

THE SYRO-MALABAR MAJOR ARCHIEPISCOPAL CHURCH OF ERNAKULAM-ANGAMALY

Varkey Cardinal Vithayathil, C.Ss.R.
Major Archbishop

Prot. No. 308/2010

Guidelines for recognizing Lay Associations of Syro-Malabar Faithful outside the Syro-Malabar Eparchies in India and Abroad

Catholic lay associations have an important role in strengthening the faith of its members and in building up the body of Christ, the Church. The Syro-Malabar major Archiepiscopal Church acknowledges and appreciates the important role and relevance of the Syro-Malabar lay Catholic associations in organizing and strengthening the Church among its migrant faithful outside the Syro-Malabar eparchies or exarchies. Such associations whether public or private may be recognized and accepted as Syro-Malabar lay association by the Major Archiepiscopal Commission for Evangelization and Pastoral Care of the Migrants subject to the following guidelines approved by the Major Archbishop.

1. Associations which are erected by competent ecclesiastical authority, or approved by the decree of the same authority (Roman Pontiff, Major Archbishop, Archbishop, local Ordinary), are juridical persons in the Church and are called public associations (CCEO C. 573 - §1). The Commission for Evangelization and Pastoral Care of the Migrants may recognize any such public association as Syro Malabar, if they conform to these guidelines and are found useful in serving the cause of the Syro-Malabar Church in those regions/places.
2. There can be private associations those not officially approved by the local ordinaries (Cf. CCEO C. 573 - §2) but have been tacitly recognized by the local Ordinaries or priests in charge and serving the cause of the Church. The Commission for Evangelization and Pastoral Care of the Migrants can approve these private associations after due review of their statutes and in consultation with the authorities concerned.
3. Syro-Malabar lay Catholic associations among the migrant faithful may be affiliated to the already existing such an association of the Major Archiepiscopal Church with the recommendation of the Commission for Evangelization and Pastoral Care of the Migrants and in consultation with the local Ordinary concerned.
4. Every association is to have its own statutes, in which are defined its name, purpose, activities and conditions required for membership. Besides the statutes have to enumerate its objectives in serving the Syro-Malabar faithful and the Church in the area. There shall not be multiplication of associations with similar objectives serving in the same area and people. The spiritual activities shall be organized only with the approval of the Syro-Malabar parish priest/chaplain/priest in charge wherever they are established.
5. The associations based on ethnic identities in a Syro-Malabar parish/mass centre are part of the Syro-Malabar community. They have to be part of all gatherings and celebrations common to the Syro-Malabar community in the place. They can have separate social/cultural gatherings of their own but separate spiritual/liturgical activities shall be organized only in consultation with the appointed Syro-Malabar parish priest/chaplain/priest in charge of the place.

Continued on Page 2

THE SYRO-MALABAR MAJOR ARCHIEPISCOPAL CHURCH OF ERNAKULAM-ANGAMALY

Varkey Cardinal Vithayathil, C.Ss.R.
Major Archbishop

6. Any modification in the statutes/by-laws require the approval of the ecclesiastical authority which erected or approved the association (CCEO C. 576 - §1& §2). They must be submitted to the Syro-Malabar Major Archiepiscopal Commission for Evangelization and Pastoral care of the Migrants, if they are to be recognized by the Syro-Malabar Church.
7. The reception of members is to be done in accordance with the norm of common law and the statutes of the association. The same person can be enrolled in several associations (Cf. CCEO C. 578) with different objectives.
8. One who has publicly rejected the Catholic faith, or has publicly abandoned communion with the Catholic Church, or has been punished with major excommunication, cannot validly be received into associations; but if he/she has already been lawfully enrolled, he should be declared dismissed in virtue of the law itself (Cf. CCEO C. 580)
9. Members belonging to other Church *sui iuris* may be admitted as associate members of Syro-Malabar Associations if they are formally enrolled in the Syro-Malabar parish/mission. They can take part in all the activities of the Syro-Malabar community in the area. But they are not eligible to be office bearers of the association unless elected with two-third majority and obtained the consent of the local Ordinary.
10. No one who has been legitimately enrolled may be dismissed from an association except for a just cause in accordance with the norm of common law and the statutes (CCEO C. 581)
11. A lawfully established and approved association administers temporal goods according to the norms of the CCEO 1007-1054, according to the particular Laws of the Syro-Malabar Church and according to the norm of its own statutes, under the vigilance of the authority which erected or approved it, to whom the association must render an account of its administration each year (CCEO C. 581).
12. Every association recognized by the Commission for Evangelization and Pastoral Care of the Migrants as Syro-Malabar is subject to the vigilance of the same authority. They should send an annual report of its activities to the Commission (Cf. CCEO C. 582).
13. The Commission for Evangelization and Pastoral Care of the Migrants can withdraw the recognition given to the association as Syro Malabar, if the association acts against the cause of the Church or violates the laws of the Church.

Kakkanad
17 March 2010



+ Varkey Vithayathil

Varkey Cardinal Vithayathil
Major Archbishop of the Syro-Malabar Church