

# **A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE CATHOLIC DIOCESES IN INDIA IN THE WAKE OF THE UNIVERSAL JURISDICTION OF THE ORIENTAL CHURCHES**

**Joseph Varghese Kureethara, CMI<sup>♦</sup>**  
*Christ University, Bangalore*

## **Abstract**

Christ as the perfect revelation of God the Father, established the Church so that it continues and spreads His revelation. After his Ascension, his Apostles and disciples and their successors zealously continued his mission of revealing God. The command given by Christ was to “go, and teach all nations” (Mt 28:19). Although Jesus settled the dispute among his Apostles about who the greatest among them was (Lk 9:46), as an institution of human beings, the issue of supremacy always surfaced among Christians. After the reestablishment of the Church as a respectable organization from the fourth century, the Roman Church exerted its control over other Churches in every aspect. As an Apostolic Church, the Church of St Thomas Christians in India was far away from the direct control of other Churches for a very long time. While maintaining its Catholicity, it preserved its unique expressions of faith in Liturgy, Law and Life. The great colonial and missionary enterprises from the fifteenth century and the accompanied lusitization efforts had its severest impact among the St Thomas Christians of India. A seemingly well laid out plan by the Roman Church effected in it losing the pan-India jurisdiction, right to evangelization and self governance.

---

<sup>♦</sup>**Dr Fr Joseph Varghese Kureethara, CMI** is Associate Professor of Mathematics at Christ University, Bangalore. He holds a PhD in Mathematics from Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, Tamil Nadu. This article was originally published in *The Way of Life*, Paulachan Kochappilly, Geo Pallikunnel and Joseph Varghese Kureethara, ed. Kottayam: Denha Publications, 2011, 280-298. Email: joseph.kureethara@cmi.in

“A rich man does wrong, and he even adds reproaches; a poor man suffers wrong, and he must add apologies. A rich man will exploit you if you can be of use to him, but if you are in need he will forsake you. If you own something, he will live with you; he will drain your resources and he will not care. When he needs you he will deceive you, and he will smile at you and give you scope. He will speak to you kindly and say, ‘What do you need?’ He will shame you with his foods, until he has drained you two or three times, and finally he will deride you. Should he see you afterwards, he will forsake you, and shake his head at you” (Sirach 13: 3-7).

### **A Rite with Restricted Rights in Its Motherland**

Who needs All India Jurisdiction? Why are Syro Malabars so greedy? Why are they not now content with the occasional establishments of eparchies which always satisfied some dioceses or some religious congregations, or some splinter groups of them? Let us ponder how the Roman Church was very calculating in establishing itself in India or rather “conquering” India, in similar manner as that in which it has established itself in the whole world! It may be doubted that in between the ritual, regional and egoistic quarrel among the St Thomas Christians, the Roman Church attained what it wanted. One who is aware of the history of the Church in India can find a parallel with the establishment of Latin dioceses in India and the colonization of the continents Africa, Australia and America by the superpowers.

Year	Number of Syriac diocesan priests
1599	200
1627	300
1860	418

They identified the land mass, took the map of it, master-plan was chalked out and colonized it phase by phase. Today, observing the number and strength of Latin dioceses in India, one may question that Rome simply took the map of India, identified a city and attached certain districts adjacent to it to create a diocese, because many dioceses have only a few thousands of faithful. But it was not just that alone. It established the dioceses by a systematic dividing of the Political Map of India in the last 150 years.

### **A Rite with Extended Rights**

After arriving in India, the European missionaries started preaching in various pockets including places where Christianity was

already active. This is evident from the histories of the dioceses of Madras-Mylapore, Kottar, Cochin, Kollam and Verapoly. Recent researches reveal that the so-called mass baptisms in the Carnatic Coast in the sixteenth century were mostly Latinization rather than real baptisms.<sup>1</sup> In 1533, the first Latin Diocese in India was established in Goa. (There are some records that suggest that Kollam (Quilon) is the first diocese).<sup>2</sup> In 1558, the second Latin Diocese, Cochin, was established. There were no native clergy in these two dioceses but Syrians.<sup>3</sup> And, in 1599, for the indigenous Church of India, the saddest of all the incidents that had happened and was to happen, took place in the form of the Synod of Diamper.<sup>4</sup> This was on the pretext of Catholicizing the natives! (A comparable act is done secretly by Pentecostal groups nowadays... baptizing the baptized in the name of true salvation!) Records suggest that there were around 200 Syriac clergy at that time! Neither Rome nor Lisbon thought of granting an eparchy to a community with 200 clergy, or recognizing or trying to understand the type of Christianity already existing in India and allowing it grow in its own way. With the support of the Portuguese forces,<sup>5</sup> the Archbishop of Goa could almost wipe out the existing systems in the land of St Thomas. The Syriac bishops who were serving them were dubbed as heretics and the customs and traditions of the land as pagan. The priests were never directed or oriented towards missionary work, even though groups of missionaries were shipped in with every vessel that arrived at the Indian ports.

In 1637, under the patronage of Akbar, the diocese of the Great Moghul (present Bombay) was established without a single native clergy. Reliable sources suggest that there were around 300 Syriac clergy in 1627.<sup>6</sup> In 1642, the Latin diocese of Mylapore (Madras) was erected even after the Portuguese themselves testified to the presence of the tomb of the Apostle St Thomas.<sup>7</sup> In 1709, diocese of Verapoly

---

<sup>1</sup>Cosme Jose Costa, *Apostolic Christianity in Goa and in the West Coast*, Goa: Xaverian Publications Pilar, 2009.

<sup>2</sup><http://www.quilondiocese.org>

<sup>3</sup>Alex Paul Urumbakal, *Vocations in India, Volume II, The Clergy*, Kottayam: Oriental Institute of Religious Studies, India, 1988, 271.

<sup>4</sup>Jonas Thaliath, *The Synod of Diamper* (Reprint), Bangalore: Dharmaram Vidya Kshetram, 1999.

<sup>5</sup>P. Kurian, *The Orthodoxy of the St. Thomas Christians*, Thiruvananthapuram: Bhaskara Press, 1908, 11.

<sup>6</sup>Urumbakal, *Vocations in India, Volume II, The Clergy*.

<sup>7</sup>George Nedungatt, *Quest for the Historical Thomas, Apostle of India: A Re-reading of Evidence*, Bangalore: Theological Publications in India, 2008, 308-312.

was established with the intention of Latinizing the remaining Syrians. Several Syriac Christian centres on the entire West Coast of India up to Kanyakumari were completely Latinized.

The dioceses of Tibet-Hindustan (Agra), Bengal (Calcutta), Madurai (Trichy), Visakhapattanam and Hyderabad were established between 1820 and 1851. Remember, in 1831, the CMI Congregation was established and many a Syriac clergy found solace in that. Between 1600 and 1850, the Syriac Church was passing through the hardest of all times. Had there been a proper intervention by Rome, the state of the Church in India would have been much different. In 1870, the diocese of Krishnagar (Central Bengal) was formed. In 1871, the illustrious leader of the Syrians, Fr Kuriakose Elias Chavara, passed away. As per Statistics there were 418 Syriac Clergy in 1860. Neither Fr Kuriakose was made a bishop nor he nor his followers were allowed to go outside the territory of the diocese of Verapoly by the missionaries themselves. But very tactically the Roman authorities used Fr Kuriakose Elias and his confreres to deport bishops Rocos and Melus in pretence of loyalty to the Roman Pontiff. According to the Report of the Delegate Apostolic of India, Mgr Ladislao Michael Zaleski, there was not a single Saint Thomas Christian qualified to be bishop.<sup>8</sup>

### **Establishment of the Latin Hierarchy**

In 1886, the Latin hierarchy in India was established with the erection of seven more new (arch) dioceses. In total, after establishing 18 Latin (arch)dioceses in India, Rome was merciful enough to establish two vicariates for the Syrians in the form of Thrissur and Changanaseri (Kottayam) with their heads as two Latins!<sup>9</sup> By the establishment of Thrissur and Changanaseri (Kottayam), Rome made sure that Syrians would not go beyond the rivers Pamba and Bharathapuzha as Syrians. If at all they wanted to cross these rivers, they were no longer Syrians, but Latins. Even now, this is the situation by and large. People who had gone beyond this limit were the so-called migrant Syrians. Migrants in one's own land! Only by 1896, did Rome feel that some natives were 'mature' enough to be bishops. One more vicariate, viz., Ernakulam was established and

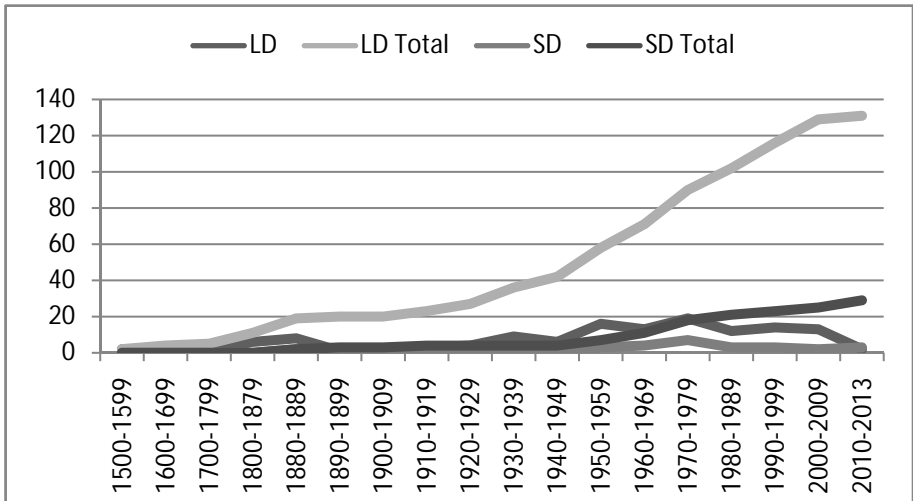
---

<sup>8</sup>Urumbackal, *Vocations in India, Volume II, The Clergy*, 246.

<sup>9</sup>It could be a strange coincidence that even when the Syro Malabar Church became a Major Archiepiscopal Church (1992), the first three heads chosen by Rome were of strong Latin background, viz., Major Archbishop Antony Padiyara, Pontifical Delegate Archbishop Abraham Kattumana and Major Archbishop Varkey Vithayathil CSSR.

three native bishops were appointed in the three vicariates. Between 1896 and 1947, not a single eparchy was established for the Syrians except that of Kottayam for the Southists, which was more of a personal and exclusive one. Apart from CMI and CMC congregations, various religious congregations were founded during this period. None of them was mature enough to do mission work outside the proper territory as Syrians! It seems that the Universal Command of Jesus (Mt 28:18-20) is not for Oriental Catholics!

<b>Timeline of Establishment of (Arch)dioceses of Syro Malabar and Latin Churches in India</b>				
<b>Period</b>	<b>Number of Latin (arch)dioceses</b>	<b>Growth rate</b>	<b>Number of Syro Malabar (arch)dioceses</b>	<b>Growth rate</b>
1500-1599	2	2	0	0
1600-1699	2	4	0	0
1700-1799	1	5	0	0
1800-1879	6	11	0	0
1880-1889	8	19	2	2
1890-1899	1	20	1	3
1900-1909	0	20	0	3
1910-1919	3	23	1	4
1920-1929	4	27	0	4
1930-1939	9	36	0	4
1940-1949	6	42	0	4
1950-1959	16	58	3	7
1960-1969	13	71	4	11
1970-1979	19	90	7	18
1980-1989	12	102	3	21
1990-1999	14	116	3	23
2000-2009	13	129	2	25
2010-2013	2	131	3	29
<b>Total</b>	<b>129</b>		<b>27</b>	
<b>LD - Number of Latin (arch)dioceses</b> <b>SD - Number of Syro Malabar (arch)dioceses</b>				



### Golden Era of Evangelization in India

The period between 1896 and 1947 saw a huge growth in vocations among the Syrians. In India, there were 673 diocesan clergy in 1924. Hundreds of men and women joined Latin dioceses and religious congregations outside Kerala. Because of this, 22 new Latin (arch)dioceses were established. Many dioceses and religious congregations had more Syrians than native Latins, both in the form of clerics as well as faithful. In total, there were 40 Latin (arch)dioceses and just 4 Syriac eparchies in India when the British left.

### Establishment of Chanda, the First Syro Malabar Eparchy Outside Kerala

In the next ten years, there was just a single eparchy established for Syrians outside the proper territory, viz., Tellichery. Pala and Kothamangalam were formed out of Changanasery and Ernakulam, respectively. On the contrary, during the same period 18 new (arch)dioceses were established for the Latin Rite Christians, either by bifurcating the existing dioceses or by extending the boundaries for missionary activities due to the inflow of hundreds of priests and religious of Syriac origin. Many dioceses were given a vast geographical area but with only a few thousands of members. But, for long, Changanasery, Ernakulam, Pala and Kothamangalam were the largest dioceses in India for the number of priests, religious and the faithful. Between 1960 and 1969, there were 13 new Latin (arch)dioceses. The Syro Malabar Church got its first four mission territories outside the proper territory during this period, viz.,

Chanda, Sagar, Satna and Ujjain. One must remember that this was the time when the Second Vatican Council was in session.

### **Indian Dioceses after II Vatican Council**

The aftermath of Vatican II had some impact. During 1970-1977, six eparchies were established, out of which Bijnor, Jagadapur and Rajkot were new mission eparchies, and Palghat and Mananthavady were appended with some new mission areas. Though this was the period in which the Syro Malabar Church obtained the highest number of eparchies, 16 more dioceses were added to the Latin Church in India in just seven years. During the Pontificate of John Paul II, Latin dioceses in India were increased more than five times that of the eparchies of the Syro Malabar Church. Between 1978 and 2006, there were just seven Syro Malabar Eparchies whereas there were 39 (arch)dioceses created for the Latin Church.

### **Exploited Missionary Zeal of Mar Toma Nazranis**

It seems that the approach of Rome was very systematic. It achieved what it wanted. Out of the 136 (arch)dioceses in India, all but a few of these dioceses were populated through the vigorous evangelization of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. A study by Alex Paul Urumbackal<sup>10</sup> finds that, out of the 8279 diocesan clergy in India, 4977 were of Latin rite and 3005 were of Syro Malabar origin and out of the 5400 religious priests, only 2302 were of Latin Origin whereas 3000 were of Syro Malabar Origin. The number of women-religious was several times higher.<sup>11</sup> These facts imply a lot. Even though, many dioceses and religious congregations in India were of men and women of Syro Malabar Origin, their enthusiasm for mission work was exploited by way of using them as instruments of spreading the Latin Church in India. Even some of the religious congregations of the Syro Malabar Church, viz., CMC, FCC, SABS, SH, CHF, etc. had to follow the Latin Rite to work outside Kerala from the very beginning. Even now, men or women, religious or diocesan, have to follow the Latin Rite to do missionary work outside India.

---

<sup>10</sup>The series *Vocations in India* by Fr Alex Paul Urumbackal is a pioneering work in this field.

<sup>11</sup>Urumbackal, Alex Paul. *Vocations in India, Volume I, Religious Women*, Kottayam: Oriental Institute of Religious Studies, India, 1986.

<b>Indigenous Religious Congregations of the Syro Malabar Church till the establishment of the eparchy of Chanda</b>			
<b>Name</b>	<b>Acronym</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Estd</b>
Carmelites of Mary Immaculate	<b>CMI</b>	Men	1831
Congregation of Mother of Carmel	<b>CMC</b>	Women	1866
Franciscan Clarist Congregation	<b>FCC</b>	Women	1888
Sisters of the Visitation of the Blessed	<b>SVM</b>	Women	1892
Sisters of Adoration of the Blessed	<b>SABS</b>	Women	1908
Sacred Heart	<b>SH</b>	Women	1911
Congregation of Holy Family	<b>CHF</b>	Women	1914
Society of the Oblates of the Sacred	<b>OSH</b>	Men	1921
Sisters of the Destitute	<b>SD</b>	Women	1927
Vincentian Congregation	<b>VC</b>	Men	1927
Sisters of St Joseph Congregation	<b>SJC</b>	Women	1928
Congregation of Saint Thérèse of	<b>CST</b>	Men	1931
Missionary Congregation for the	<b>MCBS</b>	Men	1933
Congregation of Sisters of Charity	<b>CSC</b>	Women	1944
Medical Sisters of St Joseph	<b>MSJ</b>	Women	1944
Congregation of the Sisters of	<b>CSN</b>	Women	1948
Congregation of the Sisters of St.	<b>CSM</b>	Women	1948
Assisi Sisters of Mary Immaculate	<b>ASMI</b>	Women	1949
Congregation of Samaritan Sisters	<b>CSS</b>	Women	1961

### **Danger Past, God Forgotten!**

Most of the Latin dioceses in India are of the type of Chanda or Sagar or any other Syro Malabar Mission Eparchies. But why did the Syro Malabar Church have to content itself with just 8 dioceses? This requires deep study for better answer. But I have some serious doubts about the actions of Rome. One of the largest religious congregations in India is the CMI. They were happy when they got Chanda. They were even happier when they got Sagar, Bijnor and Jagdalpur. They were the happiest when they got Rajkot. Five bishops were more than sufficient for the CMI Congregation because even Blessed Kuriakose Elias, the founder of the CMIs, was not made a bishop. MSTs were given Ujjain, CSTs were given Gorakhpur, VCs were given Satna and finally in 2007, MCBS got Bhadravati. These “sweeteners” were



deemed enough for all these major forces in the Syro Malabar Church to keep them quiet.

### **A House Divided against Itself is Brought to Desolation**

The bishops in and around Changanaseri were happy, because Rome was always ready to listen to them and occasionally acted on their suggestions on the issues of the Liturgy. The Ernakulam faction was very happy because their archbishops were made Cardinals successively, a position which should never be an attraction for an Oriental Church. Rome understood the need of each group and fed them accordingly from time to time. In between, because of these minor satisfactions, our bishops and heads of religious congregations were in a slumber, and they never knew or bothered to know what was happening around them. The fact that from the time of the Second Vatican Council (1960s), the Roman Church created 68 (arch)dioceses in India is in itself a testimony to that. Rome helped the St Thomas Christians to continue fighting each other in the name of Liturgy and gifted the warring factions with occasional pleasantries. Because of the slave mentality of the Syro Malabars and of the afore-mentioned reasons, they forgot their legitimate right of an All India Jurisdiction.

### **Might is Right**

Many of the Jesuits, the Salesians, the Fransalians, the Capuchins, the Carmelites, the Claritians, etc., were Syro Malabars, but the Syro Malabars of these great Latin Congregations were more loyal to the Latin Rite than the Latins themselves. It took decades after Vatican II for these congregations to have a Syro Malabar Province. The Jesuits never bothered to have one although they have hundreds of them with Syro Malabar origins. For the name's sake some of them started a Syro Malabar Province; the Jesuits have just a Province based in Kerala, which is 'bi-ritual.' The Syro Malabar Salesians and Jesuits were and are doing zealous missionary work in the North and North-East and many of them were even made provincials and bishops, but all these were for and in the Latin Church. Many North and North-East Dioceses have bishops with Syro Malabar origin but even they are untroubled about the call of the Second Vatican Council.

### **Holy Suppression**

Within a short span of 100 years, the Latin Church in India has established more than 100 dioceses. Is it the real growth of the Church in India? Yes, it is an indicator. But what is the spirit of

Catholicism in this growth? Can anyone counter if someone argues that it was the most cunning way of establishing the Latin Church in India? Yes, Jesus is proclaimed. In the name of Jesus, it was “a holy suppression” if we borrow the words of His Beatitude Myroslav J. Cardinal Lubachivsky.<sup>12</sup> Suppression of a *sui iuris*<sup>13</sup> Church by another *sui iuris* Church. Suppression by a mighty *sui iuris* Church, which has a leader, a system, and a mind to conquer and establish. Over the last 100 years the sterling efforts of the Syro Malabars also were towards the establishment of the Latin Church in India. They were used cleverly or, rather, exploited. The most interesting aspect of this exploitation is that, the people who were thus used were never even aware of this.<sup>14</sup> Instead, they were and are much happier to be part of this because of the pseudo-Catholicism<sup>15</sup> nurtured in their minds while they were being trained.

---

<sup>12</sup>James Arampulickal, *The Pastoral Care of the Syro Malabar Catholic Migrants*, Kottayam: Oriental Institute of Religious Studies, India, 1988, 78.

<sup>13</sup>According to the CCEO, a group of Christian faithful linked in accordance with the law by a hierarchy and expressly or tacitly recognized by the supreme authority of the Church as autonomous is called a *sui iuris* Church.

<sup>14</sup>When Eugene Cardinal Tisserant visited the migrant Syrian settlements in the North of Kerala, a group of Syrian priests working in the then Calicut diocese (Latin) and many Syrian groups submitted memorandums to him telling that they were very happy with the status quo. The same thing had happened when Archbishop Antony Padiyara visited the Syrian settlements in the major cities in India when he was made Apostolic Visitor. Quite recently it has been repeated in Chennai, Delhi and many other European, American and Australian cities. In Bangalore, the archbishop is benevolent enough to erect new parishes if there is a request from a sizeable number of Syrians and with sufficient funds. Syro Malabar bishops, including the Apostolic Visitor, are convinced of this *reasonable* condition set by the Archbishop. But do we need certain number of people to start a parish or service? Do we need a certain number of faithful or parishes to create an eparchy? If this is the case there would not have been several Latin dioceses in India. Do we need at least one Syro Malabar faithful in some locality, for a Syro Malabar priest to begin his mission? It seems that there are multiple standards and definitions for evangelization and missionary work. The Apostolic Constitution *Exsul Familia*, the Church's *Magna Carta* for the migrants, by Pope Pius XII, seems to be applicable only for the Latin Church.

<sup>15</sup>There is a kind of a slavish mentality among the Eastern Catholics to hide their identity in the name of Catholicism, a kind of fear or shame to reveal one's identity. Easterners who work in Latin dioceses in Europe and America struggle to impress others that they are Catholics. In this survival tactic they are ready to look down upon the very special elements of their respective church. I was introduced to many Latin Parishes and Priests in Europe as a Catholic belonging to an Oriental Church. Many a time it was quite an embarrassment for me. Thank God, never was I asked to recite the Creed. Where does the Catholic Church exist? Many forget that it is the Roman Catholic Church, the Syro Malabar Catholic Church, etc., and that no one can become a Catholic unless one becomes a member of one of the *sui iuris* churches.

## Hidden Agenda of the One Rite Movement

Rite<sup>16</sup> is often considered as a taboo. Whoever speaks for Rite is dubbed as sectarian and narrow-minded. At first, this mentality was with the Latins. Then it was spread to Latinized Syrians. Now, it is with the Syrians also. Hence, even the Syriac bishops are ashamed of speaking about the Rite whose guardians they are. For them, Syro Malabar Liturgy is only an extended Latin Liturgy.<sup>17</sup> 'Rite' is more identified now with Malayalam regionalism.<sup>18</sup> In many of the European parishes, parish priests conduct Mass in other languages also. In the UK, for example, many parishes have Masses in all other non-English European languages and in Malayalam and Tamil. Hence, the difference is only in the language. Because of these issues, the philosophy of *Chanda*<sup>19</sup> and the philosophy of *Kalyan*<sup>20</sup> have

---

<sup>16</sup>According to the CCEO, a rite is the liturgical, theological, spiritual and disciplinary patrimony, culture and circumstances of history of a distinct people, by which its own manner of living the faith is manifested in each *sui iuris* Church.

<sup>17</sup>In many dioceses in Kerala and outside, the Qurbana begins, proceeds and ends in the style of a Latin Mass. Priests face the people. The message of Qurbana is often as a gathering around the table for breaking the bread. Spontaneous prayers, prayers and songs from the Latin Mass; Offertory; Hymns from popular albums including films; Omission of several prayers including *G'hanta* prayers; Sharing of the *G'hanta* prayers; Use of Latin Vestments, etc., are common. Naturally, the celebration becomes an extended or distorted Latin Mass. Most of the people including priests consider the word 'Mass' as the English of Qurbana.

<sup>18</sup>Outside of Kerala, the Syro Malabar Qurbana is often identified as the Malayalam Qurbana. Other names are Malayalam Mass, Syro Malabar Mass, Kerala Mass, Kerala Qurbana, etc. Most of the Syro Malabar communities outside of Kerala gather for socialization with Kerala Cultural displays with the exclusive use of Malayalam. The faithful of the North Indian Syro Malabar dioceses would have to learn Malayalam in order to be part of a Syro Malabar gathering. Sometimes the priests and faithful forget the fact that there are non-Malayalam Syro Malabar faithful. Neither the Church nor the local communities have serious thinking about the non-Malayalam life of the faithful. Liturgical, Non-liturgical, Hymn books are translated more often from Malayalam than from the original sources. There is no serious movement on the part of the Church to cater for the needs of the children of the migrants who are brought up in the language and culture of the land. Syro Malabar is no more a Church of Kerala. It is a Universal Church mainly by its Apostolic origin and now also by the presence of its faithful in every nook and corner of the world.

<sup>19</sup>Chanda is the first diocese established outside of Kerala for the Syro Malabar Church. In 1962, it was formed out of some revenue districts of the states of Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh in India. Canonically it is not a personal eparchy. It always functions under the Latin Province. The geographical barrier restricts everybody in that region to become a Syro Malabar or follow the Syro Malabar Rite. It means there is no right of evangelization for the Latin Rite in this area! Anyone who comes from the Latin Rite to do any kind of ministry in Chanda is to be

become one and the same. Hence more *Kalyans* are demanded. *Chanda* is no more relevant. In the name of All India or Universal Jurisdiction, Syro Malabars need more *Kalyans* and *Chicagos*,<sup>21</sup> which is in fact another form of the philosophy of the archdiocese of Kottayam.<sup>22</sup> And this is what the Roman Church wanted! And this is what the theologians of the great religious orders of India planned and propagated directly or indirectly. And this is the philosophy that is implemented by the CCBI.<sup>23</sup> In Kerala the term Rite is referred to the Syro-Malankara Rite.<sup>24</sup> When it comes to India as a whole, the Rite- is either Syro Malabar or Syro-Malankara. The Latin Rite is not mere a rite, it is 'the Church.' Syro Malabar and Syro-Malankara bishops are only ritual bishops. Latin bishops are the 'real' Catholic Bishops. Hence, the conference of Latin Bishops of India is the Conference of Catholic Bishops of India (CCBI).

---

considered in the same way we doubted Rocos and Melus. Practically, It is interesting to note that *Chanda* cannot be expanded but it can only be divided. In 1999, those parts of *Chanda*, in the state of Andhra Pradesh were put together to form the eparchy of Adilabad. Almost all the Latin dioceses in and outside of India are of this nature. There is no right of evangelization for the Syro Malabar Church in those areas! A kind of a monopoly!

<sup>20</sup>The Eparchy of Kalyan was formed in 1988 consisting of the diaspora Syro Malabar faithful in the Mumbai-Pune belt of the state of Maharashtra in India. It is a personal diocese. Practically, it caters to the needs of the existing Syro Malabar faithful who by their choice wanted to be part of this establishment. The existing Latin Rite faithful continued to be in their respective dioceses of the area. Though Kalyan is a personal diocese, in principle, the right of evangelization is equal for Kalyan and other Latin dioceses in the same area. That means any new baptism by a Syro Malabar priest in the diocese has to be in the Syro Malabar Rite and the baptized becomes a member of the Syro Malabar Church.

<sup>21</sup>The Concept of Kalyan was applied in the formation of the St Thomas Syro Malabar Diocese of Chicago. But the question is, is it only for the Syro Malabar faithful living there? What should be the rite followed by the Syro Malabar priests who are in the United States and Canada for any new baptism, if at least one of the parents of the candidate is not from the Latin Rite? Is it possible for a non-Malayali to be a member of the Syro Malabar Church?

<sup>22</sup>The Archieparchy of Kottayam is exclusively for the Knanaya Community called 'Southists' and is co-extensive with the jurisdiction of the Syro Malabar Church. Since the jurisdiction is strictly personal, there is no scope of evangelization for it.

<sup>23</sup>CBCI is Catholic Bishops' Conference of India and CCBI is Conference of Catholic Bishops in India. CBCI is the conference of the bishops of all the three Catholic rites in India but it may be because Latins are the 'real' Catholics, their conference is called CCBI.

<sup>24</sup>Members of Syro-Malankara Catholic Church are identified as *Reethkar* in Malayalam means 'People of the Rite.'

## Personal Jurisdiction: A Tool Misused

With the theological and non-theological cold-war<sup>25</sup> that has happened in the last six decades, the Syro Malabar Church lost its vigour for evangelization either in India or abroad. The Syro Malabars' work in North America or Europe or in the Middle East may be helped by more and more Kalyans and Chicagos in the future. The jurisdiction is going to be only personal. Real jurisdiction is by the Roman Church. If the Roman Church can establish itself in Egypt, Antioch, Ehtiopia, India and thus in the whole world, every *sui iuris* church has this right. A Latin parish is never identified as a 'personal' parish. A Latin Diocese is never named as a 'personal' diocese. It is very interesting to note that in the same city if two Catholic dioceses are there, one diocese is personal and the other is 'the diocese.' But, which parish is not personal? Which diocese is not personal? No Catholic bishop, including a Latin bishop, has authority over a non-Catholic who resides within the geographic boundary of his diocese. For this very reason, the concept and use of the terms 'personal parish' and 'personal diocese' seem to be discriminatory. Can there be preference of evangelization? Syro Malabar bishops call for more 'personal' parishes and dioceses. They never raise their voice for a diocese in Africa because their ecclesiology is much mutilated now. What had happened in India is now happening in Africa.<sup>26</sup> Hundreds of Syro Malabars are exported to Africa to work under Latin dioceses. They baptize for the Roman Church. Because, for the most, the Roman Church is the Catholic Church.

Glory to God in the Highest! Amen.

## Additional References

[1] *Code of Canons of the Eastern Churches (CCEO)*, Bangalore: Theological Publications in India, 2003.

---

<sup>25</sup>Disputes of modernizing the liturgy, Indianization of the Church and liturgy, regional disputes over supremacy, discussions for one rite, etc., were some of the reasons for the so-called cold-war in the Syro Malabar Church.

<sup>26</sup>In October 2009, there was an African Synod. Not a single Syro Malabar priest was a representative in the Synod. There are several Syro Malabar priests and religious working in Africa in various capacities including Seminary Professors, Parish Priests, and Teachers, etc. At present, the Provincial of the TOR is a Syro Malabar. There are several other Syro Malabar faithful living in different parts of Africa. There is a CMI region and a novitiate in Africa. There are several thousands of people baptized by the CMIs in the last three decades. But no CMI is a Syro Malabar in Africa. Hence why should Rome call a CMI who is neither a representative of the Syro Malabar Church nor a Latin to be invited to a Synod?

[2] <http://www.catholic-hierarchy.org>

[3] <http://www.quilondiocese.org>

[4] *The Catholic Directory of India 2005-2006*, Bangalore: Claretian Publications, 2005.

[5] *The Holy Bible – Revised Standard Version Catholic Edition for India*, Bangalore: Theological Publications in India, 1980.

### Syro Malabar (Arch)dioceses in India in the Chronological Order of Year of their Establishment

Name	State	Year	Name	State	Year
Changanaseri <sup>27</sup> (A)	Kerala	1887	Palghat	Kerala	1974
Thrisur (A)	Kerala	1887	Kanjirappally	Kerala	1977
Ernakulam-Angamaly(A)	Kerala	1896	Rajkot	Gujarat	1977
Kottayam (A)	Kerala	1911	Irinjalakuda	Kerala	1978
Palai	Kerala	1950	Gorakhpur	Uttar Pradesh	1984
Tellichery (A)	Kerala	1953	Thamarassery	Kerala	1986
Kothamangalam	Kerala	1956	Kalyan	Maharashtra	1988
Chanda	Maharashtra	1962	Thuckalay	Tamil Nadu	1996
Sagar	Madhya Pradesh	1968	Adilbad	Andhra Pradesh	1999
Ujjain	Madhya Pradesh	1968	Belthangady	Karnataka	1999
Satna	Madhya Pradesh	1968	Idukki	Kerala	2003
Bijnor	Uttarkhand	1972	Bhadravathi	Karnataka	2007
Jagdarpur	Chattisgarh	1972	Mandya	Karnataka	2010
Mananthavady	Kerala	1973	Ramanathapuram	Tamil Nadu	2010
			Faridabad	New Delhi	2012

### Latin (Arch)dioceses in India in the chronological order of year of their establishment

Name	State	Year	Name	State	Year
Goa and Daman (A)	Goa	1533	Bangalore	Karnataka	1940
Cochin	Kerala	1558	Guntur	Andhra Pradesh	1940

<sup>27</sup>Erected as Kottayam and then moved to Changanaseri.

Bombay <sup>28</sup> (A)	Maharashtra	1637	Jhansi	Uttar Pradesh	1940
Madras-Mylapore (A)	Tamil Nadu	1642	Lucknow	Uttar Pradesh	1940
Verapoly (A)	Kerala	1709	Ahmedabad	Gujarat	1949
Agra <sup>29</sup> (A)	Uttar Pradesh	1820	Bellary	Karnataka	1949
Calcutta (Bengal) (A)	West Bengal	1834	Dibrugarh <sup>30</sup>	Assam	1951
Tiruchirappally (Madurai)	Tamil Nadu	1846	Raigarh	Chattisgarh	1951
Vishakhapatnam (A)	Andhra Pradesh	1850	Sambalpur	Orissa	1951
Hyderabad (A)	Andhra Pradesh	1851	Alleppey	Kerala	1952
Krishnagar (Central Bengal)	West Bengal	1870	Indore	Madhya Pradesh	1952
Allahabad	Uttar Pradesh	1886	Jalpaiguri	West Bengal	1952
Coimbatore	Tamil Nadu	1886	Thanjavur	Tamil Nadu	1952
Kollam	Kerala	1886	Warangal	Andhra Pradesh	1952
Mangalore	Karnataka	1886	Belgaum	Karnataka	1953
Mysore	Karnataka	1886	Vellore	Tamil Nadu	1953
Pondicherry-Cuddalore (A)	Puducherry	1886	Gwalior	Madhya Pradesh	1954
Poona	Maharashtra	1886	Amravati	Maharashtra	1955
Nagpur (A)	Maharashtra	1887	Ooty	Tamil Nadu	1955
Kumbakonam	Tamil Nadu	1899	Trivandrum	Kerala (A)	1955
Simla-Chandigarh <sup>31</sup>	Chandigarh	1910	Meerut	Uttar Pradesh	1956
Ajmer	Rajasthan	1913	Delhi	Delhi, Haryana	1959
Patna (A)	Bihar	1919	Darjeeling	West Bengal	1962
Calicut	Kerala	1923	Dumka	West Bengal	1962
Tuticorin	Tamil Nadu	1923	Jamshedpur	Jharkhand	1962
Ranchi (A)	Jharkhand	1927	Chikmagalur	Karnataka	1963
Nellore	Andhra Pradesh	1928	Bhopal (A)	Madhya Pradesh	1964
Kottar	Tamil Nadu	1930	Raipur (A)	Chattisgarh	1964
Salem	Tamil Nadu	1930	Tezpur	Assam	1964

<sup>28</sup>Formerly Bijapur or Great Moghul.

<sup>29</sup>Former Tibet-Hindustan.

<sup>30</sup>Spread also in Arunachal Pradesh.

<sup>31</sup>Spread also in Haryana, Punjab and Himachal Pradesh.

	Nadu				
Vijayapuram	Kerala	1930	Bhagalpur	Bihar, Jharkhand	1965
Jabalpur	Madhya Pradesh	1932	Baroda	Gujarat	1966
Shillong (A)	Meghalaya	1934	Kurnool	Andhra Pradesh	1967
Indore	Madhya Pradesh	1935	Balasore	Orissa	1968
Cuttack-Bhuvaneshwar (A)	Orissa	1937	Agarthala	Tripura	1969
Vijayawada	Andhra Pradesh	1937	Aizawl	Mizoram	1969
Madurai (A)	Tamil Nadu	1938	Varanasi	Uttar Pradesh	1970
Daltonganj	Jharkhand	1971	Bareilly	Uttar Pradesh	1989
Jullundur <sup>32</sup>	Punjab	1971	Guwahati (A)	Assam	1992
Imphal (A)	Manipur	1973	Gumla	Jharkhand	1993
Kohima	Nagaland	1973	Simdega	Jharkhand	1993
Palayamkottai	Tamil Nadu	1973	Srikakulam	Andhra Pradesh	1993
Tura	Meghalaya	1973	Hazaribag	Jharkhand	1995
Berhampur	Orissa	1974	Khunti	Jharkhand	1995
Cuddapah	Andhra Pradesh	1976	Neyyattinkara	Kerala	1996
Eluru	Andhra Pradesh	1976	Asansol	West Bengal	1997
Karwar	Karnataka	1976	Bagdogra	West Bengal	1997
Nalgonda	Andhra Pradesh	1976	Dharmapuri	Tamil Nadu	1997
Ambikapur	Chhattisgarh	1977	Bettiah	Bihar	1998
Aurangabad	Maharashtra	1977	Kannur	Kerala	1998
Baruipur	West Bengal	1977	Purnea	Bihar	1998
Khandwa	Madhya Pradesh	1977	Vasai	Maharashtra	1998
Jammu-Srinagar	Jammu Kashmir	1978	Bongaigaon	Assam	2000
Raiganj	West Bengal	1978	Chingleput	Tamil Nadu	2002
Rourkela	Orissa	1979	Gandhinagar (A)	Gujarat	2002

<sup>32</sup>Spread also in Himachal Pradesh.



Muzaffarpur	Bihar	1980	Jhabua	Madhya Pradesh	2002
Diphu	Assam	1983	Dindigul	Tamil Nadu	2003
Port Blair	Andaman	1984	Buxar	Bihar	2005
Udaipur	Rajasthan	1984	Gulbarga	Karnataka	2005
Punalur	Kerala	1985	Itanagar	Arunachal Pradesh	2005
Kottapuram	Kerala	1987	Jaipur	Rajasthan	2005
Nashik	Maharashtra	1987	Miao	Arunachal Pradesh	2005
Sindhudurg	Maharashtra	1987	Jashpur	Chattisgarh	2006
Sivagangai	Tamil Nadu	1987	Jowai	Meghalaya	2006
Khammam	Andhra Pradesh	1988	Nongstoin	Meghalaya	2006
Shimoga	Karnataka	1988	Udupi	Karnataka	2012
			Sultanpet	Kerala	2013

### Syro Malankara (Arch)dioceses in India in the Chronological Order of Year of their Establishment

Name	State	Year	Name	State	Year
Thiruvalla (A)	Kerala	1932	Muvattupuzha	Kerala	2003
Trivandrum (A)	Kerala	1932	Mavelikara	Kerala	2007
Bathery	Kerala	1978	Puthoor	Karnataka	2010
Marthandom	Tamil Nadu	1996	Pathanamthitta	Kerala	2010