



# Syro-Malabar Catechetical Commission

Mar Jacob Manathodath (*Chairman*)

Mar Lawrence Mukkuzhy (*Member*)

Fr. George Danavelil (*Secretary*)

Mar Joseph Pandarasseril (*Member*)

## REPORT OF THE MAJOR ARCHIEPISCOPAL COMMISSION FOR CATECHESIS

**2014-2015**

The Syro-Malabar Major Archiepiscopal Commission for catechesis is glad to present the report regarding its main activities from August 2014 to July 2015 before the honourable members of the Synod of Bishops of the Syro-Malabar Church.

### MEETINGS

Three diocesan directors' meetings were held to discuss and coordinate various activities of the commission. The drafting committee of the text book on *Mystagogical Catechesis* convened twenty meetings for preparing the text and the subcommittee for drafting the book on solemn Holy Communion met three to prepare the draft of the book.

In September, there was a two days' meeting of the Syro Malabar Catechetical Committee, *Vision 2020*, which discussed the current issues and challenges in the ministry of catechesis. The planning committee for the Syro-Malabar Catechetical Congress held two meetings to organize the programme of the forthcoming Catechetical Congress.

### ACTIVITIES

#### 1. Catechetical Congress

Date

Participants

Resource Persons

#### 1. Publication of Text Books

At present the commission brings out catechism text books up to Std. XII in Malayalam and English. All the Syro-Malabar dioceses in Kerala use Malayalam texts, and the dioceses outside Kerala and various centers of catechesis use English, Hindi, Kannada, Tamil and Marathi translations of the texts for their Sunday catechesis. We also published teachers' guide based on our texts in Malayalam and the soft copy of it in English, which is uploaded in our websites. In the last academic year we could also publish three supplementary textbooks on St. Alphonsa, St. Kuriakose Elias Chavara and St. Euphrasia for the Sunday school students.

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After making the necessary correction and adaptation based on the observations of the Synod of Bishops, suggestions from various diocesan centers and subject experts, the drafting committee of the text book on Mystagogical Catechesis could prepare the text book, which is now titled: *SyroMalabar sabhayude aradhanakrama viswasapariseelanam*. It will



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be officially published during the current session of the Synod of Bishops. Last eight years, the Synodal Commissions for Catechesis and Liturgy have been earnestly assisting in the process of drafting it. Within this period of time, there were held more than 200 meetings to draft and discuss it. At this time we remember with gratitude those who contributed their time and knowledge for it in the last eight years of its drafting period. We earnestly appeal to the Synodal Fathers to do the needful so that the book may reach the hands of our faithful.

The Synodal Commission for Catechesis could sign an agreement with the Vicariate of the Northern Arabia to print and use the Syro Malabar Catechetical Text book series there, subject to certain conditions. We recall with deep gratitude the mediatory role played by the Major Archbishop in this regard. Bishop Mar Jacob Mananodath, the Chairman of the Commission visited Kuwait in July 2015, took classes for catechists at three centers and had a meaningful discussion with them. The teachers over there are zealous. The classes are well organized and conducted.

## 2. Power Point Presentation of the Text Books

As a teaching aid to catechists we could prepare the Power Point presentation DVD of the catechism text for standard I to XII in Malayalam and English. We hope that this will make the catechism classes more active, attractive, appealing, and create better interest among the students in Sunday classes. We have also uploaded these in our website and provided the facility to download it from our website.

## 3. Training Programmes in Dioceses, Major Seminaries and Migrant Centers

Under the initiative of the SMCC we could conduct training programmes in more than 90 centers for catechists in India and abroad. SMCC could give training programmes for all the catechists in Syro-Malabar Catholic Eparchy of Melbourne, Australia and also for the Latin and Syro-Malabar catechists in Kuwait. The topics included, Catechetical ministry of

the Church, role of catechists, our text books, *Call and Response* - the catechetical directory of the Church, Catechetical Vision of the Syro-Malabar Church, *Catechism of the Catholic Church* and *Youcat*. We could also conduct seminars on the catechetical vision of the Syro-Malabar Church in Mary Matha Major Seminary, Thrissur and St. Ephrem Major Seminary, Satna. There will be held a seminar in Ruhalya Major Seminary, Ujjain, in November 2015.



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### 4. *Prathibhasangamam*

In the wake of the appreciation of the *Prathibhasangamam* among the students, this year we conducted the fourth *Prathibhasangamam*. The gathering for three days of the selected students who made outstanding performance in the XII standard of our Sunday schools in various dioceses in Kerala was held from 26<sup>th</sup> to 28<sup>th</sup> December 2014 at Mount St. Thomas. 52 students from 13 dioceses participated in the Syro Malabar Church level *Prathibhasangamam*. After evaluating the intellectual, spiritual and social maturity of the participants through various levels of programmes, the Major Archbishop distributed the awards to ten students who were selected for special merit awards.

A three day get-together of the selected students of the 7<sup>th</sup> standard from various eparchies was held from 19<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup> May, 2015 at Mount St. Thomas. There were 51 participants from 13 eparchies. George Joseph Karakunnel (Diocese of Kothamangalam) and Sherin Joseph (Archdiocese of Trichur) were selected for special merit award.

We keep in contact with the participants of the *Prathibhasangamam* and hope that within a few years we will be able to create a group of youngsters who can contribute creatively and give powerful witness to the faith formation ministry of our Church.

### 5. Animation DVDs on Catechism Text Books

Youngsters are more interested in watching videos and animation CDs than reading a book. Therefore SMCC is trying for visual presentation of our text books by presenting it through pictures and animation. In it all the 15 chapters of our text books for each class is presented with a programme of 90 minutes duration. By watching this DVD one can hear and see the content of the text book. The DVDs up to the first four standards has been released and those for higher classes will be released soon. We hope that this will help us to make our

catechetical ministry more effective and attractive. It is well appreciated by the students, teachers and parents.

## 6. Documentary Films on the Saints of Our Church

Besides the supplementary text on the saints of our Church the commission could also prepare documentary CDs about them with a duration of 30minutes. The CDs are already handed over to the diocesan directors. There is also facility to download it from our website.



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## 7. Catechesis through Internet

In the era of new media, we are also trying to use the new media in our catechetical ministry. By using the website, [syromalabarcatechesis.org](http://syromalabarcatechesis.org), we are trying to support the catechists by supplying various teaching aids. Now they can easily download teachers' guide, short clips, power point presentation, Catechetical documents, articles on our catechism textbooks, *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, *Youcat*, *Second Vatican Council*, Sunday Homilies, etc. There is also provision for asking questions. A team to answer them is available.

## 8. Margam (DVD)

The responsibility of the distribution of the *Margam*, DVD has been entrusted to the Catechetical Commission. We could so far distribute its 9600 copies.

## FINANCIAL STATUS

The main financial source for the functioning of the Commission is the income received from the sale of textbooks. At present we have Rs.10,00,000 in our FD account and Rs. 57,479 in our saving bank account on March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2015 as per our audited account. A detailed statement of accounts is enclosed with this report.

## OUR FUTURE PLAN

### 1. Publication

The drafting committee of the book on solemn Holy Communion could prepare the draft of the text and it is ready to be presented before the honourable members of the Synod of our

Church. We are also preparing a text book for those who are studying in the kindergarten. To get more acceptances of it, we are preparing its animation DVD also.

On the basis of the demands from our diocesan directors we are also drafting a supplementary text book with questions and answers on various topics, which the youth usually ask in their classes, as a hand book for the youth and teachers. We hope that we can publish these books within a short time.



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## 2. Teaching Aids

To make the catechism class more attractive and effective, and to create interest among the students, the Commission is trying to supply various teaching aids to catechists including short video clips, power point presentations, charts, pictures etc. We hope that this will enable the catechists to do their ministry more convincingly and fruitfully.

## 3. Syro-Malabar Catechetical Congress

We have arranged a Catechetical Congress on 25, 26, 27 November, 2015 and a core committee has been formed for conducting the Congress with, Fr. Joly Vadakken, Fr. Jimmy Poochakatt, Fr. Joby Karukaparmpil, Fr. Raphael Akkamattathil and Fr. George Danavelil as members. The committee has already started the preparations for the Congress at various levels. We are expecting the valuable presence and cooperation of the members of the Synod of Bishops.

## 4. An E-Learning Program for the Sunday School Catechists

The Syro-Malabar Synodal Commission for Catechesis is preparing to begin an e-learning programme for the catechists who serve in the Sunday schools. This programme provides a foundational understanding of the catechetical ministry and basic theological formation. The course will provide an opportunity to the participants to update and renew their understanding of Catholic teachings and to be well equipped with the catechetical ministry. The commission will issue certificates to those who successfully complete the programme according to the grade of their marks. Its preliminary preparations are already completed and we hope that we can start it soon.



## 5. *Prathibhasangamam*

Encouraged by the appreciation of the *Prathibhasangamam* among the students, this scholastic year also the Commission has announced *sangamam* for the students of the XII and VII<sup>th</sup> standard. It will be conducted on 21,22and 23<sup>rd</sup> December 2015 for the XII standard and that for VII standard will be in 2016, May.



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## 6. DVD on Catechism Text Books

In the wake of the good reception of the DVD on catechism text books among the parents, students and teachers, we are trying to prepare DVD on Catechism text books for IX<sup>th</sup> and X<sup>th</sup> standards also. We are also trying to prepare more catechetical short clips and power point presentations.

## 7. Smart Classrooms

Consequent upon the wide acceptance of smart classrooms in secular schools we are also thinking about the possibility of smart class rooms for Sunday schools also. There was a discussion and presentation on it in our diocesan Directors' meeting. Even though it is comparatively expensive, we have to think about it seriously and negotiations with the team of those who prepare the smart classrooms are going on.

## 8. Resource Team Training Programmes

The Synodal Commission for Catechesis has arranged a training programme on *SyroMalabar sabhayude aradhanakrama viswasapariseelanm*, on 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> September for the diocesan directors and resource team, who can facilitate proper training of the catechists at the diocesan level. Moreover SMCC has prepared a team of experts to conduct training programmes at diocesan centers /migrants centers for the catechists and conducting orientation programmes for the parents.

We take this opportunity to express our sincere gratefulness to Mar Jacob Manathodath, Chairman of the Catechetical Commission, Mar Lawrence Mukkuzhy and Mar Joseph Pandarasseril, Episcopal members of the Commission for their guidance and unstinted support for the activities of the Commission. In a special way we express our sincere



gratitude to Mar George Cardinal Alencherry, Major Archbishop, all the Bishops of the Synod, Diocesan directors, members and staff of Mount St. Thomas for their words of encouragement and wholehearted cooperation. Expecting your continued support and seeking your valuable prayers and blessings,

# Syro-Malabar Catechetical Commission

Mar Jacob Manathodath (*Chairman*) Yours faithfully,

Fr. George Danavelil (*Secretary*)

10.08.2015

Mar Lawrence Mukkuzhy (*Member*)

Mar Joseph Pandarasseril (*Member*)

Fr. George Danavelil

Secretary