

THE SYRO-MALANKARA CATHOLIC CHURCH

MAJOR ARCHIEPISCOPAL CURIA

CATHOLICATE CENTRE, TRIVANDRUM - 695004, KERALA, INDIA

Extraordinary Session of the Holy Episcopal Synod **(16 February 2020, St. John's Medical College, Bangalore)**

REPORT

As scheduled, His Beatitude Moran Mor Baselios Cardinal Cleemis Catholicos, the Father and Head of the Syro-Malankara Catholic Church, convoked an extraordinary session of the Holy Episcopal Synod of the Syro-Malankara Catholic Church at St. John Medical College at Bangalore, on 16 February 2020. There were two sessions and the first session of the Synod began at 09.00 am with a prayer invoking the assistance of the Holy Spirit and the intercession of Blessed Virgin Mary.

The members present at the Synod were: HB Moran Mor Baselios Cardinal Cleemis Catholicos (President of the Synod), Most Rev. Joshua Mar Ignathios, Most Rev. Joseph Mar Thomas, Most Rev. Jacob Mar Barnabas OIC, Most Rev. Vincent Mar Paulos, Most Rev. Samuel Mar Irenios, Most Rev. Thomas Mar Anthonios, Most Rev. Thomas Mar Eusebius, Most Rev. Geevarghese Mar Makarios, and Most Rev. Yoohanon Mar Theodosius.

Most Rev. Thomas Mar Koorilos, Most Rev. Abraham Mar Julios, the Bishop Emeritus, Most Rev. Yoohanon Mar Chrysostom the Bishop Emeritus, and Most Rev. Philipos Mar Stephanos were absent in this extraordinary session of the Synod due to various technical and other reasons. Their absences were reckoned legitimate.

Most Rev. Yoohanon Mar Theodosius, the Curia Bishop and the Chancellor of the Major Archiepiscopal Curia, recorded the minutes.

His Beatitude Baselios Cardinal Cleemis, the Major Archbishop-Catholicos, cordially welcomed all the Fathers of the Synod. HB specially acknowledged with gratitude the services rendered to CBCI and to the entire Church by Most. Rev. Dr. Johsua Mar Ignathios as its first Vice-President and its present Secretary General, His Grace Thomas Koorilos as the Chairman of Doctrinal Commission and Most Rev. Jacob Mar Barnabas as the Chairman of Women Commission.

During the extraordinary session of the Synod the following topics were proposed and discussed:

1. HB read the official letter which he had received from the Congregation for the Oriental Churches regarding the territorial expansion of the Eparchy of Marthandam and Eparchy of Puttur. The Congregation has entrusted HES of SMCC to do the needful in this regard while it comes under *territorium proprium* of the SMCC. After the canonical formulation of these expansions, Holy See would be intimated. HB informed the members that he would be sending a circular letter regarding this to the entire Church soon after the close of 24th HES. The respective Bishops of the Diocese of Marthandam and Puttur were asked to fix dates and announce the matter ceremonially in their own respective Eparchies. The transfer of the territories, immovable and movable properties have to be done with proper documentation, mentioning the assets, financial liabilities etc. on or before March 2020. A copy of the said document has to be submitted to HB.

2. Considering its geographical settings Thenni belonging to the Archdiocese of Tiruvalla has to be incorporated with the Diocese of Marthandam. Otherwise it would be an isolated place. It was not included in the previous request sent to the Holy See by the HES. Hence, it was decided by the HES to report the same to the Holy See.

3. Regarding the appointment of the new Curia Bishop and Auxiliary Bishop for the Major Archdiocese of Trivandrum HB informed the Fathers of the Synod that as per the direction from the Apostolic Nunciature, the first phase of enquiry was already begun with the Bishops of the SMCC. The second phase would begin soon among selected priests and laity.

4. The clerical errors in the Papal Bull in connection with the canonical elevation of Exarchate of St. Ephrem Khadki-Pune to the status of an Eparchy were communicated to the concerned and the corrected bull would be made available at the earliest.

5. HB informed the Synod that the Eparchy of Mavelikkara would host the 90th Reunion celebration. His Excellency Most Rev. Joshua Mar Iganatios informed the HES that the entire celebrations would be planned in view of the Centenary of Reunion which would fall in 2030. Details were left to the Eparch to decide after due consultation.

6. HB informed the Fathers of the Synod that Rev. Fr. Varghese Angadiyil, the present Finance Officer was appointed Proto-syncellus of the Eparchy of Khadki-Pune. Rev. Fr. Thomas Madukummootttil would be the new Finance Officer.

7. HB informed the Synod that Very Rev. Dr. Kurikaose Thadathil, the Rector of St. Mary's Malnkara Major Seminary would be completing three years and that he could be appointed as the new Coordinator for United Kingdom. Rev. Dr. Sunny Mathew from the Eparchy of Marthandam could be appointed as the new Rector. It was further stated that the final decision regarding these appointments would be in the forthcoming HES.

8. Rev. Fr. Abraham Pathakal, the Chaplain in Ireland would also conclude his service by this year. Regarding the new appointment, a positive reply from the Archdiocese of Dublin is awaited.

9. Corepiscopo Jose Chamkalayil was proposed to replace Fr. Mathew Kandathil in UAE. HE Samuel Mar Irenios was asked to talk with the Corepiscopo regarding the same and inform HB at the earliest.
10. It was decided to use the service of Rev. Fr. Philip Vettikatt from Bathery to be the Chaplain of the SMCC community in Melbourne.
11. As per the need, the Holy Qurbono Thakso and other texts of prayer for various occasions may be translated into vernacular, but with the imprimatur from HB.
12. Regarding a central office for the social service apostolate of SMCC at New Delhi, HE Jacob Mar Barnabas was asked to present the details of the same in the forthcoming HES.
13. A brief report on the adoption of Missions would be made in the next HES by the respective eparchs.
14. HB cautioned the bishops that priests from other eparchies should not be easily incorporated into the mission or other areas since we might not know the full history of such a priest. Serious inquiries must be done prior to such induction.
15. HE Samuel Mar Irenios was asked to study the term “Community” with the help of experts and to present a possible way out to help our members.
16. Each Eparchy is expected to submit a financial report to the Congregation for the Oriental Churches in view of the annual subsidy from the Congregation.
17. The Air fare of Ad limna visit was received from the Congregation for the Oriental Churches and Bishops were expected to collect the same from the Major Archdiocese of Trivandrum.
18. It was suggested that during the briefing of the Eparchies it was better to present the current financial status of the Eparchies.
19. Bishops going abroad should inform HB regarding the same.
20. HB informed the Fathers of the Synod that liturgical strictness must be maintained in the eparchies and priests who do not follow strictly the Thookasa should be corrected by the concerned eparchial Bishop.
21. The next HES would begin with retreat of Bishops at Pangode Ashram in Trivandrum from 28th February to 2nd March 2020.

22. HB informed that the process enquiry regarding a Center for the SMCC in Rome was still under progress.

23. HB informed that the Red Cross Organization of Germany has promised to create job opportunities for nurses and details would be made available to bishops.

24. HB informed the Bishops that as pre the CCEO, during the Holy Week all bishops are supposed to be present in their own respective Eparchies.

25. HE Thomas Mar Eusebius was asked to prepare the final document of the Second Ecclesial Assembly at the earliest.

26. HE Vincent Mar Paulos informed the Synod that the Superior General of Bethany Ashram has informed regarding the transfer of Rev. Fr. Mathai Kadavil OIC from St. Mary's Major Seminary at the end of this academic year. Fund collection for the Seminary from the parishes of SMCC will be scheduled during the month of June.

At 4.30 pm, with a short prayer, the extraordinary session of the meeting concluded.

✠Thomas Mar Koorilos
HES Secretary

✠Yoohanon Mar Theodosius
Chancellor.