

THE SYRO-MALANKARA CATHOLIC CHURCH
APOSTOLIC EXARCHATE IN USA



Mar Ivanios Bishop's House
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Dr. Thomas Mar Eusebius

Bishop of the Syro-Malankara Catholic Exarchate in USA
Apostolic Visitor in Canada & Europe

By the Grace of God and by the approval of the Holy See, Thomas Mar Eusebius, Bishop of the Apostolic Exarchate of the Syro-Malankara Catholic Church in the USA extends cordial greetings to all the priests, religious and Faithful of the Exarchate.

Prot. No. EPL 1/2012

Praise be to the Most Holy Trinity

My dear Fathers, Sisters, Seminarians and the Lay Faithful,

We are entering into the important liturgical season of the great Lent. As a believing and witnessing community that needs constant renewal and rededication, we approach the Lent as the most suitable time for our spiritual regeneration. The intensity and depth of the personal change and conversion that the Lent requires of us is indicated meaningfully by the miracle at Cana, of water turning into wine, which is the Gospel reading of the first Sunday of the Lent in our liturgy. The Lent must help us to initiate lasting and substantial positive changes in our attitudes and life style. Real conversion demands a move away from sin and a move closer to God. The Lenten acts of fervent prayer, sacrifices, forgiveness, charity, etc. enable us to grow in our closeness to the Lord and in our relation to our brethren. Let this Lenten season be a time of deep spiritual renewal for all of us in the Exarchate. Let all our prayers, fasting, abstinence, etc. during this holy season prompt us to be better oriented to our brothers and sisters, especially those who are less privileged than we are. Proper observance of the Lenten season will make us worthy of experiencing and celebrating the peace and joy of the Risen Lord.

The New Pastoral Council

With the establishment of the Exarchate we were privileged and required to constitute the pastoral council, giving due importance to the crucial role of our lay faithful in the life of the Church. The pastoral council enhances better consultation and collective thinking in matters pertaining to the life and growth of our ecclesial mission. Elections to the new pastoral council were held in all our parishes and missions in November 2011 and the new pastoral council was constituted on Jan. 8, 2012. Mr. Philip John of the St. Mary's Malankara Catholic Parish of New Rochelle was elected to be the new Secretary of the pastoral council. I extend hearty congratulations to Mr. Philip John and to all members of the newly constituted pastoral council and I express our heartfelt gratitude to Mr. Gheevarghese Thankachan, the outgoing Secretary and all members of the former pastoral council for their dedicated service to the Exarchate.

Convention 2012

One of the most important events of the Syro-Malankara Catholic Church in North America this year is the forthcoming Convention. We have decided to conduct the Convention from Aug. 9 to 12 at the Hudson Valley Resort, Kerhonkson, New York. After the establishment of the Exarchate, it is the first

time that we conduct the Convention. As we know, the Holy Father has declared this year as the year of faith, following which, His Beatitude Moran Mor Baselios Cleemis Catholicos, our Major Archbishop has proposed to lay special focus on this theme in all the activities of the Syro-Malankara Catholic Church. Consequently, we have chosen 'growing in faith' and the resultant 'growth in holiness' as the central theme of our Convention. Our faith is what gives us a distinctive identity and we are reminded of our call to grow consistently in this faith to make ourselves a holy people consecrated to God, namely the holy Church of Jesus Christ. All the activities of the Convention will have this central focus.

Serious preparations are on for the effective and fruitful conduct of the Convention. Very Rev. Msgr. Peter Kochery, the Vicar General of the Exarchate functions as the Co-Chairman of the Convention, Very Rev. Fr. Augustine Mangalath as the General Convener and Mr. Philip John, the Secretary of the Exarchate Pastoral Council as the General Secretary of the Convention. On Jan. 29, the inaugural Registration Kick-off of the Convention was held at the St. Mary's Malankara Catholic Parish, New Rochelle, New York. The response from our faithful was overwhelming. A good number of people have already registered as sponsors and the registration is progressing at a very fast pace. The venue chosen for the Convention is considered to be ideal because of the facilities available for meeting the various requirements of a convention of this sort. In calculating the budget of the convention, special care has been taken to confine the rate to the lowest possible minimum in order to ensure maximum participation. The program of the Convention will focus on the needs of all sections of our faithful, with special emphasis on family, youth, children, etc.. Resource persons and dignitaries both from India and the US are expected to be present in the Convention, besides our beloved Major Archbishop Catholicos.

Let us resolve ourselves to make this Convention a very significant event in our ecclesial life here. Let this be an occasion for us to celebrate our faith joyfully, to pray together and worship the Lord as a community of love, to fall in deeper love with our revered traditions, to learn greater wisdom at the feet of the Lord, to get to know and appreciate our fellow-Malankarites more closely, to build up new relationships, or in short, to grow together as a Church. I very earnestly request all our families to ensure full and active participation in this Convention. The assurance is ours that any pain and sacrifice taken for this cause is worth its while.

Parish Establishment

Responding positively to the provisions and responsibilities opened up by the constitution of our Church in this country as an Exarchate, we are in a process of establishing parishes canonically within the Exarchate in the place of missions. The growth of a community from the status of a mission to that of a parish reflects the ecclesial maturity that the community has attained. Consequently, our communities at Long Island, Philadelphia, New Rochelle, Queens, Houston and Chicago have already been established as parishes within the Exarchate. I congratulate whole heartedly the pastors and parishioners of all these parishes. May the Lord enable these parishes to live up to the new responsibilities that they have assumed as parishes.

***Symbiosis* and website**

To make available to all members of our Exarchate reports about the life and activities of the Exarchate and of our individual parishes and missions, an Exarchate bulletin by the name *Symbiosis* has been started. A minimum of three issues of *Symbiosis* is expected to be published annually. Wholehearted

cooperation and support of all our families is solicited in this noble venture. So also, an official website has been launched for the Exarchate with the address syromalankarausa.org. I take this opportunity to congratulate and thank all the members of the Exarchate webteam for their selfless and painstaking dedication to this cause.

On March 1, I am leaving for India in order to participate in the meeting of the Holy Episcopal Synod of the Syro-Malankara Catholic Church to be held from March 4 to 8 and in the ceremonial Consecration of the Holy Mooron of the Church on March 9 and 10. From India, I hope to proceed to Ireland in order to visit our community there. I shall celebrate the Holy Week and Easter with our communities in the United Kingdom. I request the prayers of all our faithful in these my humble missions in India and Europe. I thank all of you for your powerful faith witness in this great land, for your exemplary ecclesial commitment and in a special way for your unreserved support and dedication to the Exarchate. I wish all of you the peace and joy of the Risen Lord.

May the Lord bless all of you and your families abundantly with His peace and joy and may Mother Mary and all the Saints intercede for us.

Yours lovingly in our Lord,

+ Eusebius

+ Thomas Mar Eusebius



February 15, 2012
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This circular is to be read in all our churches on Sunday, February 19, 2012