

REPORT OF THE MAJOR ARCHIEPISCOPAL COMMISSION FOR CATECHESIS . 2013-2014

The Syro-Malabar Major Archiepiscopal Commission for catechesis is glad to present, before the honorable members of the Synod of Bishops of the Syro-Malabar Church, the report regarding its main activities from August 2013-July 2014.

MEETINGS

Three diocesan directors' meetings were held to discuss and coordinate various activities of the commission. Besides, the expert committee of the SMCC convened three meetings and the drafting committee of the text book on Mystagogical Catechesis had convened fourteen meetings for preparing the draft of the text.

ACTIVITIES

1. Publication of Text Books

At present the commission publishes catechism text books up to Std. XII in Malayalam and English. All the Syro-Malabar dioceses in Kerala use Malayalam text and dioceses outside Kerala and various centers of catechesis use English, Hindi, Kannada, Tamil and Marathi translations of the text for their Sunday catechesis. We are really happy to inform you that by this year the catechetical committee for the North Indian missions published the Hindi translation and the Catechetical department of the Belthangady diocese published the Kannada translation of textbooks up to Std XII. On this occasion we extend our sincere thanks to Bishop Sebastian Vadakkal, Bishop Lawrence Mukkuzhy, other members of the catechetical committee and all the experts who contributed to the publication of these textbooks. We also published teachers' guide based on our texts in Malayalam and the soft copy of it in English.

2. Competitions for Catechists and Sunday School Students

In connection with the year of faith celebration we have conducted an essay competition for religious sisters and lay catechists on 'Second Vatican Council and the catechetical ministry of the Church'. For the Sunday school students there was a power point presentation competition based on our textbooks. The awards were distributed on 28th August 2013.

3. 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. We hope that this will make the catechism classes more attractive, appealing and create better interest among the students in Sunday classes.

4. Training Programs in Dioceses and Migrant Centers

Under the initiative of the SMCC we could conduct training programs in more than 56 centers for catechists in India and abroad. The topics included, Catechetical ministry of the Church, role of catechists, our text books, Call and Response - the catechetical directory of the Church, Catechism of the Catholic Church and *YouCat*.

5. Prathibhasangamam

In the wake of the appreciation of the *Prathibhasangamam* among the students, this year we conducted the third *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 26th to 28th December 2013 at Mount St. Thomas. 51 students from 13 dioceses participated in the Syro Malabar Church level *Prathibhasangamam*. After evaluating the intellectual, spiritual and social maturity of the participants through the various levels of programs, the Major Archbishop distributed the awards to the ten students who were selected for special merit awards.

Three day's get-together of the selected students of the 7th standard from various eparchies, was held from 13th to 15th May, 2014 at Mount St. Thomas. There were 52 participants from 13 eparchies. Denic Sravan Mankuzha (Diocese of Manathavady)) and Kumari Jesirin Maria Francis (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.

6. DVD on Catechism text books

Youngsters are more interested in watching videos and using internet 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 program of 90 minutes duration. By watching this DVD one can hear and see the text book. We hope that this will help us to make our catechetical ministry more effective and attractive. The DVD for first standard has been released and those for higher classes will be release soon.

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, 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 and there is a team to answer them.

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. 30,00,000 in our FD account and Rs. 8,25,735 in our saving bank account on March 31st as per our audited account. From the account of the SMCC we could contribute Rs. 5,00,000 for the production of the documentary film on our Church. A detailed form of accounts is enclosed with this report.

OUR FUTURE PLAN

1. Publication

In the wake of the forthcoming Canonization of Blessed Kuriakose Elias Chavara and Blessed Euphrasia we have decided to publish a supplementary textbook about them for the Sunday school students.

The drafting committee of the text book on Mystagogical Catechesis already prepared the first draft of the book. By making the necessary correction and adaptation based on the suggestions from various diocesan centers and subject experts, the drafting committee could prepare the revised draft of the text and it is ready to be presented before the honorable members of the synod of our Church. We hope that we can publish it soon.

2. Teaching Aids

To make the catechism class more attractive and create interest in it 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 enrich the catechists to do their ministry more effectively and fruitfully.

3. *Prathibhasangamam*

In the wake of the appreciation of the *Prathibhasangamam* among the students, in this scholastic year also the commission has announced *sangamam* for the students of the XII and

VIIth standard. Church level *sangamamm* will be conducted on 26, 27 and 28th December 2014 for the XII standard and that for VII standard will be in 2015, May 14, 15 and 16.

4. 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 higher classes also. We are also trying to prepare more catechetical short clips and power point presentations.

5. Training Programs

In the coming year we are planning to conduct more training programs to form a 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 programs at diocesan centers /migrants centers for the catechists. In September 26th and 27th we have arranged a *silpasala* for the diocesan directors and resource team.

To get a wider acceptance for our catechetical directory, *Call and Response*, in this year we are translating it into Malayalam. We hope that the Malayalam version will help the people to understand the catechetical vision of our Church more clearly.

A Syro Malabar catechetical congress in 2015 is also in our agenda.

At this juncture, we remember with gratitude Mar Pauly Kannoorkadan, who was the Episcopal member of the Commission for the last two years and Mar Bosco Puthur, former Curia Bishop, for their support and encouragement. We extend our cordial welcome to Mar Lawrence Mukkuzhy, the new Episcopal member of the Commission.

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, members and staff of Mount St. Thomas for their words of encouragement and wholehearted cooperation. Expecting your continued support and imploring your valuable prayers and blessings,

Yours faithfully,

13.08.2014

Fr. George Danavelil

Secretary