for mission in Pollachi. Three priestly ordinations expected this year. There are 3 priests working in ETRI, one in Gulf, 1 in Switzerland and 1 in Canada. There are vocations to priesthood; but no vocations to women religious congregations. More Particular (Eparchial Laws) laws are codified and promulgated
7. **Eparchy of Mavelikara:** More Particular Law will be promulgated soon. 2 new mission stations begun. The Clergy Home is under construction. Financial resources are very limited. The Eparchy needs Rs 8 lakhs every month to pay the allowances of the Priests etc. Three schools have problem of recognition. Admission to the Seminary is after +2. There is good co-operation of the Faithful. Pastoral Visit is in progress. Auditing of Accounts is made compulsory.
8. **Archieparchy of Tiruvalla:** There is interest in mission activities. Two new parishes have been started in the High Ranges. There are two schools in Kumily. There is a need of an Arts and Science College. It will be established in the vicinity of the Kumily parish. The Bishop's Day collection is utilised for it. The construction of the building in front of the Marygiri is completed. Though forgetful His Excellency, Mar Timotheos, the Bishop Emeritus of the Archieparchy, is doing well now. The Pushpagiri group of institutions are improving.
9. **Major Archieparchy of Trivandrum:** The Housing Project for the homeless is the priority charitable project of the Major Archieparchy now.

Titles of Ramban and Corepiscopoproposed for.

The HES suggested to the Catholicos to consider the conferring of the titles of Ramban and Corepiscopo on the priests who should be honoured for their dedicated ministry. So, considering the need of each Eparchy, the Bishops suggested the following names and the titles proposed to be conferred on them:

1. Eparchy of Puttur
 - a. Rev. Fr Koshy Kakkanattu proposed for the title Ramban
2. Eparchy of Pathanamthitta
 - a. Rev. Fr Geevarghese Chedyath proposed for the title Corepiscopo
 - b. Rev. Fr Jose Chamakkalayil proposed for the title Corepiscopo
 - c. Rev. Fr George Jacob proposed for the title Corepiscopo
 - d. Rev. Fr Daniel Kuzhithadathil proposed for the title Corepiscopo
3. Eparchy of Bathery
 - a. Rt Rev. Msgr Mathew Chamakkalayil proposed for the title Ramban
 - b. Rev. Fr Chacko Narimattom proposed for the title Corepiscopo
4. Eparchy of Marthandom: Nil
5. Eparchy of Muvattupuzha : Nil
6. Eparchy of Mavelikara
 - a. Rev. Fr Thomas Karichal proposed for the title Ramban
 - b. Rev. Fr George Charuvila proposed for the title Corepiscopo
 - c. Rev. Fr Jose Kadakampallil proposed for the title Corepiscopo
7. Archieparchy of Tiruvalla
 - a. Rev. Fr Jacob Thekkeparampil proposed for the title Corepiscopo
 - b. Rev. Fr Abraham Chacko Narimattathil proposed for the title Corepiscopo
 - c. Rev. Fr Thomas Kodinattumkunnel proposed for the title Corepiscopo
8. Major Archieparchy of Trivandrum
 - a. Rev. Fr Mathew Manakkarakavil proposed for the title Corepiscopo
 - b. Rev. Fr James Paravila proposed for the title Corepiscopo
 - c. Rt Rev. Corepiscopo Mannikkarott proposed for the title Domestic Prelate, title invested by Rome.
9. ETRI: Nil
10. Exarchate of USA: Nil

Holy Communion Helpers: As per the earlier decision of the HES, trained faithful can be given the mandate, according to CCEO c 709 §2 and CPCSMCC c 490, for helping the distribution of the Holy Qurbano. The Eparchy of Marthandam and parishes in serious need in the Major Archieparchy of Trivandrum can try this.

The Sixteenth Ordinary Holy Episcopal Synod

It was decided that the Sixteenth Ordinary Holy Episcopal Synod of the SMCC be convoked on Sunday and Monday, 21 and 22 September 2014 at the Bishop's House Bathery. The Synod will begin at 9.00 a.m., on 21 September and end at 4.00 p.m. on 22 September.

CONCLUSION

His Beatitude gave the concluding message in the session of the Holy Episcopal Synod that began at 6 p.m. on 13 September 2014. His Beatitude thanked the Synod Fathers for their presence at the Synod. HB recounted the wonderful way our Church was guided by the Holy Spirit. HB said, "When the Servant of God visited Rome, there was none to introduce him to the Vatican. From that status of our Church, today the Holy Spirit has led the Church to be known everywhere in the world. May the Holy Spirit so guide us until the end of the ages! Our Church is now represented at the American Bishops' Conference through our Exarch in the USA. The Lord was pleased to assign a kingdom to the "little flock." This is an assurance given by the Lord to us. It is very important. I thank the personal support of my venerable brother Bishops for fulfilling my ministry in the Church. This support is immeasurably great. As we depart from the Synod and go to our Eparchies, we are in the midst of the Lenten Season. May this time be a fruitful time for our sanctification through fasting, abstinence and penance! Let this Lent lead us to reliving and experiencing the Paschal Mystery that we commemorate and celebrate at the end of the Lenten Season! The Blessed Virgin Mary, the Mother of God and the star of New Evangelisation be with us and intercede for us in our pilgrimage!"

His Beatitude declared the Fifteenth Ordinary Holy Episcopal Synod closed.

The Fifteenth Ordinary HES ended with prayers and the final blessing imparted by His Beatitude the Catholicos.

✠ Thomas Mar Koorilos
Secretary

✠ Thomas Mar Anthonios
Chancellor