



# **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 2014 TO AUGUST 2015**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

We are happy to present the report on the activities of the Syro-Malabar Major Archiepiscopal Commission for Evangelization and Pastoral Care of the Migrants (CEPCM) of the period from September 2014 to August 2015. At the end we have highlighted some of the major concerns and issues that affect our people calling for the attention of the Synod.

#### **1. NATIONAL MISSION CONSULTATION AT UJJAIN ON 23 & 24 FEBRUARY, 2015**

The Commission for Evangelization and Pastoral Care of the Migrants organized a National Mission Consultation at Kripa Training Centre, Ujjain on 23 & 24 February, 2015. The theme of the Mission Consultation was: *Syro-Malabar Church, 50 Years after 'Ad Gentes' of Vat II: A Consultation on Mission Ad Gentes Today: Prospects and Challenges*. His Beatitude Mar George Cardinal Alencherry, Major Archbishop of the Syro-Malabar Church, His Excellencies Mar Sebastian Vadakel, Chairman of the Commission for Evangelization and Pastoral Care of the Migrants and bishop of Ujjain, Mar Antony Chirayath, bishop of Sagar, Mar Thomas Thuruthimattam, bishop of Gorakhpur, and Mar Chacko Thottumarickal, bishop of Indore were present on the occasion. There were 110 participants. The participants, besides bishops, included priests-in-charge of Evangelization and Mission in Syro-Malabar eparchies, major superiors and councilors for Mission and Evangelization of the Syro-Malabar Institutes of Consecrated Life, representatives from Syro-Malabar Major Seminaries, Syro-Malabar mission regions/provinces, Lay Missionary Organizations and Movements, and priests, religious and lay missionaries actively involved in the *Ad gentes* mission of the Syro-Malabar Church. There were three main input sessions: (1) "Mission 'Ad Gentes' of Vatican II and the Post Vatican II Magisterium on *ad gentes* mission." The resource person was Rev. Dr. Davis Varayilan CMI, Rector, Samanvaya, Bhopal; (2) "50 Years of Syro-Malabar 'Ad Gentes' Mission: Appreciation and Introspection." The resource person was Rev. Dr. Devamitra, Eparchy of Sagar; and (3) "Socio-Political and Religious Situation in India today: The Prospects and Challenges to Evangelization - An Analytical Study." The resource person was Rev. Fr. Cedric Prakash sj, Director, "Prashant", A Centre for Human Rights, Justice and Peace, Ahmedabad. Input sessions were followed by

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sharing from the participants on the prospects and contemporary challenges in the field of evangelization and mission in India today. The Consultation was very effective and fruitful. It has also placed a few suggestions of better evangelization and mission for the consideration and decision of the Synod. The program was well coordinated and organized by the Commission in collaboration with the Eparchy of Ujjain. After the two days of Consultation, the participants made a pilgrimage to the Tomb of the Servant of God, Sr. Rani Maria FCC at Indore, which enkindled further the missionary spirit of the participants.

### **2. MEETINGS AND VISITS OF THE COMMISSION**

**2.1. The Commission Meetings:** The members of the Commission met thrice in the year 2014-2015. Besides, correspondences are also made through phones, emails and letters to discuss the various pastoral issues in migrant centres abroad.

**2.2. Pontifical Council Meeting:** His Excellency Bp. Sebastian Vadakel, the Chairman of the Commission, attended the World Congress for Migrants, held in Vatican from 14 November to 19 November, 2014. Bp. Sebastian Vadakel submitted a report of the activities of the Syro-Malabar Migrant Commission to the Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of the Migrants and Itinerant People highlighting the activities, challenges and concerns of the Church in the pastoral care of the migrants of our Church in the past five years.

**2.3. Visits of the Commission to Migrant Centres:** The Chairman and members of the Commission visited UK, Ireland, Italy, Germany and Gulf Countries during the year 2014-2015. Meetings were held at national and regional levels in different countries. The Commission could also meet the local ordinaries in UK and Ireland and discuss with them the contemporary issues and solutions to the pastoral needs of the Syro-Malabar faithful there. The Chairman also visited Philippines on the occasion of the Papal Visit to Philippines.

### **3. ARRANGEMENT FOR THE PASTORAL CARE OF THE SYRO-MALABAR FAITHFUL IN ITALY AND OTHER NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES**

On behalf of the Migrant Commission, Bp. Mar Mathew Arackal, a member of the Commission, was entrusted with the responsibility of making further correspondence with the migrant centres and their Latin dioceses for the Syro-Malabar migrants in Italy, Germany, France, Austria, and Switzerland. Major Archbishop asked Bp. Mar Mathew Arackal to try to get a Church or a Central office in Köln for Syro-Malabar pastoral coordination in the above mentioned countries.



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### **4. PASTORAL SUPPORT FOR MIGRANT COMMUNITIES**

#### **4.1. Providing Pastors for Migrant Communities abroad**

The Commission has taken special efforts to provide chaplains/pastors for Syro-Malabar migrant centers. In this year of reporting, we could send 7 Syro-Malabar priests for UK, 1 priest for Ireland, and 1 priest for Italy, following the proper procedure of their presentation by the Major Archbishop and the appointment by the local Ordinary. The name of the priests and their appointments:

- 1) Fr. Antony James Chundelikkatt (Thuckaley): Diocese of Middlesbrough, UK
- 2) Fr. Lonappan Arangassery (MST): Diocese of Shrewsbury, UK
- 3) Fr. Terrin Mullakkara (Trichur): Diocese of East Anglia, UK
- 4) Fr. Philip John Panthamakkal (Changanassery): Diocese of East Anglia, UK
- 5) Fr. Tom Chirackalmanavalan (Ernakulam): Diocese of Portsmouth, UK
- 6) Fr. Sebastian Namattathil (Kothamangalam): Archdiocese of Birmingham, UK
- 7) Fr. Jino Varghese Arikatt (MCBS): Archdiocese of Liverpool, UK
- 8) Fr. Antony Cheeramvelil (MST): Archdiocese of Dublin, Ireland
- 9) Fr. Joseph Pinakkatt (Pala): Diocese of Savona, Italy.

#### **4.2. Correspondences and Messages**

The Commission maintains regular correspondence with the appointed national coordinators, pastors/chaplains, migrant communities and their respective local Ordinaries. As a result most of the communities are getting better organized.

The migrant centres were encouraged to celebrate feast days and other days of ecclesiastical significance like Mission Sunday with befitting functions. Messages were sent by the Chairman of the Commission on different feasts like St. Thomas Day, Mission Sunday, Christmas and Easter, and on other occasions like Jubilee celebrations, Annual gatherings and National Meetings.

#### **4.3. Training Programmes**

The Commission could train ministers – priests, catechism teachers and lay missionaries – for our migrant faithful. There were meetings and trainings for priests of Syro-Malabar migrant centers occasionally and the Commission members were present on many such occasions, instructing and guiding them. The Commission also held meetings of lay leaders in various migrant centers and the responses were generally very encouraging. The Commission for Catechism has rendered its help to conduct catechism training programs for Catechism teachers abroad.





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#### **4.4. Marriage Preparation Courses**

The Commission, in collaboration with the migrant communities, arranges Marriage Preparation Courses in many migrant centers abroad, and the certificates are issued in the name of the Commission. The Marriage Preparation Course is conducted as per the Syllabus for Marriage Preparation Course, approved by the Commission.

#### **4.5. Formation of Lay Associations and Organization**

The Commission could take initiative to begin lay associations and organizations with proper juridical and ecclesiastical structure and most of those associations render excellent service, keeping the Church vibrant and relevant among migrants. Syro-Malabar Cultural Associations (SMCA) in Gulf Countries, regional and national units of Syro-Malabar Catholic Congress (AKCC) in other foreign Countries, etc., are such Lay associations in the Syro-Malabar Church.

### **5. PASTORAL CARE OF THE SYRO-MALABAR KNANAYA COMMUNITY IN MIGRANT CENTRES ABROAD**

**Supplementary Guidelines for the Knanaya Community:** Considering the special historical and cultural heritage and ethnic identity of the Knanaya Community, the Commission for Evangelization and Pastoral Care of the Migrants, as per the mind of the Synod, took certain steps to strengthen and promote the faith life of the Knanaya migrant communities abroad. A meeting of the members of the Commission for Evangelization and Pastoral Care of the Migrants was held on 16 April, 2015 under the presidency of His Beatitude Mar George Cardinal Alencherry at Mount St. Thomas, Kakkanad. The Commission discussed the practical pastoral arrangements to be made for the Knanaya Community in those places outside the Syro-Malabar eparchies, and a few supplementary guidelines were formulated after proper deliberation. The Commission had been then entrusted with the responsibility of formulating Guidelines for Knanaya Community in migrant centres abroad. Later, the Guidelines were promulgated by the Major Archbishop and were given to all Syro-Malabar chaplains/priest-in-charge and Syro-Malabar coordinators abroad. The copies of the supplementary guidelines were sent to all Syro-Malabar bishops as well.

### **6. DEVELOPMENTS**

#### **6.1. NATIONAL COORDINATION**

##### **6.1.1. UNITED KINGDOM**

Under the leadership of Rev. Fr. Thomas Parayadyil MST, the National Coordinator for England and Wales, a National Coordination Council (NCC) has started functioning, assigning the various departments of service to Syro-Malabar priests appointed in UK. National Coordination Council meets every three months. We have 17 officially appointed Syro-Malabar chaplains and





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156 organized Holy Qurbana Centres spread out in 22 Latin dioceses of England and Wales, estimating about 35000 Syro-Malabar faithful. There are occasional meetings of the officially appointed Syro-Malabar Chaplains as well. In Scotland we have 5 officially appointed Syro-Malabar priests with approximately 3100 Syro-Malabar faithful spread out in 10 Holy Qurbana centres of 5 Latin Dioceses. It is estimated that there are approximately altogether 38,280 Syro-Malabar faithful in United Kingdom. "The Procedure Rules for the General Body and Parish Council (*Potuyogam* and *Pratinidhiyogam*)" for Syro-Malabar Communities in UK are approved. The Constitution of the Syro-Malabar Association of Laity in UK is on the process of formulation. The Syro-Malabar Lay associations in UK are getting adapted to the Syro-Malabar Catholic Congress (AKCC).

In the reporting year, the following major developments and changes took place in Syro-Malabar Communities of Latin Archdioceses/Dioceses in UK:

- 1) **Archdiocese of Birmingham:** Fr. Jaison Karippai and Fr. Sebastian Namattathil are the priests-in-charge of the Syro-Malabar Communities in the Archdiocese of Birmingham. There are 14 Holy Qurbana centres, with regular catechism classes for children. Fr. Soji Olickal, the former priest-in-charge of the Syro-Malabar faithful in the Archdiocese, conducts retreats for our faithful in England and the retreats are attended by large number of faithful.
- 2) **Diocese of Brentwood:** Fr. Joseph Anthiamkalam MCBS is the priest-in-charge. There are 9 Holy Qurbana centres. Lay associations like Vincent De Paul, Mathrujyothi, Mission League, etc., are active in these centres. Catechism classes are conducted from 1<sup>st</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> Standard.
- 3) **Diocese of East Anglia:** For the first time we could send two Syro-Malabar priests, Fr. Philip John Panthamakal of the Archdiocese of Changanassery and Fr. Terrin Mullakkara of the Archdiocese of Trichur for the pastoral care of the Syro-Malabar faithful in the diocese of East Anglia. There are 10 Holy Qurbana Centres for the Syro-Malabar faithful in the Diocese of East Anglia.
- 4) **Diocese of Lancaster:** There are 4 Holy Qurbana centres. In January 2015, we got two personal parishes, with one parish Church, for the exclusive use of the Syro-Malabar faithful in the diocese of Lancaster. They are Saint Alphonsa Syro-Malabar Personal Parish in the Deanery of Preston and Saints Kuriakose Elias Chavara and Euphresia Personal Parish for the Deaneries of Blackpool, Fylde and Wyre. These personal parishes will be officially inaugurated by our Major Archbishop on 2<sup>nd</sup> October, 2015. CMC sisters are invited by the Diocese of Lancaster to start their convent for the pastoral care of the Syro-Malabar faithful





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as well as for pastoral service in the Latin parishes there. They will reach the Diocese in the beginning of September, 2015. The Commission gratefully acknowledges the great efforts taken by Fr. Thomas Parayadyil and Fr. Mathew Choorapoikayil for these achievements.

- 5) **Diocese of Leeds:** The term of Fr. Joseph Ponneth, the priest-in-charge of the Syro-Malabar faithful, is renewed for another two years. There are 6 Holy Qurbana centres, with regular catechism classes for children and meetings of pious associations for adults.
- 6) **Archdiocese of Liverpool:** After a few years of break, we are able to send a Syro-Malabar priest, Fr. Jino Varghese Arikatt MCBS, as priest-in-charge of the Syro-Malabar faithful in the Archdiocese of Liverpool. There are 7 Holy Qurbana Centres.
- 7) **Diocese of Shrewsbury:** Fr. Lonappan Arangassery is appointed as the chaplain of the Syro-Malabar faithful in the Diocese of Shrewsbury, while Fr. Sajimon Malayilputhenpurayil continues his pastoral ministry as chaplain of the Syro-Malabar Knanaya Community in the same Diocese.
- 8) **Archdiocese of Southwark:** There are 13 Holy Qurbana Centres. Fr. Biju Kottanalloor CST has successfully completed his term of service in the Archdiocese of Southwark. Fr. Saju Pinakkatt OFM is appointed by the Archbishop of Southwark as Chaplain of the Syro-Malabar faithful in Bromely. However we hope to send another Syro-Malabar priest for other Holy Qurbana Centres in Southwark.
- 9) **Diocese of Middlesbrough:** Fr. Antony James Chundalikkatt is appointed as the Priest-in-Charge of the Syro-Malabar migrants. There are 5 Holy Qurbana Centres with regular catechism for children and faith formation programs for youth.
- 10) **Archdiocese of Westminster:** Fr. Thomas Parayadyil, the national coordinator, is the priest-in-charge of the Syro-Malabar faithful in the Archdiocese of Westminster. We need a priest to be appointed as assistant priest-in-charge of the Syro-Malabar faithful in the Archdiocese.
- 11) We may get personal parishes in the **Dioceses of Cardiff and Salford** and in a few dioceses of Scotland.





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### United Kingdom: Syro-Malabar Migrants: Statistical Data

| ARCHDIOCESE/DIOCESE                           | NUMBER OF FAMILIES | APPROXIMATE POPULATION | PRIESTS-IN-CHARGE  |
|---|--------------------|------------------------|--|
| 1. Diocese of Arundel and Brighton            | 390                | 1650                   | -----  |
| 2. Archdiocese of Birmingham                  | 930                | 3990                   | Fr. Jaison Karippai<br>Fr. Sebastian Namattathil               |
| 3. Diocese of Brentwood                       | 570                | 2530                   | Fr. Joseph Anthiamkalam MCBS                                   |
| 4. Archdiocese of Cardiff                     | 330                | 1400                   | -----  |
| 5. Diocese of Clifton                         | 370                | 1560                   | Fr. Paul Vettikattu CST  |
| 6. Diocese of East Anglia                     | 580                | 2350                   | Fr. Philip John Panthamakal &<br>Fr. Terrin Mullakkara         |
| 7. Diocese of Hallam                          | 120                | 460                    | -----  |
| 8. Diocese of Hexham and New Castle           | 205                | 820                    | Fr. Saji Thottathil  |
| 9. Diocese of Lancaster                       | 240                | 960                    | Fr. Mathew J Choorapoikayil<br>Fr. Thomas Kalapurackal         |
| 10. Diocese of Leeds                          | 175                | 700                    | Fr. Joseph Ponneth   |
| 11. Archdiocese of Liverpool                  | 345                | 1380                   | Fr. Thomas Parayadyil  |
| 12. Diocese of Menevia                        | 120                | 470                    | -----  |
| 13. Diocese of Middlesbrough                  | 205                | 820                    | Fr. Antony James Chundelikkatt                                 |
| 14. Diocese of Northampton                    | 510                | 2130                   | -----  |
| 15. Diocese of Nottingham                     | 550                | 2270                   | Fr. Biju Joseph Kunnackatt                                     |
| 16. Diocese of Plymouth                       | 80                 | 340                    | -----  |
| 17. Diocese of Portsmouth                     | 380                | 1420                   | Fr. Tomy Chirackalmanavalan                                    |
| 18. Diocese of Shrewsbury                     | 410                | 1800                   | Fr. Lonappan Arangassery & Fr.<br>Sajimon Malayilputhenpurayil |
| 19. Diocese of Salford                        | 425                | 1850                   | Fr. Thomas Thaikkootathil MST                                  |
| 20. Archdiocese of Southwark                  | 570                | 2530                   | Fr. Biju Kottanalloor CST                                      |
| 21. Archdiocese of Westminster                | 470                | 2090                   | Fr. Thomas Parayadyil MST<br>Fr. Paul Nellikulam               |
| 22. Diocese of Wrexham                        | 40                 | 160                    | -----  |
| 23. Diocese of Aberdeen                       | 190                | 790                    | Fr. Joseph Pinakkattu  |
| 24. Diocese of Dundee                         | 40                 | 140                    | Fr. Rofi Narithookkil CST                                      |
| 25. Archdiocese of St. Andrew's and Edinburgh | 180                | 740                    | Fr. Sebastian Thuruthippillil                                  |
| 26. Archdiocese of Glasgow                    | 100                | 600                    | Fr. George Thelliankal CMF                                     |
| 27. Diocese of Motherwell                     | 205                | 830                    | Fr. Joseph Vembadamthara VC                                    |
| Others  | 250                | 1500                   |  |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                                  | <b>8980</b>        | <b>38,280</b>          |  |





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### 6.1.2. IRELAND

Under the leadership of Msgr. Antony Perumayan, the National Coordinator for Ireland, the pastoral care activities are getting better organized. Fr. Paul Morely will be appointed as assistant priest-in-charge to Msgr. Antony Perumayan in the pastoral coordination of Syro-Malabar faithful in Ireland. The recorded number of Syro-Malabar Catholics in Ireland is 7768 and they are organized in 38 Holy Qurbana Centres in about 16 Archdioceses/Dioceses in Ireland. We have 5 Syro-Malabar priests in 7 dioceses presented by the Major Archbishop and appointed by the local Ordinaries. There are still many other small groups in Ireland yet to be identified and organized. The Bye-Laws for the Syro-Malabar Church in Ireland and *Palliyogam* Rules are in the process of formulation. During the visit to Ireland, Bp. Mar Sebastian Vadakel met a few bishops of Ireland and asked for erecting one or two personal parishes for our community in each Diocese, and if possible, allotting churches also to us. Some of the bishops are open to the idea of providing personal parishes for Syro-Malabar faithful in their Archdiocese/Diocese.

- 1) **Archdiocese of Dublin:** Fr. Jose Bharanikulangara and Fr. Antony Cheeramvelil MST are the priests-in-charge of the Syro-Malabar faithful in Dublin. Fr. Antony Cheeramvelil substituted Fr. Manoj Ponkattil. There are 10 Holy Qurbana centres.
- 2) **Dioceses of Armagh, Clougher, Derry:** Fr. Joseph Karukayil is the priest-in-charge of the Syro-Malabar faithful, with 3 Holy Qurbana centres in the Dioceses of Armagh, Clougher and Derry.
- 3) **Diocese of Down and Connor:** There are 6 Holy Qurbana centres. Msgr. Antony Perumayan is the priest-in-charge. Fr. Paul Morely assists him to provide pastoral care for our faithful.
- 4) **Diocese of Cork & Ross:** Fr. Francis George Neelankavil is the priest-in-charge of the Syro-Malabar faithful in Cork & Ross. There are 7 Holy Qurbana Centres.

It is estimated that the total number of Syro-Malabar faithful in United Kingdom (38,280) and Ireland (7,768) is 46,048. Naturally a complete statistics is not available. Further, there are many other Syro-Malabar faithful, both in United Kingdom and Ireland, who, though like to participate in liturgy and other celebrations of their Mother Church, remain nominal faithful with minimum or no participation in Liturgical and ecclesial life, which again is a matter of serious concern for us, necessitating an Eparchy/Exarchate for the Syro-Malabar faithful in United Kingdom and Ireland.





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#### Ireland: Syro-Malabar Migrants: Statistical Data

| ARCHDIOCESE/DIOCESE                  | FAMILIES    | APPROXIMATE POPULATION | OFFICIALLY APPOINTED PRIESTS                         |
|--------------------------------------|-------------|------------------------|--|
| 1. Archdiocese of Armagh             | 44          | 125                    | Fr. Joseph Karukayil                                 |
| 2. Diocese of Clogher                | 9           | 45                     | Fr. Joseph Karukayil                                 |
| 3. Diocese of Cloyne                 | 29          | 121                    | Fr. Francis George Neelankavil                       |
| 4. Diocese of Cork and Ross          | 95          | 472                    | Fr. Francis George Neelankavil                       |
| 5. Diocese of Derry                  | 40          | 161                    | Fr. Joseph Karukayil                                 |
| 6. Diocese of Down and Cornor        | 339         | 1448                   | Fr. Antony Perumayan                                 |
| 7. Archdiocese of Dublin             | 889         | 3849                   | Fr. Jose Bharanikulangara<br>Fr. Antony Cheeramvelil |
| 8. Diocese of Elphin                 | 15          | 65                     | Fr. Jose Bharanikulangara<br>Fr. Antony Cheeramvelil |
| 9. Diocese of Ferns                  | 12          | 75                     | Fr. Francis George Neelankavil                       |
| 10. Diocese of Galway & Kilmachduagh | 50          | 202                    | Fr. Francis George Neelankavil                       |
| 11. Diocese of Kildare & Leighlin    | 18          | 78                     | Fr. Jose Bharanikulangara<br>Fr. Antony Cheeramvelil |
| 12. Diocese of Kilmore               | 24          | 105                    | Fr. Jose Bharanikulangara<br>Fr. Antony Cheeramvelil |
| 13. Diocese of Limerick              | 63          | 273                    | Fr. Francis George Neelankavil                       |
| 14. Diocese of Ossory                | 30          | 130                    | Fr. Jose Bharanikulangara<br>Fr. Antony Cheeramvelil |
| 15. Diocese of Raphoe, Letterkenny   | 20          | 82                     | Fr. Joseph Karukayil                                 |
| 16. Diocese of Waterford and Lismore | 55          | 238                    | Fr. Jose Bharanikulangara<br>Fr. Antony Cheeramvelil |
| Others:                              | 69          | 299                    | Fr. Jose Bharanikulangara<br>Fr. Antony Cheeramvelil |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                         | <b>1801</b> | <b>7768</b>            |  |





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#### 6.2. EUROPEAN COUNTRIES (Italy and neighboring Countries)

The Commission, with the consent of the Major Archbishop, has entrusted the pastoral care of the Syro-Malabar migrants in European Countries such as Italy, Germany, Austria, Switzerland, and France to the guidance of Bishop Mar Mathew Arackal.

**Italy:** Msgr. Stephen Chirappanath leads the Syro-Malabar migrant communities in Italy to better coordination. We could identify a few more centres of Syro-Malabar migration in Italy. We could also send a priest, Fr. Mathew Pinakkatt from the Eparchy of Pala, to provide pastoral care to the Syro-Malabar faithful in the diocese of Savona. There are approximately 11,125 Syro-Malabar faithful in Italy in 20 Holy Qurbana Centres.

**France:** Rev. Fr. Sebastian Naduthadam organizes Syro-Malabar Communities in France. Other Countries like Austria, Germany, Switzerland, Singapore and Gulf Countries are not having national coordinators presented by the Major Archbishop and appointed by the local Ordinary or National Bishops' Conference. There are about 10,700 Syro-Malabar faithful in these countries, spread out in 17 Holy Qurbana centres. Thus there are altogether 21,825 Syro-Malabar faithful in the European Countries (Italy and neighboring Countries).

Translations of Syro-Malabar liturgical Texts to German, Italian and French languages are on the process, under the guidance of the Commission for Liturgy.

#### 6.3. GULF COUNTRIES

##### 6.3.2. Vicariate of Southern Arabia

Most Rev. Paul Hinder, the Vicar Apostolic of the Southern Arabia had accepted the invitation of the Major Archbishop to Mount St. Thomas on the occasion of St. Thomas Day Celebrations on 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> July, 2015. During his visit, the Vicar Apostolic, as per the request of the Major Archbishop, had a meeting with the Syro-Malabar bishops to discuss and dialogue on the pastoral issues and solutions to the various pastoral needs of the Syro-Malabar faithful in the Vicariate of Southern Arabia. There were 15 bishops present for the meeting. The report of the meeting was sent to all the Syro-Malabar bishops. The Commission looks forward to better provisions of pastoral care in Gulf Countries.

##### 6.3.3. Vicariate of Northern Arabia

Eucharistic Celebrations, Catechism, etc. are regular in some of the Gulf Countries of Northern Arabia, with the strong support of SMCA. The most alarming situation is in Saudi Arabia. His Excellency Bishop Camillo Ballin, the Vicar Apostolic of Northern Arabia, does not permit the entry of any Syro-Malabar priest, presented by the Major Archbishop, for the pastoral care of the Syro-Malabar faithful in Saudi Arabia.



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#### **6.4. SINGAPORE**

In spite of the repeated requests and correspondence, the Archdiocese of Singapore is not yet willing to accept the priests and coordination from the Syro-Malabar Church. However, there is a narrow opening to begin the Syro-Malabar Catechism for our faithful in Singapore. The project may be realized within a few months.

#### **6.5. NIGERIA**

There are about 180 Syro-Malabar families in Nigeria and the Syro-Malabar faithful there have requested for a Syro-Malabar priest for their pastoral care. We have made initial correspondence with the local Ordinary and are in the process of preparing a priest for the Syro-Malabar faithful in the Archdiocese of Lagos, Nigeria.

#### **7. MAJOR CONCERNS AND PROBLEMS FACED BY MIGRANT COMMISSION**

Most of the Syro-Malabar migrant communities are getting organized better with support of the local Ordinaries, priest and Lay leaders. Most of the priests sent for pastoral care of the migrants are rendering excellent service in their ministries. However, the pastoral ministry among the migrants is very demanding and difficult. There are many issues and problems to be tackled. Some such major concerns of the migrant centers are the following:

1. Lack of sufficient numbers of Syro-Malabar priests appointed for the pastoral care of the Syro-Malabar migrants. There are many factors such as availability of priests, cumbersome visa process and unwillingness on the part of the local Ordinaries to appoint required number of priests.
2. Tension between the migrant lay leaders and the local Ordinaries: Many of the pastors and local Ordinaries are not ready to accept the role of the Syro-Malabar Lay leaders or associations in the life and activity of the Church.
3. Lack of Space or Permanent Structures for regularly celebrating the Holy Qurbana and conducting faith formation programs. It is important that in all the migrant centers with a sizable number of families the Syro-Malabar Church has her own place of worship and space for faith formation programs.
4. The local Ordinaries in some of the countries like Singapore and Arabian Gulf countries resist the appointment of any Syro-Malabar priest for the pastoral care of the migrants, in spite of repeated requests.
5. The priests who have been appointed by the Latin Local Ordinaries without any reference to the Major Archbishop do not show proper ecclesial vision in their pastoral care and at times offend the migrant communities.





## **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 Moolakkattu, OSB** (*Member*)  
**Bishop Mathew Arackal** (*Member*)

6. Retreat centers and retreat preachers of Syro-Malabar Origin function independently under Latin Ordinaries in some area without any reference to the Syro-Malabar pastors.
7. Visiting priests or even bishops without a religious visa and formal consent of the local Ordinaries concerned preside over the public liturgical celebrations and address meetings. This often irritates the local Ordinaries and can cause problems for the visitors themselves.
8. Refusal on the part of the local Ordinaries to approve the Syro-Malabar Lay Associations. The Latin Ordinaries cannot accept the concept of Lay Associations with relative autonomy being approved and working in the Church. It creates conflicts with the hierarchy in many places.

#### **8. PLAN FOR THE YEAR: 2015-2016**

##### **8.1. Follow-up of the National Mission Consultation at Ujjain at four provinces in Kerala:**

In the light of the National Mission Consultation at Ujjain on 23 & 24 February 2015, it was found out that the mission awareness and mission activities can be accelerated in Syro-Malabar Church only when such consultations are done also in Kerala. Therefore it was proposed that the follow up programs of the National Mission Consultation at Ujjain should be done in Kerala, after a consultation of it in the forthcoming Synod in August, 2015. The Commission will do it in collaboration with ASSM (and with the Apostolic Visitor Bp. Mar Raphael Thattil).

It was also observed that there should be better and frequent contacts among the Mission Dioceses outside Kerala for effectiveness of their ministry. The Commission plans to create such opportunities for their coming together and sharing.

- 8.2. Send more Syro-Malabar priests to all migrant communities abroad. We are in search of priests for UK, Ireland, and Nigeria, i.e., for the dioceses of Cardiff, Northampton, Nottingham, Salford, Arundel and Brighton, Westminster, Motherwell, Hallam, etc. in UK and Dublin in Ireland, and Lagos in Nigeria.
- 8.3. Try to get at least one parish Church in each diocese in migrant communities for the exclusive use of Syro-Malabar faithful.
- 8.4. Intends to facilitate the opening of a central office in all countries, with a central administrative team consisting of priests, sisters and lay leaders.
- 8.5. Work for the affiliation of all lay Syro-Malabar associations with Catholic Congress following the proper procedure.
- 8.6. More efforts of coordination through National Coordinator and Central Administration Committee in all Countries.



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Bishop Mathew Arackal (Member)

### Pastoral Care of TheMigrants Income & Expenditure From 1 April 2014 to 31 March 2015

#### Receipts

Donations from Migrant Communities : 3,05,031.00  
Bank Interest : 68,136.00

Total : 3,73,167.00

#### Expenditure

Bank charge : 6.00  
Machinery & Equipments : 31,925.00  
Meeting Exp. (outside Kerala) : 1,07,400.00  
Office Exp. : 10,820.00  
Postage : 5,076.00  
Printing charge : 9,115.00  
Salary & Allowances : 83,000.00  
Telephone charges : 10,066.00  
T.A. : 18,971.00  
Vehicle Insurance : 696.00  
Vehicle repair : 280.00

Total : 2,77,355.00

#### Total Income

Previous Balance : 17,12,687.00  
Income of 2014 – 2015 : 3,73,167.00

: 20,85,854.00

#### Balance:

20,85,854.00 –  
2,77,355.00  
18,08,499.00

Fixed Deposit : 7,50,000.00  
Federal Bank : 8,28,699.00  
SB A/C : 2,29,800.00

Total Balance : 18,08,499.00

Fr. Mathew Pulimoottil  
Finance Officer





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### CONCLUSION

During the last year, the Commission has been trying to systematize and enhance the pastoral care activities in Syro-Malabar migrant centers abroad with generous support of the local Ordinaries as well as with the dedicated service of many priests and laity in migrant centers. The Commission is very grateful to His Beatitude Mar George Cardinal Alencherry, the Major Archbishop of our Church and all other Syro-Malabar bishops, local Ordinaries of migrant centers, Superiors of Syro-Malabar Institutes of Consecrated and Apostolic Life, national coordinators, priests/chaplains and Lay leaders for their unfailing support to the Commission.

Bishop Sebastian Vadakel MST  
**Chairman**

Abp. Mar Mathew Moolakkatt OSB  
Bp. Mar Mathew Arackal  
(**Episcopal Members**)

Fr. Shaji Abraham Kochupurayil MCBS  
**Secretary**

Sr. Francelet, SD  
**Office-Assistant**

