



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)

REPORT OF THE MISSION CONSULTATION AT ST. THOMAS APOSTOLIC SEMINARY, VADAVATHOOR ON 16 & 17 MAY, 2016

The Syro-Malabar Commission for Evangelization and Pastoral Care of the Migrants in collaboration with ASSM, under the leadership and in the presence of the Major Archbishop, organized a Consultation on *Ad Gentes* Mission of the Syro-Malabar Church on 16 & 17 May, 2016 at St. Thomas Apostolic Seminary, Vadavathoor, Kottayam. There were 155 participants, of whom 120 were from the Southern Region of the *Proper Territory* of the Syro-Malabar Church, consisting of Archbishops, Bishops and other representatives from the Archeparchies of Changanassery and Kottayam, and the eparchies of Pala, Kanjirapally and Thuckalay, and 35 were from the Mission Regions, namely, missionary delegates/representatives from Mission Eparchies, Eparchies for Migrants, Mission Provinces, Major Seminaries, Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life, and Lay Missionary Associations and Movements. His Beatitude Mar George Cardinal Alencherry, the Major Archbishop of the SM Church, Abp. Mar Joseph Perumthottam, Abp. Mar Mathew Moolakkatt, Bp. Mar Joseph Kallarangattu, Bp. Mar Mathew Arackal, Bp. Mar Sebastian Vadakel, Bp. Mar Raphael Thattil, Bp. Mar Jose Pulickal and Bp. Mar Gratian Mundadan participated in the Consultation. Besides them, there were also many Proto-Syncelli, Syncelli, Major Superiors and/or their Councilors, and Directors of various Institutes and Lay Organizations as participants of the Consultation. V. Rev. Frs. James Palackal, Michael Vettickattu, Varghese Kochuparambil, Joseph Maleparampil, and Thomas Koippuram were the Eparchial coordinators from Changanassery, Kottayam, Kanjirapally, Pala and Thuckalay respectively. The coordinators had been instructed in a previous meeting held on 29 March, 2016 to prepare the participants from their own eparchies for the Consultation. Accordingly most of the eparchies held meetings beforehand and prepared the participants well for the Mission Consultation.

Objectives: (1) Mission animation; (2) Encouraging the evangelizing efforts of our missionaries; and (3) Internal assessment of 'Mission *Ad Gentes*' of the Syro-Malabar Church and planning for the future.

Context: Fifty years after the promulgation of the Vatican II document - *Ad Gentes*, eleven years after the promulgation of the Mission Policy of the Syro-Malabar Church, three years after the celebration of the Mission Year – 2012, and the proposal of the Mission Consultation held on 23 & 24 February, 2015 at Kripa Training Centre, Ujjain to have Mission Consultations in Kerala.

Title – Syro-Malabar Church 50 Years after *Ad Gentes* of Vat II: A Consultation on *Ad Gentes* Mission Today.

The Consultation had four sessions: Inaugural Session, Input Session, Sharing Session and Concluding Session.



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INAUGURAL SESSION

The participants arrived at St. Thomas Apostolic Seminary, Vadavathoor at 5 pm on 16 May, 2016. (It was the day of Kerala Legislative Assembly Election). After the registration and tea, the inaugural session started at 6 pm. The prayer was led by the delegates from the Eparchy of Pala. His Grace Mar Joseph Perumthottam welcomed the gathering. His Grace spoke also of the great relevance of the Consultation in the present Indian and global contexts of the Mission of the Church. The welcome address was followed by an exposition of the dynamics of the Consultation by His Excellency Mar Sebastian Vadakel, chairman of the Commission for Evangelization and Pastoral Care of the Migrants: He explained the context of the organization of the Consultation as well as the nature and relevance of its main sessions, such as the orientation talk of the Major Archbishop, the inputs of the resource persons and the sharings of the Missionaries, followed by the interaction and planning in the Concluding session.

THE INAUGURATION AND THE ORIENTATION TALK OF THE MAJOR ARCHBISHOP: The Major Archbishop lighted the lamp together with other bishops and missionary representatives, and gave the orientation talk. The Major Archbishop spoke of the need of the time to make the whole Church missionary. Mission is the work of God carried out by the Church. The call of the Church is to continue to the mission of Christ. Mission is the Mother of the Church. 'I am a mission than I have a mission'. We are missions towards all people of a place. Church is seen by the Holy Father as the family of families. The Church supports different charisms and missionary efforts of its members, even when they are not always directly ecclesial and supportive. All charisms are important in the Church. Though certain missionary activities are done individually, and some others as community/congregations, all the missionary activities should be carried out as one Church. The talents and charisms of the apostles were different. The Church greatly acknowledges the commendable service done by her children to the different individual Churches in India, to society and the world at large. The Major Archbishop mentioned the contributions done by CMI congregation in the missionary efforts of the Syro-Malabar Church, with special mention of their contribution to Chanda diocese, education and Deepika. We need to extend our media mission. The whole Church should support the missionary movements from all corners. The Mission Consultation is organized with the intention of and planning for revitalizing the missionary call of the Church in all respects.

The inaugural session got over with the Orientation Talk of the Major Archbishop. Then there was the First Input Session.



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INPUT SESSIONS (papers are attached)

The First Input Session was given by Rev. Dr. Davis Varayilan CMI, rector of Samanvaya, Bhopal at 6.45 pm on “Challenges of *Ad Gentes* Mission in India: From the Perspective of Vatican II & Post-Vatican II Documents”. The moderator was His Grace Mar Mathew Moolakkatt. The session was for 45 minutes (class for 30 minutes and interaction for 15 minutes).

The Second Input Session was at 9–9.30 am on 17 May by Rev. Dr. Devamitra, from the Eparchy of Sagar. He spoke on the theme: “50 Years of Syro-Malabar *Ad Gentes* Mission: Syro-Malabar Mission Eparchies & Mission Regions: Appreciation and Introspection.” After the presentation, the participants were given 15 minutes for questions and clarifications. His Excellency Mar Raphael Thattil moderated the session.

The Third Input Session was given from 9.45 am to 10.15 am on 17 May, by Mr. George Kallivayalil, Associate Editor & Chief of Bureau at Deepika Daily, New Delhi. He spoke on the theme “Openness of the Church to the Secular Reality: The Prospects and Challenges to Evangelization”. The moderator of the third input session also was His Excellency Mar Raphael Thattil. The third session was followed by 15 minutes interaction for the participants.

Encounter with Missionaries and Missions: At 9.15 pm on 16 May, there was a mission documentation and exhibition prepared by IMPACT, MST fathers (Fr. Daey and Fr. Jomon) to explain the various ministries, the Syro-Malabar Church is involved in. There was also an informal session at 9.30 pm, with the Missionaries from Mission eparchies, mission regions and Institutes of Consecrated and Apostolic Life to introduce themselves and their ministries. The mission documentation, encounter with the missionaries, the sharings about their missions really enkindled the missionary spirit of the participants.

SHARING SESSIONS

Theme of the Sharing Session was: “*Ad Gentes* Mission of the Syro-Malabar Church yesterday, today and tomorrow: Attitudes, Approaches and Prospects”. The representatives were requested to share in particular on, ‘how their ministry was/is effective in the field of evangelization?’, ‘how it becomes evangelization?’, and ‘the challenges they face in their field of *ad gentes* mission’, and ‘their prospects of the mission tomorrow’, etc. The sharing started at 11 am on 17 May. Each representative was given 4-5 minutes to speak on their evangelizing mission. There were four groups of sharing of missionaries: (1) Representatives from Mission Eparchies and Mission Regions; (2) Representatives from Various Ministries/Associations of Evangelization; (3) Representatives from Institutes of Consecrated Life and (4) Representatives from Eparchies within the Proper Territory. The following persons shared on their evangelizing mission:



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(1) Representatives from Mission Eparchies and Mission Regions

1. Fr. Sijo Ponthokkan – Adilabad
2. Fr. Roby – Chanda
3. Fr. Siby Kochalunkal CST – Faridabad, Punjab-Rajasthan
4. Fr. Jose Panthalanickal CMI – Jagdalpur
5. Fr. Jose Cheriampanatt MST – Sangli Region, Kalyan Diocese
6. Fr. Mathew Kalathoor CMI – Rajkot
7. Fr. Siljo Kidangan – Sagar
8. Fr. Antony Panchinkal – Satna
9. Fr. George Chakkungal – Ujjain
10. Fr. Mathew Kizhakkearanjaniyil – Goa Region
11. Fr. Francis Eluvathingal – Santhom Mission, India
12. Fr. Joby Thalayinakuzhy - Itawah
13. Mr. Adv. PT Chacko – Ahmedabad

(2) Representatives from Syro-Malabar Ministries and Associations of Evangelization

14. Fr. Joby Poochukandathil – State Director, CML
15. Fr. Jose Anchanickal – National Chairman, Charismatic Movement
16. Fr. Sebastian Kaippanplackal – Secretary, Syro-Malabar Youth Commission
17. Mr. Jose Olickal – Fiat Mission
18. Mrs. Ancy Mathew – Matruvedi, Changanassery
19. Fr. Mathew Thundathil MCBS – FBA, Ministry for the Beggars
20. Sr. Maris Stella CHF – Home Mission
21. Fr. Anto Puthuva MCBS – Prison Ministry
22. Fr. Joseph Pulavelil MST – Secretary, ASSM
23. Fr. Joby Maprakavil MST – Internet Mission
24. Fr. Felix CMI – Mentally Challenged, TVM
25. Sr. Suma Jose SD – NGO, Legal Aid, Prison Ministry
26. Fr. Kurian Kochottonnil MST – Village Ministry, Delhi
27. Fr. Thomas Changanariparambil MST – Ministry for the Mentally Challenged
28. Fr. Paulachan Kochappally CMI – Ministry of Celebration
29. Mr. Stephan George EX-MLA – AKCC
30. Fr. Joy Ayiniyadan – Rector, Major Seminary, Vadavathoor

(3) Representatives from Institutes of Consecrated Life

31. Fr. Dominic Mundatt MCBS – Education
32. Fr. Mathew Cheeramkuzhy CMI – Ministry for those at the peripheries



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- 33. Sr. Noble FCC – Eunuchs and Street Ministry
- 34. Fr. Binoy Puthiyadath VC – Preaching Ministry

(4) Representatives from Eparchies within the Proper Territory

- 35. Fr. James Palackal – Changanassery
- 36. Fr. Mathew Manakkatt – Kottayam
- 37. Fr. Joseph Maleparampil – Pala
- 38. Fr. Varghese Kochuparambil – Kanjirapally
- 39. Fr. Thomas Koippuram – Thuckalay

At the end of the sharing session, Bp. Mar Gratian Mundadan shared his vision of the Mission of the Church today. He strongly urged the leaders in the Church to be more missionary in the life-witness, programs and planning in their own eparchies to revitalize the mission *ad gentes* of the Syro-Malabar Church.

Reviews and Suggestions/Observations from the Inputs, Sharings and Discussions

The Consultation reviewed the mission *ad gentes* call of the Church from its major missionary teachings from Vatican II till today, introspected the formal mission *ad gentes* initiatives of the Syro-Malabar Church of the past fifty years, and creatively and critically appraised the emerging religio-theological and socio-political and cultural scenarios and trends both within and outside the Church, and made the following observations and proposals in view of revitalizing the mission *ad gentes* of the Syro-Malabar Church for the future.

I. Review of 50 years of the Mission *Ad Gentes* Initiatives of the Syro-Malabar Church

1. The mission we carry out on earth is the continuation of the mission of Trinity in Christ for the salvation of the whole of humanity. The Church, the abiding presence of Christ on earth continues this Mission through word and deed.
2. The SMC both within and outside the proper territory of the Church has really made a difference through its presence and activities in the missionary enterprise of the Universal Church and in the mission of the Indian Church in particular.
3. The SMC is always earnest to revive missionary spirit towards home mission and universal mission. It is committed to rejuvenate its home mission so that it may continue to respond to the missionary command of the Lord, realizing that the limits of the mission are simply the ends of the earth. It also tries to live faithfully the two millennia old patrimony of faith, remain exemplary witnesses of the Gospel and keep on being a resource for *ad gentes* missionary undertakings.



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4. Many of the SM missionary involvements and initiatives had been made under the leadership and collaboration of various Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life of both men and women. They gathered personnel and material resources, established numerous mission stations/centers, ran institutions and programmes in view of evangelization of the territories entrusted to their care.
5. Along with the pastoral care of migrants, the eparchies of Kalyan and Faridabad as well as all the SM mission eparchies outside the *territorium proprium* of the SM Church in India are primarily focused on mission *ad gentes* and they make use of direct and indirect ways of preaching the Gospel involving in various apostolates.
6. We are happy to observe that all our mission Eparchies have a good number of Eparchial Clergy to take care of their mission stations.
7. The Lay Missionary Movements like CML, CLC, Jesus Youth, Fiat mission and similar organizations continue to add momentum to the SM missionary enterprises.

II. Challenges to SM *Ad Gentes* initiatives today

1. Even though SMC has significantly established Christian presence in various parts of mission territories entrusted to her through various Christian institutions and apostolates, SM mission Eparchies do not have many SM communities of believers from the missions. This seems to be a major weakness of our missions.
2. Disturbances from Communal forces and the existing of anti-conversion bill in some of the States is a discouraging factor for direct evangelization and missionary activities as well as in adding new members to the community. Some theological thoughts discouraged the conversion through baptism, causing also the non-building up of the indigenous SM Christian communities.
3. The continued limited jurisdiction of the SMC is another disappointing obstacle in catering the pastoral needs of the migrants and for the evangelization activities outside the given territories.
4. Restricting and discouraging of priestly and religious vocations from the Mother Church to the mission has weakened the missionary activities.
5. Failure to understand the language and the cultural genius of the places of mission and the disinterest to familiarize with these realities have affected the quality of our missionary endeavors. 'A missionary is sent to everyone in a place' has to be deepened further.
6. At present the mission provinces of the SM religious congregations have more houses in the Latin Dioceses. This remains a great lose in the SM mission Eparchies. At times the attitude of



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the SM eparchies being not sensitive to the needs of the mission provinces seems to be one of the main reasons for this situation.

7. Decrease in external financial support has also negatively affected the acceleration of our growth, especially in starting of new centres and in the running of the existing centers especially the boarding.
8. The SM missions are compelled to focus on income generating ministries for sustenance which has resulted in the assimilation of both human and material resources for the establishment of institutions.
9. The tendencies to reduce our social action programmes to the level of NGOs have distorted our evangelization focus and the ecclesial dimension of mission. The ecclesial and spiritual dimension of the mission is to be stressed more and more in the Syro-Malabar Church.

III. Proposals for Rejuvenating the SM Mission *Ad Gentes*

1. Understand the specificity of mission *ad gentes* among other missiological variants like evangelization, pastoral work, new evangelization, etc. and enhance the permanent urgency of mission *ad gentes*, as *Redemptoris Missio* puts (RM 14).
2. There should be mission *ad gentes extra* and mission *ad gentes intra* in the Syro-Malabar Church.
3. SM mission eparchies and mission provinces of religious should focus their attention on the majority of non-Christians in all their activities both religious and secular. Ministry of Education and works of mercy appear to be very relevant and effective means of evangelization among non-Christians.
4. Spreading of the Word of God directly and indirectly must be our priority. Every activity should be oriented towards this primary purpose.
5. Imbibing the genius of the Indian Spirituality and culture, the SM missionaries should strive for an experiential communication of the gospel message, in addition to the works of mercy, social action, education and interreligious dialogue.
6. Continuous renewal programmes for the missionaries to imbibe the spirit of new evangelization for new ardour and methods of doing mission so that they do not lose focus of evangelization while involving in various apostolic activities of secular nature.
7. Strive for an inclusive approach to mission by exploring more frontier missions through legal aids, commitment to social justice, gender equality, human rights, reviving our commitment to



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the marginalized and the sensitivity to the poor. Further possibilities of ministry for widows, eunuchs, women empowerment, low wage/exploited workers, etc. are to be explored.

8. Develop an attitude of dialogue in all areas of undertakings, with dialogue among cultures, religions, world views, etc... and explore contemplative and experiential elements of mission through Ashram life, monastic life and popular Christian movements. There should be a dialogue within the Church and outside the Church. We need to present other religions positively to promote our evangelizing efforts. Our mission works shall not hinder the common policies of the nation.
9. Explore the possibilities of media apostolate by sharing resources and products among various missions/eparchies and by making use of the 'new media' through social networking sites for the circulation of insightful items of evangelization.
10. Cultivate healthy working relations among the Mission Eparchies and the Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life in their respective territories. The eparchies may support and encourage the Institutes within their territories to live their prophetic vocation and charism meaningfully and to become spiritual power houses of the eparchies. Missionary life in the history of the Church is the fruit of monasticism and mysticism. More collaboration and mutual support between Eparchies and Institutes of Consecrated Life will make the Mission more effective.
11. Avoid any kind of commercialism/careerism that can creep into our ministries. The simple, humble and down to earth life style of Bl. Mother Teresa of Kolkata can touch the lives of many.
12. In all our undertakings, importance shall be given to the sanctity of life and the witness of the love and compassion of our Lord, so that we may always walk the talk as ambassadors of Christ. "The initial of evangelization" is Christian presence and life witness.

IV. Some Concrete Recommendations and Suggestions to the Mother Church in Kerala

1. **Coordination of Missionary Endeavors:** Co-ordinate and channelize various pious organizations, associations, movements and pieties of missionary nature at Major archiepiscopal and eparchial levels, so that different charisms and gifts shall be made available for the *ad gentes* mission.
2. **Open Mission Possibility for All:** There should be possibilities for missionary work open to everybody in the Church.
3. **Starting of Mission Training Centres and Mission Homes in Eparchies:** Every eparchy shall have at least one training center for the missionary formation of the laity in the Mother Church so that they can enter into secular fields with a better missionary spirit. There should be mission



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homes in Kerala for all mission Eparchies and mission provinces to have initiation and orientation of the new candidates to priesthood and religious life in Kerala itself for a certain period of time before they are sent to actual mission eparchies and mission provinces. The mission house may also support and promote missions and missionaries in other possible ways, like conducting formation programs for both Malayali and non-Malayali missionaries of our Church, etc. A change of attitude towards mission must take place among the bishops and priests in Kerala for materializing such mission oriented initiatives and projects in all eparchies of the Mother Church.

4. **Sponsor Mission Stations and Mission Endeavors:** Every eparchy and parish must gladly sponsor mission eparchies and mission centres. They shall welcome ASSM to their communities to conduct mission animation and fund raising programs, encouraging all to sponsor a seminarian/sister under formation as well as the mission projects.
5. **Promote the Mission-Mother Church Relations** by improving the mutual involvements/participation in the events of the mission eparchy and the sponsoring eparchy. Encourage at least a few newly ordained priests and the interested diocesan priests in Kerala to work for one or more years in the mission, after essential orientation and vice versa. Laity also can be prepared likewise to work in missions. Occasional mission visits, especially that of youth, must be encouraged and organized. The missionary Lay associations/movements like SMYM, CML, Jesus Youth, Catholic Congress, Mathruvedi, etc., may be instructed/permitted to take initiatives in these regards. The eparchy can also make available certain laity, for eg., widows, pensioners, etc., to serve in mission territories.
6. **Vocations** to Latin Church and Latin Congregations without a region or province in SMC must be considered with proper discernment and discretion. Formation and ordination of men to the **permanent diaconate** with proper missionary training may solve some of the pastoral needs. Send priest-candidates to Mission Seminaries for formation. Seminarians should be trained to accept the missionary nature and reality of the Church.
7. **Popularize Missionary Publications, Media, Art and Architecture:** Mission animation books and booklets like *Kadukumani*, *Kunju Missionary*, etc...must be given proper popularity and parish priests must encourage every family to have at least one of them at home. It is also important to have a page left in all Eparchial bulletins, popular weeklies and magazines (*Satyadeepam*, *Deepanalam*, *Katholica Sabha*, *Sathya Darshana Mala*, etc...) with missionary sharing. Evangelization through Art and Architecture is a great mission possibility today. Make use of the Media to spread the mission places and activities as well as to make known the saints of our Church. Media programs of the Church must give focus and attention to the missionary works of mercy.



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8. **Focus on Frontier Missions:** Shelter home for women, drug addicts and the down trodden are important areas of mission in Kerala. Missionaries in Kerala may be inspired by Bl. Kunjachan's (Ramapuram) style of mission works. Church should be more open and supportive to facilitate sacraments and other necessity of human life like cemetery, school, etc. for the mentally challenged and those at the peripheries. Church should take special attention to get the constitutional provisions from the Government in these regards. Special attention, from the point of view of evangelization and mission, should be given to the cases of mixed marriages.
9. **Have a Missionary Life-Style:** Awareness must be given effectively to make "Celebrating Kerala SMC to a missionary Mother Church". Missionary Lay movements like CML, Charismatic movements, etc. could be made use in this regard. On the other hand, the Mother Church should adopt simplicity in celebrations, constructions and expressions to have a mission spirit in life-style.
10. The role of the **parish priests** is vital with regard to the awakening of mission spirit among the faithful in the Mother Church. The priests have to take initiative to reactivate the mission oriented organizations and their programs. They should be open to start new areas of better mission works.
11. There should be a **mission support group** active in every parish. This group can be a link between the mission region and the parish community in Kerala. It can animate mission vocations and occasional mission visits. The families should be encouraged, motivated and guided to support the missions and the migrant centres. Every parish shall have a box kept for mission support in the Church.
12. There can be a **prayer group of parents of priests and consecrated people** in every parish. This group can support missions spiritually and materially. This prayer group can gradually be developed to a community where the parents of priests and consecrated people shall live together, especially during their old age. This is especially relevant as the only son becoming a priest is very common now-a-days.
13. **Charismatic retreats** in Kerala and in mission areas can motivate the clergy and the laity with better and deeper mission zeal within the Mother Church and in mission regions.
14. Arrange mission *sangams* in the parishes, with the support and participation of the younger generation and with **mission sharing** by the experienced missionaries.
15. **Mission towards the weaker sections** in a parish/place can be attended by trained personnel or a model couple/family, mission oriented organizations, etc. Home Mission has a great role to play, like teaching, forming, renewing and sanctifying the families through accompaniment, counseling, etc., according to the mind of the Church.



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CONCLUDING SESSION

At the end of the input sessions and sharing sessions, there was the Concluding session at 3.45 pm with general interaction and planning, followed by the message of the Major Archbishop. Fr. Justin Vettukallel MST presented a report, putting together the views, suggestions and observations of the missionaries, resource persons and other participants, for the group interaction and planning as well as for the formulation of the Statements of the Consultation. Bp. Mar Sebastian Vadakel moderated the session and encouraged the participants to share their observations/insights on the Consultation. At 4.15 pm, the Major Archbishop gave concluding message. The Major Archbishop thanked the participants and the organizers for the meaningful and well organized Consultation. He exhorted everyone to feel one with the missionaries. We need to live with people. The people should welcome us through our life-witness. Pope Francis instructs the religious sisters to go out to the people. Our time and energy is not mainly meant for solving the problems of the Community, but to enrich and benefit the people. Inculturation is a felt need of the time. Vocation to missions is to be encouraged. The Laity has a great role in the missionary endeavors of the Church. The Church encourages the laity to visit, stay and work in the missions as missionaries/evangelizers. At 4.50 pm, Fr. Shaji Kochupurayil mcbs, the secretary of the Commission for Evangelization and Pastoral Care of the Migrants, proposed vote of thanks. While thanking the bishops, resource persons, missionaries, and the participants from eparchies and Institutes of Consecrated Life for their active and meaningful participation, great appreciation was also expressed for Rev. Fr. Rector, Staff and students of the St. Thomas Apostolic Seminary, Vadavathoor, as well as for Fr. Justin Vettukallel MST, Fr. Jose Cheriampanattu MST, Fr. George Thanchan CMI and Fr. Joby Maprakavil MST for their meticulous support for the conduct of the Consultation. The Consultation ended at 5 pm with prayer and blessing by the Major Archbishop.

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Abp. Mar Mathew Moolakkatt OSB
Bp. Mathew Arackal

Fr. Shaji Kochupurayil mcbs, Secretary, CEPCM
Sr. Francelet sd, Office-Secretary, CEPCM

Bp. Mar Raphael Thattil

Fr. Joseph Pulavelil MST, Secretary, ASSM
Sr. Ancy SH & Sr. Alphonsa SH, Office-Secretaries, ASSM