

EPISCOPACY IN MALANKARA AND THE EPISCOPAL CONSECRATION SERVICES OF THE MALANKARA MAR THOMA SYRIAN CHURCH



JUHANON MAR THOMA

Translation: Rev. Dr. P. G. George

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Publication
**Malankara Mar Thoma Syrian Church
Animation Department**

(English)

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Translation: Rev. Dr. P. G. George

Publisher: Mar Thoma Church Animation Department

Distributors: Mar Thoma Book Depot

Ph: 0469 - 2606090

First Impression (Malayalam) : 1975

Second Impression(Malayalam) : 2016

First Impression (English) : February 2017

No. of Copies: 1000

Editing & Cover Design: Rev. Abraham Varghese (Othara)

Typing & Setting: Animation Creative Suite

Page Layout: Sam Crayons

Printed at: Five Star Offset Printers, Eranakulam

Price: ₹ 100/-



Malankara Mar Thoma Syrian Church

Apostolic See of St. Thomas

DR. JOSEPH MAR THOMA METROPOLITAN

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FOREWORD

As part of the 'holy, catholic and apostolic' church, Mar Thoma Syrian Church of Malabar is blessed with an authentic episcopacy in the Holy See of Apostle Thomas in Malankara. Metropolitan Dr. Juhanon Mar Thoma was a great leader who articulated the history, faith and practice of the Church with utmost care and passion. Our Beloved Metropolitan has turned every hurdle in life to opportunities in articulating his faith in God who called him to this ministry and to take up the leadership of the Mar Thoma Church.

Our Metropolitan, Juhanon Mar Thoma was a teacher by profession, and he published several small books about the history of the Mar Thoma Church, about Sacraments, about the Lord's Prayer and also his experiences like a beautiful garland in 'ormakalum Kuruppukalum'. The book 'Episcopacy in Malankara and the Episcopal Consecrations' (Malayalam) is a careful analysis of the episcopacy of the Mar Thoma Church, and a clear direction to the church in keeping the Episcopal tradition of the church with great ardour and sanctity. As a reformed Malankara church with celibate Episcopacy, we have to be proud of our rich eastern and ecumenical heritage and legacy of an Antiochian lineage.

I am very happy to see that this book, which is republished in Malayalam, to mark the 180th year of the Malankara Reformation is now translated into English by the Rev. Dr. P. G. George and published by the Church Animation Centre as an Illustrated volume. I appreciate the efforts of the Director, Rev. Abraham Varghese to reach out to a larger audience, especially to the members of the Mar Thoma Church in Diaspora. I pray that this volume would enlighten our understanding of the church and engender an earnest desire to know more.

DR. JOSEPH MAR THOMA METROPOLITAN



06.01.2017

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Sabha Secretary's note:

The small book 'Episcopacy in Malankara and the Episcopal Consecrations', written by Dr. Juhanon Mar Thoma during the most turbulent days of the Reformed Syrian Church of Malankara is now republished (in Malayalam) for the reading of the wider public.

This book depicts a journey through the historical trajectories of the episcopal consecrations in the Malankara Church where the Bishops are consecrated in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit and the people declared in unison '*oxios*' which means "he is worthy".

This book has clear descriptions of the Holy See of St. Thomas, the foreign domination (Roman Catholic), Antiochian connection, relationship with Thoziyoor and the Episcopal Consecrations. This book contains an unbiased reading of the Episcopal Consecrations until the year 1975.

In the year (2016) when we celebrate the 180th year of the Malankara Reformation, the re-publication of this book would definitely help us to know more closely the history of the Church and to praise the Triune Lord God who gave us Bishops (pastoral leaders) with wisdom and divine gifts in the Holy Church through the Apostolic laying on of hands.

Juhanon Mar Thoma Metropolitan is a special luminary gifted to the Malankara Church. The Metropolitan is known as the 'Kohinoor Gem of Character'.

He was a teacher who imparted knowledge all through his life and was always eager to teach the members of the Church the history, sacraments and the faith and practices of the Church.

He excelled in the international milieu as a prophet of ecumenism, holding on firmly the moorings of the eastern tradition.

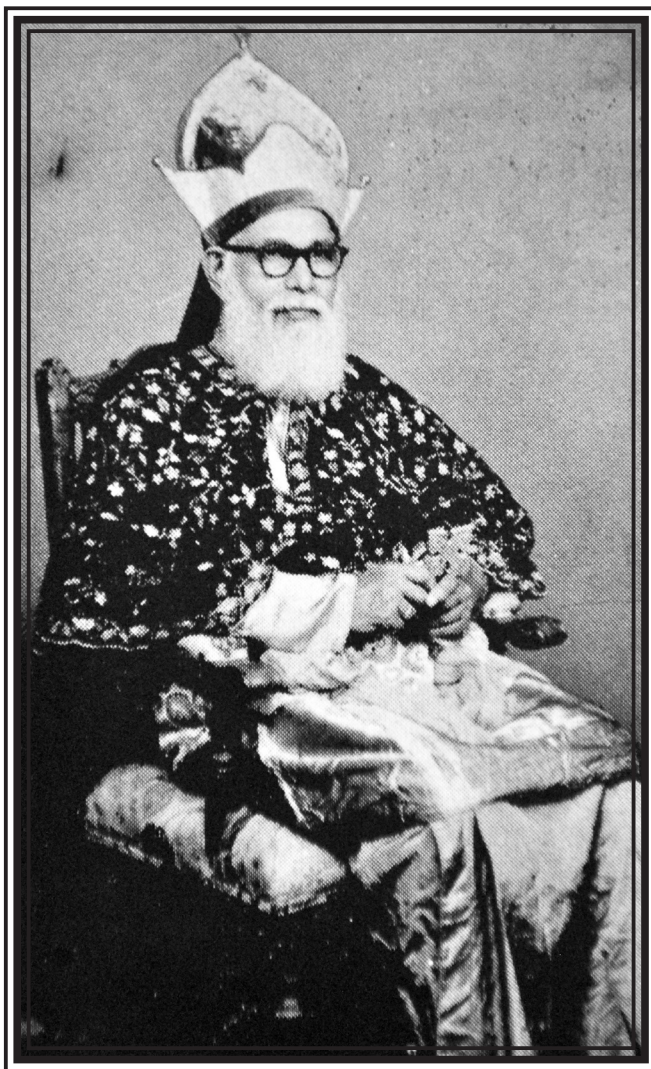
When someone is elevated to the office of an Episcopa, the 'Metropolitan' Celebrant gives him a 'holy staff' and exhorts him as follows: "With this you must ward off wolves that are clearly evident." Thirumeni made earnest effort to fulfil this task. That good shepherd of the flock seriously attempted to teach the people of the church in clear and simple language the truth of the Gospel and exhorted them to distance themselves from false teachings. This book stands as the supreme example of the noble effort of His Grace towards this end.

Thanks remain immeasurable to His Grace the Metropolitan, the Most Rev Dr Joseph Mar Thoma, for giving permission to republish this book. Thanks are due to Rev. Dr. P. G. George, the Dean (Dept. of Research/SATHRI), Senate of Serampore College (University), for his tireless efforts to translate the book from Malayalam. The Church Animation Department is publishing this english translation. A word of special thanks to Rt. Rev. Joseph Mar Barnabas the Chairman of Church Animation Department. Rev. Zachariah John helped us in proof reading and Mr. Sam Joseph, Crayons Media for layout and typesetting and the fivestar offset press, for undertaking the printing of the book.

This book is submitted to the public in anticipation that it would generate encouragement and enthusiasm for the faithful. It would be an impetus to the students of Church history to do further study and would also help the faithful to grow in loyalty and devotion to the Apostolic See of Malankara Church.

Rev. Oommen Philip

Sabha Secretary



JUHANON MAR THOMA

(1892 - 1976)

Preface

One of the subjects of much talk (debate) after the 1975 Episcopal Consecration was that it was Mathews Mar Athanasius who brought the Malankara Church in relationship to the Antiochian Patriarchate. This is not a new allegation, but an old one.

It is to be known that there are a few Marthomites who think this way. It is of no wonder to think this way those who have not read and studied the total history of the Malankara Church.

It is a historical fact that it is Mathews Mar Athanasius is the first one to go to Antioch and received the office of the Bishop from there. In order to get a clear understanding we should be in the known of the context in which this happened, what kind of relationship that the Bishop has made, whether he has made any new connection or entered into any new contract in writing and to see the *Staticon*, which is the Affidavit given by the Patriarch.

After the Episcopal Consecration (1975), I got an opportunity to stay at the Guest house of a factory in Electrogiri near Mulanthuruthy, where one of my friends was a Manager.

I got a few days to peacefully read and to write without the disturbance of motor horn, or away from the sight of buses and without hearing the loud noises from the loudspeakers. Major part of this book was written during those days.

After completing this work, I have given it to the church history scholars like Prof. Titus Varghese and our C. E. Abraham Achen to make necessary correction and then only it was handed over for publication. There was a delay in publication. The issue came for discussion about four or five months ago got settled.

People view the historical incidents from different angles. There were also several publications on issues which we do not have clear historical records (documents). This chapter contains facts taken from such works. I do not dispute, if it is said that this

is written from the point of view of the Mar Thomites. I have not tried to hide facts or to twist arguments. It is to be noted that truth is sometimes very painful.

There are certain facts that are described in this small book, which are not appreciated by the members of the Mar Thoma Church or by members of other churches. Of course, there are views which are acceptable and approved by different groups or divisions. I tried to point out certain facts. I submit the same for the reading of the public.

In this work, I have not done any new historical research. I have referred only to some simple books which are written from time to time in the Orthodox Church, CSI Church, Roman Catholic or the Mar Thoma Church.

This is not meant to be a history book. I tried to highlight the major stages in the development of Episcopacy in the Malankara Church.

Various Episcopal churches of Malankara has one single tradition. There is a 'net work' which unites the churches.

Juhanon Mar Thoma

Poolatheen

Thiruvalla

25-07-1975

EPISCOPACY IN MALANKARA AND THE EPISCOPAL CONSECRATION SERVICES OF THE MAR THOMA CHURCH

DR. JUHANON MAR THOMA

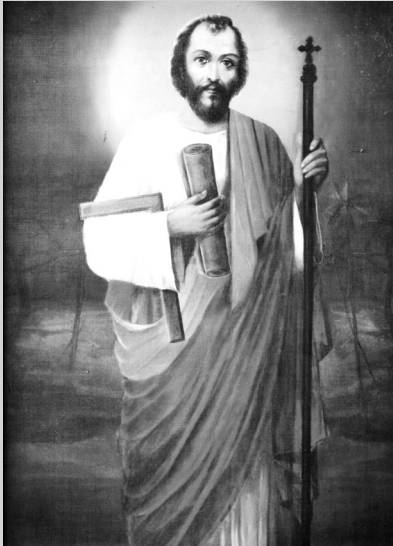
The Episcopal consecration service held on 8th February (1975) brings to us the memory and recollections of all the early Episcopal consecration services. There are people of the Mar Thoma church and other sister churches who believe and also say that Mar Thoma Syrian church began in 1837 (Malayalam year 1012) and Metropolitan Mar Athanasius is the first Metropolitan. They also put forward that Mathews Mar Athanasius Metropolitan was the one who went to a foreign land and brought the Malankara Church under the yoke of the Patriarchate of Antioch. But to say that the origin of the Mar Thoma Church took place in 1837, is similar to saying that the Malankara Church began only after the oath of the Coonen Cross in 1653.

AN OUTLINE OF THE CHURCH HISTORY

The coming of the Apostle Thomas to Malankara and his spreading of the faith of Jesus marked the beginning of the church. That is the reason why it is believed that the Mar Thoma Church was established in A.D. 52, when the Apostle Thomas established his throne in Malankara. It is not proper to say that the Apostles established a 'throne' only in certain places. It is more appropriate to say that the Apostles have preached Gospel of Life and have established a 'community of believers' who saw God in Christ; and, through Christ, experienced God's communion and fellowship with each other. As we see in the Acts of the Apostles, leaders were appointed in these communities. This appointment of the leaders were done through the laying on of the hands. That is why we say that the Apostles have established a 'throne' (an apostolic See). Today, whenever, we talk about the establishment

of a 'throne', the prime thought that comes to our mind is that a Metropolitan or a Patriarch has established an order or hierarchy and under them were clergy (*Kassessa*), deacons (*Semmash*) with a particular tradition of worship.

An organized order of clergy and nature of worship (liturgy) all had their beginnings by the second century and thereafter.



St. Thomas

The names of the Apostles who founded these churches were remembered. We may not have historical evidences, but they may well be true. We continue to remember St. Mark as the founder of the church in Egypt, St. Peter as the founder of the church in Antioch and Rome and St. Thomas as the founder of the church in India. It is also significant that whichever be the church, founded by a particular Apostle, it is understood to be part of the One, Holy and Catholic Church. There was no thought of any superiority

over one church founded in certain region by another church in another region. They were all considered as independent apostolic churches. In all aspects of faith, which would affect all churches, the decisions of the common Synod was accepted. The Jerusalem Synod (50 AD) described in Chapter 15 of the Acts of the Apostles remains as a clear example before the church.

The history of the first four decades of the Malankara Church is not clear. It is legendary how the people sent from the church in Alexandria and Persia have visited or migrated to Malankara. The first undisputed historical record is found in the writings of a sailor

named Cosmas Indicopleustes in 522 AD. He wrote that he saw in Malabar, where black pepper is grown, a church strengthened by the Bishops who came from Persia. It is believed that the church in Malankara, from the fourth century to the sixteenth century, continued in relationship with the Persian church. We do not have adequate knowledge of this period. There are historical records to show that Bishops and priests under the Papal authority have visited the Malankara church and are also said to have lived in Malankara. Then, there is a difference of opinion regarding this Persian connection. It was commonly accepted that the Malankara church had connections and communion with the Catholicos of Edessa who was related to Nestorian Patriarch of Persia. Then also, one group of people, in the last seventy years, thinks that the connection was with the Catholicos of Edessa who was connected to the Patriarch of Antioch. They argue that this Catholicos was not under Antioch, but was an independent entity and authority. This argument originated in connection with the establishment of the 'Catholicate' in the Orthodox Church.

The Nestorian faith is that the divinity and humanity exists separately in Jesus Christ. So that, when Jesus was sleeping in the boat, he was 'human', but when he calmed the sea, he was God: this teaching is called 'two nature argument'. The Ecumenical Synod which met in 413 AD in Ephesus had rejected this as a heresy. Since the Nestorian believers lost freedom to practice their faith in the Roman Empire, the Nestorian faith was strengthened outside the boundaries of the Empire in Edessa of Persia and there a 'catholic throne' was established. It was with these Nestorians that the Malankara Church had relations.

Eutyches of a monastery in Constantinople developed a teaching that was against Nestorian faith. This teaching argues that in Jesus Christ both divinity and humanity were merged to become a new character. This teaching is called Monophysitism. The Synod of Chalcedon which met in 481 AD rejected this teaching also as a heresy. The teachings that were accepted in the

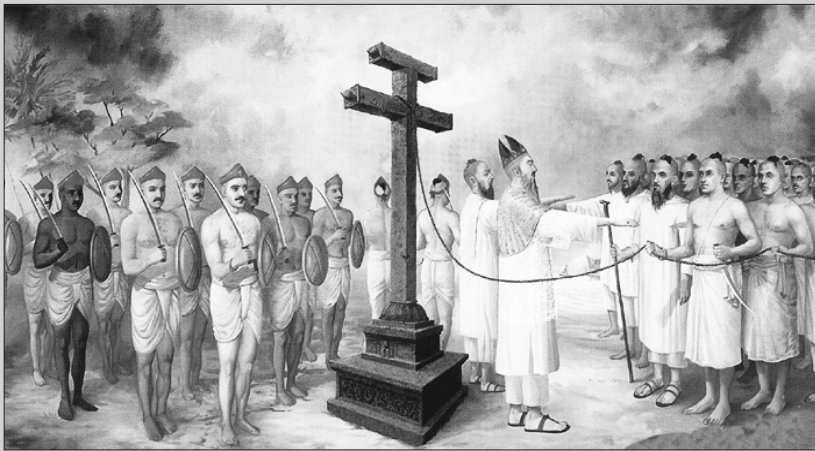
Ecumenical Councils of Nicea and Constantinople and is reaffirmed and declared in the Synod of Chalcedon is that, the divinity and humanity does not exist separately, they are not united but inseparable and undivided in Jesus Christ. This is the Catholic and Apostolic faith. This is the faith that our church followed. Both the Nestorian church and the Jacobite church had accepted the Nicene Creed. We can think, that the difference lies in the understanding and interpretation of words denoting the person of Jesus Christ who is fully divine and fully human.

At this juncture, it will not be out of place to point out that two more false teachings that had developed in the church in the fourth century.

1. A Bishop of Constantinople, Macedonius, questioned the divinity of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit, he taught, has no personality; but only, a power or influence. But the personhood of the Holy Spirit is one of the basic principles of the teaching of Trinity.
2. Bishop Appollonaris of Laodicea rejected the humanity of Jesus Christ. His argument was that Jesus Christ was fully God (divine) and he only appeared as a human.

Both of these arguments had affected the basic teachings of the Christian church. The full divinity and fully humanity of Jesus Christ and the teaching of Trinity that was developed from it had been the core teaching of the church. The Council which met in Constantinople in 318 AD (the second Ecumenical Council) had rejected both teachings of Macedonianism and Appollonarianism as heresies and reaffirmed the declaration of faith of the Synod of Nicea; the Council also added a sentence regarding the Holy Spirit.

We are not sure how long the episcopate established by St Thomas lasted. The earliest known episcopate in Malankara was from Persia. It continued till the sixteenth century. A Portuguese sailor named, Vasco da Gama came to Kozhikode in 1498 and 1502. The Samootiripadu of Kozhikode and King of Kochi were in



Oath of the Coonen Cross

relationship with the Portuguese.

The Portuguese found that the Malankara Church, did not accept the authority of Pope or their practices and were different from the Roman Church. The Portuguese made untiring effort to bring the Malankara church under the Papal authority. The Archbishop Menezes accomplished this at the Udaymperoor Synod in 1599. For about half a century the Malankara Church was firmly under the control of the Papal authority. With the Oath of the Coonen Cross in 1653, the majority of the people were free after parting from the domination of Pope. Only 400 hundred families continued to remain with the Roman Catholic Church. But, through the hard work of their priests and also due to the delay in getting bishops ordained for the Malankara Church, a lot of people returned to the Roman Catholic Church. Out of the 116 parishes, only 32 parishes remained faithful to the oath of the Coonen Cross for freedom. It was not at all possible to get Bishops for the Malankara church from Babylon. As long as the Portuguese navy had controlled the Indian Ocean, no foreign person could enter the Malankara territory without the permission of the Portuguese. Episcopacy was an unavoidable necessity for

the Christians of Malankara. So, the people who stood by the Oath of Coonen Cross got together at the Alangattu church, and by the laying on of hands by twelve clergy, declared Archdeacon Thomas as Bishop, (1653). He is known as the first Mar Thoma. The history of the Malankara Church, which was established by St Thomas, is reiterated here to point out a few things.

1. We are not sure how long the Malankara Church founded by St Thomas remained as an independent entity.
2. The Malankara Church existed under the authority of both the Persian Church and the Roman Church.
3. Even though from the fourth to sixteenth centuries bishops were coming from Persia, it is believed that the internal ruling was conducted by the Malanakara Archdeacons.
4. During the Persian period, except for the episcopacy and ecclesiastical supervision, the internal rule or governance was



Mar Thoma I



**Mar Gregorios of
Jerusalem**

not from abroad. The Archdeacons conducted the same.

5. The Malankara Church remained unaffected by the teachings and arguments, in the Eastern and Western churches of Roman Empire, in the fourth and fifth centuries. The Malankara Church was unaffected by Monophysitism, two nature's theory, of Macedonianism, Appolloniarism (a heresy that questions the humanity of Jesus Christ). Even though there was the Nestorian connection with the Malankara church, the church did not subscribe to the Nestorian faith. Malankara church was never unwilling to welcoming bishops from Antioch or Babylon.

The Malankara church held fast to the original faith affirmation of St. Thomas: "My Lord and my God," which he declared about Jesus Christ. If this be true, then the Malankara church is unique unlike any other church in the history of the churches. What is evident here? Negligence of the teachings of faith or steadfastness to the faith of the Fathers? If what is mentioned above is correct, we can be proud of the Malankara church which remained independent, was unyielding to the foreign domination, and had an attitude to hold close to connection with Eastern churches and a church which was firmly rooted in the teachings of the Bible.

A few people declared that the Oath of Coonen Cross is the Declaration of Independence of the Malankara Church. In reality, during the Oath of Coonen Cross there was no Orthodox Church or the Jacobite Church. The church that was founded by St. Thomas, while maintaining connection with Babylon, until the Papal authority was forced upon it, was a small community achieved independence and called themselves the Malankara Mar Thoma Christians. Since they did not have episcopacy, they had accepted the Jacobite relationship. That is how the Jacobite church grew here. From the Jacobite church, a group of people took the name of the Orthodox Church. During the litigation under Thomas Mar Athanasius, we do not find the presence of the Orthodox Church. The case was won as Jacobites.

The efforts made by Roman Catholics to dominate the Malankara church, created division in the Malankara church and it paved the way for the establishment of the Roman Catholic Church in Malankara. Let us now turn our focus to the interference of another foreign See.

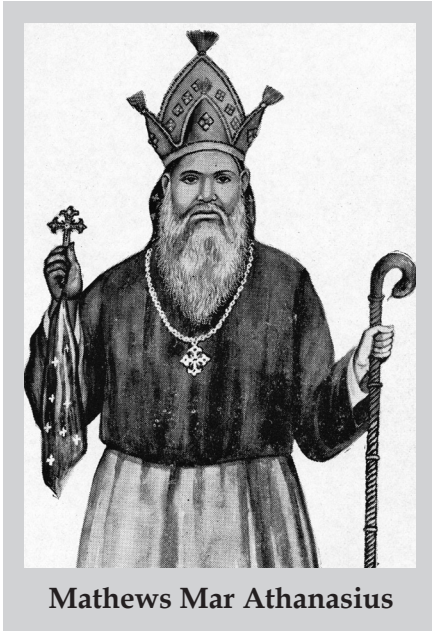
The Relationship with Antioch

We have already seen that with the Oath of Coonen Cross (1653), twelve Clergy together with the group of people who supported the freedom movement had elevated Archdeacon Thomas of the Pakalomattom family to the office of Metropolitan. People knew very well that this act was not in order. Under the pressure of circumstances, the Church was compelled to take this step. Many who were part of the Oath of Coonen Cross returned to the Roman church which had Bishops and worship. A small minority who stood for freedom stayed with the first Mar Thoma. At this time, the Portuguese domination in India came to an end. The Protestant Dutch succeeded the Portuguese and established their authority in Kochi and other places. This opened the way for foreign Bishops to enter Malankara. After the Synod of Udayamperoor, when the Papal authority was imposed upon them, a few Christians of Malankara under the leadership of Archdeacon Thomas had appealed to the Patriarchs of Alexandria, Babylon and Antioch, to send them a Bishop. As long as the Portuguese had control over the Indian Ocean, it was impossible for any foreigners to land at Kochi. During the Portuguese domination, a Bishop from Antioch namely Ahathalla who is said to have landed in Kochi was drowned in the sea by the Portuguese and this resulted in the disturbance and the Oath of Coonen Cross of 1653. After the Dutch had taken the domination of the sea, the first Bishop to come to Malankara was the Metropolitan of Jerusalem, Mar Gregorios. This Metropolitan appropriately elevated the first Mar Thoma with the laying on of hands. Thus Malankara regained and restored the apostolic succession of the Episcopacy. This is how the Antiochian connection started. Mar Gregorios Metropolitan attempted to

introduce the faith and practice of the Jacobites in the Malankara church. The First Mar Thoma along with the Bishop Mar Gregorios consecrated the second Mar Thoma. Bishop Mar Gregorios and the first Mar Thoma passed away. During the period of the second Mar Thoma, there arrived other Jacobite Bishops. There were nine Metropolitans from the Pakalomattom family with the name 'Mar Thoma' in the Malankara church history. The church was ruled jointly by the indigenous Bishops and foreign Bishops. Bishops were also consecrated by the indigenous Bishops and foreign Bishops. The sixth Mar Thoma who was consecrated by the fifth Mar Thoma took another consecration from a foreign Bishop and received another name: Mar Dionysius. During the period of the sixth Mar Thoma, there were efforts to establish the both the Babylonian and the Roman connections. All these were sad incidents in the historical process. Mar Thoma VI, after receiving re-consecration from a foreign Bishop took the name Dionysius. He was also known as Mar Dionysius the Great. It was during the period of Mar Dionysius that Claudius Buchanan came down to Malankara from Calcutta. He (Mar Dionysius) consecrated the seventh Mar Thoma. At the death bed of the seventh Mar Thoma, without proper election or veneration or consecration services, the eighth Mar Thoma was consecrated. There was an allegation, saying that the hand was placed on his head only after death. Palakunnathu Abraham Malpan received ordination from the eighth Mar Thoma. Since he had doubts about the efficacy of the consecration, he was re-ordained by one of the Antiochian Bishops who came from abroad during the time of Cheppattu Mar Dionysius. Following a case filed by Cheppattu Mar Dionysius, the Government imprisoned the Malpan. There were other clergy also in that group who got re-ordained.

Mar Thoma VIII consecrated the ninth Mar Thoma. Pulikkottu Mar Dionysius (who was consecrated by the Anjoor Bishop, Philoxenos II) forced the ninth Mar Thoma to lay down his staff, crown (*mudi*) and the cross. He became a monk and stayed in the Kadamattom church. He died there and was buried there also.

The treacherous and painful history during the time of the ninth Mar Thoma is described to show that Mar Thoma Church during the 17th and 18th centuries was following the Episcopacy received from the Patriarch of Antioch. Although the ordination was from Antioch, there was no dominance. Two foreign Bishops who came here were deported by the Government. Mar Thoma VI who was re-consecrated by one the foreign Bishops ruled the



Malankara Church under the name Mar Dionysius. During his period, there was a foreign Bishop with the name Mar Gregorios. He consecrated his friend Kattumangattu Ramban as a Bishop. This act was displeasing and unacceptable to Mar Dionysius. Even though, the Kattumangattu Bishop had legitimate Episcopal Order, he was not allowed to serve as a Metropolitan in Malankara. He had to suffer many hardships from the Malankara Metropolitans. So the Kattumangattu Bishop left Kochi-Travancore to

Kunnamkulam in the British Malabar and there he bought a piece land at Anjoor, three miles away and built a seminary and lived there. It is also called Thozhiyoor Church. The episcopacy of the Bishops of Anjoor was received from the See of Antioch. Even though there was a Bishop who came from Antioch at hand, it was the Mar Thoma Metropolitan who governed the church. This proves that the Malankara Church had freedom to govern itself. It was the fifth bishop of the Anjoor or Thozhiyoor church, Mar Philoxenos II, who consecrated Pulikottu Mar Dionysius, Punnathra Mar Dionysius and Cheppad Mar Dionysius, thereby maintaining the

episcopate of the Jacobite church without getting any approval from Antioch. In the interest of the Malankara church, all these three Bishops ruled the church with governmental decrees. All this proves is that the ordination and succession of the Malankara church was from the See of Antioch. Even then, the Malankara Sabha had authority to govern itself. During the period of Bishop Mar Philoxenos II of Anjoor and Cheppad Mar Dionysius, since they received consecration without the knowledge of Antioch. Bishop Mar Athanasius Abdul Messih, who came from Antioch, attempted to give them a second consecration after first disqualifying them by taking their staff, mudi and red cassock. The government sent him away by a ship. This proves that neither the Government of Travancore nor the Malankara church approved of the Antiochian rule.

Mathews Mar Athanasius

Let us now enter into the history of Mathews Mar Athanasius.

During the period of Pulikkottu Mar Dionysius, Church

Consecration of Thozhiyoor Metropolitan Joseph Mar Coorilos by Mathews Mar Athanasius



Joseph Mar Coorilos



Mathews Mar Athanasius

Missionary Society (CMS) Missionaries came to Malankara from England. Bishop Pulikkottil was favorable to the missionaries. He was the one who built the Old (*Pazhaya*) Seminary and started theological education and English education under the leadership of the missionaries. Punnathra Bishop also cooperated with the missionaries. It was during the period of Cheppattu Mar Dionysius when a difference of opinion arose between him and the missionaries and when they left the Syrian community and began their work among the downtrodden lower caste people. Palakkunnathu Abraham Malpan and Kaithayil Geevarghese Malpan were teachers with the missionaries in the Old (*Pazhaya*) Seminary. They were attracted by their teachings based on the Bible. There arose in them a desire for Reformation. When the missionaries left, they were in great anguish. They did not like to join a western church by closely attaching themselves to the missionaries. They had to leave the Old (*Pazhaya*) Seminary. It had come to the point that the deacons who were taught by Abraham Malpan were denied ordination. The reforming ideas of Malpan Achen spread to different places and parishes. Abraham Malpan, using a revised Taksa (liturgy), celebrated Qurbana in Malayalam in Maramon Church. Cheppattu Bishop ex-communicated Abraham Malpan. There were a few Deacons and some people with him. They had to suffer severe opposition from the Cheppattu Bishop and the Jacobite Syrian Church. There was no Bishop, no church, and yet Malpan Achen was adamant regarding the apostolic laying on of hands. (It will be recalled that Malpan took ordination from the eighth Mar Thoma, but subsequently invited opposition from the Cheppattu Bishop for doubting the episcopacy of Mar Thoma VIII and taking re-ordination from one of the foreign Jacobite Bishops and had to suffer a time in jail). He insisted that he and his people would continue in the tradition of Apostle Mar Thoma. The episcopate which existed at that time was from the throne of Antioch. When he realized that Cheppattu Bishop will not accept Abraham Malpan and the people with him, the only way to get episcopacy was to seek the favor of Antioch. It is for

this reason that he decided to send his elder brother's son Deacon Mathews who was doing his education in Madras to Antioch. It is to be noted that he did not sent him abroad with a request to make the Deacon a Bishop. Considering the sad state of affairs of the Malankara church, the letter appealed for the sending of a Bishop for the governance of the church. But the Deacon who remained with Mar Elias Patriarch for twenty months gained his affection and acceptance, Mar Elias Patriarch decided that he would send Deacon Mathews as the Bishop of the Malankara Church.

He was given ordination from a Deacon to all other Orders and then consecrated him as a Bishop and appointed as the Bishop of Mosul for six months. Later, Mathews Mar Athanasius was sent with a *stathicon* (letter of appointment) to Malankara. The Malankara Church received him with reverence. After about ten years government edicts declared Mathews Mar Athanasius to be the Malankara Metropolitan instead of the Cheppattu Bishop. Thus he governed with government approval as the Metropolitan of the Malankara church till his demise. The last eight years he worked very hard for the Reformation. At that time he had opposition from the Pulikottil Bishop who also took office from Antioch. It was in 1841 that Deacon Mathews left for Mardin. He returned in 1843.

Because Deacon Mathews received consecration from the Patriarch, the allegation arose that we have taken over the 'yoke of Antioch'. Mathews Mar Athanasius had not accepted any 'yoke', neither did Abraham Malpan attempt to introduce a new episcopacy in Malankara. Also twelve or eighteen clergy together never attempted to establish an episcopate. Abraham Malpan never attempted to establish an episcopate as had lately been done by the CMS, which brought in a Bishop from outside. Yet, this was the blame that was cast on Abraham Malpan. Abraham Malpan did what was most appropriate. The laying on of hands which was acceptable to him was the same from 1665 when Bishop Mar Gregorios from Jerusalem of the Patriarchate of Antioch came over to us. That is the reason why Deacon Mathews went overseas to

the Throne (*Simhasanam*) with which we had connection for the last 175 years. It is true that there is no difference in the priesthood in the ordination that was given by a visiting bishop here or receiving the ordination from Mardin by going there. It is to be noted that Deacon Mathews never submitted any contract to the Bava surrendering the sovereignty of the Malankara Church. The treatise in Turkey did not affect the Malankara Church. Deacon Mathews never insisted on receiving episcopal consecration.

A few Sentences from the *Stathicon* given to Mathews Mar Athanasius:

In the name of the Triune God, the one causing all causes and owner of all good gifts, by this Grace Ignatius of Antioch, who is (by the name) Elias

Every good and perfect gift comes from above. It is not by the hand of one who understands or by the hand of one who reaches in succession, but by the hand of the gracious God. In the name of the Almighty, perfect in essence, eternally self-created, the Apostolic See of Antioch, Ignatius Patriarch.

-----From God who makes All Godliness, who has become God is truly God and who Makes God

In the year of our Lord 1842, 1st of the month of 'Kumbhom', the Omnipotent God, the Almighty who is perfect in basic quintessence (kathal thathvam), eternal being, in whose Holy name, of the Apostolic See of Antioch, Ignatius Patriarch by the name Elias.

(SEAL)

Our dear and beloved Children!

Again, I am informing you that when we were told through letters saying that you have no Shepherd, you have no ordination, you have no baptism, you have nobody to guide you, we were very grieved and deeply sorrowed to hear that as people of faith you are scattered. We desire to send you a true shepherd, to visit you and govern you.

When we were deeply concerned to think whom should we send to the area of Malabar, our much-loved son Mathai Kassessa has arrived in peace to us from you. When we saw he him, we have greatly rejoiced in him. When one from them came, we realized that it is best to make one of them their Father and ruler. We saw that, "This is the Lord's doing and it is marvelous in our eyes."

When our mind (bodham) was enlightened by the divine light, we realised that this revered Mathews Metropolitan is the chosen one, abode of the Holy Spirit, like the Prophet Jeremiah was chosen right from the womb of his mother and called for the divine priestly service, is perfect in good works, his maturity, his humility and fasting and prayers, his devotion (meditation) and knowledge in the Scripture, we were enlightened that he is truly eligible to be admitted to the office of a Bishop (Episcopacy).

Therefore, we have first ordained him as a Deacon, then a Kassessa and then as a Ramban and then as a Metropolitan. For this reason, as this call is from the Holy Spirit which was attested through many voices (witnesses) and they all concurred with each other. By the Holy Spirit, he was called by the name Mar Athanasius. Just as he was made eligible for this call, he was also eligible and perfect (uttaman) for this name. As of now, we with all the Metropolitans, Episcopas in one voice acclaimed Oxios, Oxios, Oxios. The Shepherd and Episcopa, respected Father, Mathews Mar Athanasius is eligible and perfected to be the Metropolitan of the Holy See of Malankara. At the time of consecration of the person elected by God to be his abode, the hosts of angels also, because of their joy, sang along with us.

From our Lord Jesus Christ, as it was given to the Holy Apostles, in our weakness, we have given him authority to bind and to loose, give judgments and to order, make regulations and ordain Cor-Episcopas, Kassessas, Deacons and to dedicate Churches and Madbahas, and to conduct things according to the given office and for the wellbeing of the faithful in Malabar, he has right to set up building for schools and education. We have specially commanded him to maintain and establish

firmly the Kottayam Seminary which is called as the Vaidika Seminary. We command that the all necessary funds for its expenses be given into his hands.

Once again my Spiritual children, what we want to inform you is that: maintain and buildup of churches (parishes) and Dayaras earnestly and with interest and that you do not walk in the path of unjust and keep oneself away from unrighteousness and evil desires and one without 'appeasing' and one who does not make new Canons, which are not related to the church, and to walk in the path of the ancient Fathers and ask no one more that his capacity and do not put the order of priesthood to blame through taking bribes, I earnestly commanded this to your Father and reminded him.

Our children, again with love we inform you that; by the hand of our son Metropolitan Mathews, we are sending the consecrated Muron for you. I am hoping to consecrate Muron again after the (Easter) great Feast of the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ from the Tomb. I will send Muron again to you. Let this be known to you. Our Father in heaven etc. Amen

If you are asking us about our health, we are keeping well by the Grace of God. Our son Mathews Metropolitan shall tell you everything in detail. So much we have commanded him to do.

In the year of our Lord, 1842 in the month of 'Kumbhom' We, Koorilos Metropolitan, by the name Mathews, was present at the laying on of hand of our beloved brother Athanasius Metropolitan, 'We are also joined with all Episcopas who proclaimed Oxios, Oxios, Oxios to the lifted up Father Mar Athanasius'.

Quoted above are some important portions of the long 'Staticon'. Some truths becomes clearer from these:

- 1. The personal love and care shown by His Holiness Patriarch Elias to the Malankara Church.*
- 2. The people accepted the relationship which the Patriarch of Antioch had with the Malankara Church. This Antiochian connection was*

welcomed and depended on for Episcopal consecration.

3. *There is a Holy See in Malankara. That is the Mar Thoma Simhasanam (Throne). It is to that Holy See that Mathews Mar Athanasius was consecrated and sent as the Metropolitan.*
4. *In consecrating the Metropolitan, there was no demand for domination or jurisdiction. There is no indication to show that Mathews Mar Athanasius had to execute his responsibilities by submitting himself to the His authority.*
5. *Sending the consecrated 'muron' had never brought the Malankara church to any relationship or 'yoke of slavery'. It simply maintained that relationship of respect.*

NOTE:

During this time when Thomas Mar Athanasius lost the Seminary case and had to leave the Old (*Pazhaya*) Seminary and had no place of his own, to end the division in the Syrian Church there came a proposal from the leaders of the Jacobite Church who won the case. There were three conditions:

1. Thomas Mar Athanasius would be accepted as the Malankara Metropolitan.
2. After the demise of Thomas Mar Athanasius, Pulikkottu, Mar Dionosyus would become the successor.
3. Afterwards, whoever the Patriarch of Antioch would consecrate will be the the successor Metropolitan.

Out of the above, the third one was not acceptable, so Thomas Mar Athanasius left the Seminary and all other properties and resided at Kuziyathu House, Padippura meadayil. The continuation of independent Malankara Simhasanam was the recognised in the Laws of the Reformation. It was for continuation of Malankara Simhasanam, that Patriarch Elias had delivered a Staticon and sent Mathews Mar Athanasius. Then, who had right of the succession

of this Simhasanam?

The verdict of the Seminary case was against Thomas Mar Athanasius. He lost the Seminary and '*Vattipanam*', not because he belonged to the Reformation party, but only because Pulikottul Bishop's consecration was received from the Patriarch and the consecration of Thomas Mar Athanasius from the Mathews Mar Athanasius. The office of Mathews Mar Athanasius was received from Antioch. Thus, only if the laying on of hands of the 5th Metropolitan of the Thozhiyoor Church, (who himself received the laying on of hands only via Kattumangattu Metropolitan, who received consecration from Antioch) and who consecrated Malankara Metropolitans Pulikkottu, Punnathra and Cheppattu, is deficient, Thomas Mar Athanasius' position also is deficient. Today, the reason why the Malankara Orthodox Church owns all properties and churches of the Malankara church is due to the court verdict which is based on the See of Antioch.

Mathews Mar Athanasius is not the first Bishop of the Mar Thoma Church. But he must be seen only as a Bishop in Malankara, the church established by the Apostle Thomas, in which, when the office of Bishop failed without any successor, it was restored from the 4th century to 16th centuries with the laying on of the hands of the Babylonian bishops and continued with the laying on of hands of the Antiochian Patriarch. We may be able to say that Mathews Mar Athanasius is the first bishop of the Reformed Syrian part of the Malankara Church after its division due to Reformation. This reformed group took the name Malankara Mar Thoma Syrian Church.

Neither Abraham Malpan nor Mathews Mar Athanasius had established a new church. They also had not separated from any church. Nobody had excommunicated (*mudakkuka*) Mathews Mar Athanasius who was the Metropolitan of the Malankara Church. It was after he consecrated the Bishop of Anjoor and Thomas Mar Athanasius. The Bishops of the Mar Thoma Church were consecrated in Pazhaya Seminary Church, Kottayam

Cheriyapally and Puthencavu Valiyapally. Neither Abraham Malpan nor Mathews Mar Athanasius had formulated any new teachings. They only had removed the teachings brought in by the Roman Catholics and Antiochians to the Malankara Church. That is the reason why it is said that whatever had happened in the 19th Century was '*poorvikaranam*' or restoration and not reformation. There was Reformation in the Malankara Churches in the 17th and 18th centuries. In the Mar Thoma Church founded by the Apostle Thomas, there was no prayer for the dead, or offering of Holy Qurbana for the dead, appeal to the saints, and there was no erroneous teachings about the Holy Qurbana and ordination.

Holy Muron & The Malankara Throne



And it was only after the Ecumenical Synods that in the churches these teachings were officially formulated. Not that there was no such teachings in the 3rd and 4th centuries, may be there was in the teachings of Early Fathers. But, they were not the officially accepted teachings of the Church. Those were the teachings that were accepted in the (Western) Middle Ages, which were rejected by Abraham Malpan.

The Episcopate and the Apostolic laying on of hands of the present Orthodox Church, Mar Thoma Church and Thozhiyoor Church of the Malankara Church were received from the See (*simhasnam*) of Antioch. No one can deny this. The present

ordination of the Mar Thoma Syrian Church is received from Thozhiyoor. The first Bishop of the Thozhiyoor church was consecrated by the foreign Bishop Mar Gregorios who came from the Patriarch of Antioch. The seventh Bishop of Anjoor was consecrated by Mathews Mar Athanasius. It was Mar Elias Patriarch who consecrated Bishop Mathews Mar Athanasius. The consecration of Titus I of the Mar Thoma Church was officiated over by the Bishop of the Thozhiyoor Church who had the laying on of hands of Thomas Mar Athanasius. This is how the three Churches - Antioch, Malankara and Anjoor - are interrelated. These three churches are also linked by the basic teachings of the Nicene Creed and the Apostolic Succession of laying on of hands. Only if one insist that those teachings which are not formulated in Nicea, are to be the basis of faith, there is conflict among these churches.

HOLY MURON

It is a practice of the Orthodox Church, that those who go from the Mar Thoma Church to Syrian Orthodox Church in marriage are re-anointed with Muron and also those coming in marriage to the Mar Thoma church are not given the *Vilichuchollu Kuri*. There may be different experiences also. This indicates that in their view, the Mar Thoma Church is not an episcopal Church. Nobody should dare to say that there is no apostolic laying on of hands (succession). There is a resolution being touted, that, in accordance with the decision of the Nicene Council, when the heretics (*idathood*) return, they have to be received by Muron anointment, therefore all the Marthomites have to be received into the church only after anointment of Muron. It is not so. During the time of the Synod of Nicea, the Eastern churches and Western churches were not separate. It was the whole church which was gathered there. Anointing with Muron was not accepted in the Western churches. Even if there was mention of Muron or something similar to Muron or mention of some sacraments, during the period of Synod of Nicea and during the period of the Ecumenical Councils, what

was a heresy? It was only the teaching related to the person of Jesus Christ and the Trinity which was accepted as the teaching under consideration. Rejecting that Christ is fully divine and fully human was a heresy. It was not heresy not to accept the teaching on praying for the dead, intercession to the saints and accepting certain teaching about the Holy Qurbana and ordination. These were teachings which arose in the Middle Ages. By not accepting these teachings, neither Mar Thoma Church or any other church will become heretics.

ANTIOCH AND CONSTANTINOPLE SIMHASANANGAL (Thrones)

There are several churches - national churches - which are associated with both See of the Patriarch of Antioch and the See of the Patriarch of Constantinople. The Patriarch of Constantinople is the head (*Simhasanadhipan*) of the Eastern Orthodox Church. But then the national churches - for example, Orthodox Churches in Europe, Greek Churches in America - have freedom to govern themselves (*Bharanaswatantraym*). When it comes to universal church issues, the heads of churches should come together. When such get-together takes place, the Patriarch of Constantinople should preside over it. The Patriarch of Constantinople is also called 'The Ecumenical Patriarch'. Due to political differences in national Churches, it has become impossible to convene an ecumenical Council of Eastern Orthodox churches. Orthodox Conferences take place instead. The Antiochian Patriarchate had always acted as Monarchic Patriarchate. Wherever there is the forming of a church, the Antiochian Patriarchate would demand both the spiritual and administrative supremacy. This is what had created a dispute for the Malankara Church. If the Malankara Church, under the Catholicos, was given freedom to conduct their internal affairs and demanded only spiritual supremacy, this conflict we witness today would not have happened. As we can see from the history, when the apostolic succession of the See of Mar Thoma (*Simhasanam*) came to be discontinued, it had accepted the spiritual

authority of the Babylonian Patriarch (episcopal connection) and continued as an independent church for ten centuries.

Whenever the Apostolic succession of one church comes to an end (*Anyam Ninnu*), if that church seeks ordination or consecration to maintain the *Simhasanam* (See), does it mean that the ordaining church also has established authority over them? It cannot be so, as is the tradition of the Malankara Church. Bishop Mar Philoxenos II of the Thozhiyoor church had consecrated three Bishops in the Malankara church, but the Bishop never contended or insisted that those Bishops are under his authority. When the fifth Bishop of Anjoor Church died without consecrating his successor, it was Cheppattu Mar Dionysius who consecrated the sixth Bishop. When the sixth Bishop of the Anjoor Church died without consecrating his successor, it was Mathews Mar Athanasius who went there and stayed in Anjoor and consecrated the seventh Bishop. Questioning this Authority, in order to bring Anjoor Church under Antioch, a foreign visiting Jacobite Bishop, Yoakim Mar Coorilos, by his authority had filed a civil case challenging the authority of the newly consecrated Bishop, but Mathews Mar Athanasius conducted the case on behalf of the Anjoor Bishop and secured a verdict affirming that the Anjoor church is an independent church. Even then Mathews Mar Athanasius never attempted to enforce any authority over the Anjoor Church. The words written by Bishop Mathews Mar Athanasius, when the affidavit of the Anjoor case was filed is of great significance: "The churches and the properties belongs to the Bishop of Anjoor and the People (*yogakkar*) and this church (*Edavaka*) stands as an independent church and the Patriarch of Antioch or anyone from his office or ourselves who is the Mar Thoma Metropolitan, have no authority or jurisdiction over it." There should not be any other interests when one church helps the other in terms of things like ordination (consecration), than giving a help to a sister church.

It was the Metropolitan Joseph Mar Athanasius and Suffragan Geevarghese Mar Coorilos of the Anjoor church who consecrated

Titus I of the Mar Thoma Church at Kottayam Cheriapally in 1894. They had never demanded any authority or supremacy over the Malankara Mar Thoma Church. Two Bishops of the Anjoor church were also consecrated by the Mar Thoma Metropolitan. The Mar Thoma church has not received any authority over the Anjoor Church.

How the Antiochian Authority and Administration did get strengthened here?

1. In order to remove Mathews Mar Athanasius from the office of the Malankara Metropolitan, Abdulla Patriarch was brought here to influence the Travancore Maharajah, to say that Malankara is in his jurisdiction and his authority was accepted. Later in Mulanthuruthy, the Malankara church was divided into seven dioceses and six Bishops were consecrated, and when they became the Metropolitans of these Dioceses, the administrative authority of the Patriarch was accepted.
2. When the influence of the C.M.S missionaries were increasing, in order to take away the freedom given to them, Pulikottu Mar Dionysius and Punnathra Mar Dionysius, the Cheppattu Mar Dionysius called for a church meeting (*Sabha yogam*) in Mavelikara and by publishing the '*Mavelikara Padiyola*' that reaffirmed the authority of the Patriarch and the administrative authority of Antioch.

A few sentences of the 'Padiyola' is quoted below:

We Jacobite Syrians, from the time when under the authority of the Patriarch of Antioch.... are not to preach in churches without the permission of the Patriarch" In order to be helpful in keeping the Missionaries away from the church, we have sought the authority of the Patriarch.

3. In the period when the Malankara Metropolitan Thomas Mar Athanasius was residing in the Pazhaya Seminary, they have sought the authority of the Patriarch of Antioch (*Simhasanam*) to

get the Bishop out of seminary and to get the '*Vattipanam*'. Only based on the acceptance of the authority of the Patriarch of Antioch and by securing a court verdict, did they removed Thomas Mar Athanasius from the Seminary. This is the real history of the 'yoke of Antioch'.

The events associated with the Consecration of the Seventh Bishop of Anjoor Church by Mathews Mar Athanasius

Consecration of Thomas Mar Athanasius



Thomas Mar
Athanasius



Mathews Mar
Athanasius



Joseph Mar
Athanasius

In 1856 the Anjoor Bishop, Geevarghese Mar Coorilos, passed away without consecrating his successor. Hearing this news, Mathews Mar Athanasius reached Anjoor. He found that, by then, Seminary room and Treasury were sealed. He broke the seal and entered the upper level of Seminary. There came a very large crowd from Kunnankulam against the Bishop and surrounded the Seminary and entered the church. Since the door was closed, they could not enter the tower (*Malika*). During the night, Venkadthu Deacon who was with the Metropolitan was lowered down by rope through the window and sent with a letter to the George Munsif of Chavakkattu informing him of

the dangerous situation. By early morning the Munsif, Police and Magistrate arrived there. By then, more people came down from Kunnankulam to remove the Bishop. When they saw hundreds of thousands of people and the Magistrate, those with him were a bit afraid. One of the Police Officers present there, with great courage came out to the front yard and drew a long line there. He said that he had drawn that line in the name of the Company and if anyone crosses that line, they would burn the Kunnankulam town down to ashes. Nobody dared to cross this 'command'. The people dispersed. Some of them were arrested also. In the criminal case that followed, the Metropolitan was the winner. With the interest of the Paramel family and with the approval of the people of Anjoor, Mathews Mar Athanasius consecrated the Panackal Joseph Kassessa as Mar Coorilos Metropolitan. Following this, the foreign Bishop Euyakim Coorilos turned against the Anjoor Bishop. Mathews Mar Athanasius conducted the civil case that was filed for the properties of Anjoor. The Government's verdict was that the Thozhiyoor church is an Independent Syrian church.

Consecration of Thomas Mar Athanasius (1868)

Mathews Mar Athanasius had to visit parishes for various reasons. So it became necessary to consecrate a Suffragan Metropolitan. It was a time when there were only traditions and there were no set of rules or regulations accepted by the church for the election of Bishops. The Deacons and the Priests were chosen as per the wishes of the Bishops. For the selection of Bishops, the wishes of the incumbent Bishop were in the fore. But, they also had sought the suggestions of the prominent clergy and the laity.

Thomas, the second son of Abraham Malpan, after finishing his studies from the Old (Pazhaya) Seminary and education in Madras, was serving as a clergyman at the Maramon Church. Suitably educated clergy were very rare at that time. Kurian, the writer, had asked the Bishop to consecrate Thomas Kassessa as a Bishop. But he did not show much interest to elevate a close relative so suddenly to the office of Bishop. Later, due to the exceptional

interest shown by the leaders of the community, Thomas Kassessa was elevated to the office of Bishop in 1868. It is said that at first, the Bishop thought whether this should be informed to the Patriarch Bava before the consecration. But, the common opinion was against such an initiative. Thomas Kassessa was relieved from the responsibilities of Maramon church and appointed to the general services of the Church. The consecration service was conducted in the Old (*Pazhaya*) Seminary Church. The Metropolitan of the Thozhiyoor Church was also present.

In 1877 the Mathews Mar Athanasius passed away. Thomas Mar Athanasius became the Metropolitan. Joseph Mar Dionysius of the Jacobite Church filed a case against Bishop Thomas Mar Athanasius in 1879. The substance of the litigation was that the Old (*Pazhaya*) Seminary and the properties are under the title of the Patriarch of Antioch and they shall only remain under the jurisdiction and custody of the Metropolitans for the time being. And, it was argued, as Joseph Mar Dionysius had received the office from the Patriarch Bava of Antioch and since Thomas Mar Athanasius had not received the office from the Patriarch, the custody of the Seminary and the properties are illegally held. Thomas Mar Athanasius argued that the Patriarch of Antioch had no jurisdiction over the Malankara Church and since he received the office from the Malankara Metropolitan, Mathews Mar Athanasius, he is the true heir. Also, the Seminary was built by funds from the Government of Travancore and from the people, so it is not appropriate to hand over that property to the person who is under another regime. The litigation lasted for ten years. The verdict of the Royal Court in 1889 was to leave the property to the Metropolitan under the Patriarch. The order was written by three judges. In them the only Christian Judge, Mr Justice Ormsby, ruled that the Malankara Church was independent and the Patriarch has no right over the properties here. By majority vote the properties went to Patriarchal Party. Surely the Orthodox Church would now agree that the stand of Thomas Mar Athanasius and Justice Ormsby was right.

The effort and pain the Metropolitan had to endure to collect money for conducting the litigation that lasted 10 years, and how he with a heavy heart departed, can be read from the biography of Thomas Mar Athanasius.

It was necessary to build a wall for the cemetery of Maramon Church. The church had no money. A 'fistful of rice' (*Pidiari*) collection started by Mathews Mar Athanasius was encouraged. '*pidiari*' Pots were given to each house to put a pinch of rice from each meal as donation to the church. The strong wall of the cemetery was so built by '*Thirumeni*'. If all houses received this instruction today, it would have been capital money given without any loss to the church or household. Thomas Mar Athanasius left the Old Seminary and came to settle in Maramon. Bearing many difficulties, he worked hard for the parish and church. He encouraged spiritual revival in the church. He gave all encouragement and support to the Mar Thoma Evangelical Association established in 1888. He laid foundation for a spiritual environment in Mar Thoma Church. Thomas Mar Athanasius was a Bishop of 'Tears'. His tears helped in the growth of the Church. It was this spiritual environment and vision, even when they lost the case and the churches, which helped and persuaded people to remain with the reformation movement without withdrawing.

Mar Athanasius was rheumatic. For treatment he moved to the Palakkunnathu House. One day while he was having his meals he had a stroke and fell unconscious. After receiving care from his priests and parish members he was joined with his forefathers on 27 '*Karkkadakam*' 1893. When Thirumeni was sick, Pulikkottu Joseph Mar Dionysius who was the complainant of the Seminary Case and Vattasseril Geevarghese Malpan who later became Metropolitans and some priests visited him. Pulikkottu Thirumeni went near the bed of the Metropolitan and called '*Aboon*'. He only had the strength to open his eyes and smile. As there was not enough time for Bishops of Anjoor to reach, the Vicar General Kovoor Kassessa did the last rites. With the help of other priests

Consecration of Titus I Mar Thoma



Titus I Mar Thoma



Joseph Mar
Athanasius



Geevarghese Mar
Coorilos Suffragan

Thirumeni was entombed in Maramon Church.

The Consecration of Bishop Titus I Mar Thoma

Following the demise of the Metropolitan Thomas Mar Athanasius, the people who were against the Reformation and some members of the Jacobite Church thought that the Reformation movement would die. How can a church exist without Bishops? But the church was moving forward. In a committee meeting that met at the Niranam *Puthen Pally* under the chairmanship of Vicar General Koorilackal Achen on *Kanni* 21,22, 1893. the youngest son of Abraham Malpan, Theethose Achen, was elected to the office of Bishop. It was decided to conduct the Consecration service on 6th *Makaram* 1894. Who would do the Consecration service? All efforts were initiated from the opposition parties to block the sending of the Bishops of Thozhiyoor Church to Kottayam. Thazhathu Achen, Edathua Achen, Palakunnath Dethose Achen went to Thozhiyoor. Because of the help and support of Paramel Ittup Muthalaly of Kunnamkulam, the Bishops of Thozhiyoor agreed to come. That time, the Kottayam Cheriapally was totally under the control of Thazathu Chandapilla Kathanar, Vicar. Some Jacobites of those days also tried to block the consecration service. They tried to get

an Ordinance from the Peshkar to do so. But the order came in favor of Thazathu Achen. Theethose Achen arrived at the church, very late, at about 1 o'clock in the previous night of the Ramban ordination. Fearing the threat of disturbance on Sunday, there was tight police security in the Church campus. Since there was a fear that the consecration would be prevented by force, the Government had appointed DSPs of Kollam, Kottayam and five Police Inspectors of Taluks to keep peace. The show of strength by the police force is well captured in a poem written by O. M. Cherian.

See the briskly moving around of the brave British
Ferguson in elephantine elegance and pride
in the courtyard (of the Kottayam Cheriapally).
Police constables in full attire shows off their might.
The army in full force presening themselves
with swinging of swords.
Who would dare to stand up
for any kind of commotion.

This large deployment of police at the consecration of a Bishop of a church, showed the kind of relationship the Mar Thoma and Jacobite churches had at that time. The church that had been called out for the renewal of the world, had yielded to the power structure of the government.

Bishop Titus I was a saintly person and a man of prayer. His shining face was an indication of the purity of his heart and gracefulness. The consecration of Titus I Mar Thomas was officiated over by Joseph Mar Athanasius Metropolitan and Geevarghese Mar Coorilos Suffragan Metropolitan of the Thozhiyoor Church. In spite of the opposition from the Jacobites and Panakkal Muthalalies, the fact that the bishops came and conducted this service was a demonstration of God's grace upon the church. Although there was presence of Police force, fearing the threat, no untoward incidents happened and that was also truly God's grace.

The Consecration of Titus II Mar Thoma - 1899

It was during the time of Bishop Titus I, after clearing the damages caused by the Seminary case, that the church entered into church-related and evangelism-related creative works. Bishop Titus I was not a very healthy person. There arose a need for a Suffragan Metropolitan to work for building up of the church. As we have it now, there were no prescribed rules for the election of the Bishops. The *Samudaya Aloochana Sabha* met in 1896 and elected Palakunnathu Titus Achen to the office of Bishop. In 1899 Mar Coorilose of the Thozhiyoor church elevated Titus Achen to the office of Ramban. This was conducted in the Maramon Church. The decision was to conduct the Bishop's consecration service at the Puthencavu *Valiya pally*. Puthencavu *Valiya pally* was built by Mar Thoma VI. When the Reformation was widespread, the Jacobites and Marthomites had conducted church services on alternate Sundays. Jacobites were not pleased about the consecration service

Consecration of Titus II Mar Thoma



Titus II
Mar Thoma



Titus I Mar Thoma



Geevarghese Mar
Coorilos

being conducted there. Since there was fear of some problem, for this Consecration service also, police help was sought.

Assisted by the Metropolitan of the Thozhiyoor church,

Titus Achen was consecrated with the title Mar Thoma by the Metropolitan Titus I. He is known as Titus II Mar Thoma. After celebrating the Golden Jubilee of his ordination Titus I Mar Thoma left for his heavenly abode in 1910. His funeral service was conducted by Bishop Titus II, assisted by Bishop Coorilos of the Thozhiyoor church and Ipe Thoma Kathanar. The British Resident was also present at the service. Archbishop Gill gave the Eulogy.

It is during the time of Metropolitan Titus II Mar Thoma that a Church Constitution, based on democratic principles, was formulated, bringing together rules of the General Assembly (*Alochana Sabha*), and the rules governing the parishes (*Edavaka*) and codified rules for other Organizations. The Metropolitan constantly visited Parishes and stayed there for longer days to oversee the construction of church buildings, to check the proper upkeep of the accounts, and to develop interest in such matters. The plans and projects of the church found great increase. An appointment of a Suffragan Bishop was strongly appreciated.

Consecration of Abraham

Mar Thoma Metropolitan – 1918

When the need for another Bishop for the Mar Thoma church was felt, the eyes of the leaders of the church fell on Marattu N. M. Abraham, who was a B.A. Student. N. M. Abraham who was studying in the Madras Christian College was from the Marattu family, of the Jacobite church. After the death of his father, he was with his mother's family at Eraviperoor Karikkattu doing his studies. He was very active in the gospel work even from his student days. This young man was the only son of his mother. So it was very difficult to choose celibacy without the tears of his mother. He was also not interested in doing church service in positions of status. But he conceded to the persistence of his friends who were also leaders of the church, as a call from God and he committed himself to become a Bishop. He wanted to remain as an evangelist and even after being a Bishop he was able to accomplish

that. He was made a Deacon along with his friend M. P. Philipose at the SCS Hall. This was the first time in the Mar Thoma Church that degree holders were coming forward for ordination. Before that Deacon P. T. Varghese of the Jacobite church was the only degree graduate, who was known as 'M.A. Achen' and became Mar Ivanios Metropolitan and later established the Malankara Rite. Deacon Abraham left for higher studies to Wycliffe College in Toronto. He was selected for the office of Bishop in 1917. The consecration was held in 1918. To enable the crowd who were gathering to participate in the worship the consecration service was held in a specially made Madbaha and attached facilities (*pandal*). This was unlike the tradition of the time. This leader of the Mar Thoma Church was teased as '*Pandal Bishop*'. It is to be noted that all consecrations of the Mar Thoma church and of Jacobite church thereafter were held in such specially made facilities. To assist Bishop Titus II, in this Consecration service, there was Bishop Mar Coorilos Bishop of the Thozhiyoor church and his Suffragan present. This was the first time in the history of the Malankara Church, a Bishop was consecrated in the presence of three Bishops

It was said that there is a Canon that there should be three Bishops to do the Episcopal Consecration. May be this was to

Consecration of Abraham Mar Thoma



Abraham Mar
Thoma



Titus II Metropolitan



Kuriakose Mar
Coorilos
Metropolitan

prevent the possibility of one Bishop consecrating a Bishop in his own interest. This was prevalent in the Catholic rite under the Patriarch. The Bishop consecrated is the Bishop of the Universal Church. Thus, the basis of this practice might have been that whenever there is a bishop consecration, other Bishops are to be intimated and do the consecration with their cooperation. When there are small independent churches, it was not possible to have three bishops in one church. So it was meaningful to have the cooperation of Bishops from other churches whenever there is an episcopal consecration in one of those churches. Now, it is the practice in the Syrian churches that the celebrant bishop only lays



**Consecration of Juhanon Mar Timotheos and
Mathews Mar Athanasius**

his hand on the candidate. The Bishops who are assisting in the service also play their role. When the Metropolitan give the 'holy staff' to the consecrated Bishop, they will also hold along with him. The Metropolitan will hold at the top, other Bishops according to their seniority will hold below. The Bishop who is assuming the office will hold all the way at the bottom. Then, all will leave their hold from the bottom to the top and the staff will finally be in the hand of the Bishop who is newly admitted to the office. The staff is given as a mark of his right to exercise authority in the church.

In the Western churches, all supporting Bishops would lay their hands on the candidate. Also, in the Jacobite church, abroad, they practiced that all Bishops laid their hands on and this is known from a translation under the custody of the Bishop of Anjoor. But somehow, this was changed at a later time.

It was during the time of Bishop Abraham Mar Thoma, that the church witnessed a great growth on the evangelistic front. It is due to the Missionary zeal of the Church that during the period of Abraham Marthoma our church found a place in the missionary world. Thirumeni was the President of N.M.S. He also held other national leadership positions.

Keeping in mind the growth of the church, in order to conduct the work efficiently, the church was divided into three divisions and appointed secretaries to speed up the work. Later it became necessary to divide the church into three Dioceses and entrusted them in the charge of Bishops. Attention was turned to elect new Bishops.

Election of Juhanon Mar Timotheos and Mathews Mar Athanasius

It was in the *Alochana Sabha* of the Church in 1933 that a proper Episcopal election procedure was passed. In 1934, the *Alochana Sabha* appointed a Board to elect one more Bishop. There always have been two opinions in the Church. It was the strength of the Church that these two groups could work together. When the proposal to elect one Bishop came, some people were not ready to accept the names that came up. So they decided to elect two Bishops and the responsibility was entrusted to the same Board. The Board proposed the names of C. M. John *Kassessa* and C. T. Mathew *Kassessa*. John Kassessa had to appear two or three times to respond to the allegations made against him. The special 'Mandalam' met in 1936 conducted the election. There was no visible party rivalry, but there was great anxiety regarding what the result would be. The first day of the *Mandalam* was set apart

for prayer and devotion. The election was held on the second day. Since both of them got the 75 percent majority of the Clergy and laity as per the Constitution, both candidates were declared elected. In this Episcopal election, due to personal reasons or due to the diversity of emphases of doctrine, there were indications of public expressions of opinion and politics which made this election process challenging. The reality is that often personal differences appear as ideological conflicts.

In 1938 December C. M. John *Kassessa* and C. T. Mathew *Kassessa* were consecrated as Juhanon Mar Timotheos and Mathews Mar Athanasius respectively. Timotheos Bishop was made the Episcopa of the south diocese and started living in Kundara. Mathews Mar Athanasius Bishop became the Episcopa of the Niranam-Maramon Diocese and began his Diocesan ministry.

Chapter 2

1952 Election, 1953 Consecration and developments.

After the time of Titus II and Abraham Mar Thoma, the two remaining Bishops shouldered the responsibility of the Church. Parishes were established outside Kerala and also outside India.



Consecration of Alexander Mar Theophilus,
Thomas Mar Athanasius and Philipose Mar Chrysostom

There was an increase of parishes even in Kerala. It was understood that to give the right leadership and offer services, there was a need of more bishops. In 1952, the Mandalam decided to elect three more Bishops. According to the revised Sabha constitution a Nomination Board was elected by the Mandalam with nine clergy and twelve laity.

As per the announcement by the *Sabha* Council, all the unmarried priests were nominated. It was the responsibility of the Board to choose three or more candidates. But this episcopal election created a lot of waves in the Church. Allegations came up saying that the Mar Thoma Metropolitan is of Jacobite faith. All the three candidates who came to the fore of the selection Board were those close to the Metropolitan. They are not with any evangelical vision, if they are elected the Reformation of Abraham Malpan Achen would be in jeopardy were the loud voices heard in the Church. Mr. K. N. Daniel wrote several pamphlets. A *Pathyopadesha Samithi* (committee) came into being to work towards the preservation of evangelical teaching in the Church. In order to block the shockwave another committee namely '*Satya vishvasi Samithi*' was formed. The two sides strengthened their campaign.

The Episcopal Nomination Board proposed three names: Rev M. G. Chandy, Rev. P. Thomas and Rev. Philip Oommen. From this list, the name of Rev. P. Thomas was fiercely opposed by members of the '*Pathyopadesa Samithi*' and Mr. Daniel. Several efforts were made in the church to make peace and to conduct the election in a united spirit. Those with opposing viewpoints on the faith and practice of the church published an 'agreed statements'. Another effort to bring unity was made by inviting three Bishops of the C.S.I. Church. None of these efforts achieved any result.

Even though there was no consensus in opinion, it was decided to convene the Special Mandalam and the notice was issued. The election meeting was held with a lot of canvassing. On the first meeting, the person in whose name there was opposition, the same Thomas Achen was only elected. On the second day the other two

people were elected with a large majority. Afterwards a case was filed to block the episcopal consecration. Then it was withdrawn later. On the day of consecration there was an attempt to hold a black flag demonstration. It did not take place. The Consecration was held in a peaceful atmosphere. Those three who were admitted to the office of Episcopa were received with respect and great favour by the members of the Mar Thoma Church, members of sister Churches and by the general public. They had turned out to be a blessing for the Church.

The conducts of the *Pathyopadesa Samithi* did not end there. Mr. Daniel who alleged that the Mar Thoma Metropolitan is of Jacobite faith approached the Courts requesting that they restrain him from entering the parishes of the Mar Thoma Church and not to conduct himself in any way as the Metropolitan. This case came up for hearing in District court, High Court and in Supreme Court. In all three courts, the verdict was in favour of the Mar Thoma Metropolitan. Though the court case was very unfortunate, the submissions of the Metropolitan of the time and that of the other parties were gainful for the clarification of the traditions of the church and teaching of the common people. It was an



**Consecration of Joseph Mar Irenaeus and
Easow Mar Timotheos**

advantage that the court verdicts clearly contained 'the *Thaksas*' of the church and interpretations of the basic faith of the church. It is not inappropriate to mention the name of Advocate Kottarthil K. T. Thomas who conducted this case as his own affair without receiving any remuneration.

'Ten years' has some significance for the Mar Thoma Church. It took ten years of effort for Mathews Mar Athanasius to receive the official edict of the Government (*Thiruvezuthu Vilamabaram*). Ten years of the Seminary case resulted in the ousting of Thomas Mar Athanasius from the *Pazhaya* (old) Seminary.

After the Episcopal Consecration in 1953, the members of the *Pathyopadesa Samithi* continued to create problems in the church for the next eight years. They conducted partisan speeches, use of a new '*Thaksa*' were all part of their scheme. During this period, one very unfortunate necessity was the removal of four clergy from the office due to their indiscipline and disobedience, after informing them. As usual, as we can possibly understand, the enmity of the opposition party was on the rise. With the four clergy another fourteen clergy also joined. In 1961, those eighteen Clergy men together consecrated one of clergy as a bishop and accepted a special constitution and established a church called by the name "The Evangelical Church of India."

I have written these facts in order to show that Episcopal elections may create very difficult situations in the church. Mutual respect, mutual understanding and discipline are essential for the stability of the organizational structure of the church and Christian witness.

The Consecration of 1975

Considering the ill health of both the Mar Thoma Metropolitan and Mathews Mar Athanasius, the *Sabha 'Pradinidhi Mandalm'* in 1973 decided to elect two more Bishops for the effective functioning of the church. They also elected the Nomination Board according to the Constitutional provision. According to the prevailing rules,

the person who would be elected to the office of an Episcopa should have completed forty years of age. Such a rule was not in any of the episcopal churches around the world! This rule does not allow a person with 38 years of age or 39 years of age to be elected and be given enough training. The earlier rule was 30 years of age. There was an effort in the Mandalam to amend the age limit from 40 years to 35 years. Due to some strong misunderstanding that motion for amendment had to be withdrawn. Eventually the 1975 Mandalam reduced the age limit for the election of Bishops to 35 years. The election of our Episcopas is not done with a mere majority alone, expecting it to be unanimous; it was decided to have separate 75 percent majority of the votes of clergy and laity.

It is the understanding that the Nomination Board, which was elected with public support, would examine public opinion and only after scrutiny of the proposed persons, nominate them. In the history of the Board, more than the required candidates were never proposed to the *Mandalam*. There are people who think that this not right. If they are not getting at least one person to vote and defeat in the *Mandalam*, it is a breach of their rights and interference by the members of the Board. In principle, the Board is given the right to do a preliminary election. If it was only to look at the age, educational qualification from the names received, it could very well be done by the *Sabha* Office. That was not enough. That was the reason why it was entrusted with a Board elected by the *Mandalam*. If there are several people with almost equal qualifications, surely the Board should be able to suggest more names than the decided numbers. If there are no such people, only the qualified people's names should be submitted to the Council. This should not be misunderstood as an interference in the rights of anybody.

The Nomination Board submitted only two names in 1974. There were efforts made in that year also that the proposed candidates should not get enough votes. Every person or clergyman had the absolute freedom not to vote for a candidate who they thought



Consecration of Zacharias Mar Theophilos

to be unworthy. But to make organized efforts by collecting signatures, especially by the clergy, is not appropriate. It is to be pointed out that with much gratitude, the 1973 *Mandalam* meeting was held with good discipline and decorum. The election held in 1952 was acrimonious. In 1974, the election process did not turn to a partisan campaign. There were only two or three pamphlets, but they did not create open party politics. On the contrary, the leaflets had an opposite effect. This type of pamphlet activity is *anathema* to us and should we not rejected?

Before I end this small book, let me point out two or three things. 1) There is a growing thinking in the mind of a few clergy and laity that we should change the tradition of celibate episcopacy and we should have married Bishops. This is understood as a progressive thinking. Particular churches have their own ethos. The celibate episcopate is the longstanding tradition of hundreds of years of the eastern churches. Let me tell you about the happenings in the Nestorian church which is just opposite to this practice. Mar Simoon patriarch lived in a bad neighborhood in Chicago for a very long time and fell in love with a woman. He resigned as Patriarch and married her. After marriage, he withdrew his resignation and

tried to become the Patriarch again and a group of people accepted him. This has caused a permanent split in the Chaldean church. Not only that, the office of the Chaldean Patriarch had earned a slandered name. A caucus who stood with the Patriarch accepted him. The Chaldean Church in Iraq which is under political domination by the Government of Iraq did not have the power or freedom to oppose it. All this had happened because the Chaldean Patriarch could not enter Iraq and so Seemoon Patriarch moved his See to Chicago and became a slave to the culture of Chicago.

The celibate episcopate has its own merit (*thanamayatham*). The bishops are able to give full time service to the church without being distracted by the burdens of having a family to look after. They will be able to acquire greater love and respect from the people and the church community. Do we want to see the Episcopal election in the Mar Thoma Church downgraded to the level we see happening in some of our other organizations? If we come to give the Episcopal office to married clergy, then we are moving towards bitter electoral campaigns also.

II) There is thinking in some quarters that we should reduce the number of Bishops and use the offices of Archdeacons to conduct



Consecration of Geevarghese Mar Athnasios, Geevarghese Mar Theodocious, Euyakim Mar Coorilos



**Consecration of Joseph Mar Barnabas, Thomas Mar
Timotheos, Issac Mar Philoxenos**

the administration. It is thought that increasing the number of Bishops also means increase in the expenses for the Church. We need to think about the number of Bishops in our Church. As we see the state of the Church today, we need four Bishops for Kerala and two for outside Kerala. The reception given to the Bishops will not be given to Archdeacons or anyone else. We may be able to change this. Every Bishops should have good and efficient 'writer' (Bishop's Secretary), and a Diocesan Secretary. He can be given the vicarship of a Parish. Every Diocese must have one Vicar General. The responsibilities of the Bishops can be delegated to them. So far, the office of the Vicar General was given as an honour to the senior Clergy found to be efficient. They will be serving along with the Bishops as their right hand. A few years ago, there was a discussion in the *Alochana Sabha* to make Ayroor C.P. Philipose *Kassessa* the Vicar General. Achen's response was. "I am known as C. P. Philipose *Kassessa*. Now onwards it should be the same." We have received the same service from C P. Philipose *Kassessa*, that we would expect from a Vicar General.

III) If the Mar Thoma Church is to continue as an Eastern Church in India and to sustain the office of the Episcopate, there should

be a community of celibate clergy. There should be a Monastery (*Dayara*) somewhere in Kerala and they should come together for two months, twice a year and the rest of the time they should visit different places in India where our people are dispersed to give pastoral care to them. This is the only way that we can provide adequate church related services to our people dispersed in different parts of India. In the central Travancore people enjoy somewhat good pastoral care. Outside the state of Kerala, except in major cities, there are many families in small communities who long to get a pastoral visit and services of an Achen at least once a month. This work is not possible with Priests who are under a payroll or who are having a family. If it is possible to have one or two celibate priests staying in our Ashrams, we may be able to fulfil this need. It would be good if those who are coming forward for the ministry of the church understand this need of the Church.

Conclusion

We are concluding this small book. The question may be raised as to why some of these old hidden facts are being dug out. We have mentioned very clearly in the Preface what prompted us to do this. Is it not great joy to see that the churches which once



Consecration of Abraham Mar Paulos

were in conflict have changed their attitude and are now coming together in understanding? We need to understand the reason why the Malankara Church came to be divided into four or five dominations (*melkoima*). We are not trying to blame, in any way, our predecessors. Maybe we are not able to understand the severity of the pressures they had to undergo during those circumstances. In this work, we tried to describe the reason how the Church which was established by the Apostle Thomas has come to be divided into various dominations. Is it possible to see that the church had lost its balance in her effort to maintain the institution of the church without giving utmost importance to the mission of the Malankara Church, which is maintenance and propagation of the new life in Jesus Christ?

Looking closely, the fight for leadership by some individuals had become the reason for the division of the Church. History proves that from the earliest times, there were divisions and controversies in the Church that happened not due to any theological reason, but more due to the lack of understanding between leaders and heads of the Church and due to personal conflicts and grudges. The Synod of Ephesus, the Synod of Chalcedon and the East - West Church conflict in AD 1012 remains as examples. These should be warnings for us. During the meeting between Pope John XXIII



**Consecration of Mathews Mar Makkarios, Gregorios
Mar Stephanos, Thomas Mar Teethos**

and Patriarch Athanagoras of the Orthodox Church, the Patriarch said, "The biggest obstacle to Christian unity is not theology, but theologians." Pope John has agreed to this statement. This is also attested by the Church history. There is a message to the Malankara Church given by these two eminent Church Fathers.

We have to accept that there were some historical reasons for separating ourselves as different Churches under separate episcopates. Today, however, do we have enough reasons to exist in Malankara as a divided Church with separate interests? The leaders of the church and those who wish her well should think carefully about such questions. Where is the origin of the basic teachings of the Christian Church? Is it contained in the religious teachings and catechisms? The faith of the Church which has triumphed over the efforts of persecutions of, the world power, the Roman government that tried to destroy it for two centuries is "The Nicene Creed'. Do we come together on this? If we can base ourselves on this and move forward in co-existence and cooperation, won't more doors open for unity?

Appendix I

Episcopal Consecrations after 1975

Zacharias Mar Theophilus -1980 May 01 at Thiruvalla SCS

Alexander Mar Thoma, All other Episcopas of Mar Thoma Church & Mathews Mar Coorilos of the Thoziyoor Church

Name before Consecration : Rev. Oommen Koruthu

Saffargan Metropolitan: 2004, July 03

Entered into Eternal Rest on 27/12/2015

Geevarghese Mar Athanasius (Rev. C.I. George), Geevarghese Mar Theodosius (Rev. George Jacob), Euyakkim Mar Coorilos (Euyakkim I. Cheeran)

1989 December 09 at Thiruvalla SCS

Alexander Mar Thoma, All other Episcopas of Mar Thoma Church & Joseph Mar Coorilos of the Thoziyoor Church

Joseph Mar Barnabas (Joseph Jacob), Thomas Mar Timotheos (K. Thomas George) , Isaac Mar Philoxenos (Dr.A.I. Issac)

1993 October 02 at Thiruvalla SCS

Alexander Mar Thoma, All other Episcopas of Mar Thoma Church & Joseph Mar Coorilos of the Thoziyoor Church

Abraham Mar Paulos (Dr. K.U. Abraham)

2005 May 14 at Thiruvalla SCS

Philipose Mar Chrysostom Mar Thoma, All other Episcopas of Mar Thoma Church , Joseph Mar Coorilos & Cyril Mar Baselios of the Thoziyoor Church

Mathews Mar Makarios (Dr.Varghese Mathai), Gregorios Mar Stephanos (K.V. Varkey), Thomas Mar Theethos (Oommen George)

2011 April 13 at Thiruvalla SCS

Joseph Mar Thoma, All other Episcopas of Mar Thoma Church , Joseph Mar Coorilos & Cyril Mar Baselios of the Thoziyoor Church

Dr. Alexander Mar Thoma

became Valiyametropolitan on 1999 October 23

Entered into Eternal Rest on 2000 January 11

Dr. Philipose Mar Chrysostom became Saffargan Metropolitan
on 05/01/1978

Officiating Metropolitan on 1999 March 15

Metropolitan on 1999 October 23

Valiya Metropolitan on 2007 October 02

Dr. Joseph Mar Thoma Metropolitan

Dr Mathews Mar Athanasius Episcopa :

Entered into Eternal Rest on 1973 December 01

Dr. Juhanon Mar Thoma

Entered into Eternal Rest on 1976 September 27

Dr. Thomas Mar Athanasius Saffargan Metropolitan

Entered into Eternal Rest on 1984 November 27

Easow Mar Timotheos Episcopa

Entered into Eternal Rest on 1988 April 11

Chronology of Leaders who administred Malankara Church

St. Thomas - AD 52 - 82

Joseph Episcopa who came along with Knai Thommen - 345

Arch Deacons of Pakalomattom (Archadiyakkon) - 345-1653

Mar Sapor & Mar Prod - 825

Mar Yuhannan (Nestorian) - 1490

Mar David, Mar Denaha, Mar Jacob (Nestorians)- 1502-1549

Mar Youseph (Nestorian) - 1555-1569

Mar Abraham (Nestorian) - 1568-1597

Mar Simon (Nestorian) - 1578-1585

Archbishop Meneziz (Roman/Portuguese) -1599

Francis Roz (Roman/Portuguese)- 1601-1624

Stephen Debreto (Roman/Portuguese) - 1624-1641

Francis Garzia (Roman/Portuguese) - 1641 - 1653

1st Mar Thoma - 1653 - 1670

2nd Mar Thoma - 1670 - 1686

3rd Mar Thoma - 1686 - 1688

4th Mar thoma - 1688 - 1728

5 th Mar Thoma - 1728 - 1765

6 th Mar Thoma (Mar Dionysius) - 1765 - 1808

7th Mar Thoma - 1808 - 1809

8th Mar Thoma - 1809 - 1815

Mar Dionysius (Pulikkottil) - 1815 - 1816

Mar Philoxenos - 1816-1818

Mar Dionysius (Punnathra) - 1818 - 1825

Mar Dionysius (Cheppad) - 1825 - 1853

13th Mar Thoma - Mathews Mar Athanasius - 1843 - 1877

14th Mar Thoma - Thomas Mar Athanasius -1877 - 1893

15th Mar Thoma - Titus I - 1893 - 1909

16th Mar Thoma - Titus II - 1909 - 1944

17th Mar Thoma - Abraham Mar Thoma - 1944 - 1947

18th Mar Thoma - Juhanon Mar Thoma - 1947 - 1976

19th Mar Thoma - Alexander Mar Thoma - 1976 - 1999

20th Mar Thoma - Philipose Mar Chrysostom - 1999 - 2007

21st Mar Thoma - Joseph Mar Thoma - 2007 -



Mar Thoma I



Mar Thoma II



Mar Thoma III



Mar Thoma IV



Mar Thoma V



Mar Thoma VI



Mar Thoma VII



Mar Thoma VIII



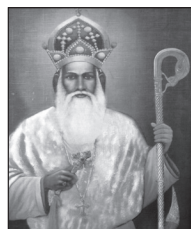
Mar Thoma IX



Mar Thoma X



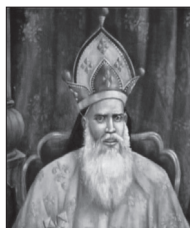
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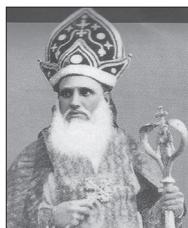
Mar Thoma XII



Mar Thoma XIII



Mar Thoma XIV



Mar Thoma XV



Mar Thoma XVI



Mar Thoma XVII



Mar Thoma XVIII



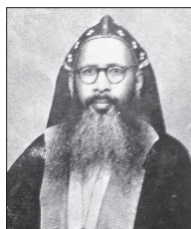
Mar Thoma XIX



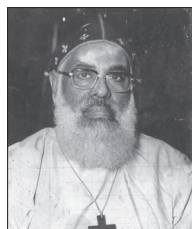
Mar Thoma XX



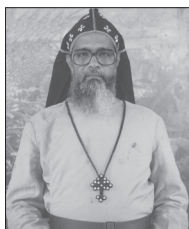
Mar Thoma XXI



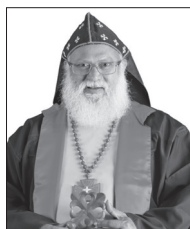
Mathews Mar
Athanasius



Thomas Mar
Athanasius



Easow Mar
Themothius



Zacharias Mar
Theophilus



EPISCOPACY IN MALANKARA & THE EPISCOPAL CONSECRATION SERVICES OF THE MALANKARA MAR THOMA SYRIAN CHURCH

The book 'Episcopacy in Malankara & The Episcopal Consecration Services of The Malankara Mar Thoma Syrian Church' is a careful analysis of the episcopacy of the Mar Thoma Church, and a clear direction to the church in keeping the Episcopal tradition of the church with great ardour and sanctity. As a reformed Malankara church with celibate Episcopacy, we have to be proud of our rich eastern and ecumenical heritage and legacy of an Antiochian lineage.

Dr. Joseph Mar Thoma Metropolitan

MALANKARA MAR THOMA SYRIAN CHURCH
ANIMATION DEPARTMENT

