

FACTIONAL FEUD IN THE MALANKARA CHURCH

മലങ്കര സഭയിലെ കക്ഷി വഴക്ക്

മത്തായി ഇടയനാൽ കോർ എപ്പിസ്കോപ്പാ
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Translated by
Fr. Dr. Jacob Mathew

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English

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FACTIONAL FEUD IN THE MALANKARA CHURCH

(Malankara Sabhayile Kakshivazhakku)

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It is unfortunate that fights and court cases exist in Malankara for a long time. It can be a very valid criticism against the whole Church in Malankara, who shall be the eternal witness to Jesus Christ, that she does not pay any attention to the spiritual nurture of her children and spends her valuable resources and work force at courtrooms and police stations. Problems continue, as if they are ever not going to end, between the Patriarchal and Catholicose factions as two separate entities. It was only for twelve years, precisely between 1958 and 1970 that peace prevailed in the Church and the progress that has befallen during that period was remarkable too. Nevertheless this peace was obliterated. Children of various parishes of the mother Malankara Orthodox Church started to pitifully fight inside and outside the courtrooms. This is extremely agonising. Innocent people, who are not in a position to understand the reality, believe the hollow statements and equivocating exhortations of the leaderships and fight against each other. This shameless drama is baptised with a noble nomenclature as 'safekeeping the faith'. Not many people deliberate themselves to understand facts or to inquire and comprehend the truth. 'I would prefer continuing in the Church to which I was born and have grown up to something else' is what the majority of people have to pronounce. The leadership that knows the truth hides it skilfully from the unpretentious folk and is exploiting their feelings to land to their perverted goals. Standard of many church leaders has gone even below the baseline like political leaders of no scruples. Truth will only be revealed to those, who seek it with open mind and no prejudice for

they will stand firm for the truth. Accusations, ridicule, loss of wealth or any like would not make them cowards. Truth will set them free (Jn 8:31)!

When we closely examine the books, publications, and substantial documents of the two factions, we can find out some facts that both parties unanimously agree. They agree upon that the Church in Malankara was established by St. Thomas, the Apostle of Jesus Christ, and they were called as MALANKARA NAZRANEES or MAR THOMA CHRISTIANS. Divisions that occurred into the body of the Universal Church have reflected in the Church of Malankara as well. For instance, Nestorians, Catholics and other Christian denominations have entertained their supremacy over Malankara Church. Very Rev. Kurian Cor-Episcopa Kaniampampil, who is one of the reputed and learned leaders of the Patriarchal faction, elucidates upon the above said facts in his book 'Aluvayile Valiya Thirumeni' on page 3.

H.H. PETER III, THE PATRIARCH, IN MALANKARA

In 1876, the Patriarch of the See of Antioch H.H. Peter III arrived in Malankara. It was for the first time that a Patriarch of the See of Antioch was visiting Malankara. In the same year he summoned a meeting of representatives from parish churches and thereby formed the Malankara Suriyaani Kristiani Association (Malankara Association) and the Malankara Managing Committee (Managing Committee) for the better administration of the Church in Malankara. It was a Metropolitan, who was administering the Church in Malankara until then and he was known as Malankara Metropolitan. H.H. the Patriarch divided Malankara into seven dioceses and enthroned seven Metropolitans for the administration of these dioceses. He also conducted Sanctification of Holy Myron (mooron koodasha) for the Church in Malankara and also ordered that all men above 21 from Malankara shall pay

reesseessa (head tax) to the Patriarch of Antioch. This evidently accentuates the fact that the Church in Malankara remained under supervision and rule of the Patriarch of Antioch from 1876 onwards. It was the Patriarch alone, who could consecrate bishops and perform Sanctification of Holy Myron (mooron koodasha) for the Church in Malankara (Kurian Cor-Episcopa Kaniamparampil, pp. 16-17). However, it shall also be noted that the status of Malankara Metropolitan as the authority over the Church of Malankara was not abolished.

After having done the above said administrative reforms, the Patriarch returned to his native land and he passed away in 1895. Two people contested to the Patriarchal dignity of Antioch thereafter, namely, Abdul Messiha and Abdulla. Abdul Messiha won the contest by the majority of one vote and he was eventually consecrated as Patriarch. It was the law of Turkey that the one, who will be elected and consecrated as Patriarch to the See of Antioch, shall obtain the consent note from the Sultan of Turkey, called 'the Ferman', which was obtained by Abdul Messiha and he started discharging his duties as Patriarch of Antioch. However, after ten years in 1906, Abdulla, who lost the election by one vote earlier deposed Abdul Messiha and got enthroned as Patriarch. He used his influence in the court of the Sultan of Turkey to withdraw 'the Ferman' to Abdul Messiha and obtained the same for himself (Kurian Cor-Episcopa Kaniamparampil pp. 16-17). (Z.M. Paret says that Abdulla had quitted from the Orthodox Church after the Patriarchal election that he lost to Abdul Messiha to join the Catholic Church and he remained with the Catholics for these ten years.)

It is unlawful to consecrate another one to the same throne, when one Patriarch without any serious physical disability, mental insanity or heresy is reigning. This convention and custom was here cleanly violated. The breach that occurred thereby in Antioch ended with the death of the two

Patriarchs. Nevertheless the breach in Malankara that these two Patriarchs had caused is still continuing and that is the pathetic reality.

Patriarch Abdulla, who had deposed Abdul Messiah and ascended to the throne of the See of Antioch, arrived in Malankara in 1909. It was Vattasseril Mar Dionysius the Malankara Metropolitan at that time. There occurred difference of agreements between the Malankara Metropolitan and the Patriarch. Mar Dionysius and his party alleged that the Patriarch Abdulla was imposing temporal authority over the Church in Malankara as well as demanding the ownership of church properties. Consequently, the Patriarch deposed Mar Dionysius and summoned a meeting of parish church representatives, who were his supporters at Aluva and installed Kochuparampil Mar Coorilose as the replacement Malankara Metropolitan. The Patriarch lived in Malankara for two years and thereafter in 1911 he returned back to his native place. (He died in 1915, on his way back, before he would reach his destination.)

Abdul Messiha, however, responded with a telegraphic message as Patriarchal Order saying that the deposition of Abdulla was void, for it was he, who was the real Patriarch, to imply that there was no necessity to pay any value to the deposition imposed by Abdulla. The confusing result was there were two Patriarchs and two Malankara Metropolitans showing their allegiance to their respective Patriarchs. Both the Malankara Metropolitans demanded authority to rule over the Church in Malankara (Kurian Cor-Episcopa Kaniampampil p. 20).

STATUS OF CATHOLICOSE IN MALANKARA

There after the Patriarch Abdul Messiha arrived at Malankara with two Rembans in 1912 and in the same year

itself he consecrated Mar Ivanios of Kandanad Diocese as Catholicose of the East at Niranam Church. Mar Ivanios hailed from Murimattathil family of Kolencheri in the present Ernakulam district (Kurian Cor-Episcopa Kaniamparampil P. 28). Five important points were noted in the order that he issued along with this consecration, namely:

1. The need to reinstate Catholicate of the East at Malankara to sustain freedom and peace at Malankara was very much convincing.

2. The Catholicose was consecrated as successor of St. Thomas on to the throne of St. Thomas, the Apostle.

3. Catholicose has the right to consecrate Metropolitan as well as sanctify the Holy Myron and in future it is deemed as not necessary to depend upon the Patriarch therefore.

4. The Holy Synod of Malankara has the right to consecrate another person as successor of The Catholicose, when one Catholicose passes away and nobody has the right to impede the Holy Synod therefrom.

5. The loving relation with Antioch shall be maintained unhindered. (Vattasseril Mar Dionysius, Z.M. Paret pp. 458-459)

After having reinstated the Catholicate of the East at Malankara that it can remain with freedom, the Patriarch H.H. Abdul Messiha stayed at Malankara for about nine months. Thereafter he returned back to his native place and he too passed away in August 1915.

THE TOMB OF H.H. THE PATRIARCH ABDUL MESSIHA

H.H. the Patriarch Abdulla and the Patriarchal faction

had been spreading rumours that H.H. the Patriarch Abdul Messiha was condemned and therefore deposed. However, H.H. Abdul Messiha was entombed at Kurkuma monastery, where Patriarchs of the Church of Antioch were usually entombed. That tomb is to be seen even today there. We shall understand one important truth from this point, namely, that H.H. Abdul Messiha had no condemnation upon him until his death and entombing. (Had he had been condemned, he could not have been entombed along with the other Orthodox Patriarchs!) All the contrary rumours are stone studded lies. Nevertheless nobody knows where the tomb of H.H. Abdulla is to be found. Some people say that it is in London and some say that it is not in London, but somewhere else, for nobody is sure about the place of his entombing. It will be good that those ones, who belong to the Patriarchal faction to read this, shall initiate an inquiry about the tomb of H.H. Abdulla!

CATHOLICOSE - PATRIARCHAL FACTIONS

Vattasseril Mar Dionysius and his faction recognised and accepted the Catholicate and remained thereunder to be known as Catholicose faction or Catholicate faction. Those ones, who did not recognise Abdul Messiha as Patriarch, but supported and recognized Abdulla as Patriarch, namely, Kochuparampil Mar Coorilose and his faction, began to be known as Patriarchal faction. The Patriarch continued the practice of consecrating Metropolitans and sanctifying Holy Myron for the Patriarchal faction and for the Catholicate faction these spiritual needs were met by the Catholicose himself (Kurian Cor-Episcopa Kaniampampil, pp. 51).

As a consequence, the question arises that who shall receive the interest of Vattippanam, which is the property of the Church of Malankara. The Patriarchal faction filed a case to have the right to receive the interest of Vattippanam as well as for the authority to rule over the Church of Malankara.

However, the case was settled in favour of the Catholicose faction and Patriarchal faction had to pay to the Catholicose faction the legal expenses of the suit. Catholicose faction, as legally affirmed, received the interest of Vattippanam (Kurian Cor-Episcopa Kaniamparampil, pp. 44, 45, 46).

Time passed and both factions continued the fights and legal procedures with ever new arguments. Patriarchs and Catholicoses have passed away in the mean time and their successors were consecrated as needed. Some reconciliation talks also have taken place amidst initiated by some peace loving good souls, yet none of them reached the ultimate goal (Kurian Cor-Episcopa Kaniamparampil, pp. 52-56).

Finally, after the legal battle for long 43 years, on 12th September 1958, the Supreme Court of India settled the issue in favour of the Catholicose faction. Five Judges have unanimously issued the verdict and it also had directed the Patriarchal faction to pay all legal expenses to the Catholicose faction. Patriarchal faction, who lost the legal suit, filed a review petition and the Supreme Court rejected that too. In this context reconciliation talks gained wind and the Patriarchal faction had no option but to loosen their grip from the demands that they were firmly holding on until that time.

PEACE IN MALANKARA

The Patriarch and his faction insisted on that H.H. Abdul Messiha had been condemned and therefore, the Catholicose and Metropolitans, whom he had consecrated, had to be re-consecrated. Moreover, that the Catholicose should not sanctify the Holy Myron and the right to sanctify the Holy Myron shall alone rest upon the Patriarch; they argued (Kurian Cor-Episcopa Kaniamparampil, p. 51).

The Catholicose faction, however, did not accept these

two conditions. They believed that the consecration by the Patriarch Abdul Messiha had no mangle and spiritual blessings of a person do not get affected by the withdrawal of recognition (Ferman) by a heathen Sultan of Turkey. St. Peter and St. Paul, whom the heathens have killed, had no mangle on their apostleship. Status of all the holy fathers, who have been persecuted and have been killed in prison, had not been questioned too. In this context, how the withdrawal of Ferman by the Sultan shall be affecting the spiritual blessings, they counter argued. The Catholicose faction maintained their stand as the Catholicose had the right to sanctify Holy Myron and they were not at all ready to forfeit that right.

The Patriarchal faction, nevertheless, was then in a difficult situation. They had lost the legal suit, had to pay the legal expenses to the Catholicose faction and also had to hand over the administration of parish churches too. In such a predicament of deadlock, they were ready to embrace peace. The then Patriarch, H.H. Jacob III, handed over to the Catholicose the document of unconditional acceptance as well as recognition of the Catholicose through his delegate Mar Julius. On the other hand, the Catholicose handed over to the Patriarchal delegate the document of acceptance and recognition of Patriarch as per the relevant clauses of the current constitution passed in 1934. It was on 16th December 1958 that the Metropolitans of both sides prayed in front of lighted candles and thereafter exchanged the above said documents of peace in the Holy Altar Room of Old Seminary, Kottayam, and this historical hour was proclaimed by spectacular fireworks. Children of the Church of Malankara were happy for the fact that the Church that had been divided for almost half a century became one and they praised God Almighty for the same.

We need to notice one very important fact here. The Patriarch accepted the Catholicose unconditionally, whereas the Catholicose accepted the Patriarch under a very important

condition, namely, as per the relevant clauses of current Constitution, that they themselves have passed in 1934. Now, one question pops up. Who have violated this contract of peace? Who were the culprits?

CONSECRATION OF CATHOLICOSE AFTER ESTABLISHMENT OF PEACE

After the mutual recognition and acceptance in 1958, H.H. Baselius Geevarghese II, the Catholicose issued orders declaring that the Metropolitans of the former Patriarchal faction were again given responsibilities of those dioceses, which they were pasturing until mutual agreement and peace. As Malankara Metropolitan and Catholicose H.H. Geevarghese II presided over the new Holy Synod, which comprised bishops from both factions and in this capacity His Holiness ruled and led the Malankara Church thenceforth.

Ecclesiastical atmosphere, which was under dark clouds for a long time, became clear and sunny. As a consequence of peace the Malankara Church started to gain progress on every walks in horse's pace.

Meanwhile the Catholicose, who took initiatives for peace passed away in 1964. During his lifetime itself, the Malankara Association meeting at Niranam in 1962 had elected Augen Mar Thimotheos of Kandanad Diocese as his successor and Catholicose Designate. Now the necessity aroused to consecrate him as the next Catholicose. As per relevant clauses of 1934 constitution, if an accepted and recognised Patriarch exists on the See of Antioch he shall be invited for the consecration of Catholicose of Malankara and if he comes, he has to lead the consecration ceremony as President of the Holy Synod. In this context the Holy Synod of Malankara invited the Patriarch to Malankara. H.H. Jacob III, the Patriarch accepted the invitation and he consecrated H.H. Baselius Augen I at the

temporary Holy Altar-Room that was arranged at the M.D. Seminary campus on 22nd may 1964. Special invitees like the Ethiopian Archbishop and Armenian Archbishop along with all members of the Holy Synod of Malankara participated in this consecration. Thousands of faithful witnessed this blessed event. Thereafter the Catholicose and the Patriarch were given royal welcome at various parts of Malankara. After a month's stay at Malankara the Patriarch happily returned back to his native land.

There was a dissident group existing then too that worked against and would not desire peace at Malankara. They, however, could not influence anything because of the brave steps that the Patriarch assumed, which would not offer any support or assistance to them. They could only achieve an order of injunction against the Malankara Association meeting that elected H.G. Augen Mar Thimotheos as Catholicose Designate, but it was soon invalidated by the Division Bench of the Honourable High Court of Kerala.

DISSIDENTS UNDERMINING THE PEACE PROCESS

Strong co-operation that the Patriarch bestowed upon the consecration of Catholicose in 1964 further strengthened the Church that cruised peacefully from 1958 to 1964. Some years thereafter, however, some amazing experiences that have befallen on the Church from the side of H.H. the Patriarch need to be mentioned remorsefully. These might have happened due to some devilish instigation of dissidents from Malankara. This will later be elaborated upon.

As H.H. Baseliouse Augen I became weak of advanced age, the Malankara Association assembled again in 1970 to choose another candidate as his successor and Vattakkunnel Mathews Athanasios was elected as Catholicose Designate.

The dissident group filed a petition at the Honourable Ernakulam court to prevent this Association meeting too, but that attempt also misfired miserably. Catholicose Designate was elected through the appropriate procedure itself.

DENYING THE PRIESTHOOD OF ST. THOMAS

Thereafter in the same year itself letter No. 203/1970 dated 27.06.1970 from Patriarch Jacob III reached the Catholicose, which denied even the priesthood of Apostle St. Thomas. The letter said as follows: Long before your letter I wondered very much at noticing another letter with the letterhead, which carries the title 'Throne of St. Thomas' ... As it becomes clear from the Gospel according to St. John (20:21-24), Apostle St. Thomas had never become a priest. By not being even a priest, how did he become an Episcopos? When not an Episcopos, how did he establish a throne? Throne of Apostle St. Thomas that the letter No. 203 mentioned again sowed seeds of quarrel in the Church of Malankara.

HOLY SYNOD OF MALANKARA SEIZES ACTION

Holy Synod of Malankara pondered on the said letter in detail and as it contradicted the faith of the Church as well as the divine word of God, the Holy Synod declared it as worthy to be renounced and the decision was informed to the Patriarch.

ANOTHER PAINFUL INCIDENT

Church of Malankara never assumed any income from the tomb of Patriarch Elias III at Manjanikkara and maintained that the income from there be utilised according to the wishes of H.H. the Patriarch. The Patriarch had appointed Remban Aprem Aboodhi as caretaker of the tomb of H.H. Elias III at Manjanikkara and at this crossroad rumours started to spread

that the Patriarch had intentions to consecrate him as Metropolitan and to send him to Malankara as his delegate. No sooner the Catholicose got a clue on this, than he convened the Holy Synod of Malankara and the Synod decided to inform the Patriarch by means of a letter that he shall withdraw from appointing and sending Remban Aprem Aboodhi as Patriarchal delegate. Happens that he sends Remban Aboodhi as his delegate, that would cause to spoil the good relation between Malankara and the Throne of Antioch, the letter warned. It is specially noteworthy that both Mar Philoxenos (who later became His Beatitude of the Patriarchal faction) and Mar Clemis (of Knanaya Diocese), who have hailed from the former Patriarchal faction have signed this letter. Patriarch, on the contrary, having not even bothered to reply to the letter of the Synod of Malankara, consecrated Remban Aboodhi as Metropolitan and sent him with an order to the Church of Malankara to receive him as Patriarchal delegate.

Consequently, the Catholicose ordered all parish churches, as decided by the Holy Synod of Malankara, not to receive him at all. However, favouring the Patriarch some churches have received Metropolitan Aboodhi and those meetings urged people to revolt against the Catholicate. In this predicament leadership of the Church beseeched the Central Government to expel him out of India. He had to leave India on 8th July 1973.

After Metropolitan Aboodhi had left India, the Patriarch Jacob III retaliated by summoning some priests to Damascus, to his abode, and after consecration sending them back as Metropolitans to Malankara. Thus, Kadavil Paul Remban, Cheruvallil Fr. Thomas and Perumpillil Fr. Geevarghese arrived at Malankara as Metropolitans.

WITHDRAWAL OF ACCEPTANCE TO THE PATRIARCH

On 03.08.1974 the Holy Synod of the Church in Malankara withdrew every acceptance to the Patriarch, which was in craft from 1958, citing various charges, namely, sending a delegate to Malankara from 1970 onwards; denial of even priesthood to Apostle St. Thomas, the founder of the Church in Malankara; consecration of Metropolitans violating constitutional stipulations etc. On 16th June 1975 the Patriarch summoned his supporting Metropolitans from Malankara to Damascus and the combined synod of Damascus condemned the Catholicose as well as all Metropolitans of his Synod. In the month of September of the same year the Patriarch consecrated Paulose Mar Philoxenos, Metropolitan of Kandanad, as counter Catholicose. Patriarchal faction formed a counter association named 'Malankara Yacobaya Association' to install a parallel arrangement. These actions paved way to fights and legal procedures between the factions like in the times before 1958. As we are now awaiting the final verdict on these issues from the Honourable Supreme Court, some questions are relevant, it looks like.

1. The Patriarch and the Catholicose accepted each other in 1958 as per the relevant clauses of the 1934 Constitution of the Malankara Church. Then, is it not a rightful claim from the Catholicose faction that the Patriarch shall involve himself in the Church of Malankara as per that Constitution alone?

2. Have not both the factions together amended and accepted the Constitution of 1934 in 1967, which was in craft during the time of mutual acceptance in 1958? Have not bishops of Patriarchal faction too sent necessary orders to respective parish churches to implement this amended constitution? Didn't Paulose Mar Philoxenos also, who was later consecrated as the first Catholicose of the Patriarchal faction, implement this Constitution in parish churches of his diocese?

3. Is it not a serious heresy, which H.H. Jacob III claimed in his letter No. 203, that St. Thomas the Apostle was not even a priest? He himself says in his book 'Syrian Church History' on page 149: "During the spring season of AD 28, St. Thomas was elevated to the rank of Apostles along with other disciples". Again on page no. 164, he says that, "After having sown the seed of Gospel in Malankara he (St. Thomas) ordained priests from four families to serve this young Church, namely from Sankarapuri, Pakalomattam, Kalli, and Kaliyankal, who have embraced Christianity from among the Barahmins". If St. Thomas was not a high priest, how could he have been ordaining priests? Is it not amazing that a section of people from Malankara have no ill feeling for embarrassingly abjecting St. Thomas and spreading such a severe heresy? What would have been the situation, had someone else have voiced this kind of a remark?

4. IS THE THRONE OF ST. THOMAS AN INVENTION?

H.H. Abdul Messiha had consecrated the Catholicose in 1912 and it was on to the Throne of St. Thomas. The letter of Catholicose to the Patriarch at the time of mutual acceptance in 1958 was on the letterhead carrying the title 'Throne of St. Thomas'. The letter of summons to parish churches to send delegates to the Malankara Association to pass the Constitution in 1934 was also in the letterhead carrying the title 'Throne of St. Thomas'. Rakad church in the diocese of Ankamali has an old inscription on the steps to the Holy Altar Room, which reads as: "Yuyakim Mar Coorilose visited the Church of Malankara in 1846, when Mar Dionysius was ruling as Malankara Metropolitan on the Throne of St. Thomas" and it shows that the 'Throne of St. Thomas' was existing even then. Is it not then swindling to state that the letter of mutual acceptance of 1958 was read only in 1970?

Moreover, what does it mean with the term 'Throne'? Doesn't it mean 'Apostolic Succession'? It was the Apostle St. Thomas, who has founded the Church of Malankara and the Church of Malankara is his Church. We can read the letter of H.H. Abdulla in the 'Pampakuda prayer books' in our homes and that letter also begins like 'to the blessed ... in the Church of Apostle St. Thomas'.

The Holy Bible witnesses that all the 12 apostles have thrones. In the Gospel of St. Matthew we read: Jesus said to them, "Truly I tell you, at the renewal of all things, when the Son of Man is seated on the throne of his glory, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel". In short, was the question about the 'Throne of St. Thomas' not a cheap trick to persuade a partition in Malankara?

5. ARE THE CATHOLICOSE AND HIS FACTION HERETICS?

What does it mean 'heresy'? Doesn't it mean 'against the truths of the Holy Bible'? It is only a historical fact that St. Thomas has founded the Church in Malankara and ordained priests. Even when one dares to deny this, it just becomes a different opinion on a historical fact and not a heresy. Therefore, to claim the 'Throne of St. Thomas' on the legacy of succession of Apostle St. Thomas does not become a heresy, rather is an expression of true faith and a biblical verity. The Patriarch is, therefore, a heretic, who has denied this 'expression of true faith and biblical verity'.

We sing the following hymn during the Holy Qurbana:

'Aaron and Moses together received the first-priesthood and Moses imparted it to Zachariah. Zachariah imparted it to John and John to the Lord, the Lord to the Apostles and the Apostles imparted it to All the nations -

(Aadyacharyathvam kaikkont - aharon moosayodon-
nichu,

skariyaykathu nalki moosa - skaria yohannaneki,
yohannan karthavinnum - kartha than sleehanmarkkum,
nana srishti vibha-gankalkkeki sleehanmar.)'

We do not sing that the Lord had imparted priesthood to all Apostles except St. Thomas. The Lord was not partial to any of his disciples and gave 'everyone' alike. From Mt. 16:18, we understand that the keys of the kingdom of heaven are given to St. Peter. This authority of binding and losing is given not just to St. Peter alone but to all apostles. In Mt. 18:18 we read: "Truly I tell you, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven." How is it possible to believe that this authority is not valid for St. Thomas alone?

6. WHO HAVE FORGOTTEN THEIR FATHER?

The Patriarchal faction accuses that the Catholicose and his faction have forgotten their father. Was it not St. Thomas, who has become father to the Church of Malankara? We read in I Corinthians 4:14-16: "I am not writing this to make you ashamed, but to admonish you as my beloved children. For though you might have ten thousand guardians in Christ, you do not have many fathers. Indeed, in Christ Jesus I became your father through the gospel. I appeal to you, then, be imitators of mine." What does this mean? It was Apostle St. Paul, who has preached the Gospel in the Church of Corinth and thereby has become their father. There occurred, however, factions in that Church. St. Paul writes the above given text to them to make them ashamed of their deeds. 'For though you might have ten thousand guardians in Christ, you have indeed only one father', the one, who has become their father through the Gospel. In short, this means that the father of the Church in Corinth is St. Paul. Which Apostle has the right to ask to the children of Malankara Church like this? Is he not

St. Thomas alone? Was it not H.H. the Patriarch, who claimed that St. Thomas has no right to be the father? It is not possible to become father without priesthood. Now, was it not the Patriarchal faction, who has denied their true father, the ones, who have forgotten the father?

The Valiya Thirumeni of Aluva of blessed memory, who was the Malankara Metropolitan of Patriarchal faction before 1958, wrote in his last letter as follows: “Dear children! We have commemorated the completion of nineteen hundred years of the arrival and founding of Church in Malankara by the Apostle of India St. Thomas, who was one of the beloved disciples of our Lord Jesus Christ. Now, after the political independence of India and the completion of around five years thereafter, we have conceived in full hope the possibilities of growth to our Apostolic Church” (Kurian Cor-Episcopa Kaniampampil, p. 89). This also confirms that the Church in Malankara had always claimed the legacy and succession of Apostle St. Thomas.

After having abjected the Apostle St. Thomas to the maximum, the Patriarchal faction has honoured him by sneaking in his name into the diptychs. Recently, his relics have been ceremoniously laid at Mulanthuruthy as well. Are these expressions not just to dunce the children of the Church in Malankara, who are grieving at the dreadful humiliation done at the first saint of Malankara?

7. ARE NOT THE PATRIARCH AND CATHOLICOSE EQUALS?

The zenith of holy ordination is episcopate. Neither the Catholicose, nor the Patriarch has a status above that of an episcopos. No trained mind would say 'ordination as Patriarch or as Catholicose', rather would prefer designation or position as Patriarch or as Catholicose to anything else. This is not a position in terms of ordination, but is an administra-

tional designation. Orthodox Churches are local churches. Ethiopian Orthodox Church has her supreme head. Patriarch of Antioch is the supreme head of the Church of Antioch and eastern provinces. 'All the east' does not mean also the Church all around the world. There is no entity called Universal Syrian Church and nor there exists a Patriarch for the Universal Syrian Church. No Patriarch had ever used such a title. Very recently we come across the new usage 'Head of the Universal Syrian Church' and such a Patriarchal Designation is not mentioned anywhere canonically.

H.H. the Catholicose is the supreme head of the Oriental Syrian Church. The Patriarch is to consecrate Metropolitans and sanctify Holy Myron for the Church under his jurisdiction and the Catholicose performs these two responsibilities for the Church under his jurisdiction. We address both of them as 'Your Holiness', where as the Catholicose of the Patriarchal faction is degraded as 'Sreshtha Catholica Bava'. He has no right to sanctify Holy Myron. The Hoodaya Canon, which the Patriarchal faction upholds, also permits the Catholicose to sanctify the Holy Myron. Since the 'Sreshtha Catholicose' has not been given this right, he is not a canonical Catholicose, but an under-ordinate, who was consecrated for the personal interests of the Patriarch or is only a conditional Catholicose.

The letter No. 203, which denied even the priesthood of Apostle St. Thomas, has indeed addressed the Catholicose as 'to the nobility of our brother'. 'After brotherly kisses and greetings we write' is the beginning of this letter. All these facts prove that the Patriarch and the Catholicose bear equality within their respective confines. They are brothers, aren't they? Are they like father and son?

8. WHO SHALL ELECT H.H. THE PATRIARCH?

The Holy Synod of the Orthodox Church of Syria

elects the Patriarch of Antioch. If the expression 'Universal Syrian Church' means the combined Church in Syria as well as in Malankara, the Patriarch shall be elected from the combined Holy Synod from Syria as well as from Malankara. Supreme head of the Universal Catholic Church, the Pope of Rome, is elected from the College of Cardinals, in which Cardinals from all over the world are members. However, it is stipulated that no Metropolitan from Malankara shall become the Patriarch. Only a Syrian shall have this dignity. The one, whom they elect from among themselves, will condemn or remove the ones, whom the Church in Malankara elects and he will also appoint the ones here, whom he likes. Alas, what a contradiction! What does this mean? It clearly means that the children of the Church in Malankara shall be slaves under the Syrians. The Patriarch, who has the right to rule over the Church of Malankara, shall only be elected from among the Syrians. Can anyone with an iota of self respect accept this condition? Can the Patriarch and his faction accept the condition that the one, who gets majority from among the Syrians as well as from Malankara, be consecrated as Patriarch? Have the children of the Church in Malankara ever understood this? Why should we bear this shameful yoke? Who can bear this disgraceful shackle that one shall be the slave of a ruler, whom he has no right to elect?

9. WHAT IS THE TRUE RELATION BETWEEN THE CHURCH IN MALANKARA AND THE THRONE OF ANTIOCH?

In his book 'Aluvayile Valiya Thirumeni' Kurian Cor-Episcopa Kaniampampil writes on p.56 as follows: "Valiya Thirumeni, who knew the truth right from the beginning of revolution had only one insistence". Yes, it was the particular insistence of a true member of the Syrian Church, namely, the sacred relation with the Holy Antiochene See shall never be broken and that was all. This statement makes it clear that

the 'sacred relation' shall be maintained with Antioch. H.H. Abdul Messiha, the Patriarch, ordered to maintain the 'loving relation' with Antioch. Does this 'sacred relation' mean subjugation and servitude? Shall the right to condemn, remove and rule under the feet be called a blessed relation?

Catholicose faction was always ready to maintain the 'sacred relation' with the Throne of Antioch. To maintain this relation with the See of Antioch they have provided two rights to H.H. the Patriarch in the Constitution, which they had passed in 1934. These are rights alone and are no powers. The Antiochenes always wanted to cheat Malankara by converting rights into powers. What are these rights? If a Patriarch, who is accepted by Malankara, exists then:

a. He shall be invited for the consecration of Catholicose; if H.H. the Patriarch accepts and arrives he can conduct the consecration as the president of the Holy Synod. Otherwise, the Synod will consecrate the Catholicose.

b. The Synod, which is being summoned to study allegations against the Catholicose, can be presided by the Patriarch, if he arrives and he can declare the decision too.

This clearly shows that the Constitution also recognises 'the sacred relation'. It is shameful to demand that to maintain 'sacred relation' one shall accept supremacy and endorse subjugation. Does any other Church in the world have this kind of a tragic disaster? Oh' children of Malankara, don't you have self respect? Don't you have even today the courage to unshackle and overthrow subjugation?

10. IS THE CHURCH OF MALANKARA A CHURCH WITH COMPLETE FREEDOM?

When we say that a State has freedom, it means that,

the State can rule by itself and decide upon its domestic emergencies without any external adherence; technically said, that state is autocephalous and autonomous. When we say that a Church has freedom, we shall understand that the Church can elect its own Supreme Head as well as consecrate him and can fulfil its spiritual and temporal necessities without any external dependence. In this context Catholicate of the East has complete freedom and it is autocephalous as well as autonomous.

The Patriarchal faction accuses that the Catholicose exhorts freedom. It would not be wrong to humbly ask them a question. Don't you say that all parish churches have freedom and is this not your argument at the legal procedures? No parish church has an existence independently. Still you ridicule the Catholicose, who claims that the Malankara Church has freedom, as 'exhorter of freedom' with the same tongue that claims that each parish church is free. This is nothing but contemptible.

11. THE PATRIARCH EXHIBITED MAGNANIMITY!

Look at how the Patriarchal faction is teaching their children untrue statements! We read on page 34 of the book on Church History of Malankara for the 9th standard Sunday School as follows: "H.H. the Patriarch exhibited magnanimity to accept the Catholicose in 1958". Has not this generous action happen, when the Patriarchal faction had lost pathetically in the Honourable Supreme Court of India and was ordered to pay all legal expenses to the Catholicate faction? On the contrary, the Catholicose faction, who has won the case, forfeited all legal expenses and allowed all Metropolitans of the Patriarchal faction to continue in their respective dioceses to manifest benevolence. Was this not the true magnanimity?

12. REVOKED CONDEMNATION AND CONSECRATED!

Again the same book teaches the children on page 132: “H.H. Jacob III consecrated Augen Mar Thimotheos, whom H.H. the Patriarch Aprem had condemned in 1943, with the appellation Baseliouse Augen I, after having revoked his condemnation”. This statement communicates that the condemnation on Augen Mar Thimotheos that was set in in 1943 continued till 1964 and it was only in 1964 that his condemnation was lifted. We have to ponder on this statement in detail. It was in 1927 that H.G. Mar Augen Thimotheos has received episcopate from the Patriarch of Antioch. He continued as one of the bishops in the Patriarchal faction, yet laboured ardently for the peace process within the Church. However, the Patriarch exhibited no favourable attitude and due to this remorse he accepted the Catholicate in 1943 on his own to embrace the Catholicose along with some people, who endorsed his stand. And the Patriarch condemned him in the same year.

In 1958 H.H. the Patriarch accepted the Catholicose together with his faction and the Church in Malankara became one. If H.G. Augen Mar Thimotheos, who was a Metropolitan under the Catholicose, had ever been legally condemned, had not the condemnation upon him automatically revoked in 1958? Moreover, it was in 1943 that H.G. Augen Mar Thimotheos accepted the Catholicose. In 1958 H.H. the Patriarch also accepted the same Catholicose. If accepting the Catholicose is an error, both have committed the same error. And consequently, the Patriarch condemned himself too. The statement of condemnation revoke, therefore, is absolutely indiscreet!

If the condemnation can only be revoked in 1964, one more doubt remains unclear. It was Rev. Fr. Zachariah Arakkunnam of blessed memory, who proposed H.G. Augen Mar Thimotheos as Catholicose Designate in the Malankara Association meeting that took place at Niranam in 1962. 'This meeting elects Augen Mar Thimotheos of Kandanad Diocese

to the Throne of St. Thomas as successor of the Catholicose of the East' was the proposal and late Mr. K.A. George from Morakkala church supported the same. H.G. Paulose Mar Philoxenos, who was later consecrated as Catholicose of the Patriarchal faction was also present in that meeting. Had he also consented to elect a condemned one in 1962? Was the one, who administered the Diocese of Kandanad until 1964 a condemned one? Is it desirable to teach the children with such stone studded lies?

13. DIDN'T DEMONSTRATE OPEN HEARTINESS!

Another accusation is levelled against the Catholicose faction in the same book on page 141: "The leadership of that time was unable to perpetuate peace that the Church in Malankara could reach in 1958. Church leadership, which comprised entirely from the former orthodox faction, failed to demonstrate open heartiness, admiration and mutual reverence. They showed total disregard to the Jacobite faction. They exhibited haughtiness towards the true faithful as the ones, who lost the law suit".

To which great leaders, who had lost the law suit, has the Church leadership showed disdain? Answer to this question is unclear from this statement. A statement that is unclear and lacks kernel deserves no response.

14. ABOUT THE CONSECRATION OF METROPOLITANS IN 1966

It is written on the same page itself: "Catholicose Augen consecrated in 1966 at Kolencheri Philipose Theophilose, Youhanon Severios and Thomas Thimotheos, who were all adherents of former orthodox faction and appointed them as Metropolitans of Ankamali, Kochi and Malabar, which were

fortresses of Jacobite stronghold and this was also an action of the above said spirit”. Does this have any truth in it?

It was in 1966 that Metropolitans were consecrated for the first time after the church merger. H.G. Paulose Mar Severios, who was Metropolitan of Kochi and belonged to the Patriarchal faction before 1958, passed away in 1962 and the diocese that he was administering, came under the Catholicose temporarily. Thereafter, as per the Constitution of the Church of Malankara, the Malankara Association was summoned in 1965 to elect new Metropolitans. Five candidates were elected and the Holy Synod approved to consecrate three of them. They were consecrated as metropolitans on 24th august 1966 at Kolencheri church. Renowned bishop of Ankamali H.G. Mar Gregorios as well, who belonged to the Patriarchal faction before 1958, was present in the Holy Synod that approved these three names. Fr. C.M. Thomas (the present Sreshtha Catholicose Mar Dionysius) played a leading role for arrangements of this consecration.

Did the United Church elect these candidates to the post of metropolitans deeming them as adherents to Catholicate faction or Patriarchal faction? Did there exist any factions then? Malankara Association elected five best available candidates. They were consecrated at Kolencheri and this reflects the great co-operation and unity of the people of northern region. Thus Thomas Mar Thimotheos was assigned Malabar, Youhanon Mar Severios was assigned Kochi and as H.G. Gregorios of Ankamali passed away unexpectedly, Ankamali was assigned to Philipose Mar Theophilose.

Can we ask humbly two more questions to the Patriarchal faction in this context?

- a. When metropolitan candidates were elected in 1966,

has any one raised the names of H.G. Kadavil Athanasios or H.G. Gregoriose of Perumpilli or the present Sreshtha Bava or has anyone wanted to consecrate them as Metropolitans? No one has even deemed them as befitting candidates. Only those, who were elected by the Malankara Association that is summoned from among the United Malankara Church, were consecrated. Does the above statement from the book of Malankara Church History contain even a trifle of truth in it?

b. Secondly, the text depicts the consecrated candidates as 'adherents of former orthodox faction' and moreover charges easily that they were appointed as Metropolitans of Ankamali, Kochi and Malabar, which were 'fortresses of Jacobite stronghold'. The allegation, namely, 'adherents of former orthodox faction' and the statement, namely, 'fortresses of Jacobite stronghold' plainly show that even when peace was prevailing at Malankara, these dissidents were dissidents within their hearts. The next statement that we are about to consider also reflects the same notion and one can evidently understand from these that they were hiding venom inside, while reciting the sonnet of peace. They spat their venom out in 1974 and it fully accomplished the division into the body of Christ in Malankara. Aren't these status seekers the ones, who have undermined peace in Malankara?

15. WOULD REMAIN UNDER-ORDINATE!

It reads on page 142 of the same text book: "It was with the promise that they would remain under-ordinate to the Patriarch, who is the supreme head of the Holy Church that the true faithful have accepted the Catholicose and his adherents after the peace in 1958. Later the leadership wavered from their stand and started showing disobedience to the Holy See and the true faithful rejected that erred leadership. They united again to maintain the relation with the Holy See and to

preserve their ancestral faith.”

Let us analyse this statement in detail. It is normal that there are conditions set, when their leaderships unite two groups after having been existed separately for about half a century. When we read the text above, it definitely bestows an impression that the Catholicose and his faction have promised to remain under-ordinate to the Patriarch at the time of union. However, in the letter of acceptance that the Catholicose faction has handed over to the Patriarchal delegate no such promise was granted. On the contrary, it is written that the Catholicose accepts the Patriarch as per relevant clauses of the Constitution passed in 1934. If the Patriarchal faction has any genuineness, they shall publish the document in which the Catholicose had promised to remain under-ordinate to the Patriarch. They could have produced this document at the court and no better evidence would have been necessary even for the faithful as well to understand the truth. Why have they not published such a document? Although the Patriarchal faction disseminates a number of publications, the document promising under-ordination, which was handed over in 1958, has not yet been published. It is nothing but simply shameful to teach little children such fabrications and falsehoods.

16. ORTHODOX FACTION IS FOND OF COURT CASES!

Orthodox faction has dragged the true faithful into court cases is another accusation. Has it not been the Patriarchal faction the appellants of all cases that have been filed right since 1912, the time of re-establishment of Catholicate in Malankara? It was Patriarchal faction, who filed the case over Vattippanam as plaintiffs in 1913 (Kurian Cor-Episcopa Kaniampampil, p. 37). That case was judged in favour of Catholicose faction and the plaintiffs were ordered even to pay legal expenses to the defendants. Catholicate faction took actions to get the legal expenses and the Valiya Thirumeni of

Aluva submitted Rs. 3619, 9 Chakram and 13 Paise in the court (Kurian Cor-Episcopa Kaniampampil, p. 44). The above said verdict came on 15th September 1919. (This legal expense alone would have become 300 million Rupees, if it is calculated to be doubling in each five years until now. How many millions of Rupees have been wasted until today and are being squandered for court cases by the Church of Malankara?)

Plaintiff of the case that was settled in 1958 was also the Patriarchal faction. As mentioned earlier, even after the union of 1958 the Patriarchal faction has often gone to court, but all those attempts have been misfired. The faction that has gone to court and got judged against is now complaining that the Catholicate faction is dragging them to court cases. What a fairness! As it has been affirmed by the Valiya Thirumeni of Aluva, deserving rights can only be protected by civil courts (Kurian Cor-Episcopa Kaniampampil, p. 38) and it is a binding fact for both factions.

One reproach that the Sreshtha Catholicose of Patriarchal faction voices seems very much comical. "Dear children, there are 399 cases against me. I have never filed a single case. It is all done by the Catholicose faction." How many cases were against the forest terror and sandal wood robber Veerappan? He had never filed a case against anyone. Does it paint someone's greatness that there are a number of cases against that person? If yes, we must have to consider Veerappan also as a great man!

17. PARISH CHURCHES WITH MAJORITY

'Patriarchal faction would be satisfied with parish churches with majority' (Book of Malankara Church History, p. 143) is another claim. What a disgraceful thought! Can we amend the faith considering the majority? Majority is a

concept that oscillates from one side to the other from time to time like a pendulum. Can faith also swing similarly? Assume that the Catholicate faction had wavered from faith and conditions, they shall have no right over the properties of the Church of Malankara as well as over parish churches. If it is the Patriarchal faction, they also shall not claim anything. Either the Patriarchal faction shall surrender everything to the Catholicate faction and step back. Otherwise, the Catholicate faction shall hand over everything to the Patriarchal faction. Isn't this the rectitude? Claiming parish churches with majority is just like parting the Malankara Church again and be satisfied with what one gets. When the Marthomites parted, there hadn't happened any partition. They departed empty handed. Are the ones, who claim to get a part of the Church of Malankara, the ones, who really love the Church? Aren't they like one of those two women, who came to King Solomon and would have been satisfied with half of the child and consented to part it? The real mother can never argue to part the child. Is this not crookedness to get what is not legitimate by conciliation talks outside the courtroom? Can India part Kashmir, which is an integral part of the nation? Do political parties, when divide, part their offices considering the majority of each region?

18. IS THE PARISH CHURCH A PROPERTY OF THE PARISHNERS?

Parish churches are usually built by members of that parish themselves. Each member pays according to his capacity, but the amount that one has contributed has no bearing on the right of the person in the parish. What does it mean 'a person's right' in the parish? It is just to get all spiritual needs fulfilled without any hindrance. It also includes the right and responsibility to express one's opinion on the daily affairs of the parish. This right remains intact as long as one remains a member of the Malankara Church. A person, who had spent

even millions of Rupees for the construction of the parish, will not even be buried in the parish cemetery, had he had been cut off from the membership of the Church. One, who is not a member of the Church, is not a member of the parish too. In other words, a person without church has no parish.

When a person moves from one parish to join another parish, he does not have to pay anything special and he will not also get anything from the old parish too. All rights that the members of the parish, who have contributed to construct the parish church, will also be given to the new member too. Anyone, who joins this parish from another parish, will also have the same privileges. What does this indicate? It testifies that members of the Church as well as parish churches belong to one Owner. Parish belongs to the Mother Church and Church belongs to God. A member of the Church can be member of any parish, which belongs to the Church. As long as he is a member, he can avail all privileges, rights and responsibilities of a parish member. Parish is not a co-operative society, which gives back a person's share, when one disjoins oneself. One can only contribute to the parish, but can not take back. Offer-tory box is a very good example of this principle. One can cast in, but can not take back!

19. WHO HAVE SWAPPED STANDS?

After the Supreme Court verdict of 1958 the Patriar-chal faction had to accept and recognise the Catholicate faction, whom they had ridiculed as heretics and the costumed. In other words, they had to swap their stand from what all they had claimed until then to enter into the manger of the Catholico-se. Twelve years thereafter they swapped their stand once again to disown the Catholicose. They then ridicule the ones, who had sternly remained behind the Catholicose ever after the mutual acceptance of 1958, as the ones, who swapped their stands. Said otherwise, the ones, who have swapped their stand twice, are deriding the ones, who have swapped their

stand once, as swappers. This is nothing but just like the totally blind addressing the partially blind as 'you blind'!

20. IS THIS THE TRUE FAITH?

In 1956 the Honourable High Court decided the litigation in favour of the Patriarchal faction and the Catholicate faction feared that all properties of the Church had to be handed over to the Patriarchal faction. They bought a place in haste at Devalokam as residence for their Supreme Head the Catholicose and H.H. the Catholicose was brought ceremoniously with the accompaniment of a number of vehicles to Devalokam. They also pledged that they and their children would ever remain under the Catholicate and also to strive to safeguard its freedom. They were affirmatively cementing their stand once again thereby.

The same case was settled by the Honourable Supreme Court, but in favour of the Catholicate faction. The Patriarchal faction was also directed to pay all legal expenses to the Catholicate faction. In this context the Patriarchal faction gulped all their claims until then and accepted the Catholicose unconditionally. Can this be called safeguarding the faith? Or does safeguarding the faith mean violating those conditions time and again? Can one change one's faith, when one loses the court cases? The Catholicate faction stood firmly on their stand, even when they had lost the case. They did not renounce their faith for properties and church buildings.

21. WHAT IS THE REAL NAME OF THE CHURCH OF MALANKARA?

It was St. Jacob Baradaeus (Jacob Burdana - the Syriac word 'burdono' means a person in horse cloths or rags), who

had redeemed the Syrian Church during the 6th Century from destruction and persecution through his extreme hard work and sincere devotion. The Byzantines and Chalcedonians, therefore, mocked the faithful, who arrayed themselves behind this saintly soul as 'Jacobites'. The Constitution of the Church of Malankara clearly mentions this fact. We read therein that "the Orthodox Syrian Church was wrongly labelled as Jacobite Church, but the correct appellation is Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church".

No Patriarch had used the term Jacobite in their letters or on their letterheads. They know that it is wrong to use this term. They only use 'Syrian Orthodox'. Recently many parish churches have removed the term 'Orthodox' from their name boards as well as from their letterheads and added 'Jacobite' instead. Catholicose Paulose had used another name, 'Malankara Jacobite Syrian Church'. He was not satisfied with just that and added in parenthesis, 'under the Throne of Antioch'. Now we can note three types of names.

1. H.H. the Patriarch - Syrian Orthodox Church
2. Sreshtha Catholicose- Jacobite Syrian Orthodox Church
3. Parish churches and faithful- Jacobite Syrian Church

One serious doubt is arising out from here. Why the ones, who claim that the Malankara Church is a part of Syrian Orthodox Church, of which the Patriarch is its supreme head, add 'Jacobite', which is not a part of the original name their Church?

No Church shall be known under any personal banner. Church can not be appelled as Jacobite Church or Thom-site Church or Peterine Church. Therefore, the Constitution says that Jacobite is a wrong appellation. This situation had aroused, because some people are not ready to give up mistakes. How scandalous it is that a member of the Church can't correctly pronounce the name of his own Church!

22. WHAT IS BEING SAID AS THE FIRST CLAUSE OF THE CONSTITUTION OF THE CHURCH?

Patriarchal faction always refers to and propagates that the Constitution speaks as 'the Church of Malankara is a part of Universal Syrian Church and the Supreme Head of the Universal Syrian Church is the Patriarch of Antioch'. However, is this the fact? The truth is that the first clause of the constitution is very similar to that above said when hear, but is very much different in meaning and it is as follows: "The Church of Malankara is a Division of the Orthodox Syrian Church and the Supreme Head of the Orthodox Syrian Church is the Patriarch of Antioch". It is very clear from this that the Church of Malankara is a division of the Orthodox Syrian Church and not a part of the Universal Syrian Church. First of all, we shall understand that there exists nothing called Universal Syrian Church and it is a newly fabricated term, which has no bearing at all. Secondly part and division are not to be understood as synonyms. For instance, hand is part of the body, but not division of the body. Part denotes an integral status like the hand with the body, whereas division denotes a strong relation with a separate existence, and no integral standing like in the case of a part. In short, Church of Malankara is not a part of the Syrian Orthodox Church or Universal Syrian Church but a division of the Orthodox Syrian Church.

We can make use of another example. If Standard VII is divided into Division A and Division B, both are standard VII, but are two different classes. This indicates that the Syrian Orthodox Church is a division of the Orthodox Syrian Church and Malankara Orthodox Church is another division of the Orthodox Syrian Church. The second clause of the constitution elucidates this point very clearly, although no one refers to it often.

”Church of Malankara is founded by the Apostle St. Thomas and is included in the Oriental Orthodox Syrian Church and the supreme head of the Oriental Orthodox Syrian Church is the Catholicose.” (The term Oriental here denotes to the Church existed outside the Roman Empire in Mesopotamia during the first millennium. There existed a Catholicate in Mesopotamia centred at Tigrith and it declined and disappeared in the course of time. Antioch was, on the other hand a part of the Roman Empire.)

The first two clauses are the proclamation on the Church and these two clauses make five points plain.

1. Church of Malankara is founded by the Apostle St. Thomas.
2. Church of Malankara is a division of the Orthodox Syrian Church (and not a part).
3. Church of Malankara is included in the Oriental Orthodox Syrian Church.
4. Supreme Head of the Syrian Orthodox Church is the Patriarch.
5. Supreme Head of the Oriental Orthodox Syrian Church is the Catholicose.

How can the ones, who distort and refuse to accept such a clear and meticulously defined Constitution, be justified?

23. Teaches that there is no valid priesthood, still...

’For the Patriarch had condemned the Catholicose and his faction, they were eliminated from valid priesthood and they do not possess any ordination at all’ is the schooling of the

Patriarchal faction. However, they do not follow this concept, when it comes to holy sacraments like marriage or baptism. Patriarchal faction entirely accepts the marriages solemnised by priests from the Catholicose faction. They never re-baptise children, who were baptised by priests from the Catholicose faction. Dispute creeps in only when it comes to funereal services. How disgraceful is this? And moreover, it is called 'safeguarding the faith', whereby the blessed departed are being humiliated! In short, the contemporary Patriarchal faction has no right to claim succession and faith of the Patriarchal faction that existed before 1958, for they never practised any such coarse actions. The present dissidents have no law code, no virtue, no righteousness, but have just an antagonistic combating spirit alone.

Patriarchal faction tested a number of tricks in court rooms to argue like they had the majority, but they can not reflect this majority in Association meetings and the clauses of 1934 constitution were responsible therefore etc. They pleaded that they had lesser number of parish churches, but have more members in them. The 1934 Constitution says that a parish church (regardless the number of membership in parishes) can send two members and a priest to the Malankara Association. If it would be possible to send members in proportion to the number of membership in parish churches, they would have claimed majority, was another point that they had made in the court. The court had accepted that too. Constitution had also been amended therefore that membership in a parish church can clearly reflect in the Malankara Association. They again wanted an observer during the procedures of Malankara Association meeting. That too was sanctioned. Both factions paid the fee of Rs. 100,000.00 each at the court towards the expenses of the observer. In the supervision of Honourable Justice Malimath, whom the Honourable Supreme Court had delegated as observer, election process was carried out. As-

sociation meeting was held at Parumala in 2002. However, the Patriarchal faction pulled themselves out of this meeting to convene another meeting at Puthencruz to approbate a Counter Constitution. Now they again demand to get parish churches with majority and claim again that they would readily accept mediation from any neutral body as well. Nevertheless, they were not ready to accept the mediation and decision from the supreme law enforcement instance of the nation. In short, no judgement from court is desirable, only mediation is necessary! Political parties, who cunningly aim at votes alone, are also with them to support.

Having fallen into the ditch dug in by a minority that does not desire to observe ecclesiastical life, nor to follow the true faith or to respect traditions, innocent children of the Church are hold under in distress. Certain people, who have assumed status and positions by hook and crook, have conquered some parish churches and properties via extra legislature. They do not obey court decisions and violate them either in explicit or implicit fashions. Among their family members and henchmen they skilfully distribute huge sums of money that has been collected from the children of the Church. Had the innocent faithful had been understanding that after a certain time they can just remain mere onlookers to see institutions and movements, which these fake leaders build by meticulously collecting funds under the shadow of the present emergency, when simply slipping away from their grip!

24. FIRMLY STANDING ON THE FAITH OF THEIR FOREFATHERS!

This is a common parlance we hear, when talking to many partisan people of the Patriarchal faction. Isn't this a lame excuse, even after having been convinced of realities? Beloved faithful! Think for a short while! Do we require supremacy from a foreign Church? Do we need to remain slaves

under the leverage of a Church that is being extinct in the land of Arabs? Shall the brethren of Malankara need to obliterate themselves for those foreigners? They have nothing to lose, but we do!

CONCLUSION

If any single statement of this book is proved wrong or untrue, the author hereby expresses his willingness to shift from the Catholicate faction. The Patriarchal faction has no existence, if they acknowledge at least one single truth. The leadership of Patriarchal faction is holding innocent faithful for their stand points upon singularly untrue statements. Also they grant, therefore, undeserving status and positions to their partisans. Let us pray for the truth to triumph, let us await therefore, and let us work together to that noble goal!