



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)

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Bishop Mathew Arackal (Member)

31 August 2016

Report of the Commission for Evangelization and Pastoral Care of the Migrants from September 2015 to August 2016

INTRODUCTION

We are happy to present a report on the activities of the Commission for Evangelization and Pastoral Care of the Migrants (CEPCM) of the period from September 2015 to August 2016. At the end, we have highlighted some problems and issues that affect our migrant faithful, as well as the main recommendations and suggestions from the three National Consultations on Mission *ad gentes* conducted in Kerala in the month of May, 2016, calling for our immediate attention.

At the outset, the Commission expresses its joy at the erection of the new eparchy of Preston, Great Britain and the Apostolic Visitation in Europe and Ireland, the two major steps of the Holy See recognizing the momentous growths of our Church. The Commission is happy that it could render some service in facilitating these events to happen.

1. THE NEW SYRO-MALABAR EPARCHY IN PRESTON, GREAT BRITAIN

The estimated total number of Syro-Malabar migrants in the new Eparchy of Preston, Great Britain as per the information with the Commission is 38, 500. There are about 80 Holy Qurbana centres spread out in 19 Archdioceses/dioceses in Great Britain. There are at present about 50 Syro-Malabar priests serving the migrant communities in Great Britain, of whom 24 Syro-Malabar priests are presented by the Major Archbishop. There are also 2 religious nuns, sent by the Major Archbishop, serving the community at Preston, in the Diocese of Lancaster. The Commission is happy to be relieved of its responsibilities for the Syro-Malabar faithful in England, Wales and Scotland and wishes the new diocese and its Bishop-Elect Msgr. Joseph Srampickal God's abundant blessings!

2. APPOINTMENT OF THE APOSTOLIC VISITATOR FOR EUROPE

His Holiness Pope Francis has appointed Msgr. Stephen Chirappanath the Apostolic Visitor for Syro-Malabar Catholics residing in Europe and Ireland. The Apostolic Visitor is entrusted with the responsibility of facilitating the pastoral care of the Syro-Malabar migrants in Italy, Germany, Austria, France, Switzerland, Netherlands and Ireland. Hence the Commission is relieved of this responsibility.

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Syro-Malabar Major Archiepiscopal Curia

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There are about 22,000 Syro-Malabar faithful in Italy and the neighboring European Countries, and about 7,500 in Ireland. There are about 38 Syro-Malabar Holy Qurbana Centres spread in 16 Archdioceses/dioceses in Ireland, about 25 Syro-Malabar Holy Mass centres in Italy, 6 in Austria, 5 in Germany, 10 in Switzerland and a couple of Holy Qurbana Centres in France and Denmark. The Commission wishes the Bishop-Elect, Msgr. Stephen Chirappanath, the Apostolic Visitor, all success!

3. MEETINGS OF THE COMMISSION MEMBERS

Between September 2015 and August 2016, the Commission members, Bp. Mar Sebastian Vadakel, the Chairman and Abp. Mar Mathew Moolakkatt and Bp. Mar Mathew Arackal, the members of the Commission, met two times at Mount St. Thomas to discuss the issues related to the pastoral care of the migrants abroad. Besides, the members of the Commission were kept informed of the various programs of the Commission as well as the developments in migrant communities, by the Secretary of the Commission through emails, phone calls and personal meetings.

4. ANNUAL REPORT TO THE PONTIFICAL COUNCIL FOR THE PASTORAL CARE OF THE MIGRANTS AND ITINERANT PEOPLE

An annual report of the Commission is prepared to be submitted 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 abroad.

5. VISITS OF THE COMMISSION TO THE MIGRANT COMMUNITIES ABROAD

In the reporting year, the Chairman visited the migrant communities in UK, Ireland, Germany, Italy, Austria, Switzerland, Kuwait, Dubai, Doha-Qatar and Sharja. He held discussions with the Latin Bishops in UK, Ireland, Europe and Gulf Countries on the pastoral care of our migrant faithful in the respective countries. Meetings and discussions were also held with the Syro-Malabar priests and lay representatives there on how to make the Syro-Malabar Co-ordination more effective and useful. Besides the Chairman, the members and secretary of the Commission also visited Dubai, Doha, Kuwait, Nigeria, UK and European Countries in the reporting year.

The visits and the functions arranged in connection with the visits have greatly benefitted better coordination and collaboration among the Syro-Malabar migrant communities and with their respective Latin bishops. The Commission thanks very specially the National Coordinators in UK, Ireland and Italy, and SMCA, Gulf for their support and arrangements for the visits of the Commission.

6. THE SYNODAL DELEGATION TO KUWAIT

The Synod of the Syro-Malabar Church (August, 2015) sent a delegation to Kuwait on 16 & 17 November, 2015 to study the matters related to the pastoral needs of the Syro-Malabar faithful in Kuwait and met the Vicar Apostolic. The members of the Synodal delegation were Abp. Mar Kuriakose Bharanikulangara, Bp. Mar Jacob Manathodath and Bp. Mar Raphael Thattil. The delegation submitted a copy of their report to the Major Archbishop and the Commission.

7. PRIESTS SENT FOR MIGRANT COMMUNITIES ABROAD IN 2015-2016

The following priests, with the recommendation of the Major Archbishop, were presented for the pastoral care of the Syro-Malabar faithful abroad in the reporting year.

1. Fr. Albin Paul Nallakuttu (Changanassery), South Africa
2. Fr. Benny Mathew Mulayolil (Thalassery), Leeds, UK
3. Fr. Jino Arikatt (MCBS) Liverpool, UK
4. Fr. Hans Puthiyakulangara (MST), Southwark
5. Fr. Joy Chittilappilly Devassy (Trichur), Genova, Italy
6. Fr. Thomas Chakkumpeedika (Thrissur), France
7. Fr. Paul Morely (Ernakulam-Angamaly), Down and Connor, Ireland
8. Fr. Robin Thomas (Thuckalay), Limerick, Ireland
9. Fr. Fra Tojoy Jose OFM, Jerusalem

8. PERMANENT DEACON

The Commission is happy to say that the Syro-Malabar Church has the first permanent deacon from a migrant community, Southwark, UK. Rev. Dn. Joice James Pallickamyilil, originally from Thodupuzha of the Eparchy of Kothamangalam, was ordained deacon on 6 May, 2016 for the Eparchy of Ujjain by His Beatitude Mar George Cardinal Alencherry at St. Mary's Cathedral Baslica, Ernakulam-Angamaly. He serves the Syro-Malabar migrant communities in the diocese of Southwark.

9. PASTORAL ACTIVITIES OF THE COMMISSION

1) Correspondence with the Migrant Communities

The Commission has been in regular contact with about 15 countries, such as UK, Ireland, Italy, Austria, South Africa, Nigeria, Germany, Singapore, Gulf Countries, etc. The Commission could maintain an effective correspondence with the appointed pastors/chaplains and the migrants of our Church, particularly through visits, emails and telephone calls. Occasional meetings by the members of the Commission with these Communities help them to grow united and fruitful. Messages and greetings of the Commission were sent to all the migrant centers through emails

on the occasions of Christmas, Easter, St. Thomas Day and Mission Sunday. Messages are sent also for various other programs, anniversaries and celebrations in migrant communities. Correspondence is regular with almost all the centers/communities of the Syro-Malabar migrants.

2) Marriage Preparation Courses

With the approval of the Commission, Marriage Preparation Courses are conducted in Northern and Southern Arabia, United Kingdom and Ireland, as per the Syllabus for Marriage Preparation Course approved by the Commission. As part of the faith formation of the migrant communities, the Commission has arranged some training programs for the catechism teachers in Gulf Countries and UK with the support of the Commission for Catechesis.

10. THE VISIT OF THE SMCA GULF COORDINATORS TO ROME

The SMCA Gulf coordinators, on their own initiatives, made a visit to Rome in the month of June, 2016. They met the Holy Father and Prefects of Oriental Congregation and the Congregation for Evangelization of Peoples. They also gave in writing the concerns of the Syro-Malabar faithful in Gulf Countries to the Holy Father, and Prefects of the said Congregations. The Commission had helped them in the preparation of the documents.

11. NATIONAL CONSULTATIONS ON MISSION *AD GENTES* IN KERALA

The Commission, in collaboration with ASSM, organized three National Mission Consultations in Kerala, on ‘**Syro-Malabar Church and Mission *Ad Gentes* Today: The Prospects and Challenges**’ in the month of May 2016. The first Consultation was on 16 & 17 May at St. Thomas Apostolic Seminary, Vadavathoor; the second Consultation was on 19 & 20 May at Sandesh Bhavan, Thalassery; and the third Consultation was on 23 & 24 May at Mount St. Thomas, Kakkanad. Almost all bishops were present in the Consultation of their respective region. The presence of a few bishops from the mission eparchies added greater meaning to the Consultation. Altogether there were about 500 missionaries and those responsible for *ad Gentes* mission in our Church participated in the three Consultations (more than 160 participants in each Consultation). The Commission thanks the bishops, the missionaries and those who hosted the Consultations, for their active participation and remarkable gestures of hospitality and arrangements for all the three Consultations. The Consultation really enkindled the missionary spirit in the participants. The Commission looks forward to concrete follow-up planning with the approval of the Synod on the *ad Gentes* mission involvements of the Church.

12. MISSION DOCUMENTATION

The Commission, in continuation of the plans of the Mission Year-2012, is in the process of preparation of a Mission Documentation incorporating the missionary efforts of the Syro-

Malabar Church down the centuries, especially in the last 50 years. The Chairman of the Documentation Committee is His Grace Abp. Mar Joseph Perumthottam.

13. DEVELOPMENS IN THE MIGRANT CENTRES ABROAD

13.1. GREAT BRITAIN

With the erection of new Eparchy of Preston, the pastoral activities in Great Britain get better coordination and development. The Syro-Malabar communities in England, Wales and Scotland are getting well organized. The local Ordinaries in general are very open to the Syro-Malabar pastoral arrangements there. The appointments of many of the priests-in-charge of Syro-Malabar communities in Great Britain by the Latin Bishops are made with the proper presentation of the priests by our Major Archbishop.

Priests (Presented by the Major Archbishop) Currently Serving the Syro-Malabar Communities in Great Britain

- 1) Fr. Thomas Paradyil MST, Westminster, National Coordinator
- 2) Fr. Jaison Karippai, Birmingham
- 3) Fr. Sebastian Namattathil, Birmingham
- 4) Fr. Joseph Anthiamkalam mcbs, Brentwood
- 5) Fr. Paul Vettikattu cst, Clifton
- 6) Fr. Terin Mullakara, East Anglia
- 7) Fr. Philip John Panthamakal, East Anglia
- 8) Fr. Saji Thottathil, Hexham and Newcastle
- 9) Fr. Mathew J Choorapoikayil, Lancaster
- 10) Fr. Mathew Mulayolil, Leeds
- 11) Fr. Jino Arikatt mcbs, Liverpool
- 12) Fr. Antony Chundelikkat James, Middlesbrough
- 13) Fr. Biju Joseph Kunnackatt, Nottingham
- 14) Fr. Tomy Chirackal Manavalan, Portsmouth
- 15) Fr. Thomas Thaikkootathil mst, Salford
- 16) Fr. Lonappan Arangassery mst, Shrewsbury
- 17) Fr. Hans Puthiyakulangara mst, Southwark
- 18) Fr. Sebastian Chamakkala, Westminster

- 19) Fr. Paul Nellikulam, Westminster
- 20) Fr. Joseph Pinakkattu, Aberdeen, Scotland
- 21) Fr. Johny Anmura/Fr. Rogi Narithookkil cst, Dundee, Scotland
- 22) Fr. Sebastian Thuruthippillil, Edinburgh, Scotland
- 23) Fr. George Thelliankal cmf, Glasgow, Scotland
- 24) Fr. Joseph Vembadamthara vc, Motherwell, Scotland

Besides these 24 priests, there are about 25 other priests serving our communities in Great Britain.

13.2. EUROPE

Germany, Switzerland, Austria and Denmark: In Germany, Switzerland, Austria and Denmark, no Syro-Malabar priest, with the proper recommendation of the Major Archbishop, is officially appointed as parish priest or chaplain. However there are many Holy Qurbana centers with various pastoral programs conducted regularly and with the help and support of the Syro-Malabar priests working in Latin Dioceses. Better pastoral care can be ensured if our priests are appointed full time for each of these communities. Priests serving the Syro-Malabar Communities in these countries are:

- 1) Fr. Ignatius Chalissery cmi, Kolon, Germany
- 2) Fr. Thomas Kurian cmf, Limburg, Frankfurt, Germany
- 3) Fr. Thomas Pullattu mcbs, Heidelberg, Germany
- 4) Fr. Thomas Thandappilly cst, Vienna, Austria
- 5) Fr. Wilson Mecheril mcbs, Vienna, Austria
- 6) Fr. Thomas Pulickiyil ocd, Denmark
- 7) Fr. Thomas Plappallil mst, Zurich, Switzerland
- 8) Fr. Binoy Thomas, Fribourg, Switzerland
- 9) Fr. Vincent Kadalikattilputhenpura mst, Zurich, Switzerland

Italy and France: There are some Syro-Malabar priests presented by the Major Archbishop for the pastoral care of the Syro-Malabar faithful in these countries:

- 1) Fr. Biju Augustine Muttathukunnel, Rome
- 2) Fr. Binoj Mulavarickal, Rome
- 3) Fr. Mathew Pinakkattu, Savona, Italy
- 4) Fr. Thomas Chakkumpeedika, France

Besides these priests, there are about 15 priests from various other Syro-Malabar eparchies and congregations serving the migrant communities in Italy.

13.3. 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 appointment of Msgr. Stephen Chirappanath as the Apostolic Visitor for Ireland, gives a lot of hopes for better coordination of Syro-Malabar migrant communities and emergence of new organized communities and Holy Qurbana centers in Ireland. The Pastoral Coordination team in Ireland comprises of:

- 1) Msgr. Antony Perumayan, National Coordinator, Ireland
- 2) Fr. Joseph Karukayil, Armagh, Clogher, Derry, Northern Ireland
- 3) Fr. Jose Bharanikulangara, Dublin, Ireland
- 4) Fr. Antony Cheeramvelil mst, Dublin, Ireland
- 5) Fr. Paul Morely, Down and Connor, Ireland
- 6) Fr. Robin Thomas, Limerick, Ireland

13.4. GULF COUNTRIES

Dialogue at different levels is going on to ensure proper pastoral care for our faithful residing in Gulf countries. We have not yet succeeded in presenting Syro-Malabar priests for our faithful in Gulf countries because of the reluctance from the local ordinaries. It is very painful that we have no Syro-Malabar priests for our faithful in Saudi Arabia. We are very grateful to the dedicated service of our Lay faithful under the organization SMCA, the only formally accepted Lay Association in Gulf countries. The Commission looks forward to better provisions of pastoral care in Gulf Countries.

13.5. SINGAPORE

We have about 1000 Syro-Malabar families in Singapore. Our attempts to present Syro-Malabar priests for our faithful have not yet succeeded. An OFM priest is appointed by the local ordinary to look after the pastoral needs of the 'Malayali' communities.

13.6. AFRICAN COUNTRIES

We could send priests for the pastoral care of the Syro-Malabar faithful in two South African Countries: the Syro-Malabar communities in Pretoria and Uganda. We are in search of priests for the Syro-Malabar faithful in the Archdiocese of Lagos, Nigeria and for Boswana, South Africa.

14. 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. There are also certain group rivalries among the faithful too. The Commission highlights some of the serious problems and issues that affect our migrant communities calling for our immediate attention.

14.1. Inflow of unauthorized retreat preachers and priests to migrant centers

Inflow of unauthorized visits of many Syro-Malabar pastors and preachers to migrant centers still continues to be a matter of serious concern in some of the migrant centers and communities abroad. The conduct of retreats by some priests without any reference to the officially appointed chaplains of the migrant communities and the National Coordinator has caused some disturbances in the pastoral arrangement there.

14.2. Unauthorized Lay Associations

The mushrooming of rival lay associations claiming to represent Syro-Malabar Church is of serious concern in some of the countries, especially in Gulf, UK and Ireland. 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.

14.3. Lack of properly presented Syro-Malabar priests in Gulf and Singapore

Our migrant centers, especially in Gulf countries and Singapore, are having priests appointed by the local Ordinary without a proper 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.

14.4. Lack of Proper Pastoral Leadership

Some of our migrant communities, especially in Gulf Countries, Singapore and certain communities in Europe, are led by the Lay faithful. The elder generation in migrant communities requests for themselves Catechism and other faith formation programs. Many such communities necessitate the leadership of priests sent by the Major Archbishop.

14.5. Lack of Space for the Conduct of Holy Qurbana and Catechism classes

More and more migrant communities are getting interested in and are in need of having their own churches or prayer centers for the conduct of Holy Qurbana and Catechism classes. To get churches of their own, require more collaboration and correspondence between the local Ordinaries and the Mother Church, more pastors and other Personnel, money, etc.

14.6. Requests from migrant communities for more priests for pastoral care

We have identified a few more Syro-Malabar migrant communities in Italy, South Africa, Nigeria, Jerusalem, etc., necessitating the presentation of more priests over there. Recently the Commission has received communications from our migrant faithful in Korea, Malaysia, etc., requesting for the pastoral care in those countries also. We will complete the process of sending priests to Great Britain, Europe and Ireland shortly.

15. RECOMMENDATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FROM THE THREE NATIONAL MISSION CONSULTATIONS

The Commission is happy to present the main recommendations and suggestions from the three National Consultations on Mission *ad gentes* in Kerala in the month of May, 2016 for the consideration of the Synod.

1. All mission eparchies shall have their mission homes at least in one of the eparchies in Kerala.
2. All eparchies in Kerala shall have at least one mission animation centre in the eparchy:
 - a) For the missionary formation of the laity to equip them to enter the secular fields with a missionary spirit
 - b) For the initiation and orientation of the new candidates to priesthood and religious life in Kerala itself for a period of time before they are sent to actual mission eparchies and mission provinces.
 - c) For the support and promotion of missions and missionaries, as well as for the continuous renewal programmes for the missionaries. It can also animate mission vocations and occasional mission visits.
3. Promote the Mission Home Church Eparchial relations
 - a) Encourage our Lay faithful and priests of the home eparchies of Kerala to visit/stay in the missions.
 - b) Promote mutually supporting programs at eparchial levels between mission eparchies and eparchies in Kerala.
 - c) There shall be mission support groups in the parishes.
 - d) Invite our missionaries to our eparchies, parishes, Sunday schools, pious associations, etc., to honour them and to listen to their mission experience.
 - e) Every eparchy must gladly welcome ASSM to their communities/parishes/associations.
 - f) Cultivate healthy working relations among the mission eparchies and the Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life in their respective territories.
4. *Vocations to missions* must be promoted by the eparchies with more priority. Mission animation books and booklets must be given proper popularity. It is also important to have a page left in all eparchial popular magazines for missionary sharing.
5. Co-ordinate and channelize various organizations, movements and pious associations of missionary nature at Major Archiepiscopal and eparchial levels, so that different charisms and gifts shall be made available for the *ad gentes* mission.
6. Shelter home for women and drug addicts are important areas of mission in Kerala.
7. Church should take special attention to get the provisions of the Government.

16. FINANCIAL REPORT FROM 1 APRIL 2015 TO 31 MARCH 2016

Pastoral Care of TheMigrants

Income & Expenditure

From 1 April 2015 to 31 March 2016

Receipts

Donations from Migrant Communities : 1,37,085.00
Bank Interest : 94306.00

Total : 2,31,391.00

Expenditure

Bank charge : 86.00
Miscellaneous : 500.00
Office Exp. : 3,876.00
Postage : 3,433.00
Printing charge : 6,056.00
Salary & Allowances : 1,00,000.00
Telephone charges : 5,347.00
T.A. : 1,54,479.00
Vehicle repair : 2,164.00

Total : 2,75,941.00

Total Income

Previous Balance : 18,08,499.00
Income of 2015 – 2016 : 2,31,391.00

: 20,39,890.00

Balance:

20,39,890.00 —
2,75,941.00
17,63,949.00

Fixed Deposit : 8,50,000.00

Federal Bank : 8,14,245.00

SB A/C : 99,704.00

Total Balance : 17,63,949.00



Fr. Mathew Pulimootil

Finance Officer

CONCLUSION

The year 2015-2016 was a year of Lord's special grace for the Commission for Evangelization and Pastoral Care of the Migrants. The Erection of the Eparchy of Preston, Great Britain and the Appointment of the Apostolic Visitor for Europe and Ireland are God's precious gifts to our Church. 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 Mission in the Syro-Malabar Church. Due to the dedicated service of many of our priests and laity in migrant centers we could organize a few more Syro-Malabar communities abroad. 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, especially Sr. Francelet SD, the office-secretary of the Commission for the last three years, for the support and encouragement that they have extended to the Commission in 2015-2016.



Bp. Mar Sebastian Vadakel MST, Chairman



Fr. Shaji Abraham Kochupurayil MCBS, Secretary

Abp. Mar Mathew Moolakkatt OSB, Member

Sr. Praveena CSN, Office-Secretary

Bp. Mar Mathew Arackal, Member