
By the grace of God and by the approval of the Holy See
From the Major Archbishop of the Syro-Malankara Catholic Church
Moran Mor Baselios Cleemis Catholicos
Blessings to the Metropolitan Archbishop, all Metropolitans, Bishops,
Priests, Deacons, Religious and the Faithful



Prot No. CPL 2/2009

Praise to the True God, Self-existent, Almighty, Eternal and
Consubstantial

**79th Reunion Anniversary and Platinum Jubilee Celebrations
of the Malankara Church in the District of Kanyakumari**

Most Rev. Bishops, Very Rev. Corepiscopoi, Rembans, Rev.
Fathers, Deacons, Religious and dear Faithful in the Lord!

We are preparing to commemorate and celebrate a great ecclesiastical event presented to us on 20 September 1930. The Malankara Church, the community that succeeds St. Thomas, the Apostle, is an Apostolic Church that enjoys this tradition for the past 2000 years. Various Churches were formed from the communion of the Malankara Church under various circumstances during the course of the history of the Church. As a result of the Coonan Cross Oath of 1653, the Malankara Church lost her communion with the Universal Church. But the profound self-submission of the Servant of God Mar Ivanios enabled the Malankara Church to regain her lost communion with the Universal Church. And that was a great blessing to the Malankara Church. The Reunion of Mar Ivanios in 1930 was the fulfillment of the long cherished dream of the *Puthenkur* Community

ever since 1653. Today, the Malankara Catholic Church is flourishing as the presence and the witness of the entire Malankara Church within the Universal Church.

The Malankara Catholic Church is a united Church and is at the same times a source of unity. That is, it is a Church in communion with the Universal Church and a Church that leads other Churches to communion with the Universal Church. The service of unity of the Malankara Catholic Church should foster unity even amidst the new challenges. For that, we have to prepare very much spiritually. It is noteworthy here, the remark of John Paul II of happy memory, that “the Reunion Movement is a work of the Holy Spirit”.

It gives us all immense happiness that the celebrations of the seventy-ninth anniversary of the Reunion are being held in our Eparchy of Marthandom. This is also the occasion when the Malankara Catholic Church completes seventy-five years of its ecclesial service in the District of Kanyakumari of the State of Tamil Nadu. These two events are being celebrated jointly under the title “Malankara Sabha Sangaman” (Gathering of the Malankara Catholic Church) on 19, 20, 21 September 2009 at the Mar Ivanios Nagar, Kaliyickavila.

As a Reunion anniversary being celebrated in the Eparchy of Marthandom for the first time, our coming together this time has very many specialities. The Council of Vatican II teaches that “the Church is missionary by her very nature” (A.G 2). When we re-read this teaching of the Council from the soil of Marthandom, we experience immense satisfaction, esteem and above all, an unbounded gratitude towards the providence of the Holy Spirit. At this juncture we remember gratefully as a Church, the service of our holy father Servant of God Mar Ivanios, the glorious sun of the Malankara Church, whose service transformed the Apsotolic Malankara Church into a missionary Church – a missionary work that sets an example to other Malankara Churches. We understand and accept as a great blessing that we could spread the presence, nearness and self-dedication of the Malankara Catholic Church to other communities. The service of the preaching of the Gospel held under the auspices of the Major Archdiocese of

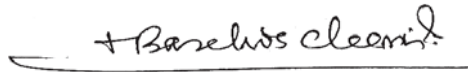
Trivandrum, has paved the path for a considerable progress of the Eparchy of Marthandom. We remember in a special way the Servant of God, Mar Ivanios, the late Archbishop Benedict Mar Gregorios, the Rev. Priests and Religious, especially Msgr. Joseph Kuzhinjalil of happy memory, the members of the Daughters of Mary Congregation and the Brothers of the Franciscan Missionary Society, who endured innumerable sacrifices. So also we remember with immense love all the Faithful of the region, their families and the *Upadesis* (Catechists). His Excellency Lawrence Mar Ephraem of happy memory has spread the spirit of preaching the Gospel not only in this region but throughout the entire Malankara Church. We pay our profound homage before the holy memory of this missionary Metropolitan.

It is Cyril Mar Baselios Catholicos of happy memory, who requested the Holy See to raise this community, which had surpassed the challenges of its infancy, to an Eparchy centred at Marthandom. And accordingly it was erected on 16 December 1996. Again, it was His Beatitude, who gave leadership to transform this place into an ideal Eparchy. His Lordship Lawrence Mar Ephraem of happy memory served this Eparchy as its first Metropolitan. From 1 July 1998, Most Rev. Yoohanon Mar Chrysostom is serving as its Metropolitan. Now it counts on its rolls 65000 faithful in 80 parishes. There are 38 diocesan priests, 9 religious priests, 218 religious sisters, who are engaged in the service of shepherding the faithful. There are 51 Seminarians undergoing formation in various Seminaries. There are 4 first grade colleges, 19 schools, 2 hospitals, 3 dispensaries, 4 boys' homes, 2 old-age-homes, 2 houses for the handicapped. They have also started a publication. It is most gratifying that the Eparchy of Marthandom is advancing in various services. We gratefully remember all those who have untringly worked behind this growth. It is the powerful leadership of Most Rev. Yoohanon Mar Chrysostom that has brought about this growth of the Eparchy of Marthandom. I sincerely congratulate all the Rev. Priests, Religious and lay-missionaries. We pray that the Eparchy of Marthandom continue to grow steadily under His Grace's unfailing confidence in the Divine Providence and under the dedicated service

of the reverend priests and the devoted life of the Religious and in the life of witness of the families of the faithful.

In this Reunion Anniversary celebrations held in the Eparchy of Marthandom, the Antiochene Syrian Catholic Patriarch, Moran Mor Ignas Yousef Yaunan III will participate as the chief guest. I cordially invite all the Rev. Fathers, Religious and Faithful of all the Eparchies to participate in the celebrations. Being the first solemn ecclesial celebration to be held in the Eparchy of Marthandom, I earnestly remind all of you to render every encouragement and financial help towards the expenses of this gathering. May god bless you all!

Your humble servant in the Lord,



+Baselios cleemis

24-08-2009
Catholicate Centre
Pattom, Trivandrum

Moran Mor Baselios Cleemis Catholicos
Major Archbishop
of the Syro-Malankara Catholic Church

Our Father in Heaven...

N.B. :This pastoral letter should be read in all our churches, mission centres and centres of worship during the Holy Qurbono next Sunday.
