



# **Commission for Evangelization and Pastoral Care of the Migrants**

## **Syro-Malabar Major Archiepiscopal Church**

**Bishop Sebastian Vadakel, MST (Chairman)**  
**Fr. Shaji Abraham Kochupurayil, MCBS (Secretary)**

**Archbishop Mathew Moolakkatt, OSB (Member)**  
**Bishop Mathew Arackal (Member)**

### **Annual Report of the Syro-Malabar Commission for Evangelization and Pastoral Care of the Migrants: from September 2013 to August 2014**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

We are happy to present this report on the activities of the Syro-Malabar Major Archiepiscopal Commission for Evangelization and Pastoral Care of the Migrants (CEPCM) for the period from September 2013 to August 2014. The Commission records with great joy and gratitude the erection of the Syro-Malabar Eparchy St. Thomas the Apostle in Melbourne, Australia and the appointment of Mar Bosco Puthur as the bishop of Melbourne and as Apostolic Visitor to New Zealand as well as the appointment of Mar Raphael Thattil as Apostolic Visitor for India, during this reporting year. With these appointments the Commission is freed from the responsibility for the migrants in India, Australia and New Zealand. The Commission is happy that it could be of some assistance in preparing the background for these appointments. Hence this report does not contain the developments after the appointment of Bishop Bosco Puthur and Bishop Raphael Thattil assign their office. At the end we have highlighted some of the problems and issues that affect our people calling for the attention of the Synod.

#### **1. NEW MEMBERS TO THE COMMISSION**

The Syro-Malabar Commission for Evangelization & Pastoral Care of the Migrants was reconstituted during the XXI Synod, Session 2, held from 19 to 31 August, 2013 with two new Episcopal Commission members: Abp. Mar Mathew Moolakkatt OSB, and Bp. Mar Mathew Arackal. Bishop Sebastian Vadakel was renamed the Chairman of the Commission. The Commission gratefully acknowledges the great service rendered by the former Episcopal Members of the Commission, His Excellencies Bp. Antony Chirayath and Bp. Simon Stock Palathra CMI.

-1-



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The Commission gratefully remembers also the dedicated service rendered by the former secretary of the Commission, Rev. Fr. Jose Cheriampanatt, MST and the office-assistant Rev. Sr. Savitha CHF for the past three years, and wishes them God's abundant blessings for their new ministries. Rev. Fr. Shaji Abraham Kochupurayil, MCBS is appointed the new secretary of the Commission and Rev. Sr. Francelet SD as the office-assistant.

## **2. MEETINGS**

### **2.1. Meetings of the Commission Members**

Between September 2013 and August 2014, the Commission members met two times to discuss the issues related to the pastoral care of the migrants in India and abroad. Besides, the Episcopal members of the Commission and secretary kept up the contact and communication through emails, phone calls and personal meetings.

### **2.2. Meeting of Syro-Malabar priests serving in Hyderabad**

A meeting of the Syro-Malabar priests serving in the Archdiocese of Hyderabad/Secunderabad was held on 02.01.2014 at Mount St. Thomas, Kakkanad, presided over by His Beatitude Mar George Cardinal Alencherry. Bishop Sebastian Vadakel, Rev. Fr. Antony Kollannur, Fr. Shaji Kochupurayil and 8 Syro-Malabar priests serving the Syro-Malabar faithful in the Archdiocese of Hyderabad were present on the occasion. The meeting greatly helped the Commission to settle some of the disputes that existed among the priests and Syro-Malabar communities in Hyderabad.

### **2.3. Meeting of the Syro-Malabar priests serving in Bangalore Mission**

The Commission convoked a meeting of all the Syro-Malabar priests working in the Archdiocese of Bangalore on 4 January, 2015 at St. Thomas Forane Church, Dharmaram, Bangalore. The priests could give a good picture of the existing situation of the Syro-Malabar Communities in

-2-

**Syro-Malabar Major Archiepiscopal Curia**

**Mount St. Thomas, PB. 3110, Kakkanad, Kochi - 682 030, Kerala, India**

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Bangalore. The Chairman of the Commission encouraged the priests to continue their zealous pastoral activities for the Syro-Malabar faithful, but also exhorted them to do the pastoral activity with greater commitment following the pastoral guidelines given by the Major Archbishop and the Synod.

### **2.4. Consultation on Evangelizing Mission of the Syro-Malabar Church and Promotion of Vocations**

A Consultation of those who are in charge of evangelizing mission and promotion of vocations in their own dioceses, religious congregations, institute of consecrated life/ societies of apostolic life, representatives of lay missionary associations and movements, major seminaries and other formation centers of our Church was held on 15 July, 2014 at Mount St. Thomas, Kakkanad. The Major Archbishop, His Beatitude Mar George Cardinal Alencherry, Archbishop Mar Mathew Moolakkatt, Bishop Mar Sebastian Vadakel and Bishop Mar Joseph Kunnath were present on the occasion. There were 130 participants and they shared their concrete proposals and suggestions in the context of the contemporary challenges of evangelization and promotion of vocations.

### **3. ANNUAL REPORT TO THE PONTIFICAL COUNCIL FOR THE PASTORAL CARE OF THE MIGRANTS AND ITINERANT PEOPLE**

An annual report of the Commission for Evangelization and Pastoral Care of the Migrants was prepared and submitted to the Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of the Migrants and Itinerant People in the month of August highlighting the activities, challenges and concerns of the Church in the pastoral care of the migrants of our Church in India and abroad.



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### **4. PASTORAL VISITS OF THE MAJOR ARCHBISHOP TO MIGRANT CENTERS**

The Major Archbishop, His Beatitude Mar George Cardinal Alencherry, visited some of the migrant communities in India and Abroad. In India, he visited the Syro-Malabar faithful of Gujarat region, including of the dioceses of Ahmadabad and Gandhinagar from 17 to 20 October, 2013, Bangalore on 17 and 18 February, 2014, Goa from 1 to 3 March, 2014, Calcutta from 6 to 8 May, 2014 and Chennai mission on 22 June, 2014.

In Abroad, the Major Archbishop visited some of the migrant communities in Kuwait and Doha from 17 to 22 May; and Abudhabi, Dubai, Jabel Ali, Sharjah and Oman, from 4 to 12 July, 2014.

The visits of the Major Archbishop have boosted the enthusiasm and spirit of the migrant communities. The discussion that His Beatitude held with the concerned Archbishops and bishops helped in sorting out some of the problems faced by the migrants.

### **5. THE VISITS OF THE COMMISSION CHAIRMAN, MEMBERS, AND SECRETARY**

#### **5.1. Visit to Gujarat**

The Chairman of the Commission Bp. Sebastian Vadakel, together with the secretary of the Commission, visited the migrant communities in Ahmedabad from 17 to 20 October, 2013, on the occasion of the visit of the Major Archbishop to Ahmedabad.

#### **5.2. Visit to Bangalore**

His Excellency Bp. Sebastian Vadakel and Fr. Shaji Kochupurayil visited a few migrant centers in Bangalore on 4 and 5 January, 2014. During the visit, a meeting of all Syro-Malabar priests working in Bangalore Mission was also held at St. Thomas Forane Church, Dharamaram.





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### **5.3. Visit to UK**

His Excellency Bp. Sebastian Vadakel visited UK from 27 February to 3 March 2014. He held discussions with Bishop Alan Hopes, the Bishop Promoter of Migrants of England Wales, and with His Grace Antonio Mennini, the Apostolic Nuncio, on the situation of our migrant faithful in England and Wales. He also could meet many other bishops of England and Wales and share with them the concerns of our faithful in their Archdioceses/dioceses. Discussions were also held with Syro-Malabar priests and lay representatives there on how to make the Syro-Malabar national Co-ordination more effective and useful. The Chairman visited also the migrant communities in Scotland and England. Rev. Fr. Thomas Parayadiyil, the National Coordinator accompanied him in almost all programs and meetings.

The visits of the Major Archbishop, the Chairman and other bishop members of the Commission could help in strengthening the Syro-Malabar migrants in their faith and in making them conscious of their ecclesial heritage. Besides these visits were also occasions to guide the pastors working there and to sort out pastoral problems that come up from time to time.

### **6. THE ERECTION OF THE NEW DIOCESE IN AUSTRALIA**

The Commission, together with the whole Syro-Malabar Church, is greatly delighted to have a new diocese for Syro Malabar Catholics living in Australia. The new diocese is known as the Syro-Malabar Eparchy of St. Thomas the Apostle in Melbourne, Australia. The Commission is happy to be relieved of the responsibility for the pastoral care for our Syro-Malabar faithful in Australia and New Zealand and wishes the new diocese and its Bishop Mar Bosco Puthur God's abundant blessings!



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### **7. THE APPOINTMENT OF THE APOSTOLIC VISITATORS**

#### **7.1. Apostolic Visitor for India**

His Holiness Pope Francis has appointed His Excellency Bishop Mar Raphael Thattil the Apostolic Visitor for Syro-Malabar Catholics residing in India *extra territorium proprium* of the Syro-Malabar Church. As per the decision of the Synod XXII, session 1, held from 7 to 11 January 2014, the Apostolic Visitor is entrusted with the responsibility of the pastoral care of the migrants in India, so far held by the Commission and the Commission is relieved of this responsibility. The Commission wishes Mar Raphael Thattil, the Apostolic Visitor all success!

#### **7.2. Apostolic Visitor for New Zealand**

His Holiness Pope Francis has appointed Bishop Mar Bosco Puthur the Apostolic Visitor for New Zealand. The Commission wishes Mar Bosco Puthur, the Apostolic Visitor for New Zealand God's choicest blessing!

### **8. APPOINTMENT OF NATIONAL COORDINATORS**

#### **8.1. The National Coordinator for England and Wales**

After several rounds of discussion and correspondence by the Major Archbishop and the Commission Chairman, the President of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales appointed Rev. Fr. Thomas Parayadiyil, MST the National Coordinator of England and Wales on 1 December, 2013 for a period of three years. The National Coordinator will now be able to officiate as mediator between the Latin bishops and the Syro-Malabar Church and Co-ordinate the Pastoral care activities of the Syro-Malabar migrants in England and Wales.





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### **8.2. The National Coordinator for Ireland**

Rev. Fr. Antony Perumaayan is appointed the Coordinator for Ireland by the Irish Episcopal Conference on 17 December, 2013. As Co-ordinator he will co-ordinate the pastoral care activities in favor of the Syro-Malabar faithful in Northern and Southern Ireland.

### **9. PRIESTS FOR MIGRANT COMMUNITIES ABROAD**

As per the request of the bishops of our migrant Communities abroad, seven of our priests are getting ready for appointment in the different dioceses in England and Wales.

### **10. PASTORAL ACTIVITIES OF THE COMMISSION**

The Commission has been successful in maintaining an effective correspondence with the appointed pastors/chaplains and the migrants of the Syro-Malabar Church, particularly through visits, emails and telephone calls. Christmas, Easter and St. Thomas Day messages and greetings were sent to all the migrant centers through emails. Correspondence is regular with almost all the centers/places/countries of the Syro-Malabar migrants.

The Commission has given approval for Marriage Preparation Course arranged in Northern and Southern Arabia, United Kingdom and Ireland. The Marriage Preparation Course will be conducted as per the Syllabus for Marriage Preparation Course, approved by the Commission. The Commission has communicated the news on the approval of the Marriage Preparation Course in those countries to all Syro-Malabar dioceses.

The Syro-Malabar Commission could send Rev. Fr. Pouly Maniyattu to the Archdiocese of Singapore to provide pastoral service for the Syro-Malabar faithful in Singapore during the Holy Week, from 13 to 20 April, 2014 as per the request of the Archdiocese of Singapore.



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As part of the faith formation of the migrant communities the Commission had arranged training programs for the catechism teachers in different places. The training was given by the Synodal Commission for Catechism.

### **11. DEVELOPMENTS IN THE MIGRANT CENTRES**

#### **11.1. INDIA**

As the Apostolic Visitor is responsible for the pastoral care activities of the Syro-Malabar migrants in India, the Commission is not mentioning the developments in India here in the report.

#### **11.2. ABROAD**

##### **11.2.1. Arabian Gulf Countries**

The condition of our faithful in the Arabian Gulf countries remains the same as last year. It is hoped that the visits of the Major Archbishop to the two Apostolic Vicariates and the dialogue with the Vicars Apostolic and the Apostolic See will bear the desired fruit. Our faithful are eagerly waiting for positive decision from the Apostolic See and action from the Syro-Malabar Hierarchy.

##### **11.2.2. Singapore**

We have about 1000 Syro-Malabar families in Singapore. Our attempts to present Syro-Malabar priests for our faithful have not yet succeeded. Recently a Capuchin priest by name Rev. Fr. Salim Joseph OFM is appointed by the local Ordinary to look after the pastoral needs of the Malayali communities.





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### **11.2.3. Europe**

#### **11.2.3.1. Austria, France and Italy**

The Syro-Malabar communities in Austria and France are well organized by their priests-in-charge Fr. Thomas Thandappilly, CST and Fr. Sebastian Nedumthadam respectively. Msgr. Stephen Chirappanath is the national coordinator of Syro-Malabar communities in Italy and tries hard to provide proper pastoral care for our faithful in Italy.

#### **11.2.3.2. Germany, Switzerland and Denmark**

In Germany, Switzerland and Denmark, no Syro-Malabar priest is officially appointed as parish priest or chaplain with the proper recommendation of the Major Archbishop. However there are a number of Mass centers with various pastoral programs conducted regularly by the Syro-Malabar priests who are serving in the Latin dioceses there. Better pastoral care can be ensured if a national coordinator is appointed for each of these countries.

#### **11.2.3.3. Ireland**

The Syro-Malabar population in Ireland has fallen considerably in the recent years due to migration to Australia. However the migrant communities are well organized by our own Syro-Malabar priests. The recent appointment of Rev. Fr. Antony Perumayan as the National Coordinator for Ireland, has given a lot of hopes for better coordination of Syro-Malabar migrant communities and emergence of new organized communities and mass centers in Ireland.

#### **11.2.3.4. United Kingdom**

With the appointment of Rev. Fr. Thomas Parayadiyil MST, the National Coordinator for England and Wales, the pastoral activities in UK get better coordination and development. The Syro-Malabar communities in England, Wales and Scotland are getting better organized. The local ordinaries in general are very open to the requests made by the Syro-Malabar hierarchy to ensure proper pastoral arrangement for our faithful. Most of the priests-in-charge of Syro-



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Malabar communities in UK are appointed by the local ordinary with the proper recommendation of our Major Archbishop.

### **11.2.4. African Countries**

We have sent priests for the pastoral care of the Syro-Malabar faithful only to two African Countries: the Syro-Malabar communities in South Africa and Uganda. Our people from Nigeria, with 90 Syro-Malabar families (250 members) are asking for a Syro-Malabar priest for their pastoral needs.

## **12. OUR MAJOR CONCERNS**

Most of our priests are giving excellent service in their ministry, though in some cases personal problems and other interests create unhealthy situations in the migrant centers. The pastoral ministry among the migrants is very demanding and difficult. The Commission highlights some of the serious problems and issues that affect our people calling for the immediate attention of the Synod.

### **12.1. Launching of new retreat/convention centers**

Some of our religious and diocesan priests serving in the Latin Church in UK have recently opened retreat/convention centers without any reference to the Commission, Syro-Malabar Hierarchy or the priests officially appointed there. Our people flock to such centers even on Sundays. This affects badly the Syro-Malabar pastoral arrangements made in UK.

### **12.2. Inflow of unauthorized retreat preachers to migrant centers**

Inflow of unauthorized preachers to migrant centers still continues to be a matter of serious concern in some of the migrant centers, although their number is gradually getting reduced.





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### 12.3. Mushrooming of Lay Associations

The mushrooming of rival lay associations claiming to represent Syro-Malabar Church is of serious concern in many of the countries. Some of them make attempt to claim authenticity either by inviting bishops or by requesting their seasonal greetings for those associations. The Commission is very grateful to our bishops for their understanding of such situations and also for not responding positively to such invitations and requests. The Commission has taken the stand that only one lay association will be approved as official in each country and that it can seek formal affiliation to AKCC, the approved lay association of the Syro-Malabar Church.

### 12.4. Priests appointed without the Recommendation of the Major Archbishop

Many of our migrant centers, especially in Gulf countries, are having priests appointed by the local Ordinary without a proper recommendation or presentation by the Major Archbishop. Some of those priests do not show any sense of commitment to the Syro-Malabar Church. Instead they are often led by their personal interests as well as the interest of the Latin communities.

## 13. FINANCIAL REPORT

### Income and Expenditure From 1 April 2013 to 31 March 2014

#### Receipts/Income

Donations from Migrant Communities, etc.	:	5,74,690.00
Advance Repaid	:	50,000.00
Bank Interest	:	2,86,215.00
Total	:	9,10,905.00

#### Expenditure

Donation to Dioceses	:	3,00,000.00
Allowance	:	65,000.00
Website	:	25,000.00



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Global Meet	:	2,28,000.00
Documentary Film	:	5,00,000.00
T.A.	:	16,43,60.00
Phone	:	18,435.00
Postage	:	3,656.00
Printing and Stationary	:	70,755.00
Machinery and Equipments	:	7,000.00
Meeting Expenses	:	15,566.00
Vehicle Maintenance	:	2,153.00
Bank Charges	:	28.00

Total	:	13,99,953.00
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### Total Income

Previous Balance	:	22,01,735.00
Income of 2013-2014	:	9,10,905.00

Total	:	31,12,640.00
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### Balance:

31,12,640.00 –
13,99,953.00
<u>17,12,687.00</u>
=====

Fixed Deposit :	7,00,000.00
Federal Bank :	9,83,517.00
SB. A/C :	29,170.00
Total Balance :	<u>17, 12,687.00</u>
	=====

Fr. Mathew Pulimoottil  
Finance Officer





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### **CONCLUSION**

The year 2013-2014 was a year of Lord's special grace for the Commission for Evangelization and Pastoral Care of the Migrants. During the Year, the Commission was trying to systematize and enhance the pastoral care activities in our Migrant centers. In the field of Evangelization, the Commission proposes concrete action plans for better evangelization and promotion of vocations in the Syro-Malabar Church. Due to the dedicated service of many of our priests and laity in migrant centers we could start a few more Syro-Malabar communities in India and Abroad. New Churches are constructed and consecrated in our migrant communities with the generous support of the migrant faithful. The Commission is grateful to all local ordinaries of migrant centers, the national coordinators, the priests / Chaplains and the lay leaders for their unfailing support to the Commission. Sincere thanks also go to the Major Archbishop, Archbishops, Bishops, Superiors General and Provincials who have generously lent the service of some of their best priests for the pastoral care of the migrants. May we take this opportunity to express our sincere thanks also to His Beatitude Mar George Cardinal Alencherry, our Major Archbishop, all the members of the Synod of Bishops, members and staff of Mount St. Thomas for the support and encouragement that they have extended to the Commission in 2013-2014.

**Bishop Sebastian Vadakel MST**  
**Chairman**

**Mar Mathew Moolakkatt OSB**  
**Mar Mathew Arackal**  
**(Episcopal Members)**

**Fr. Shaji Abraham Kochupurayil MCBS**  
**Secretary**