

Syro-Malabar Mission Year 2011-2012

Report

This report is an attempt to recapture the dynamism and the ethos of the Syro-Malabar Mission Year and its effects at various levels of the Church. More than just a series of celebrations, the Mission Year was a call by the Lord to the Syro-Malabar Church to become his message and messengers. It has encouraged all sections of the Syro-Malabar faithful to deepen their commitment to Christ's missionary mandate to make disciples of all nations (Mt.28:19). It was also an occasion for the Syro-Malabar Church to recall with gratitude the dedicated service of the missionaries from the beginning of Christianity in India and the missionary paths they have treaded. Besides, the celebration of the Mission Year opened before the Syro-Malabar Church wider fields for sowing the seeds of the Word.

The colourful reports from various Eparchies, Institutes of Consecrated Life, formation houses, migrant centers loudly affirm that celebration of the Mission Year has served to attain the four fold objectives of the Mission Year:

1. To awaken the missionary consciousness in the Syro-Malabar Church
2. To promote missionary vocations in the Church
3. To mobilize spiritual, human and material resources for the mission
4. To rekindle the missionary zeal and enthusiasm among all the members of the Church, especially among the missionaries.

The first part of this report gives a briefing on preparations made and the action plan, the logo and the dynamism and the programmes that took place on the Major Archiepiscopal level. It is followed by a report on the different activities undertaken by various Committees and sub committees of the Mission Year. Also some highlights of the mission Year celebrations at the Eparchial, Formation houses and, migrants communities and Institutes of Consecrated Life/ Societies of Apostolic Life are given

Levels of Celebrations

To make the Mission Year an event of the entire Church various modes of celebrations and programmes were proposed by the Synod in the Action plan (Major Archiepiscopal level, Archdiocesan/Eparchial, Parish, Formation Houses/ Institutes of Consecrated life).

Committees and Mission Year Coordinators

For the effective implementation of the Mission Year programmes various Committees were constituted and Coordinators were appointed in all the Eparchies and Institutes of Consecrated Life. The Committees and Coordinators have been planning meticulously and working tirelessly for the last one year. They have put in their very best in planning and organizing this great event.

Major Events at Major Archiepiscopal Level

Preparation of the Action Plan

The XVII Synod (session/2) held in August 2010 entrusted the preparation of the Action Plan for Mission Year to the Commission for Evangelization and Pastoral Care of the Migrants. After due consultations at various levels, the Action plan was presented to the XIX Synod of Bishops held in January 2011 and it was approved by the Synod with few modifications. The Synod constituted a five member Episcopal Committee to work out the details of the same with Bishop Sebastian Vadakel as the Convener and Fr Jose Cheriampanatt MST as the Secretary.

The Pastoral Letter by the Major Archbishop

The Pastoral Letter of His Beatitude issued on 3 July 2011 highlighting the *raison de etre* of the Mission Year, gave proper orientation to the entire programme. It was read out in all the parishes and organized Syro-Malabar migrant centers.

Formal Inauguration of the Mission Year

As per the decision of the Synod, the formal inauguration of the Mission Year was on 15 August 2011 in every Archeparchy/Eparchy with the celebration of the Holy Qurbana by the local Ordinaries in their respective cathedrals. The lighting of the Mission Year candle, praying the propria prayers approved by the Commission for Liturgy, singing the mission anthem and praying the mission year prayer together formed special events of the day.

The Celebration at Azhikode, Kodungallur

A very special event at the very outset of the Mission Year took place on 21 Aug 2011 at Azhikode, the shrine of Apostle Thomas. All the Bishops celebrated Holy Qurbana there as part of the solemn inauguration of the Mission Year. The Eparchy of Irinjalakuda in collaboration with the central organizing committee organized the programmes.

Children's Meet

As per action plan, a 'Mission Meet of 16000 children' was well conducted at Bharananganam with full collaboration of the Eparchy of Palai and CML on 27 Dec 2011. The Major Archbishop inaugurated the event. Cultural programs from different mission eparchies like Chandha, Adilabad, added colour to the programme. Rev. Fr. Paul Karimathy CST, Rev. Fr. Thomas Chirackal MST and Rev. Fr. Tomy Chirapurath CMI shared their experiences in the mission. A mission exhibition was also arranged in collaboration with the Mission animation team of MST.

The Mega Light and Sound Show

The mega light and sound show 'Jesus the Saviour' was organized by 'Jesus Youth' and 'Legion of Mary' on 15 Jan 2012 at Marine Drive Ernakulam in collaboration with the Mission Year Central Organising Committee. More than 14000 people watched the show.

The show in which about 300 actors gave their live performance on the stage was a grand success.

ASSM

As per the decision of the Synod, ‘Association of the Supporters of Syro-Malabar Mission’ (ASSM), a mission funding agency, was launched under the able guidance of Mar Gregory Karotemprel CMI. It is hoped that this association will be able to enlist the collaboration of all the Syro-Malabar faithful in the missionary endeavours of the Church.

Involvement of Various Committees and Commissions

The programmes in the Action Plan were implemented by the different Commissions of the Synod and the special Committees set up for the Mission Year. .

1. The Central Organizing Committee

The Central Organising Committee comprising of 5 Episcopal members and 35 other members representing various Syro-Malabar Eparchies, formation houses, migrant centers and institute and associations, took the lead in organising the programmes at the Major Archiepiscopal level. The Committee worked hard to revitalize the Church rekindling the missionary awareness in our faithful through different programmes. All the programmes at the Major Archiepiscopal level took place exactly as they had been planned a year ahead and the credit goes to all the members of the Central Organising Committee. The secretary Rev. Fr Jose Cheriampant and the office secretary Sr. Savidha CHF took care of the official work of coordination and contacts. Some of the programmes directly implemented by the Organising Committee were the following:

- Preparation and distribution of 300,000 Mission Year wall calendars with the logo and the motto of the Mission Year
- Preparation and distribution of the prayer for Mission Year, propria prayers for the Holy Qurbana for the Inauguration and Conclusion and another set of karoza prayers with the help of the Commission for Liturgy
- Preparation and distribution of the supplementary texts for catechism classes on *ad gentes* mission with the active involvement of the Commission for Catechism
- Liaisoning with the Shalom and Divine TV channels to broadcast programs on missionary apostolates from various mission Eparchies and areas.
- Organising a number of meetings at Mount St. Thomas and other places to speed up the implementation of the programmes

2. Committee for Mission Animation, Essay Competition and Mission Quiz

The main task entrusted to the Committee with the support of the animation Team of MST (IMPACT) was to help in achieving the objectives of the mission year through various mission animation programs, essay competitions and mission quiz etc. in collaboration with the Coordinators of the Mission Year. The following steps were taken by them:

- Preparation of a Resource book on mission *ad gentes* and another book for Mission Quiz both in English and Malayalam

- Orientation classes on Mission Year to the presbyteral and pastoral Councils in all the Eparchies in the territory.
- Orientation classes on mission *ad gentes* to Religious Congregations and their Provinces
- Conducting a multi-media inter province Mission Quiz programmes for the Women Religious Congregations at the Central level
- Organising mission animation programs in more than 600 parishes to promote missionary vocations
- Entrusting a few missionaries to share their mission experience in TV channels and parishes
- Coordinating the following competitions at the Major Archiepiscopal Level in collaboration with Impact (MST)
 1. **Inter seminary mission Quiz for Major Seminarians.** It was conducted the St. Thomas Apostolic Seminary Vadavathoor on 9 Feb 2012. Eleven Major seminaries participated in it.
 2. **Inter Province multimedia Mission Quiz for Religious sisters in the Territory.** It was conducted at Divine Retreat centre Muringoor from 19- 27 Feb, 2012 and 66 Provinces participated in it. It is being broadcasted by the Good TV channel
 3. **Inter Province multi media Mission Quiz for Religious sisters outside the Territory.** It was conducted at Kripa Social Service Centre Ujjain on 21-22 July. 28 provinces participated in it.
 4. **Inter Diocesan multimedia Mission Quiz for laity-** Individual as well as Group level for various age groups at Divine Retreat Centre Muringoor from April 29 to May 11. It will be broadcasted by Goodness TV channel.
 5. **Separate essay competitions for different age groups of laity**
 6. **Essay Competitions for Seminarians**
 7. **Essay competitions for Religious sisters and those in formation**
 8. **Power point presentation on mission for all the sections of the faithful**
 9. **Painting competition on mission for children below 12 years of age**

3. Committee for Media and Public Relations

The primary task of this Committee was to make known the message and the events of the Mission Year in the entire Church. For this purpose it prepared and printed promotional materials, articles and write ups on Mission Year. It will also publish a mission year souvenir at the end of the Mission Year. This Committee has already accomplished the following:

- An annual planner for the Mission Year at Major Archiepiscopal level
- Conducted competitions for the logo and anthem of the Mission Year, in Malayalam, English and Hindi, with the help of experts. The Eparchies were encouraged to make copies of the Mission Year Anthem CD and distribute them to parishes and institutions.
- A website by name www.smmissionyear.org providing full detail, giving current information and making available the day to day progress regularly
- Hosting banners in the parishes/institutes so that the whole year is focused on Mission.
- Regular media update on Mission Year programs
- Meeting of the editors of journals, magazines; Directors of retreat centers and TV channels to ask them to focus their programs on the Mission Year
- Collecting articles and experiences of missionaries for getting them published in our journals and magazines
- Preparation of articles and write ups on Mission Year for media

- Circulating a questionnaire in the mission Eparchies/Institutes of Consecrated Life/Societies of Apostolic Life for collecting information for the website and the Mission Year Souvenir.

4. Committee for Documentation and Evaluation

The Committee has been assigned the task of documenting the history of the Syro-Malabar missionary involvements. It will also make a study of the history of the mission Eparchies and critically appraise missionary involvements and mission methodologies and evaluate their effect. The following steps were taken:

- In view of documenting the history of the Syro-Malabar missionary involvements and enterprises a comprehensive bibliography on the missionary nature, apostolates and other aspects of the Syro-Malabar Church has been prepared
- Circulated a questionnaire in the mission Eparchies for the purpose of documentation on mission areas
- Collected materials on the contributions of veteran missionaries

5. Committee for Renewal Programmes

The main task of the Committee was to arrange renewal programmes for all the sections of the Syro-Malabar faithful. Besides, the committee had also the following functions: guiding the retreat centers to concentrate on *ad gentes missions*, preparing study materials on *ad gentes* mission for study and discussion in the family unit meetings, making available write ups and hand outs for the use of Eparchial and parish bulletins and giving classes on *ad gentes* mission in seminaries and formation houses. They have already,

- Arranged a meeting of the Directors of Retreat centers to orient them to focus on Mission Year
- Prepared a few write ups on *ad gentes* mission and new evangelization based on Bible and Church documents for publication in the eparchial/parish bulletins each month.
- Organized a few mission awareness conferences and talks in the various migrant centers.
- Prepared resource persons for seminars, renewal programs etc. based on *ad gentes* mission and new evangelization
- Prepared study cum reflection materials on *ad gentes* mission for the use of family units.
- Organized mission awareness programs for diaspora communities with the collaboration of chaplains/priests in-charge of these communities outside Kerala

6. Committee for Mission Seminars & Studies on *ad gentes*

Liturgical Research Centre was asked to arrange study programs and seminars for various sections of the faithful. It, in collaboration with the concerned local committees, has arranged five national seminars and one International Mission seminar. It will also publish the seminar papers and the findings of the research papers. The general opinion is that the papers presented were very scientific and highly academic. Some of their programmes were:

- July 29-31, 2011: Mission Seminar in Mumbai on the topic ‘Early Christian Communities of St. Thomas Tradition in India.’ It was well conducted with the collaboration of the Eparchy of Kalyan.

- Nov.23-25, 2011: Mission seminar at Dharmaram College Bangalore, on the topic St. Thomas Christians and Evangelization
- Feb. 9-11, 2012: Mission Seminar at Darsana Institute Wardha on the topic ‘Challenges and prospects of mission.’
- Mar. 26-28, 2012: Mission Seminar at Poornodaya Bhopal on Syro-Malabar Mission in India
- Aug.17, 2012: Seminar on New visions and plans for more effective evangelization in India at Mount St. Thomas Kakkanad.
- Nov.17, 2012: one-day International mission seminar to be held Delhi

7. Committee for Children’s Meet

It organized the ‘Mission Meet’ of children at Bharananganam on 27 Dec 2011. Nearly 16000 children from various Eparchies and migrant centers attended it.

8. Finance Committee

This Committee was responsible for the financial matters of the celebrations. It prepared the budget for the programmes and received approval of the Permanent Synod. The expenses were met through a special Sunday collection on 4 Sept 2011 in all the parishes and migrant centres and through the contribution of a fixed amount from the Archeparchies/Eparchies, Institutes of Consecrated Life, Societies of Apostolic Life, their provinces and units. We are happy to state that all the programmes of the Mission Year were conducted with the contributions received from our faithful, Eparchies, migrant centers , Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life. The Finance committee deserves our sincere thanks and appreciation for their efforts.

Prize Distribution Ceremony of Mission Year Competitions

The prize distribution ceremony of the Mission Year competitions was held at Mount St. Thomas on 17 Aug 2012. The Major Archbishop distributed the prizes and congratulated the winners.

Events yet to take Place

Visit of the Bishops to Mannanam and Kudamaloor

As part of the Mission Year Celebrations, the bishops of the Syro-Malabar Church has planned to go on a pilgrimage to the tomb of Blessed Kuirakose Elias Chavara at Mannanam and celebrate Holy Qurbana on Sunday 26 August 2012. The Bishops will then visit Kudamaloor, the birth place of St. Alphonsa and pray for the whole Church..

Concluding Ceremony of the Mission Year

As per the decision of the Synod, the Mission Year concluding programmes are scheduled in Delhi from Nov 17-18, 2012. Intensive preparations are afoot in the eparchy of Faridabad for the concluding ceremony of the Mission Year. The International Mission Seminar is scheduled on Saturday, 17 Nov 2012, at Constitution Club, Delhi. Around 200 delegates will be invited for this seminar including representatives from migrant communities. The concluding ceremony and public meeting will take place on Sunday 18 Nov 2012, at DDA Ground, Dwarka. All our Bishops, and all the bishops of Syro Malabar origin working in

other Rites, and Syro-Malabar priests and religious working as Syncell, Rectors of Major Seminaries, Major Superiors of Congregations along with representatives from our Eparchies and mission centers will be invited for the concluding ceremony of the Mission Year.

Some Highlights of Mission Year Celebrations at Various Levels

Formation Houses

- Study on Mission policy of the Syro-Malabar Church and Mission Documents
- Mega Mission exhibition at St. Ephrem's Theological College Satna
- Mission seminars on *ad gentes* mission in the Major Seminaries- Alwaye, Kottayam, Kunnoth, Sanathana, Satna, Ujjain, Trichur etc
- Sharing sessions by veteran missionaries and mission bishops

Institutes of Consecrated Life/Societies of Apostolic Life

- Honouring of the pioneer missionaries in the Central and Province level
- Mission fests in the provinces and Central level
- Orientation classes on mission *ad gentes* for formees
- Mission seminars for Religious sisters
- Inter Province mission Quiz
- Three days Mission Congress at CMI Generalate
- Santhome Mission fest, a mega mission exhibition by MST at Deepti Bhavan Melampara and Vimal Jyoti Engineering college Thalassery
- CRI Mission Congress, Dharmaram College Bangalore
- National Mission Seminar organized by CMI Marthoma Province Chanda on "Challenges of Chanda, Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow."

Migrant Centers

Mission gatherings cum seminar on *ad gentes* mission in Kolkotta, Aurangabad, Bangalore, Bhopal etc.

Eparchies

- Missionary Meet in the Eparchies Belthangady, Changanacherry, Idukki, Palai, Trichur, Palakkad, Thmarasserry, Thalassery, Kottayam, Bhadravati etc
- Visit of mission areas by priests and members of pious associations from various Eparchies
- Mission oriented seminars and symposiums

- Publication of Mission Directory by the Eparchies
- Mission Yatara to pilgrim centers

Word of Thanks

As we come to the end of the Mission Year we would like to thank all who helped the Central Organising Committee in numerous ways to implement the Action Plan approved by the Synod and to celebrate the Mission Year meaningfully and effectively. First of all we express our sincere appreciation to late Mar Varkey Cardinal Vithayathil, the then Major

Archbishop who declared the Mission Year with great missionary zeal and enthusiasm and his unfailing support to the Organising Committee. Secondly, we place on record our gratitude to our Major Archbishop Mar George Cardinal Alencherry for his unwavering support and encouragement for the Mission Year programmes. The Pastoral Letter His Beatitude sent out at the beginning of the Mission Year gave proper orientation for the programme and the addresses he gave at various meetings showed the direction the Church is to take in her missionary endeavours. We take this opportunity to thank all our Archbishops/bishops for their leadership, commitment and whole hearted cooperation and support in organizing this mega event. We are deeply indebted to the Superiors General, Provincials, Seminary Rectors, the members of various Committees and Coordinators of the Mission Year for their hard work, unstinted dedication and generous cooperation. We also thank the Catholic journals, TV Channels, retreat centers for making known the message of the Mission Year to the faithful. A special mention must be made of the mission associations like CML, Jesus Youth, Legion of Mary etc for their full support and involvement in the programmes.

The Mission year is not getting concluded, it is only getting inaugurated in the Holy Spirit. The Synod rightly decided not to solemnly conclude the 'Mission Year' but to keep up the missionary zeal and enthusiasm. Hence, as a follow up we need to organize programmes in all our Eparchies, parishes, Congregations and formation houses. The 'Year of Faith' that follows with emphasis on 'new evangelization should help the Church to keep her attention focused on 'mission ad gentes' and new evangelization for the following year. May this Mission Year help us to commit ourselves with renewed vigour to the perennial bidding of the risen Lord to bring Good News of the Kingdom of God to all the nations on the earth. May the Holy Spirit help us to find new ways of understanding and doing the mission of Jesus in the future.

Central Organising Committee for the Mission Year
Convenor



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Fr. Jose Cheriampanatt MST
Secretary