

SYRO-MALANKARA CATHOLIC MAJOR ARCHIEPISCOPAL CHURCH APOSTOLIC EXARCHATE IN THE USA

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 2/2012

Praise be to the Most Holy Trinity

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

Two years have passed since the Holy Father established an Apostolic Exarchate for the Syro-Malankara Catholic Faithful in the USA. In every sense, these two years have been a period of manifold blessings for us from God. The establishment of the Exarchate and the accompanying ecclesial possibilities helped us to have greater consolidation and fellowship as a Church. We are overwhelmed by a renewed enthusiasm and ecclesial belongingness. Most of our missions have been raised as canonical parishes in the meantime. God in His boundless love and providence for our Church, enabled us to experience profoundly, during this period, some peak moments of our being a Church.

New Deacons for the Church

The most remarkable ecclesial event in the Exarchate during this period was the Diaconate Ordination of two of our sons. The loving providence of God called Lintu Makose from our parish at Chicago and Michael Edathil from our parish at Philadelphia to the ministry of diaconate in the Church. We had the good fortune of ordaining them deacons for the Exarchate during a beautiful liturgical celebration at St. John Chrysostom Syro Malankara Catholic Pro-Cathedral on July 14, 2012, providentially on the second anniversary of the establishment of the Exarchate. This was a moment of God's infinite grace for the Syro-Malankara Catholic Exarchate. Bros. Lintu and Michael are the first persons to be ordained deacons for a Catholic Church of Indian origin in America. These Deacons are the signs of the future of this Exarchate. We are deeply proud to have them in the Church.

The Exarchate is deeply indebted to the dear parents and family members of our Deacons for having made such a wonderful sacrifice for the Church. We are thankful to Mr. Mathew Markose and Mrs. Sherly, the parents of Deacon Lintu and Mr. Philip Edathil and Mrs. Rajamma, the parents of Deacon Michael for having nurtured them as God's children and for having given them to God totally for the service of the Church. We also congratulate our parish communities at Chicago and Philadelphia that prepared the context for the faith formation of these two Deacons. Deacon Lintu has completed successfully his theological studies and is going to India for a year of pastoral experience. Deacon Michael has entered the final year of his theological studies at the St. Joseph's Seminary, New York. Two more of our sons, namely Bro. Jerry Mathew from Detroit and Bro. Jobin Thomas from Toronto have started their theological studies at the St. Joseph's seminary. Let us continue to pray for our seminarians and for the growth of vocations in the Exarchate and I solicit your kind contributions to support the apostolate of seminary formation in the Exarchate.

The Eighth Syro-Malankara Catholic Convention

Another significant ecclesial experience that the Exarchate went through in the recent past was the Syro-Malankara Catholic Convention, held in New York from August 9 to 12, 2012. The theme selected for the convention was very pertinent, namely, 'Called to be the Church – Growing in Faith to be Holy unto Him'. The whole program of the convention was designed to enhance our rootedness in faith and growth in holiness by providing an exceptional ecclesial experience. Consequently, the four days of intense living together provided all the participants a very profound experience of what it means to be a Church, what it means to be the living stones making a spiritual house. It helped us to grow deeper in faith and to advance in our journey to holiness. We grew in our relation to God, we grew in our fellowship with one another. We are deeply thankful to God for providing us this wonderful experience. We were blessed with the presence of His Beatitude Moran Mor Baselios Cleemis Catholicos, the Father and Head of our Church, the Holy Father's representative in USA, the Apostolic Nuncio, many bishops from our dioceses in India, many American Catholic Bishops, many resource persons, etc..

The preparations for the convention started almost a year ago. From the very beginning, the response of our Faithful to the convention was extremely encouraging. More than 800 people took active part in the convention and among them, around 350 were our youth and children. A lot of painstaking preparations went into it, involving various persons and committees and numerous hours of hard work. I wish to thank all the participants for being part of this great experience. A good number of our families volunteered to support this convention as sponsors. We appreciate their generosity. It was the Pastoral Council of the Exarchate that took the lead to organize the convention. All the Pastoral Council members are gratefully remembered. The relentless work and dedication of all the committees, their chairmen and secretaries is thankfully acknowledged. The Exarchate remains grateful in a special way to Very Rev. Msgr. Peter Kochery, the Co-Chairman, Very Rev. Fr. Augustine Mangalath, the General Convener, Mr. Philip John, the General Secretary of the convention and to all the Rev. Pastors of our parishes. With the wealth of experience that we have derived from this convention, let us march forward, living and witnessing our faith in unity of heart and mind through the rich and beautiful ecclesial tradition that we have inherited.

Translation of the Liturgical Texts

One important apostolate of the Exarchate concerns providing English translations of our liturgical texts. This is of crucial importance not only for the future of the Exarchate but also for facilitating the active and meaningful participation of our present youth and children in our liturgical celebrations. The Department of Sacred Liturgy in the Exarchate has started an ambitious project of providing relevant translations of all our liturgical texts within a definite time frame. As the first step in this project, we were able to bring out an official Syro-Malankara Catholic *Qurbono Takso* in English with the approval of the Liturgical Commission of the Syro-Malankara Catholic Holy Episcopal Synod. This is a complete *Takso* with translation of 6 *Anaphoras* and all the variable *Premeon-Sedros*, special prayers for the Feasts, Holy Week and other occasions. The Department of Sacred Liturgy in the Exarchate deserves our appreciation for this great achievement. I also wish to inform you that the President of the Holy Episcopal Synod, His Beatitude the Catholicos has declared that all other prevailing English translations of our *Qurbono Takso* shall not be in use from Sept. 8, 2012.

MCYM Day

As we know, October 4, the feast of St. Francis of Assisi is celebrated as the youth day in the Syro-Malankara Catholic Church. As a practice, we celebrate it on the following Sunday; and consequently on Oct. 7, this year. This day invites all of us to become increasingly aware of the important mission that our youth are called to fulfill in the Church. The Exarchate is privileged to have a very vibrant and faithful group of young people. I use this occasion to acknowledge with gratitude all the valuable contributions of our youth to the Exarchate. We appreciate the genuineness of their faith and the quality of their ecclesial commitment. The love of our youth for the Church, their dedication to and sacrifices for it are of crucial importance not only for the present existence of our Church, but more so for its future. Let us encourage and empower our youth to fulfill faithfully their God-given mission in the Church. Our national team of MCYM leaders, both outgoing and the newly elected, under the guidance of their Fr. Director, deserves our gratitude and appreciation. The Sunday collection in our parishes on Oct. 7 is to be used for promoting the National MCYM activities. I entreat all our parishioners to contribute generously to this noble cause.

The Holy Episcopal Synod

On September 9, I am leaving for India in order to participate in the meeting of the Holy Episcopal Synod of the Syro-Malankara Catholic Church. From India, I hope to proceed to Germany to take part in the Reunion Day celebrations of our communities there. I request the valuable prayers of all our faithful in my humble missions here and abroad. I thank all of you for your powerful faith witness, for your unconditional love for the Church and for your unreserved support and dedication to the Exarchate. I wish all of you the blessings of the great feast of the birth of our Mother Mary. May the Lord bless you and your families abundantly with His peace and joy and may Mother Mary and all the Saints be a stronghold to us.

Yours lovingly in our Lord,
+ Thomas Mar Eusebius

September 1, 2012

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This circular is to be read in all our churches on Sunday, September 2, 2012