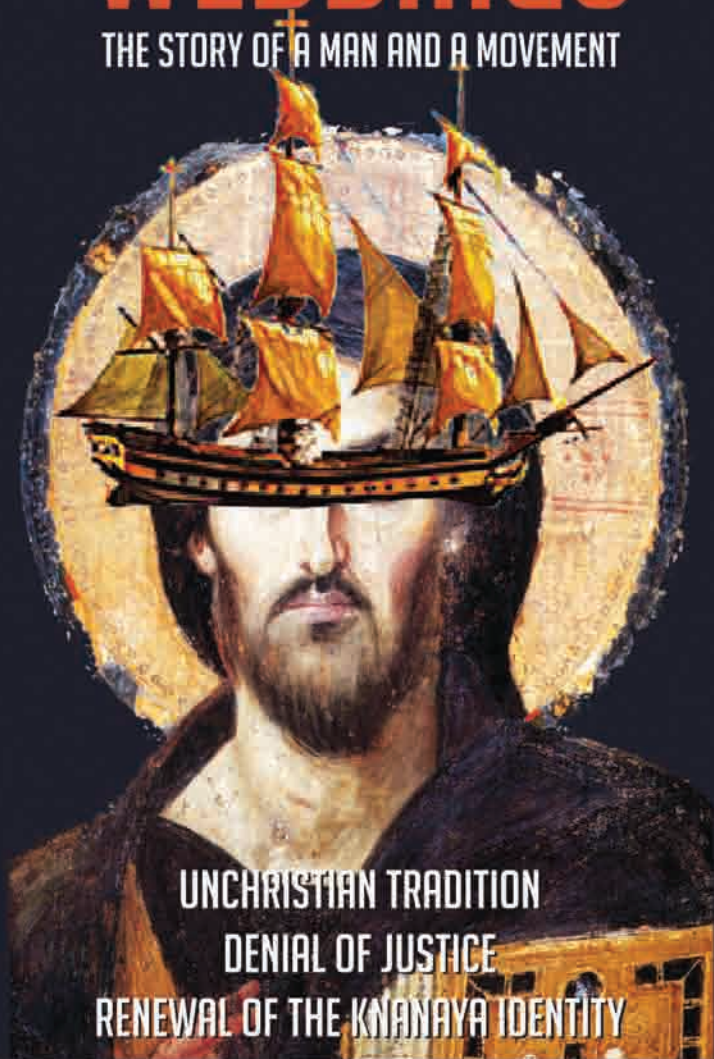


BLOOD WEDDINGS

THE STORY OF A MAN AND A MOVEMENT



UNCHRISTIAN TRADITION
DENIAL OF JUSTICE
RENEWAL OF THE KNANAYA IDENTITY

ORCHART

BLOOD WEDDINGS

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[**Articles**]

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“

Happy are you when people insult you and persecute you and tell all kinds of lies against you because you are my followers. Be happy and glad, for great reward is kept for you in heaven. This is how prophets who lived before you were persecuted

(Mathew 5:11-12)

”

DEDICATION

This book is dedicated to the tears and sufferings of all the Knanaya families who were forcibly separated and persecuted by their mother Church for loving God's children from outside their community and opposing the practice of endogamy by the church ever since Knanaya community arrived in the Malabar Coast. It is intended to give those who lived according to the teachings of Jesus hope that there is a saviour who will comfort them and remove their sufferings as promised

O.M. UTHUP

O.M. Uthup (Koch) was born on 27th January 1928 as the first grandchild of Oravanakalam Uthup and Chachi, child of Kunjootti and Mariamma. He had his primary education at S.H. School Kumarakom, Kottayam. As he was good at studies, he was sent to S.H. Mount, Kottayam for the high school classes. His excellency Mar Kuriakose Kunnassery, the first archbishop of Kottayam was his classmate. Koch stayed in his maternal house. He passed the 6th form (Tenth class) with first class. In spite of the lack of resources, his studies continued in CMS College Kottayam. Occasionally he had to walk all the way from Kumarakom to Kottayam. Later he joined SB College Changanacherry for doing BSc. degree course in Mathematics. On graduation he got employed in Malankara Estate in Devalokam. Later worked as village officer and then as a teacher. After a stint as teacher in Shenkottai, Vandiperiyar and Chengannur, he did BEd. course in KE college Mannanam, Kottayam.

Uthup has a brother and five sisters. In 1956 he married Baby (Annamma) daughter of Chacko and Lilly Kodoth, Kuttoor, Thiruvalla. The betrothal and marriage were blessed at Little Flower church of the diocese of Kottayam at West Othara. Rev. Fr. Jacob Chakkacheril was the then vicar. After years of teaching in Govt. High School Kumarakom, he went abroad and continued the profession. He had a passion for the waters and water sports. He was captain of a boat racing team.

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O.M. UTHUP



MAR THOMAS THARAYIL

FORWARD

The life of a Christian is one of constant renewal. The Catholic Church helps each one of its members in this process of renewal through the Word of God, sacraments and fellowship. The Church by nature is missionary. Jesus Christ commands each of one of us to be a missionary. While being missionary, the Church also is ever in the process of being renewed. Renewal is the work of the Holy Spirit. And the Holy Spirit works through humans. Any one who surrenders to the power of the Spirit of God, can be a part of the process of the renewal. Oravanakalam Uthup, well known in the Church of Kerala and the Knanaya community, is one among those who took part in the Knanaya renewal movement, within his limitations as a human being. He had to face denial, hardships, and insults from different quarters including the church set up, which are at times not befitting to the all embracing love and teachings of Jesus. When justice was denied to him repeatedly, he ensured that the fire of love within him is burning amidst the encircling darkness. He forgave those who did wrong to him and harm him many ways. He prayed for them constantly. With confidence and trust in the Lord, he encountered each and every situation. He was not exhausted by the fight that prolonged for decades.

When O.M. Uthup and his struggles are remembered specially, on the first anniversary of his death, by his family members who stood by him, the Knanaya renewal movement (KCNS) he nurtured also is brought to the memory lane of all who are victims of a non-Christian tradition. Thousands have joined this movement and participated in public rallies mentored by him with the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. So many have contributed to this publication. They include, family members, leaders and followers of the renewal movement, priests, benefactors, friends of Mr. Uthup

and his well wishers. The articles in the book express the respective author's own views, some of which may not necessarily be that of the publishers.

The Oravanakalam Charitable Trust, ORCHART which was conceived along with his son Biju while he was alive and registered after his death is sponsoring the publication of this book inspired by the Holy Spirit. The ORCHART only sets a stage for the renewal movement. We hope that this renewal movement that Mr. Uthup envisaged and initiated will be energised further with new vigour and get the support from Rome so that knanaya community will be set free from the bondage of endogamy being imposed by the Kottayam Diocese and freedom shall be granted to all seeking it.



PART I
RECOLLECTIONS
OF
HIS NEAR AND DEAR ONES

1

KOTTAYAM DIOCESE AND MY BITTER EXPERIENCES

ANNAMMA UTHUP

Pope Francis's words "My God is not Catholic" made me thoughtful. I prayed many times to understand its meaning. The thought that my Lord is a knanaya Catholic left me forever. As my mother is a Latin Catholic, can I enter the holy presence of God? This question haunted me throughout my family life. And it even held me captive.

Though my mother belongs to Latin, on 22nd October 1956, the then bishop of Kottayam diocese Mar Thoma Tharayil gave me permission to move from the Malankara rite under Thiruvalla diocese to Malankara under the Kottayam diocese and get included in the Little Flower church, West Othara. The betrothal prior to matrimony was blessed there. The alliance was announced as per the Canon law in the same church, Kumarakom Vellara church and all the dues were paid. My marriage with Mr. Uthup Oravanakalam was blessed in the presence of the members of both our families. My parents are Mr. K.C.Chacko and Lilly Chacko, Kodath and I am

the third among nine siblings. Bishop Thomas Tharayil knew all of us personally. Our marriage took place out of clear conviction on the part of both the families, as well as the bishop. It was not based on any lie or was not a trespassing. There may be people in the higher eschelons who had built on unholy foundations. Rev. Fr. Chackacherril, a saintly priest of Kottayam diocese was the one who offered the Holy Mass in the knanaya Catholic Church at that time. Hearing about the court cases, I approached him and he assured me that he is ready to appear in any court and testify to the truth. Within a fortnight he passed away, leaving behind many doubts. I still don't know what caused his sudden demise. All the evidences and documents relating to the marriage were with us. The judgements in three cases were in favour of us. The diocese says that so long as the cases are pending, we will not be admitted as members of the knanaya parish. The court has ordered to admit us as members of the parish community. Though we are not included, or recognized as members, our names are included in the parish register.

The eldest daughter of our eldest son was baptized in the Christ the King cathedral, Kottayam and we have documentary evidence with us. Two children of our eldest daughter were baptized and were registered in their parish. When the marriage of our second son, Biju was fixed and about to be conducted, an order was received from Kottayam diocese to the effect that as my mother is a Latinite this marriage cannot be conducted in Kottayam diocese or in any of the churches under it or in either Kizhakke Nattassery church. There was also an order from the head of the diocese to the parish priest that he should not conduct any function in connection with the marriage of Biju Uthup Oravanakalam. Consequently Biju Uthup filed a petition in the court against this order. The case was posted for hearing and three years passed by.

The court verdicts were always in favour of us. The authorities with knanaya blood, seem to pay no heed to even the orders of the Pope. It still remains a mystery who is the god of these people who vehemently stand for pure knanaya blood. The consent letter for the marriage [vivaha kuri]is to be got from the parish from where all the sacraments were received and where we are members. Where else can I get? Biju Uthup's marriage was blessed when the Inter Nuncio interfered. It was conducted without change of parish or a letter from the parish. For that we had to wait for three years. We were declared as a cursed family who filed a case in a civil court against the bishop and even prayers were conducted. Are we not worshipping a God who knows only to love us all and not to curse? Our God is one who always blesses. Wherever I looked for peace, I got insult, scorn and abandonment. Nothing could keep me down.

I have put my trust on the Mighty one who makes everything possible and this trust, keeps me going. The God I worship is truth, justice, love, peace and all powerful. The marriage of the remaining four children were blessed in the respective parishes of the bridegrooms without *vilichuchollal* or consent letter. The daughter of Biju Uthup was baptized only at the age of 10 years. The struggles, inner conflicts and the despises were unbearable. It was only God's grace that kept me from resorting to extreme acts. No, my God is not a knanayite. After creating everything, God said; "it is good" and it is this God who leads me. The contempt and scorn of those around persisted, that I thought of running away to some remote areas, where no one knows me or joining the Pentecostal church or even embracing Hindu religion.

From where can I get a consent letter other than from the parish where I am a member, where I am baptized? There is a secret deal; I can get a consent letter from the Bishop's office , provided I express

my consent in writing stating that I am willing to become a member of the parish to which the bride belongs. Meanwhile our daughter was called for an interview for admission to B.C.M. college. When she appeared for the interview, she was asked to summon her parents also. Her father was out of station. As the candidate's mother, I accompanied her. Sr. Savio was the then Principal. The Principal vehemently told me that I have infiltrated into the diocese of Kottayam through unholy means and am an imposter. I felt like my heart breaking at that moment. She said that since the pure blood of Kottayam diocese is maligned by me she will not give admission to my daughter. I retorted saying that even if the Pope desires, we cannot be ostracized from the Kottayam diocese. Let the blood of every member be examined annually and those with impure blood may be removed from the diocese. My blood is declared impure after 30 years of married life and after having two children married too. Where have the pure blood advocates gone these years? While at the confessional will there be a specific question, whether you've committed adultery with a knanayite? Let DNA test be conducted in every house. I know many outside children growing in this diocese. Who'll dare to send them out ?

Though the Principal said that she will not give admission, she said she has a seat and that it can be given to my daughter. She was actually yelling before so many knanayites declaring that I am an imposter. So ashamed and let down, I asked myself how I could continue this life. Downtrodden and with a broken heart, I boarded a bus for home. While before the college, I heard somebody saying that a sister has committed suicide jumping into a well. My mind rejoiced for a while involuntarily should this knanayism be within the church? Those who want it may marry within. Church does not stand for purity of blood. Church

is for the Lord. The church is to bless the marriage. Should this knanayism be inside the church? For those who say, I believe in the one true holy Catholic Church, it is time to revise the creed. Is there another creed for the Knanayites?

Isn't Knayi Thommen a myth? In the book authored by Mr. Joseph Chazhikadan, it is stated that Knayi Thommen had two wives: one from a low caste and another a Brahmin. All the children were born through them. Those who want to retain the pure knayi blood, let them keep it up in their own family. After creating everything God said that it is good. Does the church in which this God reigns need this pure blood phenomenon? [Refer Col . 3:11]

These court cases gave me the answers to my question: What is church, why the church, who is Jesus to me, who am I in His presence etc., I am convinced that I am to recognise those during this pilgrimage through the road of perfection. It is God's order that should order my life. So all these happenings are not a lose to me.

My husband Mr.Uthup was hospitalized due to renal failure and remained there till death on 22.9.2013. During one of the days in the hospital, Archbishop Mar Mathew Moolakkatt visited him and prayed for him. I place on record my gratitude to him and pray for him.

When the news of Mr. Uthup's death reached Holy Family church Kizhakke Nattassery, an urgent meeting was held. It was to decide whether Uthup who is contaminated through his wife is to be cremated in the cemetery there. They had doubts. If husband is cremated there, wife also has to be cremated in the same place. At the time sanction was received for a cemetery, we too had remitted the required amount and registered for a

family tomb. It was entered in the parish register too. So as in the case of others who had tombs, we too had. So if they say there is no tomb for us, who will be guilty for the lapse ?

If a girl from outside the Kottayam diocese is married to a boy of Kottayam diocese, she has no right or place either in the family or in the parish. The number of girls from other dioceses brought through marriage to the families of Kottayam diocese is very large. The tears these poor victims of contempt, despise and scorn shed is immeasurable. The boys of Kottayam diocese is denied of their right and freedom to marry a Catholic girl of their choice. Is it Christian? Oh poor knanaya youth!, you who cannot question this injustice. God's people are blinded by false teachings and baseless traditions. May God open their eyes. Let there be a brighter tomorrow. Let the Lord come again these days to cleanse the church just as He did then, at the Jerusalem church. Praise God.

2

MY ENCOUNTER WITH MY DIOCESE

BINCY RUSSEL

I was born on 9th March 1967 in Malaysia to Uthup Oravanakalam and Annamma Kodoth. My father was a teacher in a Catholic School in Malaysia. Four of his children put up with him in the same family quarter studied in the same school. After two years one more son was born to him and he was called Binu John. Years passed by, he got married. A boy was born to him. After 10 days Binu died. The boy 10 years old now is with his mother in U.S.A. When Binu died, word went around saying that the curse of the bishop is upon us. We didn't pay heed to it. Our God is not one who curses!

My three elders studied in the same school where my father was a teacher. When I was five, the medium of instruction was changed to Malay in the schools, three of us returned to Kerala along with our mother. By that time, my father got employed as a teacher in a Govt. school, in Brunei Byeju and Biju stayed with the father in the same quarter and continued their studies

in the same school. The rest of us, Beela, Bincy, Binu, Betsy and Bahitha and the mother resided in Kumarakom, Kottayam district. We continued our studies in Mount Carmel High School in Kanjikuzhy, Kottayam. As the daily trip to the school was tedious and time consuming, we shifted to a newly built house in Eranjal close to the School. With birth certificates from Vellara Church Kumarakom, we were admitted as members in the Holy Family church, Kizhakke Nattasserry. We studied catechism there upto the 10th class. Life went on smoothly, lacking nothing. The marriage of my eldest brother and eldest sister were solemnized obtaining vivaha kuri from the parish as stipulated. Children born to both the families were baptized in the Christ the King Cathedral of diocese of Kottayam and certificates received from there.

Years passed by. When the marriage of Bijuchayan was fixed, issues sprouted. Vivaha kuri was denied stating that as the grandmother of Biju is a Latinite, Biju cannot be a member of the Knanaya diocese. His blood is not pure, there is trace of Latin blood! What a contradiction? Three years of waiting followed. The parish priest did not issue vivaha kuri. The marriage was solemnized by a priest of the diocese of Kottayam in another church on the intervention of the Pro Nuncio and Archbishop Mar Powathil of Changanasserry.

Meanwhile I too personally faced some problems. After graduation I applied for admission to M.Sc., course in the B.C.M. college Kottayam for a seat under the management quota. I was asked to meet the principal, Sr. Savio in her office. I along with my mother entered her room. All on a sudden, the sister said that we had sought admission, infiltrating into the diocese of Kottayam through foul play. We were thoroughly shocked, mother the most. As I was a bit courageous, I could face it. Yet

the sister told that she would allot the seat. I did the course there and afterwards went to Bangalore for doing P.G.D.C.A course. At that time, my father responded to a matrimonial advertisement that appeared in a news paper. Both the families discussed and agreed to conduct the marriage. But for reasons unknown it did not materialize. After one year, the same proposal appeared in the newspaper. Negotiations resumed. Under inspiration from the Holy Spirit, my parents approached the bridegroom's bishop [of Alleppy] and provided him all the details. The bishop instructed them to admit the bride as a member of the parish of the bridegroom, get *vivaha kuri* from there and become member of Good Shepherd church Kottayam. The marriage can then be blessed there. Not many people were invited. The Lord blessed us a lot and the function went very well. My husband is Russel Innocent. We have two boys. The eldest, Adric Petson is a second year student of The Rajagiri Engineering College and the younger one, Britson Carmic is studying in sixth standard. By the grace of God, we live a happy life.

I may add some unpleasant facts which are contrasting to Knanayism. Pathiyoor Rosamma of Kayamkulam, a former member of the Orthodox church is still a member of the diocese of Kottayam. Nobody is bothered about her birth, or birth certificate. Number of such people is very large in this diocese. We need to say we are knanayites. Fraud has a place in the diocese. Why there is no investigation into their blood purity? Why nobody scrutinizes their birth certificates? Why nobody files court cases against them? Why this Oravanakalam family alone is crucified in the name of knayism? The diocese of Kottayam proclaims Jesus, the truth and at the same time behind the curtain acts contrary to truth. Why a diocese for pure blood; a God for divisiveness? Why these confessionals to listen to

things which are not truth. The memories of the days I was left alone without a diocese of my own, still haunt me. I pray that, a diocese of Kottayam that Jesus leads may become a reality. I wish satan is sent out from reigning the diocese. Why this diocese keeps the act of expelling those marrying from outside a secret hidden from the public. Why don't it be made a civil law? I have suffered the pangs of waiting for two years for my marriage only due to this practice. It has forced me to open the casket of truth. Moreover I have witnessed the indescribable pain that my parents had suffered.

This note is an outcome of the truth that I have experienced. Kindly bear with me.

3

JUSTICE FLOWS LIKE A RIVER

FR. JACOB CHOLLAMBEL

[As narrated to Orchart on 27th July 2014]

I have earlier heard about Mr. Uthup's marriage. Fr. Nedungattu told me when I had been to Othara. I came to know of the civil case only when I came back from U.S.A. Didn't Biju's brother and sister's marriage take place in Kottayam Diocese? When I heard about the case, felt that not even common justice or decency is shown to this marriage.

During the initial period after the filing of the case in civil court, Bishop Kuriakose Kunnassery convened a meeting of the pastoral council and the Presbyterian council. At that time I was a member of the Presbyterian council. The agenda of discussion was further steps to be taken in Biju's marriage case. Almost all of them were of the view that the marriage should not be conducted and they expressed their individual views. Nobody opposed this and reached a stage of taking a unanimous decision. Then I raised my hand and said that I have something to say. I said that as far as the church is concerned, he is a member of the church and a

believer. We have conducted the marriages of his brother and sister. So my opinion is that we should bless his marriage also. Then some of them stood up and said, “No”, as if he is not a believer”. Then I told that faith is not faith in the Knanaya community and belief in the practice of endogamy. In order to avoid any clamour, I did not say another word. I have done all this even before having seen Mr. Uthup.

After six months Uthup came to Piravom Parish to see me and said that he heard about the stand and complimented me for the stand taken by me during the Presbyterian council. Subsequent to the council meeting, the priests and others have declared and pledged that Kottayam Diocese should not conduct this marriage at any cost. They said that an appeal to the judgment of your case should be filed in the civil court and if necessary in the Supreme Court and by that time he would be too old! This distressed me very much. I felt that this is not proper. Their words pained me and I came back. The common talk was that I should not have spoken in the council in support of Uthup. If there is a civil case, the marriage will not take place in the near future. My interest was that this young man’s need should not be hindered in the church as I too was once a youth. Their argument was that they would provide whatever he needs, but not from among us and would do anything to get his marriage sacrament blessed elsewhere in other diocese. I felt that it is blatant denial of justice and decided that I should help him to solemnize his marriage without relinquishing his membership in his parish belonging to Kottayam Diocese.

Due to the intervention of Apostolic Pro Nuncio in Delhi and the letter from Archbishop Powathil, I solemnized his marriage in Lourdes Forane church as a member of Holy Family Church, East Nattassery. Celebrants for the marriage mass with me were Fr.

Medayil and Fr. James Manjackal. Later the community brought out a public notice against me titled, "You too Brutus," criticizing me for solemnizing the marriage without relinquishing the membership in his parish belonging to Kottayam Diocese. Formation of the Knanaya Naveekarana Samithy was a subsequent development.

My response to the whole case is this: "I am surprised at being accused of a crime, the crime of administering a sacrament of marriage as per the law of the church. Dear brother, it is not Christian. I don't know whether it is right and just to expel some one from the church, one who was baptized in the church in the name of marriage? Is it the church's responsibility to propagate endogamy? Everyone is equal before the Almighty. This is not raised as an issue, only because there is nobody to come forward. The authorities have to do it, but they are keeping silent in spite of the demand for a renewal within the community, which is spearheaded by the KCNS movement."

4

A TRIBUTE TO MY COUSIN

FR. MATHEW KANIANTHRAMALIL O.S.H
(FORMER SUPERIOR GENERAL)

It's been about one year since my grandmother's nephew Kumarakom Oravanakalam Kochu (Uthup Sir), passed away. I learnt about the souvenir that his family plans to publish out of love and respect for him. It will be relevant to recollect memories of what I have heard from my mother as well as my own personal experiences.

From childhood days, Kochu was smart and very studious. He had his primary education at Kumarakom Government School and then at S.H. Mount School, Kottayam. Former Archbishop of Kottayam Diocese Mar Kuriakose Kunnassery is his class mate. The headmaster of the school at that time was Mar Thomas Tharayil, former bishop of Kottayam Diocese. Uthup was his favourite student. Uthup's grandmother hailed from Eloor house which belonged to the Kaipuzha parish, same as that of the head master. She was married to Nattassery Choottuvely House. Bishop Tharayil often visited this house during his evening walks since

they belonged to the same Parish. Bishop Tharayil was highly influential in all the important matters in the life of Uthup. Baby, wife of Uthup, was the daughter of Bishop Tharayil's friend, K.C.Abraham Kodoth, Othara.

Since Uthup spent his childhood days in Kumarakom, he was very familiar with waters and activities based on it and this helped him to excel in school boat races. He was the captain of the boat race team several times..

After successfully completing his high school education and training, Uthup joined as a teacher in Kumarakom Government School. He then took up a job in Brunei as a teacher. After long years of teaching in Brunei he retired from his job and came back to Kottayam. He then settled at Eranjal, Kottayam and became a parishioner of Kizhake Nattassery Church of Kottayam Diocese.

Although he was very much devoted to the Church and the community, his twilight years were quite fraught with problems. He had to go through fiery trials for no reason of his own, which were at times unbearable. He endured harsh criticism and abandonment. He remained calm and content even though he was struggling for his identity and existence. He succeeded in converting all these sufferings in to salvation through his undeterred faith in God and devotion to Church. This crusade can undoubtedly be considered as a great example of his personal holiness.

He received the power to surpass all these through prayer, both personal and of others. His beloved wife and children stood by his side in all these hardships and that helped him a lot. Also he was strengthened by the prayer and support of many religious and laymen in and around Kottayam. He was transformed as a great man of prayer during these troubled times.

Archbishop of Kottayam diocese, Mar Mathew Moolakatt, visited him in his death bed and prayed for him and this provided him indescribable joy and consolation. This incident is a great example of his bond with Kottayam Archdiocese. His soul passed on to the eternal home a few days after this.

I pray that his life struggles, filled with truth and spirit, continue to motivate many more people.

5

DIVIDED WE FALL

FR. JAMES MANJACKAL MSFS

I am very closely associated with the family of Oravanakalam ever since Annamma Uthup attended my first Charismatic retreat at Lourdes Church, Kottayam in 1979 and became my spiritual child. I am not intending to offend any one by exposing some truths but if any one gets offended after reading it, I ask you to forgive me. Always I stand for truth because I believe that only truth can set us free (Jn. 8:32)

When I was at home I never knew about the existence of the Diocese of Kottayam where the people of that diocese are called ‘Thekkumbhagar’ as there is no such people in our area. All in our Kanjirappally area were ‘Vadakumbhagar’. I came to know about them only after joining the minor seminary at Mount Mary, Arumanur. We used to fool the candidates from the diocese of Kottayam calling, ” CharamKottikal” and then some explained to me and said that this particular diocese keeps blood purity and it

is an appendix in the Catholic Church. As a joke I replied, “ If a diocese is counting blood purity from the 4th century, it must be an appendicitis in the church because the blood must be rotten by now”. Later when I came in contact with the people of the diocese of Kottayam through many retreats in their convents and parishes, I knew that they are a peculiar people who have great love for their own people and they have some special customary behaviour in their parties like dances, folksongs and serving alcohol. When I came to know that they did not baptize anyone to their fold I felt angry as it is against the commandment of Jesus that is, to preach the Gospel and to baptize (Mk 16:15) When I realized that this particular diocese grow in number only by births and not by evangelization, the diocese of Kottayam was a riddle for me.

We know from the Bible that Jesus Christ founded only one Church to which He entrusted the keys to the kingdom of heaven with the authority to bind and to lose and He founded it on Peter the Apostle the successors of whom are the Popes. So it is clear that churches or denominations that exist in thousands today are not founded by Jesus Christ but founded by humans with no authority or power from the Lord.

The Catholics all over the world recite in their creed ‘ I believe in One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church’ but today we see several churches in the same one Catholic Church based on rites and blood purity. All divisions come from Satan because he is a spirit of hatred and division. He is our enemy and the enemy comes to destroy and not to build up (Jn. 10:10) In any society it is Satan that brings division; and the Holy Spirit brings unity. It is unfortunate that Satan tried to sow seeds of division in the Church from the beginning. The arguments of today’s ecumenical movement that holds the slogan ‘ unity is not uniformity’ also comes from Satan who never wants the churches to be one according to the

mind of Christ who prayed, “ Holy Father, keep them in your name that you have given me, so that they may be one just as we are” (Jn. 17:11b)

St. Thomas, Thomas of Cana, or St. Francis Xavier came to India to preach the Gospel of salvation and not to establish churches in their name. If they preached a Church they must have been preaching the same one, holy Catholic Church which is undivided, not a Chaldean Church, Persian Church, or Knanaya Church. Hence it is clear that present Syro Malabar Church, Malamkara Church, Knanaya Church etc are not according to God’s plan, but they are man made. St.Paul the apostle scolded the early Church for its jealousy and rivalry among themselves saying that they come from the carnal nature and desires of man. “For you are still of the flesh. While there is jealousy and rivalry among you, are you not of the flesh and behaving in an ordinary human way? When ever some one says, ‘ I belong to Paul’, and another, ‘ I belong to Apollos’, are you not merely human? What is Apollos, after all and what is Paul, ministers through whom you became believers, just as the Lord assigned each one” (1Cor 3:3-5)

It is good to have prayers and liturgies in various forms absorbing the local traditions and cultures because variety brings beauty. Also it will help the works of evangelization among the non-Christians. Whereas when prayers and liturgies are imported from other cultures and countries they are not appealing for the local people; this is one of the reasons that the Hindus in India look at the Catholic Church as a foreign religion. Yes, it is Roman, Chaldean or Syrian and not Indian. It is high time that the leaders of the Catholic Church sit together and think of making an Indian Church on one rite. And it is the spirit of rites, endogamy etc

that brings division in the Church which is contrary to the mind of Christ who said. “I give you a new commandment: love one another. As I have loved you, so also you should love one another. This is how all will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for another” (Jn 13:34-35) It is sad that non Christians cannot see disciples among Catholics today because they don't love one another! Also He said, “so that they all may be one, as you, Father, are in me and I in you, that they may be in us, that the world may believe that you sent me” (Jn 17:21) Because of the divisions in the Church the world today do not know that Jesus is sent by the Father as the Saviour of the world!

The Church of Kerala cannot even have one political stand on issues of truth and justice as they are divided. Hence when each government comes, the Church leaders bend their neck and give obeisance to the ruling party whether it is right wing or left wing and thus they lack back bone to stand for truth. When elections come, the leaders of the Church are divided as to whom to vote.

“Every Kingdom divided against itself will be laid waste, and no town or house divided against itself will stand” (Mt 12:25) Satan is sifting the Church of Kerala with divisions. We know the deplorable situation of the Church and believers in Syria, Iraq and other Islamic countries. The Church in those places is very badly divided on rites and they are not one to resist the enemies and stand firm. It can happen in India too. The old axiom ‘ United we stand divided we fall’ holds well today also.

The existence of a diocese based on endogamy is ridiculous and it is a shame for the church to uphold it today as it stands against God's will and the teaching of Jesus Christ. Catholic Church never permitted a diocese in the world based on blood purity of a race or a tribe. But the diocese of Kottayam is an exception! We must

know that the Christian missionaries in India are persecuted and even martyred as they are fighting against the caste system in the society, which brings much discrimination and inequality among the people. Christians believe that the blood that runs through a baptized Christian is the Blood of Christ that brought salvation and that all have the same blood which also is an added reason for unity. The Christians becomes Christ's own by having participation in the same blood of Christ that is shed on Calvary. The argument of endogamy fanatics say is that Pope St. Pius X gave the diocese of Kottayam for the Kananites. We must know all that the popes or saints have spoken or done have no infallibility! They too were sinners and humans like any one of us while they lived on earth, and the history shows that they too had committed blunders.

Those who have learned anthropology know that in human history no race or tribe retained blood purity even for a hundred years! It is well known that the Kananites lived amidst the 'Vadakkumbhagar' of other dioceses for centuries and to say that none of them ever committed adultery to lose the purity of blood stands contrary to human history and anthropology. It is time that this diocese should stand like any other diocese in the Church discarding endogamy; and if the endogamists want to keep their identity they may keep the social and cultural aspect of it in the political society but not in the holy Catholic Church. The fanatics of endogamy brings many false arguments quoting second Vatican council and other documents to substantiate and support their stand. But we must know that all lies come from Satan because He is a liar and father of lies! (Jn. 8:44)

Now I write something about Mr. O.M. Uthup whom I called Uthuppuchayan. I knew him very well ever since he attended his first Charismatic retreat with me at St. John's Knanaya Church

Vellara, Kumarakom in the year 1991 where he had a great experience of the Holy Spirit that changed his life through and through. He received a deep inner healing of all negative experiences that he had in Malaysia and Brunei as teacher for more than twenty years. After the retreat he used to visit me often for confession and counseling. As far as I knew him I would say that he was a gentleman or a righteous man as it is said of St. Joseph in the Bible (Mt 1:19) He was very kind and generous to the poor and needy. Also he was enthusiastic about works of evangelization and he used to help it financially as far as he could Even before attending a Charismatic retreat, he used to help me for my works of evangelization in Kottayam where I was the zonal leader. When I shared my plan to build CharisBhavan at Athirampuzha, he helped me with much money; he even built a room in that retreat centre. When ever he and his wife Annamma were threatened and persecuted by the endogamy fanatics, he used to come to me for some consolation and peace. When they told that they were going to fight for justice in the court, I advised them to refrain from fighting against the bishop and the Church. Now I know that I was a coward at that time because I feared that my works of evangelization might be jeopardized as I was using the educational institutions of the Diocese of Kottayam for retreats and conventions. Often Uthuppuchayan used to tell me, “Jamesachen, I am fighting for justice; I am not sure that I will win but I need your prayers and blessings”. I used to pray for him and Annamma as I saw their sufferings. Once they were even threatened by the endogamy fanatics; fearing they would be killed or their house would be put to fire they came to Charis Bhavan for asylum!

I would say that he fought a good fight for truth and justice. He was honest and sincere in his beliefs and he was a man of faith and prayer. As we celebrate the first anniversary of his going Home, I

quote the words of St. Paul and end this article. “I have competed well, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. From now on the crown of righteousness awaits me, which the Lord , the just judge , will award to me on that day” (2 Tim. 4:7-8)

15TH SEPTEMBER, FEAST OF MOTHER OF SORROWS.

6

MY SISTER'S MARRIAGE INTO DIOCESE OF KOTTAYAM

K.C ABRAHAM

I am the fourth son of Kodoth Mr. K.C. Chacko and Lilly Chacko. I am a retired joint registrar of the State Co-operative department. Annamma Uthup is my elder sister. She was married to Mr. O.M. Uthup son of Mr. Kunjukutty & Mariamma Oravanakalam in Kumarakom. He had worked as teacher in Kerala, Malaysia and Brunei. On retirement he settled in Kottayam. They have seven children. The fourth son passed away and is survived by his wife and his son. My brother-in-law Uthup died on 22nd October 2013. A book in his memory is to be published on the first anniversary of his death. I wish to share some of my recollections on him. My elder brother K.C. Peter (a teacher) is no more. Annamma is two years older than me. I am the only one left with all the details of the happenings.

All the members of our family, my parents and we children are members of the Little Flower Parish church, East Othara of the

diocese of Thiruvalla. The church is 2 km away from our house. Bishop Tharayil of the diocese of Kottayam and two European missionary priests came to West Othara in search of a site opposite to our house to build a chapel. They called us and had discussion with my father who was working in the PW Department of Kerala. They decided to proceed further. There were many protests from Hindus who formed the majority there. My father had a major share in settling the disputes and continuing the construction. The bishop of Kottayam used to come to our house frequently to discuss the construction matters with my father who supervised all the works. On completion, Bishop Tharayil blessed and consecrated the chapel. He came to our house, shared coffee, expressed his gratitude to us and left. We were happy we could attend Holy Mass in the nearby church and could avoid the hardship of going to our parish, 2 km away. We didn't have any intention of becoming members of the new church. Fr. Kandarappally was the then vicar general of the diocese of Kottayam. Himself and Bro Chacko used to accompany the bishop. Time passed by. Then there arose a move to widen the road. The compound wall and a portion of the church would be removed in the process. We volunteered to provide sufficient land. The road was widened removing the compound wall of our property. The chapel remained intact. On Sundays alone a priest from Kottayam came along with Bro. Chacko, offered Mass and left after breakfast with us. Fr. Modakkalil was the first one, followed by Fr. Valloppally, Fr. Nedungattu, Fr. Korattiyil, Fr. Edathiparambil and Fr. Chackacheril. I remember only these names. We still attended the services in our parish at East Othara and our children are married in other diocese. At the time of proposal for the sister's marriage, the priests in charge were Fr. Chackacheril and Fr. Edathiparambil who were known to Mr. Uthup. They had consultation regarding this alliance. Being a student, I was not supposed to interfere in such matters. It

was told that they discussed the matter with the bishop. Meanwhile Uthup came to our house along with Bro Chacko and expressed his wish to marry my sister. Then my father, uncle, his brother in law and Uthup's father went to bishop's house at Kottayam. After discussion between the bishop and Fr. Kandarappally, the vicar general, they were told that Annamma alone would be admitted to the Little Flower Parish church of the diocese of Kottayam as a member. Permission was granted to the concerned to issue Vivahakuri, make the prescribed announcement in both the parishes and conduct the marriage. Betrothal and marriage were blessed at the Little Flower Parish church West Othara, of the diocese of the Kottayam. Seven children were born to them. The marriage of the eldest son, eldest daughter and baptism of the children born to them were blessed at the Cathedral church of the diocese of Kottayam. Problems arose relating to the marriage of Biju, their third son. The girl proposed was the niece of James Makil. After 33 years it is now found that Biju and his mother are not children of Kanayi Thommen. It seems that there is no illegitimate children in the diocese of Kottayam nothing is known to me about the purity of Knayism and neither there is need for any investigation. But for this marriage, it is of no concern for us. The Inter Nuncio, papal representative gave permission and the marriage was solemnized by Fr. Chollambel of the diocese of Kottayam. After three years a girl was born to Biju. She was baptised at the age of 10 by a priest of the diocese of Kottayam in USA under the authority of Mar Angadiyath bishop of Chicago. I have come to know that this girl is denied membership in the Holy Family church, Kizhakke Nattassery, her own parish.

My wife is from the diocese of Kottayam. My father is a Knayanite. I never demanded that my marriage should be blessed in the diocese of Kottayam. We remain as members of the diocese of Thiruvalla.

Will heaven allow this? At the time of judgement, if there is an option for God the creator and Knayi Thomman, these people would opt for Knayi Thomman. How strange is this legend! A part of heaven will belong to Knayi Thomman. My younger sisters had proposal from Knayism. We didn't want to repeat the mistake. Uthup was all along carrying this inner conflict without letting anyone know it.

A bishop of Kottayam made my sister Annamma a member of this diocese. After 30 years and after the death of that bishop, another bishop did a research and made out that she is not a daughter of Kanayi Thomman. Yet she overcame all the odds and survived. She is spiritually advanced than any of us. The Lord loves her utmost. There was a time in the past when a member of the Brahmin Family, who marries from another caste is ostracized from the family and the society as well. And that too has become history.

Who leads the Church now? Is it the merciful almighty God, coming into our hearts in the semblance of bread and wine, guides us, provides us and sanctifies us, who rules the Church? Where is that God? Let our churches be venues of God realization. It is time the Lord comes with the whip and cleanse the Church. Let us pray that the Church be abode of the Holy Spirit. Kindly bear with me for this frank sharing.

7

MEMORIES OF O.M UTHUP FROM WEST OTHARA DAYS

ABRAHAM NEDUNGATT

A book of remembrances is being published on the first death anniversary of Mr. O.M.Uthup, Oravanakalam. When the family requested me to contribute a chapter, I was a bit doubtful about its relevancy. I have never seen Biju in person. I have seen Mr. Uthup clad in *Jubbah*, going to Holy Family High School for teaching. I have closely watched the famous Biju Uthup case proceedings. I have had to relate to some of its consequences.

The waves it generated have caused turbulences here in North America too

When the dispute over membership in the Knanaya mission seemed to cross the limits, I published a booklet named, “Knanaya Catholic Mission, yesterday, today and tomorrow” I made the humble suggestion in it which may help to solve the crises, consequent to the establishment of the Syro-Malabar diocese of Chicago and thereafter. Those opinions were evolved out of my

own experiences of twenty five years as a priest. How can one who thinks with belly rather brain accept them ? When this booklet came to the notice of Mr. Uthup he came to see me and sought permission to publish the same under the banner of the ‘Knanaya Naveekarana Samithy’ Later, he published the same with my consent. I have included relevant portions from it in this chapter.

I had intimate relationship of many years with those involved in the Biju Uthup case even before the case had its beginning. It had its start on 1st March, 1970, when I was appointed vicar of Kuttoor, Othara parishes.

Othara church is a parish of the diocese of Kottayam in the Malankara rite. When I arrived there, the house nearest to the church was that of K.C. Chacko, Kodoth. It seems that the beginning of Biju Uthup case itself is from that house because it was the house of Uthup’ wife and the maternal house of Biju Uthup. Let me say that my first meeting with this family was memorable as well as interesting.

On Sunday, the 1st of March, I went to Othara church. The parish community was a small one with twelve families. After the Holy mass, I had to go to Kuttur church and offer mass there. After the mass, the trustee offered me a cup of black coffee. I had a dislike for the same since many years. Anyway I had a sip of it. The coffee was from the nearby shop; it tasted bitter. I told that I don’t need it next Sunday and left the place.

On 8th of March the trustee offered me coffee; I said no and was about to leave when a woman standing close, asked me: “If I offer coffee, will you accept? My blood is not pure “I sensed something hidden in the question and so told her : “after all it is coffee not blood , please bring “ Coffee was poured from the flask, which, her son, who had assisted for the mass, was holding. I took the coffee, said thanks and left for the next station. The woman was

Mr. Uthup's mother in law !

During my visit to the families of the parish, I went to Kodoth family. K.C. Chacko and children were there. They told the background of 'pure blood story'. It was a story of severe anguish from utter ingratitude and insult.

This is the story: The day the Othara church was started as a mission centre, it was Kodoth Chackochan (K.C. Chacko) who provided all the help and assisted in all church matters. He promptly met all the dietary needs of the priest of the Sacred Heart who came there. It was this close relationship with the church that culminated in his giving his eldest daughter in marriage to Mr. Uthup from Oravanakalam house. At the time of this marriage, Fr .Jacob Chackacherril was the parish priest of Othara church. As time passed by, it was under the leadership of Fr. Thomas Valloppillil the church was rebuilt. Certain uneasiness occurred at the time of the blessing of the church. There was a demand to bless the church in the Malankara rite by Bishop of Thiruvalla as the church comes under the Malankara rite. At that time the Rite movement was gaining momentum in Kerala. The parish priest as well as the parishioners expressed their wish before Bishop Tharayil. He did not object and his silence was taken as consent and preparations were started. But it was evident that giving prominence to the Rite over Knanayism had actually pained him. He recalled that as a priest, he had suffered a lot of hardships to establish the mission centre at Katottu, Eraviperoor, Othara etc. As the Bishop he was their shepherd for the last twenty-five years. It was at his instance money was received from Rome for building the church. Now that the church was built, it only had to be blessed by the Bishop of Thiruvalla who is in no way connected to it. Those who were busy with the preparations for the blessing got a message from the Kottayam Bishop's house informing that

it will be Bishop Tharayil who blesses the church which was an unexpected turn of events. After the blessing the Kodoth family came forward to give food to the Bishop and entourage, but was denied the opportunity for the reason that Chackochan's wife is not a Knanayite, but a member of the Latin Church. Hence it was decided that the Kodoth family has no membership in the Othara parish. Any way before the blessing of the church, whenever Bishop Tharayil came to Othara, he had his food at Kodoth family only and never left without paying a visit to that family. All these happened, because, it was he who united them to the Catholic Church while being a priest. Anyway, this writer was provided with food on Sundays from Kodoth family till he was transferred. And it was Bose a son of the Kodoth family who assisted in the Holy Mass. Once I got an opportunity to talk to Bishop Tharayil about this subject. His version was like this; "It was I who reunited the members of Kodoth family with the Catholic Church. At that time Chackochan was working in the PW Department in Trivandrum and when his marriage was decided, he approached me for permission to get it blessed at Trivandrum. The Vicar of St. Joseph's Cathedral Palayam, Trivandrum was authorized to look after the spiritual needs of the people of Kottayam diocese staying in Trivandrum. I gave permission for Chacko's marriage and it was held there. Their eldest daughter was married in Kumarakom. One or two children were married in Kottayam diocese itself. Only recently I came to know that Chacko's wife is a Latinite. Will anyone seeing her say that she is not a Knanayite? The truth is that I had no knowledge about these things so far. When I came to know I asked Chacko to join Thiruvalla diocese." When I came to Othara, Chacko and family were in Thiruvalla diocese. Even then they were cooperating with the Othara church. Ever since I left charge of Othara, it was at the time of the famous 'Biju Uthup; case that I heard about the K. C. Chacko family. This is when I was residing in my home

retiring from active priestly ministry. As I frequented to Kottayam I could know the details of this case. After getting the details regarding the way the bishop and the entourage dealt with the case and their acts, I published a booklet titled “My dissenting notes” on 12.03.1991. May I quote from the same?

The pure blood stand becomes irrelevant

The Biju Uthup case in the Munsiff’s court Kottayam has taken the Kottayam diocese to a turning point. This situation should never have occurred. I do not consider the awareness regarding the Knanaya ethnicity is something wrong. But, once situation goes beyond the limits, things will become irrelevant and beyond control. The subject of Biju Uthup case will create social and communal repercussions rather than spiritual repercussions. It is the question of existence of the Knanaya community as it is today. Bishop Kunnassery is a spiritual father more than a social leader. The bishop himself is not the person who should take a decision on his own on a subject that affects even the future of the community. Instead the whole community should be involved. The social repercussions of the Knanaya ethnicity directly affect the lay people rather than the bishop and the priests.

I happened to read a leaflet named “Brutasse Neeyumo?” prepared by a “samudayopajeevi” against Fr. Jacob Chollambel who blessed Biju Uthup’s marriage. It is evident that such a leaflet will not see the limelight without the knowledge or consent of the diocesan authorities. Biju Uthup case was the first public protest against the ‘Endogamyism’ and ethnicity that was thrust upon the majority of people by a minority of chieftains. Authorities of Kottayam diocese resorted to pressure tactics and crooked ways and later brainwashing the youth for perpetuating endogamy during the reign of bishop Kunnassery. Even while the case was lawfully

lost in the court, claiming victory, the diocesan authorities and the chieftains stood firm on their extreme stand. Subsequently an attitude of protest against such extreme stand began to spread in the Kottayam diocese. I have earlier mentioned about the consequences of the Biju Uthup case. It will be right to say that the impact of the repercussions spread not alone throughout Kerala, but even here in North America. The prominent impact of the said repercussion in Kerala was one of negativity. The most important among them was the report submitted to Vatican by Archbishop Abraham Kattumana on the Syro- Malabar church of Kerala especially Kottayam diocese. Archbishop Kattumana wrote that the same mistake of establishing the Kottayam diocese, should not be repeated by dividing it and forming another diocese. As a result the much acclaimed ‘Knanaya Diocese’ in Kannur was born a dead child.

The shock waves that the Biju Uthup case created and still continues to, in the Syro Malabar Mission and the Knanaya Mission of North America are really strong. 'The shock waves created regarding the Knanaya Mission and its present state subsequent to the formation of the Chicago Syro Malabar diocese still rages. Therefore the details on Knanaya mission and its inception are to be given to the readers.

Knanaya Mission of Chicago

In a broader sense it may be said that there are five stages for the success story of the non-resident life of the Catholics of Kerala background belonging to the three rites, Latin, Malankara and Syro-Malabar in North America, especially in Chicago. The first stage is that of the priests from Kerala who came for higher studies. The second stage is of those priests who brought here their family members and relatives. The third stage is of the nurses who

came here in search of work in the American hospitals during 1970s. The fourth stage had its start when those nurses got married and brought in their spouses. Then they began to bring in the family members and relatives of their spouses, which comprised the fifth stage. Those from the three Rites pursuing their higher studies organized a fellowship named “Catholic Federation” and met once in a month in Loyola for discussions and for Holy Mass. During this period, the number of people from Kottayam diocese grew and they on 20th May 1979 formed an organization called “Knanaya Association of North America [KANA]. Philip Kalayil who came to Chicago in 1956 and completed his studies in Loyola was its first president. This association was formed and supported by the then bishop of Kottayam and certain priests of the diocese of Kottayam in America studying and doing part time pastoral work over there. The Association president declared that all who are born of Knanaya parents, disregarding their marriage from outside Knanaya community will be a member of KANA. The community was divided on this membership issue. One prominent group wanted to follow the existing practice of the diocese of Kottayam, while the other group wanted to provide equal status to those married from outside. Though this dispute was in existence, a memorandum was prepared by all members of both the groups, for establishing a special ministry for this ethnic group, to the Archdiocese of Chicago. The archdiocesan authorities considered the pastoral side of the people began to think favourably as it was supported by the bishop of Kottayam Kunjackochettan Poovathunkal was nominated as the contact person to keep in touch with the Archdiocese. In the beginning the arch diocese moved forward and asked the bishop to send the name of the priest to take up this special ministry. The bishop decided to send Fr. Jacob Chollambel. Accordingly his name was sent with his bio-data for necessary office work and visa to U.S.A.

A copy of this was also sent to the contact person in Chicago. While this was going on, the dispute about the membership of KANA went on furiously. Towards reconciliation a suggestion came up from among them to report the matter to the bishop of Kottayam. They wanted a speedy decision. So a telegram was sent to the contact person, Mr. Kunjacko saying that the Knanaya membership is to be given to the people who have not married from outside the Knanaya community. The defeated group together with the then president, Mr. Philip Kalayil, did not accept this decision. The other group formed another association as per the direction of the bishop and the existing norms and practice in the diocese of Kottayam. Shortly after, another association was formed without any clarification about its membership. While this dispute was going on, the archdiocese, after further consideration decided not to proceed further. However they made clear that the idea is not completely written off. The bishop informed Fr. Jacob that the project is not going to be realized in the near future. If he wishes to visit U.S, permission will be given with three months leave from his present work in the diocese. After a year he got visiting visa and went to Minneapolis state, in U.S.A where his relations are working. This news reached Mr. Kunjackochettan the contact person for the proposed Knanaya Ministry in Chicago. On his request Fr. Jacob went to Chicago and Mr. Kunjacko was able to arrange a special visit to the Chancellor of Chicago archdiocese. Since Fr. Jacob was the nominee and Mr. Kunjacko was the contact person in the office everything went on smoothly. No one was aware of this second attempt. During the interview various problems were discussed, about the residence and maintenance of the priest. Fr. Jacob made this suggestion that he be allowed to stay in a parish as associate to which the chancellor proposed to find a parish whose pastor will be willing to provide residence. Then the

problem of maintenance and salary were to be solved. Fr. Jacob assured that he is coming for the people at their request and assured the chancellor that they would be prepared to meet the expense pertaining to maintenance and salary. Then the chancellor did not hesitate to give permission to start the special ministry after having found out a residence parish. Then the chancellor took both to the archbishop's office. There the Cardinal archbishop asked the chancellor, whether, a solution is found. The chancellor replied in the affirmative. The Cardinal did not ask for further details. After the interview he returned to Minneapolis, with the promise to visit Chicago again, on his way back to India. After few days, one group official decided to arrange for a special Mass for Knanaya community. Fr. Jacob knew about the present situation in Chicago Knanaya community. He agreed on condition that the mass must be arranged by all the group leaders of Knanaya community, as he learned that the community was divided into three groups. Fr. Jacob's intention was to get all of them in one group with one association. Accordingly all group leaders joined together and sent invitation to the community members, for the Mass arranged in a parish church, on a Sunday evening. Mr. Kunjacko was the only person, to work for the realization of the proposed mission. He was in contact with the priests of the archdiocese. He approached several pastors whom he knew. Finally he found out a parish, where the pastor was willing to provide residence. A good number of knanayites attended the special Mass. They were all very happy to hear the good news about the fulfillment of the long cherished dream for a priest of their own community to look after the pastoral needs. Fr. Jacob was on his way back to India. He promised to return to India after a month. After he had left Chicago, certain group members wanted further clarification about the ministry, and therefore they approached the archdiocesan chancery together

with Catholic Fellowship association. The chancellor assured that Fr. Jacob's service will be available for them, with the obligation of providing financial contribution for the maintenance of the pastor. This too was acceptable. Working arrangement of the ministry was to be formed. The Catholic Fellowship soon arranged for a Mass in a church. At the mass Fr. Jacob explained the way how the special ministry could be formed and the agreement made to the chancery regarding maintenance and all other matters were to be undertaken by the beneficiary group. After a week the Catholic Fellowship wrote to the archdiocese chancery informing of their withdrawal from the ministry. The Chancellor on receiving this letter contacted Fr. Jacob enquiring whether this withdrawal would any way affect his work yet to be begun. Fr. Jacob informed the chancellor that the Catholic fellowship group was only an intruder, and so would be conducted smoothly. Unfortunately, difference of opinion regarding the ownership and the membership crept in again. Major group wanted the strict practice of Kottayam diocese to be followed there in the United States, the customary practice of excluding those who marry from outside the community will lead to loss of membership. They are forced to leave the diocese and sacraments are denied to them. A few families of the knanya community were affected by this practice. This was not known to the archdiocese. These families though not very much in number did not want to join the other groups because of their attachment to the community. The quarrel continued unabated. This practice was not known to Rome, or the archdiocese of Chicago. Fr. Jacob was aware of the situation and he was sure it would create further problems in the community. Fr. Jacob's attempt to reach a solution, establishing peace and harmony among the community members failed. After two years Fr. Jacob had to leave Chicago. Hence a formal working order was to be established with proper membership register. In his attempt one

group insisted that the small group who did not practice endogamy cannot be given membership in the ministry. This prompted the other group to approach the archdiocese complaining about the discrimination. This was unknown to the archdiocese. The archdiocese could not reach an agreement, as the other group was not willing to reconcile. The matter was reported to Rome, and reached the present status.

Anxiety of Kerala bishops

Large number of Catholics from the three rites viz, Latin, Malankara and Syro-Malabar including the northists and the southists landed in America. As they grew financially, the anxiety of the bishops of the three rites regarding their spiritual growth also grew proportionately. The bishops of the Syro-Malankara and Syro-Malabar were more worried. As all the Catholic dioceses of America were Latin Catholic ones, the Latin Catholic bishops from Kerala had no worry about their folk who had come to America. Isn't it the duty of the shepherds of Syro-Malabar and Syro-Malankara to tender to the moral life and salvation of their non-resident flock? The shepherds who came here on visit, as well as the priests who came for higher studies were reluctant to return. They constantly exhorted their sheep from Kerala not to detract from their mother tongue, rite, manners, and rituals. If the shepherds are worried about the value drain that the worldliness and the moral degradation that the western culture especially the American life will cause, they are not to be blamed. No malice, The shepherds standing in the pulpit weep over the moral degradation of the American or westerner and amass as much as possible from them. With that they build huge churches and institutions in Kerala. They find no immorality in that.

Special ministry

The Syrian Bishops council of Kerala placed a demand before the American bishops' council. It was to permit a special mission [special ministry] to meet the pastoral needs of the non-resident Syrian Catholics in their own language and rite. They assured that the request would be considered sympathetically. In this background Bishop Kunnasserry decided to send a priest from his diocese in advance to Chicago where the number of Knanaya people is very large. Bishop Kunnasserry addressed Cardinal Bernardine, Archbishop of Chicago directly. Bishop Kunnasserry's request was for a mission to cater to the spiritual needs of the aged who do not know English language by offering Holy Mass in Malayalam. In continuation an application with around thirty signatories was submitted to the Cardinal. Though the Chicago diocese approved it in principle they kept mum. Bishop Kunnasserry selected Fr. Jacob Chollambel, who was already designated to be the Episcopal Vicar of the Malabar area to proceed to Chicago. Kunnasserry advised Fr. Chollamel to proceed to America on visiting visa. As for Kunnasserry it was a step in advance, because when the American bishops' council permits Special Mission for the Syrian Catholics in America he could raise his claim over the Chicago mission conducted by his own priest. Poovathinkal Chacko was Bishop Kunnasserry's mediator and contact person in his communication with the Chicago Archdiocese. A resident of Chicago, Chacko was a psychologist with the Catholic relief society of Chicago archdiocese. Bishop Kunnasserry had an intimate relationship with him especially being the son of his baptism father. Bishop Kunnasserry had informed Cardinal Bernardin of designating Fr. Chollampel to the Special Ministry of Chicago. Bishop Kunnasserry had informed Poovathinkal Chacko also. When the news that Kottayam bishop

has demanded Chicago special ministry and his intention to send Fr. Chollampel to this mission, it was said that two priests with foreign background expressed their interest in the mission. It is heard that Dr. P.T. Joseph asked his cousin, Fr. Simon Pazhukayil to approach Kunnasserry for this post. And when approached, the bishop is said to have replied that Fr. Chollambel's name is already proposed for the same. The other priest, Fr. Thomaskutty Kottur, at the instance of his brother Cyriac Kottur warned Chollambel of the probable obstacles and protests he may have to face in Chicago. I have earlier mentioned that at that time there was an organization called 'Catholic Fellowship', for all the Catholics in Chicago. In addition there were three organizations for the Knanayites. First among them was Knanaya Association of North America [KANA] formed in 1979, the second, Knanaya Catholic Congress of Chicago [KCCC] formed in 1982. Then Knanaya Catholic Association of Chicago [KCAC] that took shape in 1983. KCCC and KCAC merged and Knanaya Catholic Society [KCS] was formed.

Only those who are impartial could recognize that there was basically only one difference between KANA and KCS. While KANA advocated and stood for membership in the mission for those who married from outside Knanaya community, KCS took the stand that only those who keep endogamy, [marriage from the same community] Knanaya identity and Knanaya tradition need be given membership. There was Philip Kalayil and Poovathinkal Kunchacko behind KANA and KCS respectively infusing power and vigour to the respective organizations claiming dignity of the clan, royal background and divinity as part of Knanaya purity. The constitution of KCS says: "Knanayithommen is the relative of Jesus." If Kanathomma is the relative of Jesus Christ, Thommen and his followers should be of David's royal lineage and even though no historical evidence could be stated,

let the claim of KCS stand as such.

Chollambel's first visit

Fr. Chollambel who obtained a visiting visa, reached his nephew's house [Ambalathunkal family] in Minneapolis via New York. When Poovathinkal Kunchacko came to know of this he contacted Fr. Chollambel and requested him to come to Chicago. Simultaneously he obtained permission for him and Fr. Chollambel for a meeting with the Chancellor of Chicago Arch diocese.

Meets the Chancellor

As per the arrangements made earlier, Fr. Chollambel and Kunchacko talked to the Chancellor at his office. The chancellor had made a study of the file relating to the correspondence on special ministry. Fr. Chollambel presented the need and relevance of the special ministry sought by Bishop Kunnasserry as a need of the aged who have arrived here and are not proficient in English. It was acceptable to the chancellor. How it could be put into practice was the chancellor's next question. Fr. Chollampel replied that if an appointment as an associate in any of the hospitals is obtained, the special ministry could be run. The chancellor's next question was who will be responsible for the financial stability of the priest who comes for such a special ministry. To this Fr. Chollambel replied: 'Whomever I serve will protect me' He informed the Chancellor that he is totally convinced about that.

Found a church to stay

The Chancellor asked to find out a church for Fr. Chollambel to stay. He himself telephoned two or three pastors; but all they wanted was priests who are proficient either in Italian or Spanish language. Kunchacko and Chollampel in their search met the pastor

of St. Ithas church. He agreed to provide food, accommodation and a monthly stipend of \$100 on the sole condition that, Holy Mass should be offered daily. Fr. Chollambel agreed to it.

In a meeting of the KANA, that was held before Fr. Chollambel's return, as the president, Philip Kalayil announced that those who married from outside will have membership in KANA as well as in the special ministry. Kunchacko had raised his strong dissent. Fr. Chollambel returned to Kottayam after offering the monthly Holy Mass on the invitation of the Catholic federation and the three groups and informing them that the special ministry will include all and that he will return in October 1983. On arrival Fr. Chollambel saw Bishop Kunnasserry and apprised him of the situation. The bishop was satisfied to know that what he has desired is achieved. He even asked the priest why he does not continue in Chicago

Fr. Chollambel is back in Chicago

On 28th of October, Chollambel on his return, arrived in Chicago. He was received at the Oher air port and was led to St. Ithas Church by the faithful including the southists, the northists, those married from outside and the Latinites, fully convinced and considering him as the person sent to them for the special ministry that embraces all Catholics. On Sunday morning the pastor of St. Ithas church asked Fr. Chollambel to offer the community Mass. Under obedience, trembling with fear offered the Mass and delivered a brief homily. When the pastor commented that the Mass which was offered without any practice or training was good, he was a bit relieved. Before the return of Fr. Chollambel the Catholic federation has sought from the Chicago chancellor details regarding the nature, purpose and beneficiaries of the special ministry. It is relevant to note here that the Chancellor on

receipt of the letter invited the office bearers of the Catholic federation and the three associations for a discussion. The Catholic federation's stand and demand was that the special ministry conducted by Fr. Chollambel should be for all sections of people. Such an agreement had already evolved during the discussion with the chancellor.

Catholic federation retreats

Two weeks after the mass of the Catholic federation, they wrote to the chancellor informing their stand that only one mass is needed per month and then they withdrew from the special ministry. Simultaneously the three associations expressed their aversion to work jointly. The basic reason for such aversion was related to the issue of membership in the special ministry to those who married outside of the community. However, offering Mass once in a week Fr. Chollambel went ahead for two years. Nobody paid him any salary for those two years. With the one hundred dollars received from St. Ithas' church and free food and accommodation, Fr. Chollambel lived on. The cold war relating to the membership in the associations created another hurdle.

Kurialasserry Mission

The people on the other side were intelligent enough to sense the cold war raging among the southists regarding the membership in the special ministry and the associations and the direction it is taking. As a result, the Catholic federation addressed the Archbishop of Changanassery for the special ministry. Fr. Thomas Kurialasserry who was working in a church here at that time encouraged them. With that Bishop Pallickaparambil came here and after necessary deliberations Syro-Malabar Mission was initiated. Fr. Kurialasserry took charge as its director. The special ministry

involving the entire emigrant Catholics breathed its last.

Last goal of Fr. Chollambel

Once the Syro-Malabar mission started, all the northists left the Chollambel mission. Only the southists remained there. That included a handful of Knanayites who married from outside their community. There was protest against their inclusion in the special ministry. That means there was extremist stand based on ethnic purity and practice of marriage among the clan, endogamy. It is because the Catholic federation understood this, that they left the mission. Fr. Chollambel had assured the Archbishop of Chicago that the special ministry will be functioning only involving all the Catholics. Fr. Chollambel took the stand that it was his profound duty to keep that assurance. Therefore he was compelled to take a stand that will not harm anybody. Fr. Chollampel considered that a small minority that has married from outside the community will not be a threat to the special ministry. Sending them out of the parish, which is the basic unit of the Catholic Church is against the teachings of Jesus. Therefore he wished to initiate an action plan visualizing a special ministry that includes even those who have married outside of the community. Fr. Chollambel asked them to fill up a form giving details such as name, address and other personal details along with their consent to donate five dollars a month per family as a support to the priest of the special ministry. Many of them filled the form and gave five dollars each.

During Sunday Mass love offering was taken, with the permission of the chancellery. The amount collected was deposited in a newly opened bank account namely, 'Knanaya Catholic special ministry' created for the same

Kalayil Philip and Poovathinkal Kunchacko took the love

offering. Besides them Fr. Chollambel appointed three others including Mullappally Jose, a person who married outside of the community. When matters reached this juncture, the opposition regarding the membership in the special ministry became severe. Kalayil Philip and a section stood vehemently in their stand that those married outside of the community also should be in the ministry. Another section under the leadership of Poovathinkal Kunchacko strongly opposed. Fr. Chollambel's stand was that if he does not fulfill the assurance given to the chancery that his mission will include all Catholics, the mission will cease to exist and therefore until it is firmly rooted, as a temporary adjustment, those who married outside of the community also should be given membership in the ministry. So he had communication with those married from outside the community. They assured that they will not seek any position in the mission and that they are ready to give it in writing. Fr. Chollambel announced that only those who filled up the forms and given five dollars could attend the meeting after the Sunday Mass. On the day before the Sunday meeting Bishop Kunnasserry called Fr. Chollambel and asked him to postpone the Sunday meeting since, Fr. Cyriac Manthuruthil is coming and will decide the membership matters. Fr. Chollambel told the bishop that he would return, to which Bishop Kunnassery did not respond

The strange approach of the bishop

It was not hard for Fr. Chollambel to recognize what had transpired. He knew that the uncompromising attitude of the Knanaya extremists and the leader who claimed an upper hand and fraternal blessing in the mission and of the bishop. Kunnasserry approving this had chained him. For the last twenty-five years he was rendering selfless, strong, influential service in the administration of the Kottayam diocese. He had stood by and

worked with Bishop Kunnaserry when he was a priest, auxiliary bishop and later as the Chief of the diocese. For Fr. Chollambel, the attitude of Bishop Kunnasserry towards him in this issue was amazing as well as strange. The bishop did not ask for his explanation. He didn't show any interest either in what he is going to do, or about what is actually happening. The bishop was instructing him to stop everything, only taking into account the words of his baptism father's son. The bishop is making Fr. Chollambel a fool. Fr. Chollambel felt like being between the devil and the sea. On one side the extremists who oppose the issue of membership in the mission to those who marry from outside and the bishop, who supports and blesses them and on the other side, the Chicago archdiocese which was given the assurance that the ministry he gives will include everyone. Intense prayer followed. The issue is to be dealt with utmost care and strategy. If he desires he can bring down the special ministry that he has nurtured and taken care of selflessly during the last two or three years; a word to the Chancellor will be more than enough. But, he found it really heart breaking to do away with the spiritual services that a large number people may get in the ministry. "Shouldn't I give preference to the commitment to my brethren and community rather than to the person Bishop Kunnaserry? Is it not my mission as a priest?" Fr. Chollambel submitted himself to the orders of the bishop, finding solace that "God who bring good out of evil" will straighten the things out

The Mass and the meeting

As usual Fr. Chollambel offered Mass. Then the meeting started. Though it was instructed that those who had given the filled

up form and five dollars only need attend the meeting, some including Kunchacko came without these things. Fr. Chollambel described what has transpired; not alone that, he said that in the light of the instructions from Bishop Kunnaserry he is stopping all further actions and almost stated that his hands are bound. Those who have given the five dollars can get it back and he added that he is going back. Though somebody stood up, he didn't allow them to speak and dispersed the meeting.

The attitude of the Chancellor

In the present unexpected circumstances, a meeting of the KANA was called and the Chancellor was appraised in writing about the turn of events relating to the mission. Chancellor called for a meeting with Fr. Chollambel and the representatives of KANA. The representatives of KANA told the Chancellor that Fr. Chollambel was being recalled for the reason that he is admitting to the mission those who married from outside the community. Chancellor asked him why he is taking such a stand. Fr. Chollambel replied that it is because it is a custom of our diocese in Kerala. The Chancellor said such a practice cannot and will not be allowed in this diocese

Visa denied to Fr. Manthuruthil

At this juncture, Fr. Cyriac Manthuruthil who was appointed successor to Fr. Chollambel approached the American consulate for visa. About 16 members of KANA sent telegrams from Chicago to the consulate stating this; "Visa should not be granted to Fr. Manthuruthil. His arrival will create division in the community". Besides, due to the happenings in the special ministry, the Chicago diocese did not send the recommendation letter to be issued in favour of Fr. Manthuruthil. Hence visa was denied to Fr. Manthuruthil. Though there was correspondance

between Bishop Kunnasserry and Cardinal Bernardine there was no change in the stand taken by the Chicago archdiocese Cardinal Bernardine wrote to the Oriental congregation in Rome seeking opinion regarding the membership issue. The official reply that Cardinal Lourdes swamy, Prefect of the Oriental Congregation gave to Cardinal Bernardine in 1986 is the famous “ Rescript of 1986”. The rescript the Congregation issued on 01-03-1986 was received by not alone Cardinal Bernardine, but by Bishop Kunnasserry as well. The content of the decision was given to KANA also by Fr. Keeli. The letter had clearly stated three things. One: The aim and basis of conducting the special ministry granted to the knanaya community is to give equal status in the ministry to those knanaya Catholics who married from outside the knanaya community. Two: The plan to extend to U.S.A. the prevalent practice in the Kottayam knanaya diocese of excommunicating from the parish community those who marry outside of the knanaya community is not acceptable to the congregation. Three: The Kottayam knanaya bishop has no authority over the knanaya Catholics outside his juris diction. The knanaya Catholic community is under the sole authority of the Archbishop of Chicago. Even though Bishop Kunnasserry received such a script, he kept silence. Though the KANA office bearers received information on the script, it is not known whether the extremists got any information. Perhaps Bishop Kunnasserry might have pacified them assuring that they need not worry about the rescript and that he will get it changed exerting pressure on those in Rome!. Though there was correspondence between Cardinal Bernardine and Bishop Kunnasserry, Cardinal was not at all prepared for a compromise with regard to a ministry where there is no place for knanaya Catholics who married from outside the knanaya community. As a result, Fr. Manthuruthil could not come to Chicago for two years. One thing is very clear here: Both the

diocesan chiefs are successors of apostles and liable to continue the pastoral mission entrusted to them by Jesus. But who among these two is committed to Jesus in his accomplishment of the mission? Even if there is no Kottayam diocese or Syro-Malabar church, the bishops here were keen to cater to all spiritual needs of all Catholics coming from India or any other foreign country. Even then when Bishop Kunnasserry requested the cardinal for opportunities to provide for the spiritual needs of the aged people who are not proficient in English, he happily permitted. But his insistence that none should be excluded from the pastoral service is not wrong. How can you say that the pastoral aegis of Bishop Kunnasserry is sincere? He had shown his green signal to the extremists, who were adamant that those who married from outside the community should not be given membership in the pastoral mission instituted as such, In the special circumstance of the USA, Bishop Kunnasserry was bound to advise to follow the instructions of the Cardinal ‘for the time being’. It is to be mentioned that Bishop Kunnasserry did not even show the prudence and discernment. Fr. Manthuruthil kept it hidden from the extremists of Chicago. It was a pastoral lie of the “pastoral ministry”. They called it “pastoral prudence”

1986 The rescript and some thoughts

The commotion the Rescript of the Oriental Congregation, stirred among the knanaya Catholics in America and Kerala is not that silly. It is to be stated that, those who whole heartedly believed that the future of knanaya Catholics, marriage from the same community and endogamy are secure under the rule of Bishop Kunnasserry and those who came to America and made a good fortune, did not have the discernment that this rescript would become a big problem.

They who still argue and write for knanaya purity assume that the minority who had to leave the diocese since they married from outside the community has influenced the Chicago archbishop and acquired the rescript.

I am of opinion that it is from the Biju Uthup case that the rescript had its inspiration and beginning. When the judgment in the secular civil law system decreed that the denial of letter for marriage was wrong, it was a strong message. That is the birth of a new generation who questions the authority and laws of the bishop! If the questioning is within the constitutional framework, there will be good response. It caused favourable and vivid response in the law system and later, within the church set up. This fortitude and the interference, from the part of the church authorities, might have prompted the people of Chicago to come forward questioning the existing system.

In Chicago the atmosphere was conducive for other reasons too. The approach of the Chicago archbishop was not that of the Kerala bishops and their offices. The Archbishop would patiently, listen to the church members, and take clear decisions after detailed study and without any reluctance to implement the decisions taken. He was straightforward, transparent and responsible. By listening to both the stakeholders, he was able to understand with an open mind the underlying truth and contradictions in their stand. Even though he could take decisions on his own, he sought the opinion of the centre of the supreme authority of the Church. That is how the rescript came into being. There is no question of influence. When Bishop Kunnasserry came to know that the rescript would create problems, he requested for extension of time to implement it and was granted. But Bishop Kunnasserry could not influence the Congregation.

Remedial attempts

Archbishop Bernardine and Bishop Kunnaserry who came to Rome to attend the Bishops' Synod met Cardinal Lourdes Swamy and had discussions to find a remedy for the crisis. Cardinal Lourdes Swamy, the Prefect of the congregation did not agree to make any amendment to the rescript. Bernardine also was not willing to sanction a special ministry which will not admit those Knanayites who married from outside the community as was stated in the rescript. Finally, only after agreeing to Bernardine's stipulations that Bishop Kunnasserry sent Fr. Manthuruthil to Chicago. But the fact is that Bishop Kunnasserry and Fr. Manthuruthil consciously concealed this from the extremists of Chicago. It was a pastoral lie of 'pastoral ministry'. They called it 'pastoral prudence'. To be brief, Bishop Kunnasserry hand over a priest of his diocese to the diocese of Chicago agreeing to all the conditions put forward by Cardinal Bernardine. The said priest was appointed to the mission established for spiritual service to the knanayites and the knanaya Catholics who married from outside of the community. He will be under the Chicago diocese subject to the authority and control of its bishop. That means, the missions which the extremists today refer to as 'cross bred churches' {sankara pallikal}, were approved and started by Bishop Kunnasserry admitting that even at their beginnings, those were 'Mixed' {sankara} churches!!

The new director and the mission management

The new director made every move tactfully. His approach to KANA was extremely negative. The director did not have the sincerity that Rome instructed to have in the faithfully conducted special ministry. The director willfully ignored those married from outside the community and the KANA where they are members. He adopted a policy of keeping them away. He put into practice the

policy of 'divide and rule'. The extremist conspirators supported him. An analysis of the quality of the pastoral ministry, the sincerity of those in the pastoral ministry, the faith life of the shepherds as well as the sheep and commitment towards the Christian values of that period of time, will lead to the conclusion that, there was not a speck of relationship.

Misfired attempt at the unity of the KCS- KANA

Miraculous, so to say, the mission director who had whole heartedly supported a division among KCS and KANA had a change of mind and in December 1995 he took the initiative for the unity of both the organizations. As for Bishop Kunnasserry, he gave wholehearted support, for the idea of a 'knanaya community' in Chicago. Not alone that, in a letter from Rev. Papparocky, the chancellor of the diocese of Chicago addressed to the knanaya Catholics, it was pointed out that Bishop Kunnasserry had sought the help of the Archbishop of Chicago by mediating in the attempts at unity. Papparocky himself attended the KCS meeting and personally exhorted for unity. It may be noted that it was four prominent laymen from outside Chicago who had mediated.

However, the attempts at KCS-KANA unity failed or were shattered. The responsibility rests with a group of people in the KCS with vested interests. Even if there is agreement on the basis of the unity formula evolved on that day it seems that it would not have lived long.

A new director arrives

The new director informed the Chancellor of Chicago diocese on 01-01 96 that the attempts at unity had failed. In response to it the chancellor on 02-03-96 issued certain instructions. The chancellor instructed that in the present situation where the two

organizations do not agree, unity should be achieved through the mission and for that an action plan should be chalked out and submitted to him. Three things were suggested as the subjects of the plan. 1.Social activities of the mission .2.Youth organization. 3.Permanent pastoral council. There was also the instruction to include those married from outside the community in these three activities. Papparocky asked them to submit the plan to him on 02-02-96 and the approved plan should be carried out on April 15th and if they fail to do so, he will recommend to Cardinal Bernardine to stop the Knanaya mission.

The letter continued to state that the quarrel between the two groups is a grave wrong. The archdiocese cannot approve it; hence we will ask to call you back; A priest of another diocese will not be allowed to work in the jurisdiction of this archdiocese. The letter states that he was in Rome while the synod of the Syro-Malabar bishops was going on there during January and then the erstwhile stance of the Oriental congregation that, the practice of endogamy which is a must for knanayites cannot be imported to America, was reiterated.

New director in a vicious circle

The new director, as per the instructions of the chancellor submitted the said plan and constituted the pastoral council and other bodies comprising a person married from outside of the community. The higher ups stormed against it. Complaints against the director were sent to Bishop Kunnasserry. The shepherd sympathetic to the cry of his folk wrote to the director and expressed his dissatisfaction. The director did not summon the parish council

Archbishop Bernardine got a copy of this letter of Bishop Kunnasserry. The relevant portions of the letter of Bernardine

addressed to Kunnasserry on 04-01-96 are given below:

“I have serious concern about the below given statement made in your letter dt.03-01-96”.One who is reluctant or fails to follow the endogamy practice by itself is depriving himself of the membership of the Kottayam diocese and the Knanaya community. For that reason he will lose his membership in the Knanaya organizations. There is no compromise in this matter. If a situation that demands compromise in our basic customs, it is better, the Knanaya mission is closed.”

“This is contradictory to the instructions received from the Oriental congregation and that we follow now. The mission director started the pastoral during February 1996 as per the instructions of the Oriental congregation and also on my wish. The assurance you gave during last July [07-05-95] to my chancellor Papparocky, appointing the present director was that “the new director will act submitting to the authority and jurisprudence of Bernardine and will cooperate with the policies of the archdiocese of Chicago regarding the Knanaya catholic mission there.”Your statement in the letter to the director that the continuance of the stance prior to February 96 only could establish unity among the people is quite astonishing to me.”

The exclusion of those who married from outside, a stance taken prior to February 96, is not according to my wish and the policies of the archdiocese. Though the unity of the groups is good, groups are, as it seems, beyond the authoritative control of the archdiocese. My first and foremost interest is the unity in the mission. I do not understand how unity could be materialized without including those married from outside the community and avoiding them

To be specific, the director should go ahead with the 1996 plan and include those who married from outside totally,”

The four-member gang writes to Bernardine

Four lay persons, who mediated for the KANA-KCS unity on 04-09-96, wrote to Bernardine. The letter was written as a response to Bernardine’s letter to Bishop Kunnaserry and in keeping with it. It was written for the community claiming that they are responsible for the Knanaya community. Six things were marked with numbers. It cannot but be mentioned that the arguments in the letter which begins with praises to Bishop Kunnasserry are quite childish and meaningless. Certain references divulge the ignorance, lack of intelligence, and lack of perception. For example, they say practice of endogamy helps to uphold and safeguard faith and morality! Another finding is that marriage from the same community multiplies happiness and unity among the married. Endogamy and the sacrament of confirmation are one and the same for the knanayites. There is another finding more interesting! Born as a knanayite alone will not make one an essential part of the knanaya community. Instead, only through marrying a knanayite partner, his commitment to the community is confirmed! As the national mediators of the knanaya community they have brought to light such novel and revolutionary revelations for the community. The readers can very well guess what will be their future revelations.

As spokespersons of the majority of the knanayites in North America, they demanded to reconsider the policy of the Chicago diocese to include those who do not practice endogamy in the pastoral council. The letter ends with a warning that if this is not approved the only option before Bishop Kunnasserry and the Knanayite Catholics who practice endogamy is to

shut down the Chicago Knanya mission

Some comments

It seems that this four-member gang wearing the gown of national mediators and community leaders is unveiling their intellectual poverty, ignorance and reckless leadership.

Did this four member gang know whether Bishop Kunnasserry who had given his consent orally and in writing to the policies of the Chicago archdiocese and its archbishop Bernardine regarding Chicago mission, and the decisions of the Oriental congregation on endogamy are acceptable to him, acted likewise in the interests of the knanaya community? If such an assurance was not given, Kunnasserry could not have sent another director after two years. Bishop Kunnasserry had not made this clear to either the knanaya community or the four-member gang. Even then, who gave this four-member gang authority to redefine endogamy and to threaten saying that the mission will be shut down if need be, they claiming representation of the knanaya community of North America? The knanaya mission was instituted and run by the Chicago archdiocese. Bishop Kunnasserry had only to depute a priest. Therefore the authority to close the mission rests with the Chicago archbishop; not with the bishop of Kottayam. The national mediator dress they wore and the farsightedness of this four member gang who does not know even this can only be described as intellectual pauperism.

If Bishop Kunnasserry had given top priority to the spiritual needs and the pastoral care of the knanaya Catholics of Chicago, he should have made attempts at solving the problems some way or other through discussions or compromise. As a 'senior bishop' who has several doctorates, who gives priority to 'prayer and

reflection' and who never jumps at decisions, would never have used threatening words or shown the administrative style of hiding from them matters that affect the society. Those who wrote the letter did not even have the common sense to avoid threat language and style of defiance while addressing people like the archbishop of Chicago.

Reply to the letter

The chancellor of Chicago archdiocese during May 96 gave a reply to the letter of the four member gang. In the reply, the earlier decisions of the Oriental congregation and the arch diocese on endogamy regarding membership in the Knanaya mission was not only reiterated; besides reply to the threat was there. May it be informed that until the Holy See takes a decision contrary to this, the decision on the continuance of the knanaya mission in the archdiocese of Chicago will be limited to the sole authority of Cardinal Bernardine, the archbishop of Chicago.

Attempts of Bishop Kunnassery

It is said that Bishop Kunnassery who came to Chicago to participate in the knanaya convention of 1996 made some backdoor attempts on his own to stretch the issue a bit far. The then KCS president too cooperated in the attempts! The chancellor of Chicago archdiocese also was invited to a dinner hosted in honor of Bishop Kunnaserry in the house of this president. A prominent jurist from Kerala too was present. Bishop Kunnaserry made this request to the chancellor: He had submitted a review petition requesting to re-examine the decision of the Oriental congregation with regard to endogamy and membership in the knanaya mission. The request is to maintain status quo in the mission till a decision is taken on the review petition. The chancellor with the permission of the Cardinal gave a favourable reply. On 10-03-97 the review

petition had a disposal in Rome The earlier decisions of the Oriental congregation was once again reiterated and proclaimed. Not alone that, it was stated that endogamy is not acceptable in America or within the jurisdiction of the Syro-Malabar church or outside. Besides, it was clearly stated that the knanaya catholic mission is under the authority of the Local Latin Catholic archbishop as well as the Major archbishop of the Ernakulam-Angamaly and not under Kottayam bishop

The Apostolic visitor and the procedure for Syro-Malabar diocese

Proposals have started to come up from various centres for the establishment of a diocese for those from the Syro- Malabar church who migrated to North America. An apostolic visitor was appointed to collect opinions and consolidate them. During 1996 he consulted the priests and leaders of the Syro-Malabar church at different centres personally, gathered opinion for and against the proposal and collected evidences. Subsequently the report was submitted to Rome. In the light of the said report St. Thomas Syro-Malabar diocese with Chicago as head quarters was announced on 13th March 2001.

The relevance and place of the knanaya mission in the new diocese

On 1st of July 2001 Mar Angadiyath was installed as the first bishop of the Syro-Malabar diocese. At the anointing and installation ceremonies knanaya Catholics under the leadership of Bishop Kunnaserry cooperated in a large scale by way of people's participation and money. The knanaya mission as well as the Knanaya Catholics is now under the authority of Bishop Angadiyath. When the knanaya missions were transferred from the authority of the Latin bishops to that of the Syro-Malabar bishop, the Oriental

congregation had given specific directions to Bishop Angadiyath to deal with the knanaya mission and endogamy with extreme care and subtlety.

Instructions

“ This Congregation has been aware for some time of the delicate nature of the position of the knanaya Community in the United States. A serious dispute in the 1980 prompted the late Archbishop of Chicago, Joseph Cardinal Bernardin, to request directives from this Congregation concerning the Special Ministry for the knanaya Catholic Community in the Archdiocese. With Rescript Prot. N. 124/83 of 30 January 1986, this Congregation made clear the position to be taken regarding the endogamous practice of those Knanaya faithful of the Eparchy of Kottayam who had immigrated to the greater Chicago area (Enclosure 1.) When Mar Kuriakose Kunnassery, the Bishop of Kottayam, requested a review of the policy embodied in the Rescript, this Congregation responded with letter Prot. N. 24/91 of 3 October 1997, upholding the previous decision of the Congregation and informed the present Major Archbishop of Ernakulam- Angamaly, His Eminence Varkey Cardinal Vithayathil, of the decision (Enclosures 2-3). As your Excellency will note from these letters, this Congregation explained clearly that the practice of endogamy was not acceptable in the United States, or in any jurisdiction outside of the proper territory of the Syro-Malabar Church. Furthermore, the letter clarified the fact that the Knanaya Catholic Mission was responsible to the local Latin Archbishop and the Major Archbishop of Ernakulam-Angamaly and not the bishop of Kottayam.

With the establishment of the Eparchy of St. Thomas of Chicago and your nomination as the first bishop, the Holy see foresees the necessity to provide adequate and proper pastoral care to Syro-

Malabar faithful of the Eparchy of Kottayam who now reside in the United States. The care of these faithful is to be marked by great sensitivity and patience, based upon an appreciation of the cultural atmosphere from which they have arrived. However, this pastoral care must also recognize the values and societal expectations present in the United States and even more fundamentally, the evangelical values required in all pastoral care. Therefore, this congregation foresees a pastoral care which is sensitive to the knanaya expectation to be served by knanaya priests, but does not make any allowance for endogamy to play a role in defining the membership of faithful in any mission or parish established by the Eparchy. The further establishment of missions and even parishes for the knanaya faithful, as presently practiced in the United States, is understood to be beneficial. However, the Holy see continues to follow the directives outlined in the Rescript Prot. N. 124/83 mentioned above.”

Appointment of vicar general and the string pulling

Bishop Angadiyath took steps to appoint two vicar generals in the diocese. A vicar general for the knanaya community is to be appointed. Nobody can find fault with, if many of the mission directors desired for the post. But this writer does not attempt to say the backyard stories of the string pulling and the games they played are right or wrong. However nobody knows how far transparent was the appointment or what were the criteria applied. How much pastoral longing and sincerity do these people who resort to such means to take hold of such responsible post as that of the Vicar General had to be seen.

Knanaya mission- Discussion with the bishop

During September 2002, the priests who were mission directors and the knanaya leaders under the leadership of vicar

general Mutholath met Bishop Angadiyath for discussing matters relating to the knanaya mission. Bishop Angadiyath informed this group that in the case of membership in the knanaya mission and endogamy, any move can be made only as per the directions from Rome and that he had specific instructions in this regard from Rome. However, no decisions were evolved, and it is said that the petition group boycotted the discussion and walked out. I am of opinion that, no person of authority with self-respect could approve the demands of the petitioner group

The style of functioning of the petitioner group-Ridiculous

How far the act of the petitioner group could be justified? Was there an emergent nature so as to take such a harsh stand? As a newly installed bishop with not much experience and as a diocesan head of a newly established diocese the bishop had to lay the foundation and start building up then. Specific directions on the knanaya mission are already received from Rome. In the above situation, if Bishop Angadiyath did not give priority to knanaya mission matters over matters of common interest to the diocese it is quite understandable. Therefore, if he had asked for some more time, it is justifiable. If there arose difference of opinion in the first round of discussions, could they have opted for second round-of discussions? Instead of that, it seems, the flurry they showed to stick on to their demand was stupid, immature, indiscriminate and foolhardy. The reason behind such style of functioning is quite understandable. Their sole assets were the knowledge and style of functioning they acquired from the political arena of Kerala. What more can be expected from the new generation knanaya leadership who act on the assumption that demonstrations, walk out, boycotting, bargaining, etc. are the only suitable ways to solve the problems? Requisite discretion or discrimination either to foresee the fruits, achievements and consequences of such style

of functioning or to evaluate it need not be expected from the new leadership. So if the laymen of the group walked out, it is understandable.

But, the act of the vicar general and the priests of the deputation group are hard to understand. It is really saddening to see those who should lead the community through the right path, those who should be the middlemen and mediators, become part of the group that resorted to walkout and boycott. These are occasions when their leadership qualities and decretory behaviour will be subjected to acid test. It's meaning is clear. They showed that they are moving along with the tide. We see dearth of values here: the unqualified occupying responsible positions through back door tactics such as pleasing the authorities, string pulling and forming panel. High positions in the church, like that of the vicar general should be adorned by prudent persons of age, maturity, reconciling attitude, experience in the pastoral field and leadership aptitude. The truth is that bishops of our church do not have such a mindset. The style of functioning of those who were sent as directors of mission centres in America is a pointer to the preference the bishops give to the efficacy of the missions here.

Today's crisis?

What is the crisis in the knanaya mission? What are the basic reasons? Can this be avoided? If so who could have avoided it? Where has it failed? Who has failed? Is there any remedy? A small analysis of such questions is good.

What is the crisis?

A section of the knanaya community is adamant about perpetuating the practice of endogamy as such in North America, as in practice for the last sixteen centuries in the southist community

of Kottayam diocese.

On the other side, another section argues that as born from knanaya parents, knayism is their birthright and though they married from outside the community they will not lose their birthright and hence they have right for membership in the knanaya mission.

The Syro-Malabar Bishop of the newly formed diocese in North America, pointed out that he could act only as per the directions issued by the Oriental congregation during 1986 in this regard and that as per said direction, the strict endogamy in practice in Kottayam diocese is not permissible in North America.

It was decided to reorganize the knanaya missions and issue membership to those who married from outside also. Besides, there will be membership in the knanaya mission to the spouses of those who married from outside the community.

To be brief, the knanaya crisis has three modules. 1. Permit missions only which has the freedom to practice endogamy strictly in the manner it is followed in Kottayam diocese and expel from the community and membership of the mission, those who marry from outside the community. 2. Since knanayism is a birthright, those who married outside of the community also should have the right to membership in the knanaya mission. 3. Knanaya missions that were reorganized in the light of the decision of the Oriental Congregation that strict observance of endogamy followed in the Kottayam diocese in Kerala is not permissible in North America only will be functioning in North America.

This crisis is not new

The issue regarding the membership in the knanaya mission is

not a recent one. It had its beginning with the decision of Rome on the Chicago knanaya mission given to the Cardinal Bernardine, Archbishop of Chicago. Rome did not issue a favourable decision on the review petition submitted by the bishop of Kottayam requesting to re-examine the said decision. Here is something that is important as well as diligent: Rome has not denied any tradition or custom of the southists. What Rome has said is that “the act of expelling those who marry outside the community from the parish community, is not befitting of Christian belief and gospel values” Ever since the time of migration, for about fifteen centuries, both the Southists and the Northists remained as members of the same church; they took part in same worship; Contributions as well as dues to the church were given; had participated in the general meetings single mindedly. There was never any dispute; The reason for all these may be the democratic system of administration prevalent then in Kerala

Even at that time had the Southists practiced endogamy, marriage from the same ethnic group and own traditions? Nobody is known to have opposed it. But, the problems started when the dominance of the bishop was thrust upon, destroying the democratic traditions of the Church in Kerala and the parishes were brought under the yoke of the bishop. With that began the ‘expelling procedure’, which was never heard before. The basic problem now is not the negation of endogamy practice. Instead, the act of sending out those, especially men who, deviated from the practice of endogamy and married from outside the community from the membership of the parish family which they earned through baptism is the problem. Were not the Knanaya leaders of America aware of the decisions given in 1986? Or did the authorities conceal from them? Nothing is heard regarding any protests or memorandum on this in the knanaya conventions,

which took place after these decisions. Then why the KCCNA leadership goes forward with protests and boycotts?

Why even Bishop Kunnassery who the KCCNS and the modern knanaya Catholics of America respect with the pet name ‘the tribal Chieftain’ did not have the ability and wits to foresee the crisis of today?. Or was he utterly helpless? It can only be said that there were undercurrents, which are beyond grasp and comprehension

Opposing arguments

Those who are for endogamy have no satisfactory arguments for opposing the decision of Rome regarding strict endogamy. One argument is that, since it is a practice followed for sixteen centuries it should persist or continue. Another argument, which appeared in the Platinum Jubilee of Kottayam diocese souvenir published in December 1986 is memorable. For those who think superficially, for those who are narrow minded, for those who do not have proper insight into history, the existence of the Kottayam diocese may seem to be an enigma. Those who raise their voices uttering that the decision of the Saint Pope Pius X who had the charisma of infallibility, taken after much prayer, reflection and thinking is wrong are who run very far away from the truth and hide themselves”. The spirit of the above mentioned statement is that the ‘infallible and Holy Pope’ did a right thing in creating the Vicariate of Kottayam. No one with common sense would say that the establishment of the Vicariate of Kottayam was wrong or it should not have been done. Let us see what is stated in the application submitted by Bishop Makil along with two other bishops of the Vicariates of Kerala on the need for establishing the Diocese of Kottayam.

“ As is known to the Holy See, among the Malayali Syrians,

there are two castes or communities originated from different genealogies. Due to that they separated themselves and remain as such to be particularly known as the southerners and the northerners. Though otherwise they are good Christians, community wise, family wise and ceremony wise due to their differences they are not cordial to each other. Because of this for the last fifteen centuries, both the sects live without any relationship, either through blood relationship or marital relationship. Due to the mutual difference regarding caste or community other than class or section they are not able to submit to such relationships.” The statement continues like this: “The bishops who rule the Ernakulam and Trichur vicariates have the help and support of the people; but in the Changanassery vicariate both the sections of the faithful are ruled jointly and there is no intimacy among themselves and not enough help or cooperation; besides difficulties arise one after the other. In the above circumstances, the bishops pointed out two remedies. One, re-establish for the southerners the vicariate of Kottayam which was closed and transfer Bishop Makil to that place and appoint a bishop in Changanassery for the northerners: Two, give to southerners an auxiliary bishop from their community to rule only the southerners under the bishop of Changanassery.” The bishops gave stress to the first suggestion. Respecting the request and wish of the bishops, Pope Pius X re-established the Kottayam vicariate. The papal bull issued in this regard says like this: “With the aim of improving the faith and devotion of the Syrian Christians of the Malayalam land decide to establish a new diocese among them. Since we are convinced subsequent to the serious and precise discussion we had with the Cardinal Prefects of the Congregation for Christian faith propaganda and eastern rites about the need for a new vicariate, as was recorded in the application submitted before us on the 1st March, this year by the above mentioned three

vicar apostolate after due deliberations among themselves, for improving the quality of faith and for peace among the mutually opposing sections, we accepting their request mercifully and as witness to our satisfaction for the people there, I give consent to establish a vicariate in the town usually called as Kottayam”

No reference to endogamy

An advertent reading of the above mentioned Bull makes clear the following things: -For establishing the new vicariate, the three-vicar apostolica point out the disunity resulted out of the North- south divide, subsequent ruin the vicariate of Changanassery meets, and the difficulties the vicar apostolic faces. They do not make any reference in the application on the practice of endogamy in the manner in which it is in force today If there was such a practice in force the vicar apostolate would have willfully hidden it from Rome. Therefore, it is clear that Rome had no knowledge about such a practice. The justification given in the Bull of Pope Pius X for the establishment of the vicariate is note worthy: We are convinced that “along with promoting the faith and devotion of the Syrian Christians, Improving the quality of the spirituality of the faithful and for peace among the mutually opposed vicariate is necessary.” Pope Pius X too does not give any reference on endogamy. For establishing a diocese no Pope needs to apply or will apply the gift of Infallibility, as it is only an administrative matter. It is only when defining the official teaching of the church on faith and morals, a Pope does apply the gift of Infallibility. It is a childish argument to say that as Pope Pius X was a saint, the establishment of the diocese of Kottayam was absolutely right, It was after many years since the establishment of Kottayam diocese, that Pope Pius X was declared a saint.

Pope Pius X did the practical thing

Pope Pius X was aware of the split in the Syrian Church in Kerala subsequent to the Koonan Kurisu oath in 1653 and one faction got lost since it joined the Jacobite church. A man of farsightedness, Pius X understood that the Kerala church might move towards such a split again. If Mar Makil is not transferred from the vicariate of Changanassery, there was a possibility of the northist members of Changanassery moving towards the Jacobite church. If Kottayam diocese is established for the southists and Mar Makil is not posted there, the possibility of the southists joining the existing Chingavanam diocese of the Jacobites was much, because the Chingavanam diocese was meant only for the Jacobite southists. Therefore, Pope Pius X judiciously applied the Principle of Double effect. [If a choice is to be made between two evils, the lesser evil is to be chosen]

What is relevant here is not the right or wrong in the establishment of the diocese of Kottayam. Pope Pius X did what any administrator of practical mind and administrative calibre would do. But, Pope Pius X would have hoped that through his acts with the best intentions both the communities would unite in Christian love, The divisiveness and mutual hatred of that time is only a temporary phenomenon and that everything would become clear in due course. The Pope possessed the qualities of right attitude, vision, determination, respect for gospel values, dedication to Christ etc. But in the absence of church authorities and lay leaders with such qualities, his acts of good intentions have today reached alienation, divisiveness, negation of faith and ethnic emotionalism

What the Church authorities did not do and should not have done

While discussing the crisis in the diocese of Kottayam, it's

irresponsibility, inaction and the hidden agenda are to be taken up for serious consideration.

The endogamy issue of the Knanaya mission has not sprung up all on a sudden. It had its beginning since the start of the mission nearly 20 years back. The beginning of the problem is with the instructions that Cardinal Bernardine gave to the mission. Specific orders came from Rome too in 1986. But what did the authorities of the diocese of Kottayam do creatively to solve this problem? It is to be admitted that one thing was done. They hid this issue from the general attention of the faithful and pretended to be doing something! The knanaya elite joined hands with them.

There was no director for the Knanya mission for two years. Later, when directors were sent, the authorities of Kottayam diocese had assured that the decisions of the Chicago archbishop regarding the Knanaya mission would be implemented. The core of the said instructions is that the endogamy is not acceptable there. The authorities of Kottayam diocese could have then and there tried to explain to the faithful about the seriousness of the issue and look for any remedial measures.

In the reply received in 1987 to the review petition submitted by the Bishop of Kottayam, Rome had reiterated its earlier decisions. Is it not thought worthy that the 'tribal chieftain' was not ready to reveal this to his knanaya children?

Though 'the tribal chieftain' had the information that Syro-Malabar diocese would be established as per the report of Bishop Karottembrayil, had he discussed with any one, what the status of the knanaya children in the said diocese will be and should be.? Wasn't 'the tribal chieftain' aware of the arising situation? Because Bishop Karottembrayil would definitely have discussed with the Bishop of Kottayam, the future of the knanaya missions 'The tribal

chieftain' was well aware that knanaya missions could go forward only as per the directions of Rome. But, why 'the tribal chieftain' did not take the initiative to make them sufficiently aware or to prepare them? There too the church authorities showed 'hide and seek' tendency. It seems that 'the tribal chieftain' has taken this attitude: on one side declared that "your bishop is Bishop Angadiyath" and on the other side, "I haven't known anything; you do whatever you want"

The stand taken by Angadiyath too was not proper

It cannot but be said that Bishop Angadiyath too played a little bit of 'hide and seek' in the matter of the Knanaya mission. Bishop Angadiyath was not ignorant of the fact that the matters relating to membership in the knanaya mission and endogamy are really complex. He had witnessed how they helped and cooperated in the installation ceremony and other matters giving men and money. He also says that he had received special instructions from Rome regarding the knanayites. Rome had told him that the problem of the knanayites is very sensitive and therefore he would deal with the matters only as per the directives of Rome. Yet, it cannot be said that Bishop Angadiyath dealt with caution and with prudence. It is admitted that just like there is among the knanayites a section that maintains extremist attitude, there is extremists on the other side also and Bishop Angadiyath has their strong pressure over him. It is to be recognized that he is in the midst of a hopeless crisis just as in between the devil and the black sea. It is in such situations, that he should show faith and love as a spiritual head, caution and prudence as a ruler. For example there arose the issue whether the wives and children of those who married from outside the community can be given membership in the mission. The truth is that his decision made the knanayites uneasy. When protests and boycotting around

endogamy were occurring, was it necessary to arouse another problem? Those with a common sense knew that such an issue would occur. The said problem could have been brought to the attention of Rome and waited for its decision? Therefore the sincerity and desire for reconciliation the bishop Angadiyath profess seems to be dubious. Or else is he shifting from the role of a pastor to that of one who dominates?

At the time of the Second Vatican Council, Cardinal Heenan said: “before the church authorities the faithful has three obligations: to pray, to pay, to obey.” His stand was, that the consideration given to the people of God in the Church is negligible, and that it should be changed. A group of people is trying to transplant to the land of Lincoln, who declared liberty and equality, the mindset of north side and south side divisiveness and hatred planted by somebody in the past, watered, grown and made big in the Christian community of Kerala. They are who came from Kerala. Though they changed their dress, their mind is not changed. But not only they do not give priority to their children’s wishes or future, but also consciously trying to divert them to a dangerous direction. The church authorities knowingly support it. The church authorities want ‘ordinary’ faithful who prays, gives contributions and obeys. The beneficiaries are the church authorities: the faithful only are the losers.

Changing thoughts and the changing world

Why endogamy, which was prevalent so long, came to be questioned today? The endogamy or marriage from the same community practice has two dimensions now. One, is the compulsion that the southists should marry only from the same community; Two, the custom of expelling those who married from outside of the community not alone from the community,

but also from the parish membership. Endogamy was a practice perpetuated only in the Knanaya community. As a mere practice in the community, it was not at all a problem to anybody; there was no opposition too. It could be thought of only as a practice consequent to communal pressure.

But with the diocese of Kottayam coming into existence, endogamy came under the control of the diocese and the bishop. Along with the communal pressure was added the control of the diocese and as a result, the endogamy achieved an officiality in its form and demeanor. The bishop took control of the whole community. A proclamation made by Bishop Kunnasserry in 1986 at the Platinum jubilee of Kottayam diocese is alive in memory: "I am the official head of the Kottayam diocese and knanaya community" To be brief, the Bishop of Kottayam declared himself 'the tribal chieftain'. And it became his responsibility to perpetuate endogamy.

With that it became a rule and compulsion for those who married from outside the community to obtain permission of the Bishop of Kottayam. A rule was brought into effect: that is, for getting the permission, a letter from the vicar of another church stating that membership is issued in that parish is necessary. On receipt of the letter, the bishop gives permission to marry from outside the community. Please note the things written in the order: "This person changes his parish on his own. No announcements or other ceremonies related to the marriage should be conducted in that [kananaya} parish. The name of that person should be removed from the parish register" To say it explicitly, those who marry outside of the community will be subjected to the 'acts of revenge' of the diocesan authorities. The common folk who did not have higher education or financial power or influence had no other go than obey the church authorities that enjoyed the support

of the community.

With the passage of time, the world has changed and man too; more thinking and educated. A new generation, bold enough to criticize the existing tendencies, to question the policies of the church authorities is born. People like M. P. Paul and Prof. Mundassery were sources of inspiration for that generation. The new tendencies echoed in the knanaya community too

Many highly educated youngsters and professionals like, doctors, engineers, lawyers and college teachers grew up in the Knanaya community. But, as they could not find suitable partners from their own community, majority of them were compelled to marry from outside the community. That included children of the prominent leaders of the community. While such marriages were on the increase Bishop Tharayil made a suggestion which comes to mind now: “If it continues like this, our community will lose much of the intellectuals; Why can’t we accept the wives and children of our boys who marry from outside, into the community?” But, some aged priests and community leaders blocked the said line of thinking

How endogamy was perpetuated

Let us ponder how the sudhist community perpetuated endogamy as it is practiced today.

From the time of migration, the knanayites lived as a closed society. Later even when they changed residence to other parts, they lived within the fortress of their own community or forming knanaya villages [and] without mingling with other people. They established their own church, school, convent, etc. Their children from early childhood study and grow in such institutions. Within such confinements is it possible for the common folk who form the

majority to think or act freely? No. In every stage of action of their lives, the church authority had its influence and control. If ever they try to think freely or come out of the fence, the community will turn against them with the full blessing of the church authorities.

Here is an example for the way the church authorities act wittingly to perpetuate this knanaya fort. During 1940s the southists migrated en mass to North Malabar. The diocese of Kottayam purchased the requisite land for this migrants from the landlords. In the document given to each household it was stated that the land should not be handed over to anybody outside the community! If some outsider purchases the land, a crack would occur in the barrier.

Biju Uthup case- the first gunshot

It was the Biju Uthup case that fired the first gunshot against endogamy perpetuated through communal pressure and with the connivance of the church authorities. The Kottayam diocesan authorities had the whole responsibility to provide a solution to the said case without it being dragged into the court. It did not happen due to the arrogance and thoughtlessness of the church authority. The judgment was against the diocese. The appeal filed by the diocese in the high court failed. On the day the verdict of the court was delivered, the egotism and impudence that the church authorities as well as the community leaders displayed again was really funny. It was a proof of the measure of respect and commitment the church authorities show to the rules and the rule of law. In order to demonstrate the power of the bishop. Hundreds of knanaya Catholics were brought to the court premises. Anyway, Rome, the Inter Nuncio, the Archbishop of Changanacherry interfered and the marriage of Biju Uthup was blessed. But that made one thing clear: the fact that a new generation that questions the endogamy that

was supposed to be powerful and impenetrable has emerged.

Chicago knanaya mission- the laboratory of endogamy

Recently some ‘young geniuses’ have sprouted in North America. It cannot but be said that the babblings of those who do not even have a smear of maturity, softness or leadership qualities which everyone expects this generation to possess, are insulting and harmful to the knanaya community. They think that the sudden financial growth of the knanaya community and various achievements of the diocese of Kottayam have nurtured among the northists jealousy and enmity and as a result they are trying to ruin the community creating problems. It could be admitted for arguments sake. But why should people like Archbishop Bernardine of Chicago, Magreth bishop of Sanosa Cardinal Lourde swamy and the Oriental Congregation have jealousy and hatred towards the knanaya community? It is they who issued the verdict that the endogamy practiced by the knanaya community is not befitting to the Christian spirit and gospel values. Magreth bishop of Sanosa went to the extent of saying that endogamy is either casteism or racism.

It is pitiful that the present day generation instead of imbibing the signs of the times and changes in the society and thinking pattern are moving ahead with hollow and silly statements.

The opposition had its start in Chicago with personal grudge and communal disunity. We are forced to think that if some efforts were taken then and there to solve the problems and bring about love and unity here, the problems would not have worsened so much. The authorities of Kottayam diocese not alone did not give due importance or prominence in this matter, but acted in a partisan way. If a little of the earnestness and intelligence used

in collecting money from America for building huge lifeless institutions in India spending large sums, was used for solving the disunity among the knanayites! A stitch in time saves nine.

Changes hurt

It is noted that changes should happen in the knanaya community. Changes always hurt. It is not right to say that as it hurts, we will not undergo change. For changes to happen, there must be shift in perspectives and attitudes. Have we not changed in keeping with the circumstances. Nobody today behaves presumptuously holding high the status and honours to be bestowed by the Cheraman Perumal. We don't go to Kodungallor requesting land exempted from tax. Nobody actually knows where it is!

Today the knanayites are in a changed world-the dream world of America. Here freedom and equality are fundamental rights. There cannot be any sort of discrimination, whether big or small or the family lineage. In a land like this the practice of endogamy was subjected to questioning. The supreme council of the Christian church concluded that it is not in line with the Christian spirit and gospel values. Everybody knows that Rome will not change its stand to reestablish this practice, however strongly demanded. Then why should adamantly stick on to the stance that we will not change? Rome's stand is that endogamy cannot be made part of the church community or knanaya mission. To be specific, a person who practices endogamy can be a member of the church; but it cannot be practiced in the parish, the small edition of the church. It is doubtful whether the modern leaders of the community take decisions pondering over the directives of Rome. Please recollect the words of Archbishop Moolakkatt: 'endogamy should be practiced in the community level and faith in the church level'.

The leadership of the community jumps to pass resolutions with the sole aim of winning the forthcoming general elections. They are least bothered about the faith life of the community. Their style of functioning clearly states how much value they give to faith life and moral values. Another thing is that the first generation who migrated to America love endogamy the most. Yet, does any one of the respected leaders think seriously about the next generation or whether they ever need endogamy? The members of most of the families who stood vehemently for knanaya identity and tradition, married partners from outside of the community. This is a subject on which decision is to be taken not on a superficial level, jumping to conclusions and borrowing thoughts of those with negative attitudes, but should be creatively and collectively done after much consideration, with an open mind based on faith,

In search of remedies

The knanaya crisis in North America still continues. Quarter of a century has passed since its beginning. It is a subject for election propaganda for those leaders who are eager to take on the leadership of the community. Is there a solution for this crisis? Isn't it a must? Let us try to think aloud.

Endogamy and marriage from the same tribe is a practice that exists only in the diocese of Kottayam of the Syrian Catholic of Kerala and in the Chingavanam diocese of the Jacobite church. They claim that it is prevalent from the time they migrated to Kerala in 345 A.D. Until the Chingavanam Bhadrasanam and the Kottayam diocese came into existence, endogamy existed and made to exist not under the authority of the church. Instead, it is the community or in the community it was practiced and sustained.

When the diocese of Kottayam was established for the southists,

endogamy, the practice followed in this community alone was attributed a church dimension and brought under the control of the bishop. Thus, the act of expelling those who do not follow endogamy, not alone from the community, but from the parish also, had its beginning. Nobody, in Kerala even the bishop has then or till now said that this act of ousting from the parish community is wrong!

It seems that through these acts an idea, that the secular society and parish community are one and the same and that the bishop has authority and control over both has sprung up. It is from this idea that the Church and community are both sides of the same coin, evolved.

But the rescript of 1986 corrects this idea. The parish community is the basic constituent of the universal Catholic Church. It has rules and constitution given by the universal Church.

Secular society is large and extensive. It has its own traditions and legal structures. Many such societies together form the human society. When a society accepts a religious belief it becomes a religious society. Those who do not become members in that religious society are not members of that society.

When the knanaya society accepts Catholic faith it becomes knanaya Catholics. Yet they continue the communal practices. One among them is the custom of marriage from their own community. Nobody stood in the way of it continuing as a societal practice. Though those who violated this kept away from the society, they were not ousted from the family.

Things began to get complicated with the establishment of the diocese of Kottayam and with the attribution of church dimension to endogamy and knanaya ethnicity. The custom of ousting the

violators from the parish community was started and it was thrust upon the faithful. As referred to earlier, nobody said or dared to say that the said ousting act is wrong.

But, the ousting act was questioned in the American soil of freedom and equality. It had its beginning in Chicago. The Chicago bishop did not take a decision of his own. Instead, he submitted the subject to the decision of Rome. The decision of Rome was very clear and it was thus: “Endogamy practiced there by the knanaya Catholics, the custom of accepting marriage partners from their own community and ousting those who married from outside not alone from the society but from the parish community too is not befitting to the spirit of Christianity and the gospel values. So it is not permissible in North America ”

It must be remembered that the said decision of the Oriental Congregation is not pertaining to the diocese of Kottayam. Nevertheless, is only related to the knanaya missions in North America. The reason being, the said practice is not suited to gospel values and Christian spirit and that discussions on solving the crisis had taken place among many educated people and leaders. All they had to say as the last word was this: “if so let Rome close the diocese of Kottayam itself.” Utterly childish response!

Those with authority and wisdom say today the custom in practice in Kerala only- the observance of marrying from the same community thought to be right by the Knanaya community - should not be practiced in the sphere of the church and at parish level. Nobody said that it should not be in the societal level. The instruction of Rome is that the violators should not be ousted from their parish. In case any disputes, problems or doubts regarding faith, law or custom arise among the faithful, the final decision comes from Rome. That has happened in this case too.

Though there are struggles and protests, the decision of Rome has to be accepted following the footsteps of our forefathers. The maxim of bishop Choolaparambil who worked tirelessly with Bishop Makil for establishing the diocese of Kottayam and led it successfully for thirty six years is worthy of remembering: “First a Catholic; then a sudhist.”

There is only one remedy for the crisis here, ardent tolerance “When our son or daughter marries from outside the community let him or her continue to be the member of the parish where he or she received baptism and lived partaking in the worship.

Hindrances to the practice of endogamy

We must seriously consider the difficulties in putting into practice endogamy and the custom of marrying from the same community in North America as practiced in Kerala.

Motivation and justification are essential for anything and everything. In case of endogamy and knanaya purity these are very important. The children of the migrants who happened to be in America are not born and grown in the same circumstances into which their older generation was born. We see here a world vastly different culturally, spiritually, socially, communally and politically. The children born here, when they are 16, will long for freedom. They try to keep aloof from the Indian perspective and approach that their parent’s hold onto. As a result, a communication gap is felt among the migrants and children born to them.

The new generation interacts with an open-minded society. Their friends studying in schools and colleges belonging to various castes too maintain this free thinking. This generation does not care or are least bothered about caste, creed, nobility or financial status or any other discriminatory factors.

The environment is not conducive for endogamy to sprout or grow. What can be done is to point out justification and persuasions.

What is the justification and persuasion in practical life? What is the higher benefit in remaining as a separate sect namely, knanayites, or in marrying a knanaya partner? What good can be found as a persuading factor? What differentiates knanaya worshipping community from a northist worshipping community? What all things differ in a worshipping community? Same language, same dress, same faith, same devotions, then where and what is the difference?

A prime trump card of knanaya identity is pure blood stance and respectability. What relevance has it got in the free will background of America? America is a land of opportunity hunters. Find out opportunities, earn prosperity and growth and be successful in life; that is what everybody here set as their goal. Education and training is essential for that. Pure blood or respectability is not a criterion; and will not be considered. The new generation knows it perfectly well. That is why, those who are active in the parish activities and religious studies till they begin their high school education, are seldom found in those areas.

One thing is clear as daylight. Those who later migrated to this place, the middle aged who came recently after being brain washed, and the priest and bishops who lead them only have such feverishness, zeal and extreme stand. They have got to point out justification, and instigation for the knanaya extremist contention for traditional practices and same community marriage. But it is doubtful that those are evolved from hearsays and fables. The common folk of Kerala may blindly believe it.

Another justification is that the southists minority didn't

benefit among the northists who formed the majority. But nothing is said about any torment or hurt from the majority. Perhaps, they may have been jealous towards the southists who from the time of migration stood apart, got royal security, grew and developed. Even then it must not be forgotten that for fifteen centuries both the communities intermingled, helped each other, proclaimed one faith and participated in the same worship.

Another justification is regarding the rule and experiences of Bishop Makil in Changanassery. It is said, that there was threat for his life. The truth that there was non-cooperation with Bishop Makil is credible. But, it is to be remembered that it is after governing the diocese of Changanassery for about 15 years without any blemishes that he became the bishop of Kottayam. When read with what Chazhikadan has said, it could be seen that it is priests themselves and at their instigation a few lay leaders who were behind these things. The common folk who believed them blindly got provoked and acted as they were told. There is a proverb in Latin; “Homo Hominy Lupus; Sacerdos, Sacerdoti Luppissimus” meaning; man against man like a wolf: priest against priest more ferociously

The new generation in North America won't understand such stories because they interact with a more open society. Those who tell such stories belong to the older generation only. The social set up forming the backdrop of those stories is no more. Not alone those, people are more cooperative, interacting open minded thinking and educated. So they are interested in evaluating things in a reasonable way. And the present generation does not believe that the old stories that spread far and wide in a generation that was far behind educationally and culturally will be repeated. So they are not interested in sustaining and nurturing divisiveness, sense of alienation and non-cooperation. If it continues in Kerala,

it should be there only. They are not bothered. If the generation that came and is coming from Kerala is not ready to recognize the broadminded attitude of the young generation and correcting themselves of the narrow-mindedness, the separation between them and their children born and grown here will widen. Why those who traversed the ocean and landed in a foreign soil should be bothered about the social set up in the country they left behind?

Creative thought and action – need of the hour

What is expedient for the knanaya Catholics in North America in the present circumstances? Two ways are open before them: One is to tread the path of faith and Christian love cooperating with the Church authorities and respecting their instructions and opinions. The other is to tread the cursed and aimless path following the extremists' stand of the immature and non-committal knanaya leadership and disobeying the church authorities and Christian values.

This author has the opinion that the following may help to solve this crisis:

1. Delve into the finding of the church that the practice of endogamy is not befitting Christian values and gospel spirit. Though it is practiced so long, it cannot be said that it is either right or wrong.
2. The Catholic community, especially the knanaya community should be willing to imbibe the changes in keeping with the present day needs and mode of thinking. It should not be forgotten that the thinking patterns and decisions of the generation here are for the formation and development of the next generation. Thought and reasoning should be given priority over emotions. The opinions and mode of thinking of the educated youngsters who are born here must be compiled.

3. Why attempts are not made to give endogamy new dimensions and interpretation in North America? Why don't we think about a reinterpretation of endogamy after extensive assessment?

4. The instructions of Archbishop Mar Moolakkatt is relevant. Endogamy and faith are to be practiced in the community and church level respectively. Both should not be mixed. This has been explained earlier. Give endogamy a reinterpretation without relating it to parish and life in the church. That is, give admission to the Knanaya mission and cater to the spiritual needs not alone of the knanayites, but of those knanayites who marry from outside the community, their wives and children . In many of the churches of the diocese of Kottayam in Kerala all the spiritual needs of the northists, including marriage are met with. Another problem is regarding membership in the parish council. That is only an administrative set up. The election and the decisions are as per the opinion of the majority. The presence of those married from outside will not affect the balance,

Not alone that the endogamy crisis is so acute here, since it is considered in relation to the diocese of Kottayam. There is only Syro- Malabar diocese here in USA. Though this diocese does not approve endogamy, there will not be any opposition to a community that practices endogamy to be in the diocese. Therefore limit endogamy within the four walls of the community. For faith related needs, sacraments, catechism etc., relate to the parish. In other words, leave to the church that which is related to church and leave to the community that which is related to it. The problem is in ostracizing those who married from outside the community from the parish community as is being done in the diocese of Kottayam. In the American Knanaya mission there is no 'sending out' act. 'Pure Knanayites' and 'hybrid knanayites' remain members of the same church; participate in the same mass; sing together the

praises of the Lord; deposit the offerings in the same box; listen to the accounts and put forward questions, sitting in the same place. What is improper in it?

Such a knanaya mission has another quality to claim. Sending out is an 'act of revenge' for marrying from outside the community. While there is no such act in the American knanaya mission, it proclaims the uniqueness and Christian affinity of the knanaya community of that place

Conclusion

The diocese of Kottayam came into existence in 1911. Many of the priests and faithful of the Changanassery vicariate had strong opposition to Bishop Makil. The protest was for giving supremacy to the minority over the majority. We do not have the full details of the circumstances that led to this protest. Yet, there are certain references in the book authored by Mr. Chazhikadan. It was the clergy leadership that initiated such opposition and protests, nurtured them and injected into the minds of the faithful. When bishop Makil experienced opposition and faced discontentment, when he recognized that it is difficult to succeed in his pastoral ministry, he decided to withdraw in the better interests of both the communities. His open heartedness and commitment to faith, love for the community is respectable, It is doubtful whether the followers would tolerate such a withdrawal now.

The diocese of Kottayam flourished. Bishop Choolaparambil and Bishop Tharayil took the diocese to greater heights spiritually, socially, financially and educationally. They earned for it uniqueness and prominence in the Church of Kerala. Even though the number of dioceses multiplied, the uniqueness of Kottayam diocese remained intact. There was no threat to its existence from any quarter. The

situation remained as such till Bishop Tharayil demitted office in 1974.

Bishop Kunnassery took control of the diocese. A new line in the administrative level and lay leadership willing to act according to the likes and dislikes of the new bishop took shape. Knanaya identity and ethnic emotionalism were given prominence. A march towards alienation and extremism began. Unchristian customs and rituals both infructuous and buried in oblivion were dug out and put into practice terming them as tradition. Some people disguised as students of history, came to the stage to attribute new language and interpretation to the knanaya identity. Many things were thrust upon. The bishop declared himself as ' the tribal chieftain ' and not shepherd anymore. The knanaya community became an island; an island isolated from other communities. Its repercussions and responses began to be felt in the Church in Kerala. When the bishop of Kottayam was unwilling to respect the bishops of other dioceses who had to interfere in their official capacity in certain problems that arose in the diocese of Kottayam and to honour their decisions, the diocese of Kottayam and the community alienated further.

Until 1974 the bishops of Kottayam had cooperated and worked with other bishops. None of them had stood in the way of its legitimate needs. They maintained unity through mutual discussions and adjustments. The knanaya Catholics should ponder why such an atmosphere does not exist now. Why majority of the bishops of Kerala maintains a negative attitude towards the diocese of Kottayam and its bishop? Why did the bishop of Kottayam failed to earn their cooperation and goodwill? One-man army attitude of the diocesan leadership needs correction. Let us hope that at least the present bishop of Kottayam will study in depth and objectively such complex issues and will reestablish the atmosphere of good will and

Christian fellowship by bringing the diocese into the mainstream.

Let me quote a sentence from ‘Evangelium Gaudium’, the apostolic exhortation of Pope Francis: “The church should be willing to reexamine rituals which are not directly related to the heart of the gospel, however deeply rooted in historical tradition.” What relation has the knanaya tradition of expelling from the parish got with the gospel?

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8

ALIVE IN MY MEMORY

JOSEPH THOTTUNKAL
PRESIDENT KCNS

A day of 1991, while I was reading the daily newspaper, a notice caught my attention. A meeting of those who were expelled from the diocese of Kottayam for marrying from other dioceses is to be held in Padinjarekkara auditorium, Kottayam. Those interested are invited to this gathering. I showed this advt. to Mr. P.A. Jacob who was my teacher and headmaster while working in St. Mathews School Kannamkara. The advertiser Mr. O.M. Uthup is known to him. I was interested because I am one among the invitees from outside and ousted from the diocese of Kottayam. But why Mr. O.M. Uthup? Mr. Uthup and Jacob are married from Kottayam only. We reached the venue on time. Mr. Uthup was presiding over. Around 300 people were there. Mr. C.M. Cyriac welcomed the gathering. Mr. Joseph Pulikkunnel gave the keynote address. We came to understand that this is the first general body meeting of the charitable organization called Knanaya Catholic Naveekarana Samithy (KCNS) registered on 03.04.1993.

This was the outcome of the meeting of the promoting committee under the leadership of Mr. O.M. Uthup as the chief promoter. Mr. Uthup described the painful experiences he had from the diocese of Kottayam that persuaded him to form this organization.

Mr. Uthup has seven children. His family is Oravanakalam in the Vellara Parish of Kottayam Diocese. When he changed his residence he and his family became members of the Kizhakke Nattassery Parish. The first two children are married in the diocese of Kottayam. While the 3rd had a proposal from Kottayam diocese, the parish priest of Kizhakke Nattassery was approached for vivaha kuri. The parish priest refused to issue the same stating that on the basis of the petition submitted by one Chacko Kaippuzha to the bishop of Kottayam, the mother of Biju (wife of Uthup) is not a Knanayite and hence the family of Uthup does not have purity of blood to continue as members of the diocese of Kottayam. Therefore Vivaha Kuri can be issued only after getting permission for change of diocese.

Mr. Uthup could not control his emotions. He could not utter a word. For a Christian especially a Catholic, his parish is his own community. An ordinary man could not even think of moving over to a new community, leaving behind his relations with the parents, brothers and sisters, grand children, relatives, neighbours, various organizations of the parish, the parish Church that offered the Sacraments.

He approached the Archbishops, the Pro nuncio and submitted petition requesting to get his son's marriage solemnized in his own parish Church, but all in vain. Biju Uthup filed a suit in the Munsiff's court for obtaining the vivahakuri from his parish as per the Civil code. When the case prolonged for two years, with the permission of the Apostolic Pro Nuncio, the marriage

was blessed in the Lourdes Forane Church of Changanacherry diocese, of course without vivahakuri. This act of the diocese of Kottayam is satanic and cruel. It is the duty of all of us who have such painful experiences to raise our voice and fight this injustice. This organization is formed with this aim and goal. He closed his presidential address exhorting everyone to join the KCNS and work for materialising the goal.

All participants except a few like Mr. Jacob, C.K. Punnan, Joy Oravanakalam were being expelled for the sole reason of marrying from outside the diocese of Kottayam. Hundreds of letters were received from those who could not attend the meeting, expressing their solidarity and approval of every decision taken at the meeting. Many shared their experiences when approached the bishop's house with application for change of diocese in the beginning Bishop Kuriakose Kunnassery used to send them back four or five times. As the requests multiplied a priest was appointed to handle the applications. While issuing permission orders, a foot note addressed to the parish priest was added noting that no functions relating to the marriage of this person should take place in the parish. So many thought of leaving the Catholic church. But the relationships stood in the way. Some who left and joined the pentecostal churches too were present in the meeting. Most of the people approach the parish priest after fixing the dates consulting both the family members. For leaving the old parishes with permission, contributions have to be made. So is the case in the new parish too many have found it very difficult to meet these expences.

Some shared their inability to go to new parishes; distance, shame, neglect all had their share. Some people refrained from going to church at all. Most of these people limit their visit to the church to three or four times annually

At the close of the discussion. Mr. P.A.Jacob came to the stage. He is well known in the diocese. He was headmaster in Kaipuzha, Kannamkara High Schools. He was a close friend of Bishop Thomas Tharayil former bishop of Diocese of Kottayam. He was a man of principles. He was known as Chakkutty sir. Everybody listened to him with utmost attention.

Let me report his words: “This act of the diocese of Kottayam is against the Holy Bible, Canon law of the Catholic church and teachings of Vatican Council IInd; This is a violation of human rights. This is against Indian Penal Code. Not alone those who are ostracized, but all who disagree with the acts of diocese of Kottayam should join this organization. I appreciate the courage of Mr. Uthup in filing the case in the Civil Court to question this non christian act of the diocese of Kottayam and to fight for justice through organizing this forum and utilizing all his resources.”

The following were elected; Mr. O.M. Uthup -Patron, Mr. P.A. Jacob- President, Mr. Cyriac Malloosery- Secretary, Mr. C.K. Punnen-Tresurer, Mr. Lukose Mathew Uzhavoor - Joint Secretary, Mr. V.C. Mathai Kumarakom - Auditor, Mr. Joseph Thottunkal-Committe Member. Though Mr. O.M. Uthup was patron it was he who led it he spent more than ten years pursuing the case The decree was in his favour. The first accused, Mar Kuriakose Kunnassery Bishop of Kottayam issued a circular stating that even if he had to go to jail, he will not carry out the order. And that it is his duty to stand for the Knanaya identity. A group of people from Uzhavoor and Kaipuzha parishes conducted a protest rally against court order and pelted stones at the residence of Mr. Uthup. Family members were frightened. As he could not even imagine the bishop being sent to the jail, he decided not to carry out the court order. Yet the bishop, filed appeal in the court.

There were many references in the judgment to show that bishop Kuriakose Kunnassery is not worthy to become a Catholic bishop. So he was in need of cancelling the judgment and court order.

When Mr. P.A. Jacob met with an unexpected death on 2nd Dec. 2003, Mr. Uthup was elected president on that day itself. He gave leadership to many activities of KCNS; namely, prayer dharna on 7th Nov 2004 at St. Thomas Mount, Kakkanad, the global convention of Aug. 2011, the political meet and rally on 29.01.2013.

The appeal filed by Mar Kuriakose Kunnasery in Biju Uthup case was dismissed by the court on 29.12.2008 with direction to pay the expenses. Mr. Uthup had no ill feelings towards Mar Kuriakose Kunnassery. He was hopeful that the diocesan authorities would ultimately do what is just. He waited patiently for 3 years without letting KCNS know the court order. Meanwhile he had several meetings with the Archbishop mar Mathew Moolakkatt. He maintained the hope that justice would be done to him. It was in vain. The diocese appealed before the High Court of Kerala. Though KCNS knew of it then, the president Mr. Uthup was totally against any protest against the diocese.

The global convention was decided by the executive committee during August 2011. Preparations prolonged for one year. By the end of May 2011, KCNS units were formed in 156 parishes under 13 forane churches. Members from all the units took part in the convention held at Kottayam on 6th August 2011. The meeting and rally were colourful, well organized, and full of novelty to Kottayam, the headquarters of diocese of Kottayam. Mr. Uthup, ever hopeful continued his the meeting with the Archbishop. Mar Mathew Moolakkatt told him that unless and until there is order from the Pope, nothing could be done and suggested to submit a memorandum to the Pope through the Major Archbishop. Though

it was done, the memorandum was returned with instruction to send it direct to Vatican. No reply is received from Vatican so far.

Another political gathering was arranged and conducted on 29.01.2013 in Kottayam. Leaders of various political parties addressed the meeting. In spite of his falling health Mr. Uthup convened meetings and conducted them in full earnestness. When news of CBCI gathering at Pala from 5th to 12th February 2014 reached Mr. Uthup he called me and told that CBCI meeting should be included in the agenda of the next meeting. A rally should be conducted in Pala and a memorandum should be submitted to the president of the CBCI.

When I called him on 12th September 2013 he was not in the usual mood. When I asked him whether it is convenient for him to have the executive meeting on 15th September. It was an unexpected reply. "I am not well and am going to the hospital. You may meet. Don't expect me anymore". The next day when I phoned to his residence, I came to know that he was already hospitalised. On 22nd September. He passed away leaving me to cherish loving memories of a relationship that lasted 22 years.

At the funeral on 23.09.2013, representatives of all the units of KCNS were present. At the subsequent condolences meeting the members took the oath that they will continue to fight for what ever Mr. Uthup committed himself.

9

IN LOVING MEMORY

JOSE JACOB

It was in a prayer meeting that I met Uthup sir for the first time. Mrs. Annamma Uthup was with him. More than twentyfive years have passed since then. The prayer group was a part of the charismatic renewal movement in the Catholic church. Those who gathered for prayer belonged to various dioceses, or parishes or even denominations. The group used to meet every Sunday after noon. The purpose of the meeting was to praise and worship the Lord whom each one has met and also to proclaim Him through sharing of what He is doing in his/her personal life. Reflection on the Word of God and thanksgiving in the group were sources of joy and renewed strength. Regular participation motivated us for ongoing renewal in the Holy Spirit.

Mrs. and Mr. Uthup were regular to the group meetings. Mrs. Annamma used to bring to the meeting, home made cakes during Christmas eve. Mr. Uthup maintained exemplary commitment to

what ever is just and strived hard out of his convictions. Nothing could deter him from translating his deep convictions into action. He found refuge in the Lord alone at the time of great trials he had to undergo to witness to truth.

When a sense of cleanliness deepens within, it is quite natural that we like to ensure that our house, our work place and the places we love most are kept clean. Mr. Uthup was one among those who loved the Church and the people whom he regarded as his own. He wished it were clean, and life giving. Mercy is supreme than sacrifice; love is superior than tradition. Those who reckon this teaching of Jesus seriously, cannot turn back; whatever be the consequences. He responded to the call for renewal of the establishment of which he is a part. His fight and hard work prolonged for decades. He loudly proclaimed through his life that his fight is not against individuals, instead it is against traditions of which Jesus warned us earlier. Relationships were dear to him and tended them affectionately

Let his life and memories continue to inspire us all to witness to the love of the Lord

10

KCNS MOVEMENT OF THE COMMUNITY

ORCHART

KCNS movement is a freedom movement inspired to liberate the persecuted people of the knanaya community from the oppression of the knanaya spirit to the freedom of the Holy Spirit. It is a movement, which to some extent has come into existence as a fulfilment of some of the biblical prophesies from the Old Testament. Recent suffering of a few knanaya families along with their determination to fight the injustice and racial discrimination within the knanaya community is the root cause of the formation of KCNS. Many knanaya families have suffered severely over the last 17 centuries in Kerala due to the practice of endogamy by the clergy.

a. Fundamentalist and liberalists of the Knanaya community

Today's knanaya community is polarized into two major sections of the community namely, the fundamental and the liberal. There is however a third section, wherein the people do not have strong

opinions, and they usually are not interested in which way the community leads.

The fundamental knanaya section of the community bases their belief in the teachings of the Old Testament. They believe that the Jewish teachings are to be strictly followed. On the other hand, the liberals believe solely in the teachings of Jesus Christ. The basic teaching of the former, is to practice endogamy which according to them has been practiced by Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Jacob married from within the community and advocated rules given in Deuteronomy 7:14, Nehemiah 9:38 and Ezra 9: 10-14 and Ezra 10: 2-5. They taught the people to marry from within their community and excommunicate all members of the community that married non-Jewish wives. In the Old Testament, disowning of wives who were not from the community was encouraged not out of racial consideration but only to prevent those who married foreign wives from accepting the pagan faith of the non-believers. This was not intended explicitly to practice endogamy. The fundamentalists of the knanaya community use these as their source of belief for the practice of endogamy and for keeping the purity of the bloodline.

Contrary to the beliefs of the fundamental section of the community, there are many people in the Old Testament that married from outside the Jewish community. This practice was accepted within the community and was practiced by Ruth, Solomon, Joseph, Moses etc. For example, Moses married a Midianite and David was descended from Ruth, a Moabite

The Liberal knanaya community follows the teachings of Jesus Christ. The teachings of the New Testament specifically, Mathew 28: 19-20 and Mathew 15:6-9 were emphasized, and propagated by St. Paul. This liberal teaching was initially difficult for Apostle St.

Paul to accept and was accepted by him only after he was blinded and given the Message from Jesus through a vision given to Cornelius. [Acts 10]

b. Growth of Knanaya fundamentalism

During Bishop Mar Kuriakose Kunnassery's era Knanaya fundamentalism grew during the period when Kottayam diocese was under the pastoral care of Bishop Mar Kuriakose Kunnassery. It was during this period that Kottayam diocese was in one of its darkest period. Most of the community was kept in repression of the kna spirit and was prevented from knowing the love of the Holy Spirit. The kna spirit was taught and propagated during Sunday school catechism in the Kottayam diocese. Members were taught about purity of knanaya blood and how the knanaya race was superior to the rest. Majority of knanaya people were arrogant and were under the influence of the fanatic kna teachings during this period.

There were few in the diocese that were genuine followers of Jesus. The community persecuted these people and anyone else who opposed the practice of endogamy and followed Jesus. This was a period when preachers spoke boldly about the unchristian and immoral ways of the Kottayam diocese following which, were persecuted, kidnapped, drugged and beaten up. The elite section of the community carried out public community purification rites, in the open. This was in defiance to the universal Catholic teaching of baptizing and accepting all gentiles. One such case was the public purification rite carried out for the expulsion and excommunication of the Oravanakalam family from the diocese to purify it from impurity of Latin blood.

According to the view of the fundamentalist section of the knanaya community, they believed that Bishop Tharayil introduced this Latin impurity into Kottayam diocese by solemnizing the marriage of Biju's mother to his father and making them members of Kottayam diocese. In order to remove this Latin impurity from Kottayam diocese, the excommunication of the impure Oravanakalam family was planned by the Makil family by offering one of their daughters to be engaged to Biju from Oravanakalam family as bait for executing this community purification rite. Their intended plan was to excommunicate Biju and entire Oravanakalam family after making the family to agree to marry the fiancée from Makil family. They thought that in order to avoid embarrassment for breaking the engagement that was fixed, Oravanakalam family would voluntarily accept to come out of Kottayam diocese to marry one of their Makil girls. To further exert pressure for this to happen, out of nowhere a case was filed against Oravanakalam family for their excommunication from Kottayam diocese. This was their calculated way for carrying out this public purification of the Catholic Kottayam diocese. Little did the Kottayam diocese know that God was watching their evil ways?

This was also a period when Bishop Mar Kuriakose Kunnassery openly declared in court that all teachings of Jesus are not divine, it was in order to support the ongoing fanatic purification rites.

There are several cases of crime and corruption that have been seen in the Kottayam diocese in the recent past. One such example is the case of a Kottayam diocese nun from a poor Knanaya family, who died under mysterious circumstance and body seen in a well in 1992. Some believe it to be a case of suicide by a mentally unstable nun. Till this day the case is still ongoing and the mystery of what really happened is not made clear to public. Many powerful priests and nuns were suspected

for this crime and have been arrested and have put the Kottayam diocese in bad light.

The knanaya nun's case came into existence only after a certain fundamental section of the knanaya community filed a case against a powerless and innocent Oravanakalam family. This case against the Oravanakalam family might have had the possible backing of Kottayam Church. It was filed for excommunicating the family from Kottayam diocese as a part of their practice of endogamy. Due to the sequence of occurrences of the above two cases, irrespective of what really happened in Knanaya nun's case, some liberals within the community believe, this to be God's curse on the knanaya community for their practice of endogamy against the innocent. Some also see the nun's case as result of God's anger against Kottayam diocese, for their public purification rites, persecution and excommunication of innocent knanaya families from their churches for no fault of theirs.

In the Old Testament such curses and rebukes have taken place to King David's family, (2 Samuel 12: 7-12), for oppressing innocent and powerless Uriah and committing adultery, with his wife by King David (2 Samuel 11), which resulted in his own son raping his daughter, (2 Samuel 13: 1-19) and later being murdered by another son of King David within a short period of his reign (2 Samuel 13: 23-29). Just like how King David who was angry, tried to suppress the event and protected his son, so also is Kottayam diocese seeming to suppress the truth regarding the nun's case and protecting their priests considered as sons of the diocese.

Meanwhile, God was also raising and blessing a few Kananya families and through them forming the KCNS movement, which is a prophetic movement of the Holy Spirit, that came into existence with God's help during this dark period of the diocese. This

movement was formed by late Chakutty teacher, which was formed to oppose this pagan public purification rite and the practice of endogamy.

c. The Oravanakalam knanaya crisis and case

In the dark age of growth of knanaya fundamentalism, during Bishop Kunnassery's era, the knanaya spirit was worshiped. Those who worshiped the Holy Spirit were persecuted. One such family that was persecuted was the family of Mr. Biju Uthup. Mr. Biju Uthup studied in the finest engineering colleges in the country. He was more of a scientist and rationalist rather than a religionist or a worshiper of the Holy Spirit. However, his mother always prayed for him. His rationalism did not get him anywhere and he was unemployed after graduating from IISc, Bangalore. After not getting job outside of the IISc campus for more than 4 years, he broke down in front of one Hindu friend. This friend asked Mr. Biju Uthup to become a Hindu in order to get a job. Being a rationalist, he rejected the idea of converting into a Hindu. Instead he decided to try seeking the help of his mother's God to set him free of the situation that he was in. He then said a small prayer in spite of being a rationalist and asked his mother's God to save him from his situation.

God did answer this small prayer in a big way. A week after this prayer, while he was sleeping on a Sunday evening, a loud voice woke him up and told him to go to church. He immediately stood up, while his body was feverishly sweating and shivering. He was so afraid of the dream that he immediately went for Sunday mass that day, after many years. When he attended the mass he wept and tears rolled down his cheeks whenever the name of Jesus was mentioned. The reason behind such behaviour, he could not understand. From that day onwards, every Sunday he would attend Mass.

During one of his visits to Kerala he went along with his family for a vacation to Trivandrum and Kanyakumari. During that trip he went as usual to a Latin Church for mass. During that mass when the priest took up the bread and said that it was the body of Jesus, the congregation knelt down and prayed. Biju also did. As he did this he heard a very loud audible voice from behind him, crying and screaming out in pain, “Ammah!” It was so loud that he was sure that every one heard the cries and he turned back to see who was screaming. To his surprise every one was bowing down and praying quietly. He realized that the voice he heard was heavenly and so he wept uncontrollably. This heavenly incident shook him and he never told anyone about it. Henceforth, he stopped smoking and drinking. He also gave up all his bad habits and began to read the Bible regularly although, in secret. Whenever he went home he used to close himself up in a room and read the Bible. While doing so, he would weep without knowing why he was weeping.

During this period, Mr. Biju was engaged to a girl from the Makil family. His marriage was fixed and was to be held after six months when Biju’s father (who was working in Brunei at the time) would come to India on a vacation. This was the period of the rise of the fundamentalist knanaya bishop, Kunnassery. After Mr. Biju’s marriage was fixed, his mother arranged for a Catholic Charismatic retreat for him. On having experienced this divine conversion from a rationalist into a believer (like Saul being converted to Paul), Biju decided to experience the God that his mother believed in. Fr. James Manjackal preached at the retreat for a period of five days. Fr. James Manjackal later was persecuted himself for preaching the good news in Kerala, speaking against the practice of endogamy of the Kottayam diocese and was thereby sent out of Kerala. During the retreat Biju was touched and baptized by the Holy Spirit. He also received several gifts from

the Holy Spirit. It was prophesized to all the participants of the retreat that as they go back, they will face several tests and trails, which they will have to testify for Lord Jesus. To this, without knowing the implication, Biju asked the Lord that he might be given all the tests so that he can stand and pass all of them and succeed for Jesus with flying colours. Little did he know what trials and tests were in store for him.

The first thing he did after attending the retreat was to meet his fiancée from Makil house. He realized and believed that the type of lifestyle that the Makil Family lived was one that the Pharisees did during the Old Testament.

It was during this period that a case was filed by an unknown (presumably, Palakada Chacko) against Bishop Kunnassery, Biju Uthup and Oravanakalam family. This case is believed and allegedly to be conspired by the Makil family with the purpose of purification of the Kottayam diocese of alleged impurities within the Kottayam diocese. The filing of this case was intended to excommunicate the Oravanakalam Family from the Holy family Church in East Nattassery from Kottayam diocese. The victims persecuted were Mr. Biju Uthup and his family. The case was filed accusing Mr. Biju Uthup's grandmother of being Latin. The accusators claimed that the entire Oravanakalam family consisted of impure bloodline. This was the first of the numerous trials Biju had to face. As a sacrifice for this trial, Biju had to give up his fiancée who in addition to being incompatible with his lifestyle, could not wait for the verdict of the case prior to getting married. Hence, the two mutually decided that they were not fit for each other and broke the engagement.

Now when all this happened, Mr. Biju's elder brother and younger sister were already married in Kottayam diocese. Their

children were already baptized in Kottayam diocese and were also members of the same. His elder brother's wife, from Tamarapally house, converted from the Jacobite knanaya community and married as a Catholic-knanaya in Christ the King Cathedral. His younger sister married and became a member of the Kannamkara knanya Catholic church. Two children born to her were baptized as well as admitted as members of that church. In order to counter the case filed by the 'unknown person', Biju and his family decided to counter the situation by filing a separate case against Bishop Kuriakose Kunnassery of Kottayam. This case was filed for not complying with the teachings of Jesus Christ in addition to practicing endogamy in the Kottayam Dioces. This case came to be known as the famous Oravanakalam family knanaya case. At this stage, Biju was engaged to Leena Emmanuel from Ottathycal family who supported the case and patiently waited for the verdict.

The case proceeded on a fast track mode since his family insisted on getting him married at once as member of the parish of Holy Family Church. After all it is his basic right as a member of that church. One day, he was to go for a scientific conference; however, his family said that he first had to be cross-examined by the court as the first witness. On hearing this, he was furious. He felt that since the case was filed against the Bishop of Kottayam, the bishop himself should be examined as first witness. He cried and asked the Lord to reveal why all this was happening. He wanted an answer and the Lord revealed it to him through the verses of Isaiah: "*Bring forth the people who are blind, yet have eyes, who are deaf, yet have ears! Let all the nations gather together, and let the peoples assemble. Who among them declared this, and foretold to us the former things? Let them bring their witnesses to justify them, and let them hear and say, "It is true." You are my witnesses, says the LORD, and my servant whom I have*

chosen, so that you may know and believe me and understand that I am he. Before me no god was formed, nor shall there be any after me.” (Isaiah 46: 8-10) On reading, Biju was convinced that God had chosen him to be His instrument in order to fulfill the prophecies made by Isaiah. This was a great revelation to him. Suddenly his weeping stopped and was replaced by immense joy. All of a sudden he submitted to God’s will and accepted to be His instrument.

Due to the above revelation given to Biju through the Word of God, he knew that he had already won the case even before the proceedings for the case started. Biju gave his witness as the first witness for the case and left for Bangalore, knowing fully well that God is in command. The narrative of what happened from the legal angle is given in details in Part II, chapter 2. Many bore witness to the case including Rt. Rev. Bishop Kuriakose Kunnassery whose examination and cross-examination took more than a week in the Bishop’s House of Kottayam diocese. Finally all the examinations and cross-examinations ended. The judge took time to study the case in order to arrive at a final verdict.

Waiting for the verdict

During this waiting period many from the church and bishop’s house tried to convince Biju’s fiancée to break the engagement. These people saw it as the only way of winning and flouting Biju’s family. Many Kottayam diocese nuns were sent to Biju’s fiancée’s house to persuade her mother to break the engagement with him. However, both Biju’s mother-in-law and Leena (his fiancée) stood by him and waited for the verdict of the case. The wait seemed boundless and Leena’s mother began to worry. Several anonymous letters were sent to them which cursed them for standing by Biju and not the bishop.

One morning while waiting for the verdict of the case, Biju's mother called him and informed him of new developments that were taking place in Kerala. She persuaded him to rush to meet Leena because she felt that Leena was being convinced to break the engagement to him. He panicked and rushed to Kerala to meet her. He was worried that by the time he reached, the engagement would be broken. Then the entire fight for the case would have been over and the wait for the verdict would have been pointless. At this point, Biju questioned the Lord. He reminded God that it was He who wanted him to be an instrument so that the judgment as predicted in Isaiah 43: 8-10 would come true. Biju asked the Lord how the prophecy would be fulfilled if the engagement were broken. He wanted an answer from the Lord through the Bible. He picked up the Bible and the Lord spoke to him through the words of Isaiah 41:1. It said, "Listen to me in silence oh distant coastlands; let the people renew their strength; let them approach, then let them speak, let us together draw near for a judgment" The words touched Biju like it had in the past and he stopped panicking. He was confident that the Lord was in control. He knew that the distant coastland that Isaiah was talking about was the distant Malabar Coast in Kerala. Also, the judgment indicated in the Bible was the judgment of his marriage case. He was overjoyed and on reaching Leena's house there was absolutely no talk of breaking the engagement. He narrated his encounter with the Lord to Leena and her mother. As promised, his mother-in-law did not succumb to the pressure from Kottayam bishop's house. They failed at trying to break the wedding. They saw this as the only way of winning and nullifying the case. This was because they sensed the victory of the case going against them.

The Final Judgement

After a long and silent wait, on 24th November, 1990, the

verdict and judgment was proclaimed. It was in the form of a 42-page judgment in favour of Biju Uthup. This was an answer to all the prayers of the many knanaya families who were persecuted for the sake of retaining the evil practice of endogamy within the Catholics knanaya Kottayam diocese. This was also the first time that a bishop of Kottayam was defeated legally in a civil court by an ordinary family. This victory was perceived as a prophecy from the book of Isaiah. This gave Biju the strength to fight the case. This verdict was believed by Biju to be God's verdict.

In spite of the verdict, the Kottayam diocese refused to take responsibility of their misgivings. They refused to accept the judgment and went on to appeal against the verdict. It was during that period, Apostolic Pro Nuncio intervened along with Changanassery Archbishop Mar Joseph Powathil to conduct Biju's marriage. The marriage was conducted without any vivahakuri (Bans for Marriage) in Lourdes Forane church. It was conducted by a brave priest from the Kottayam diocese whose name is Fr. Jacob Chollambel. He conducted the marriage without relinquishing Biju's membership from Holy Family church.

Defiance to the judgement

The verdict was decreed in favour of Biju and the marriage of Biju with Leena was solemnized by a priest from the Kottayam diocese under the direction of Pro Nuncio. Yet, the Kottayam Diocese refused to accept Biju as one of their members. They went a step further and appealed against the verdict. After 2 decades of legal battle, which aimed to reverse the verdict in favour of the Kottayam diocese, the court once again gave a second verdict in favour of Biju Uthup in 2007.

Introspection to the judgement

At this juncture, it is worth introspecting why such a case took place. The case put the knanaya community in a bad light with respect to all other Catholic communities. This case was planned by the knanaya community in order to showcase their racial superiority over the rest of the world. Unfortunately, things didn't go as planned. The original case filed by Mr. Palakada Chacko and backed by the Makil family aimed to carry out ethnic purification of the diocese by excommunicating the Oravanakalam family. This case was dismissed. Instead, Biju's case took over and the verdict was decreed in his favour. Attempts by the diocese to reverse the verdict in their favour miserably failed. The best knanaya community lawyers put in their best efforts for over two decades. Sadly for them, the diocese with the backing of the bishop of Kottayam could not reverse the judgment.

This judgement was a judgment of God as prophesized in Isaiah 43: 8-10. At a time when Jesus was proclaiming the Good news in Israel, the Jewish people did not realize the work of Jesus. His crucifixion was the fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecies. The Jewish people were blind to the work of God and crucified him. Likewise today the knanaya people who claim to be descendants of the early Jewish Christians fail to see the prophecies being fulfilled right in front of them and are blind to the work of God.

What is the message that is being conveyed from the verdict of Biju's case? Today, if God were to appear before the entire knanaya community and directly tell them (as they did to the early Jewish people through prophets) that they need to change their evil practice of living, they would not listen. This evil practice that God does not like is the practice of endogamy. Endogamy involves marrying individuals only from within the knanaya community and excommunicating all those who marry anyone from outside

the community. This is the 1st commandment of the community. This commandment is given more priority by the community than the 1st commandment that God gave the people through Moses, which is to love your God with all your heart and mind. Bishop Kuriakose Kunnassery said in court that the universal brotherhood, which was taught by Jesus Christ need not be followed as a law by the Church. He also stated without any hesitation, everything that Jesus taught and preached need not be considered as Church laws.

This is against the teachings of Jesus and God wants the relevant people to abandon such false beliefs. It is for this very purpose that Biju believed that he was used as an instrument by God so as to fulfill the prophesy of Isaiah 43:8-10. Today such a prophetic renewal movement is realized with the formation of the Knanaya Catholic Naveekarana Samithy (KCNS). This was formed as a result of the Oravanakalam knanaya case and is believed to be result of the fulfillment of Isaiah's prophesy. The formation of the movement is a work of God and a miracle of modern times.

The objective of the KCNS movement is to set the knanaya people free from the law concerning the practice of endogamy. Endogamy is practiced and executed by priests and bishops from this community. They ensure that all the members within the diocese practice this law. All those who do not practice this law are excommunicated and persecuted as seen in the case of Biju. God has been watching this evil persecution towards innocent families by Kottayam diocese and has decided to act through Biju's family as an instrument. He decreed his verdict against this evil practice of endogamy of Kottayam diocese in the courts of the Malabar Coast, a miraculous judgment favouring the persecuted.

Let those with ears listen to God's verdict and let those who love God and give the Holy Spirit more importance than the

knanaya spirit come forward and break the bondage from the chains of the laws of endogamy. For it is written through Gal 3:29, that there is neither Jew nor Greek but all one in Christ. Have the knanaya people forgotten this? There is only one Lord, one faith and one baptism (Rom 4:16). Why separate the knanaya community from the rest? St Paul, Cephas and Appolos are God's messengers who taught the people to follow Christ. They were not sent to make their own church or group like that of the knanaya people in Kerala. St Thomas, Thomas of Cana or Francis Xavier was not sent to India to establish his or her own churches based on endogamy. The Church is a large family built together with Christ by the Holy Spirit (Eph 2: 19-22). The Church is not to be separated based on purity of blood. Jesus today is calling for unity just as He and the Father are one (John 17:21). Therefore the knanaya people must also be united with other knanaya members who marry from outside the knanaya community. God forms movements like the prophetic KCNS movement for the purpose of fulfilling God's promise and ensuring that the knanaya community strictly follows the above teachings of the Bible. The practice of endogamy should be banned within the Church and God's commandment should prevail over the man made laws such as the practice of endogamy. Let the Universal Catholic Church open its eyes to see the Miracle of God's work in setting the knanaya people free from the practice of endogamy.

Final reflection

If there is a diocese existing on the basis of endogamy, it means Christianity is endorsing caste system. Caste system in India is based on endogamy; and the Church is fighting against it. Diocese of Kottayam is the only diocese that is based on caste system in India.

Perhaps that is the reason Rome or the Synod of the Syro Malabar Church is not allowing any more dioceses for knananites. Perhaps now the Church has come to know what Pope Pius X did in erecting Kottayam diocese was wrong. Pope Pius is a saint but all what he said and did have no infallibility. Saints also had done wrong things during their lives. So we cannot say all that the saints did were good and imitable.

It is been heard in the inner circles of the Catholic Church that at the Canonization of Pius X, the only negative point brought against him by the ‘Devil’s advocate’ was his allowing a diocese in India for a special caste that is Kottayam diocese.

PART II

ORAVANAKALAM KNANAYA CASE

1

KNANAYA MARRIAGE CASE A STATEMENT

O M UTHUP

(A STATEMENT PUBLISHED BY MR. OM UTHUP IS
REPRINTED HERE- ORCHART)

In the case filed by my son Biju Uthup in the Munsiff's Court Kottayam in O.S. 923/89, the honourable court decreed that Biju is a member of the Nattassery parish of the diocese of Kottayam and orderd the bishop of Kottayam to issue vivahakuri (Letter for Marriage) within 30 days for the conduct of the marriage within the diocese of Kottayam. The defendant bishop of Kottayam filed an appeal in the District Court Kottayam with a request to stay the judgement of the subordinate court. On this, the subordinate court on 31.01.91 ordered to issue vivaha kuri within ten days. The bishop of Kottayam submitted a revision petition in the Hon. High Court which the court dismissed and issued orders. Inspite of this, either Mar Kuriakose Kunnassery, the bishop of Kottayam or the parish priest was not ready to issue the vivaha kuri.

The fundamental issue in this case was, whether Biju is a member of the diocese of Kottayam. The Hon. Court gathering evidences and hearing arguments in detail, found that he is a member of the diocese of Kottayam. As the bishop is not willing to comply the court order, what is expedient for Biju is only to approach the court for action against him.

It is beyond doubt that a bishop, as a religious head is obliged to support the rule of law without reserve. Any stance contrary is despicable, unjust and punishable. acts peacefully and morally through the ways Christ has shown. As is written in the Acts of the Apostles, “like a sheep he was led to the slaughter, and like a lamb that is silent before its shearer, so he does not open his mouth. In his humiliation justice was denied to him” (8:32 RSV) Even when the highest court of judicature of the state ordered, the bishop of Kottayam denied justice to Biju. Our advocate stated in public that we are not questioning the said denial of justice and based on it have not resorted to arrest or recovery.

The words of St. Stephen to the Jewish priests, “you stubborn” people, with your pagan hearts and pagan ears, you are always resisting the Holy Spirit, just as your ancestors used to do. Can you name a single prophet your ancestors never prosecuted? ” (Acts 7:51JB) remains relevant. The bishop of Kottayam forbade the administering of sacraments stipulated by the church to Biju in his parish in the name of traditions which cannot be established in this case. Jesus asked the Jewish priests, why they denied God’s commandments in the name of their traditions. Today in the church of the followers of Christ, a group of stubborn people moves like blind guides to preserve racism and purity of blood. Biju wished through this he could invoke a

sense of justice in them. Even though in Kerala, which was once an asylum of caste system, the sand bed of caste system in the Hindu religion collapsed. The caste monster found her last refuge in the Catholic diocese of Kottayam.

I consider this as a social issue rather than a legal issue. When new vision about humanism evolves in our own country and world wide, they are turning a blind eye to it. Even while remaining in the protective care of religion, they challenge the verdict of the highest court of the state.

Priests with vested interest have always stood against social reforms. We have witnessed collapse of Brahmin supremacy over other factions of the Hindu religion. The weak thread of tradition and practices cannot hold them anymore. I am sure that the caste system in the Catholic Church will vanish in due course. Therefore as true Christians we do not intend to initiate any legal action against Mar Kuriakose Kunnassery, the bishop of Kottayam who violated the order of the court and such an action is not becoming of us.

I believe that, as the Truth slaughtered and buried in the tomb by the high priests resurrected, shattering all their high expectations, the Catholic Church also will discover the ultimate truth inherent in the court order; the traditions that imprisons them will rot in the passage of time.

Those who repudiate Christian humanism, laws of church and the high court of judicature, for being protected in the broken ramparts of the caste system will vanish in the turbulent flow of time.

Where are the thrones of authority of the high priests who crucified Jesus Christ?

humanity that they become aware of what they are doing.

2

THE LEGAL ANGLE TO THE ORAVANAKALAM KNANAYA CASE

ADVOCATE FRANCIS THOMAS

Jesus told his disciples “Go then to all people everywhere and make them my disciples, baptize them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit and teach them to obey all my commands and I will be with you always till the end”. The disciples went and preached everywhere and propagated the teachings of Jesus Christ and Christianity.

Church is founded on the teachings of Jesus Christ and it is a missionary church and there cannot be any custom or usage contrary to the teachings of Bible. The teaching of Bible is Divine law and the very basis of Christianity is against the distinction between caste or creed. The church is founded on the basis of teachings of Christ with a view to propagate the Gospel. It is out of question for a custom to have a force of law both under Canon law and Divine law.

The Christian Religion does not recognize any caste system. All Christians are treated as equals and there is no distinction between one Christian and another. Christianity never recognizes caste system. The teachings of Christianity militate against persons professing Christian faith which divides or discriminates persons on the basis of any caste. All persons who are baptized in Christ are brothers and sisters and there shall not be any discrimination between them on the basis of caste sect, colour or gender.

Knanaya Catholics who claims to follow endogamy is now acting against the Cannon law and the teachings of Jesus Christ. They claim that they are the descendents of Knai Thoma (Thomas Cana) and 72 families belonging to 7 Jewish clans(illams). The purpose of migration under the leadership of Thomas Cana in 345 AD from the middle East to India was for missionary activity. The members of the present day Knanite Christians are the descendants of 72 Jewish Christian families who arrived in Malankara in 345 AD under the leadership of Thomas Cana. They claim that the Knanayites remained an endogamous community having no marital relations outside the community. According to them if a knanaya person marries a non Knanite, he will become a non Knanite and that person is not entitled to continue as a Knanite. The children of that wedlock also cannot be considered as Knanites.

According to knanayites they are the descendants of 72 Jewish families who migrated to India under the leadership of Thomas Cana. There are Jewish Christian communities outside India. There is no separate diocese for Jewish Christians outside India. They are members of the respective diocese they reside. The Jewish Christian converts outside India are not following endogamy.

The Grandmother of King David was Ruth. She was a tribe and non Jewish. But she was accepted and acknowledged as a Jew by the community. She was considered as a saint by the Jewish Community.

In the Old Testament, there are very many instances where Jews married outside the community and they were accepted as members of the community. Universal brother hood is accepted by the church. There is no scope for any distinction between its members except on sex.

Catholic Church accepts all teachings of Jesus Christ as Divine law. All customs, traditions and practices in violation of Divine law is void- ab-initio according to the canons of the Catholic Church. There is no historical evidence that Thomas of Cana and 72 families were following an endogamous character before their arrival at Malabar Coast. In historical books, there is reference regarding the two wives of Knai Thomas. They are referred to as Hindu wives. In some books it is stated that Knai Thoma married a Nair woman from this country after his arrival in Malankara. All most all the historians who studied about the St.Thomas Christians are of the view that the Knayi Thoma married a native Nair lady after his arrival in Malankara. In some books, there is reference regarding the dispute between the children of two wives of Knai Thoma.

There are references of Tribal people known as Cannanites in Palastine during the Old Testament days. They converted themselves into Christianity and some historians say that Knai Thoma and his followers belonged to that tribe.

As far as late O.M. Uthup is concerned, there is no dispute that he is a knanayite. But now the vicar of Holy Family Church Nattassery and Bishop of Kottayam diocese says that O.M. Uthup

lost his membership in Kottayam diocese by marrying Annamma who is a non knanayite because Annamma's mother Lilly was a Latin Catholic. But it is pertinent to note that marriage between Uthup and Annamma was solemnized at west Othara Church after admitting her as a member of that parish. According to the bishop, marriage of knanites with non knanayites cannot be solemnized in a church under Kottayam Diocese. Admittedly, the marriage being solemnized in a church coming under Kottayam diocese shows that Annamma is also a knanite.

Subsequent to the marriage, Mr. Uthup and Annamma continued as members of St. John's Church, Kumarakom. Children were born out of that wedlock and all of them are baptised in Churches coming under Kottayam diocese. Holy communion and other sacraments were performed in St. John's Church kumarakom and Little Flower Church Othara and other churches which are all coming under Kottayam diocese. Their daughters were married to members of Kottayam diocese and marriages were solemnised at churches of Kottayam Diocese. Some of the grand children of the late Uthup were baptized and other sacraments were given to them in churches coming under Kottayam diocese.

So, O.M. Uthup and his wife Annamma and other members of the family were accepted and acknowledged as members of the knanaya Churches coming under Kottayam diocese. His son Biju Uthup was baptised at Little Flower Catholic Church Othara, a parish church coming under the Kottayam diocese. Biju Uthup received the Holy Communion and other Sacraments from churches coming under Kottayam diocese. In 1986, Mr. P.M. Chacko filed a suit as O.S. No. 1086/88 of Munsiff Court Kottayam. In the said suit it is alleged that O.M. Uthup and his family members are not knanities and they have no right to continue as knanite since O.M. Uthup married a non knanite. Impleading bishop of Kottayam

diocese as second defendant he filed the said suit.

In 1989, the said Biju Uthup approached the Vicar of Holy Family Church Nattassery for issuing necessary Vivaha Kuri for his betrothal with Leena who is a member of St. Mary's Church Vithura coming within the Jurisdiction of Kottayam diocese. The then vicar at the instance of the then bishop of Kottayam diocese refused to issue VivahaKuri to Biju. He approached all ecclesiastical authorities for getting Vivaha Kuri for his betrothal. Finally he approached the court and filed a suit as O.S. No. 923/89 of Kottayam Munsiff Court for a direction to the vicar and bishop of Kottayam diocese to issue the vivahakuri for his betrothal.

In the said suit the then Vicar of Kizhakke Nattassery Holy Family Church and the then bishop of Kottayam were the defendants. They resisted the suit by taking the contention that Biju is not a member of the Holyfamily church and he cannot be a member because his maternal grandmother Lilly was not a knanaya member.O.M. Uthup's membership in the church is lost due to his marriage with Annamma the daughter of Lilly and K.C. Chacko. So he is not entitled to get Vivahakuri from the Holy Family Church Nattassery. They are following certain custom in the community from the time of Knayi Thomas and they are following that custom and endogamy from time immemorial During trial, Knanaya Catholic Congress was impleaded and they pleaded that Knanaya Catholic Congress was established for preserving the purity and traditionof the community. The knanaya Catholic Community is an endogamous Society. If any member of the community marries from outside the community, he or she automatically ceases to be the member of the Knanaya community and hence the plaintiff is not a member of the Kottayam diocese.

Evidence was taken on all these aspects and on the side

of the plaintiff 8 witnesses were examined and 19 documents were marked to prove the case of the plaintiff. Defendants examined 5 witnesses and marked 29 documents to prove their case. 3 documents were called for and marked by the court. Pw1 is the plaintiff himself. In his chief examination, he categorically stated that he is a member of Holy Family Church Nattasery coming under Kottayam diocese and he is entitled to get vivahakuri. Even though the defendants elaborately cross examined him for 3 days nothing was brought out to discredit his evidence. Most of the documents of the plaintiff were marked through him also.

On the side of plaintiff Fr. Jose Cherusseril, second witness of the plaintiff, the Vicar of St. John's Vellara Church Kumarakom was examined as the second witness. Even though he was directed to produce the "vilichu chollu" Register of the year 1956 it was not available in the church. He has produced the baptism register of the church from 1930 onwards till 1969 and the relevant portion of the register in which the baptism of Biju is entered is marked by the court. From this document, it is proved that the name of Biju is entered in the Baptism register of the St. John's church which is coming under Kottayam diocese. Biju's baptism was conducted in Little flower Knanaya church, Othara and the baptism certificate was produced in court and also entered in the baptism register of the church. After the baptism this information was entered in the baptism register of Kumarakom St John's Vellara Church as indicated above.

3rd witness of the plaintiff is Late Mr. K.C. Peter, the uncle of Biju Uthup. Pw3 categorically stated that before the marriage of her sister with Uthup she was made a member of Little Flower Knanaya Catholic Church, West Othara by the vicar Fr. Chackacheril with the permission of Bishop Tharayil. From his evidence and from A2 letter written by Fr. Chackacheril, court found that there

was ecclesiastical permission for the marriage of plaintiffs parents and that the marriage was conducted after granting membership to plaintiff's, mother Annamma in the West Othara Church. P.J. Cyriac, the brother in law of the plaintiff is examined as Pw4. He categorically stated that he is a member of Kottayam diocese and he married the sister of the plaintiff on 29.12.85 and their marriage was solemnized at St. Xaviers Church, Kannamkara coming within the Kottayam diocese and their betrothal was conducted at Holy Family Church Nattassery. He further stated that his son's baptism was conducted at Cathedral Church of Kottayam diocese and his name is entered in the Baptism register of Kannankara Church. Further he stated that his brother in law Byeju's marriage was with Reeba who was a member of Knanaya Jacobite church Paruthicadu. She was made a member of Holy Family Church Nattassery and their marriage was conducted at Cathedral Church of Kottayam diocese.

The 5th witness of the plaintiff examined was Fr. Dr. Joseph Koikudy who was a professor of Apostolic Seminary Vadavathoor. He was a professor in Canon law. He categorically stated that marriage is a sacrament and as per Canon 9 wife who belongs to another rite is at liberty to join the rite of her husband at the time of marriage. He categorically stated that canon 28 provides that the Supreme authority of the church alone is empowered to declare authentically in which case divine law forbids or annuls marriage. The Supreme authority alone is entitled to establish other prohibitive or detrimental matrimonial impediments. As per canon 30 a custom that introduces a new impediment or one contrary to existing impediment is invalid. He stated that the alleged custom being followed by the knanites have no force as per cannon law. 6th witness of the plaintiff is Fr. Jose Tharapputhottiyil the Vicar of Little Flower knanya Church West

Othara. He produced the marriage register from 1956 onwards. In that register the marriage of plaintiff's parents are recorded. He produced the baptism register of the church in order to show the name of Biju in the register.

7th witness of the plaintiff is Mrs. Rosamma who was a member of St. George Orthodox Church, Pathiyoor who is not a knanaya and on a fine morning she was admitted as a member of St. Stephen's Church Uzhavoor and her marriage with Abraham a member of said church was conducted. She was baptized in the non-knanaya parish church of the orthodox church at Kayamkulam where her father is stated to have membership as a parishioner and there is nothing in the evidence of the 7th witness of the plaintiff, to indicate that her parents were both knanaya and members of knanaya churches.

8th witness of the plaintiff is the vicar of St. Stephen's church Uzhavoor. He was examined to prove the marriage of the above said Rosamma (who was not a knanaite) and Abraham (a knanaite). They are both now members of St. Stephen's Church, Uzhavoor church even though one of them is not a knanaite, thus it is evident that endogamy is practiced selectively according to the whims and fancies of the church.

On the side of defendants Rt. Rev. Dr. Kuriakose Kunnassery the Bishop of Kottayam Diocese was examined as Dw. For the examination of the bishop Advocate Thomas Mappilassery was appointed as commissioner and the examination was conducted at bishops house Kottayam for several days. On the defense side they have examined four more witness also. Adv. P.V. Thomas and Sri. Francis Thomas appeared for the plaintiff. Sri. K. George and M. J Thomas were the defendant's counsels. Sri. T.R.G Warriar and former Supreme Court Judge Balasubramanyam

appeared for the defendants on several occasions.

During the examination of the documents produced the defendants produced the Malayalam translation of the joint representations made by the three Bishops of Syro Malabar Church to Pope Pius X in the Vatican dated 1-03-1911. Another document that was produced as Ext. B3 & B3a is the Papal Bull regarding the creation and erection of Kottayam diocese dated 29-08-1911. The purpose for which the diocese was erected finds its place in Ext. B3a and it is specifically stated that the object of formation of the diocese is for the spiritual advancement for the Southist and also with the view to compromise the warring groups of believers during that period. Never is it mentioned in this Bull that the erection and creation of the diocese is for the diocese to continue to practice endogamy and keep the purity of bloodline of the newly erected Kottayam diocese nor does it speak anything about the endogamous nature of the knanaya community.

Defendant's 1st witness is Rt. Rev. Dr. Kuriakose Kunnassery the Bishop of Kottayam diocese stated that the universal brotherhood as taught by Jesus Christ cannot be said as Law for the church and went on a step further in stating without any hesitation that all that Jesus has taught is not necessary Law, indicating indirectly that Kottayam diocese can frame its own personal jurisdiction law which need not conform to the teachings of Jesus Christ. 1st witness of the defendants testified this in court. To counter the above statement by 1st witness, Fr. Dr. Joseph Koikudy, gave enough evidence to prove that the Church is founded by the teachings of Jesus Christ and that it is a missionary church and there cannot be any customs, personal jurisdiction or usage contrary to the teachings of the Bible and that the teachings of the Bible is divine Law and that the very origin of Christianity is

against the distinction between caste or creed.

Evaluating all the evidence adduced by both sides and perusing the documents produced by them and also on hearing the argument advanced by the advocates of both sides, the learned Munsiff Sri. George Oommen decreed that plaintiff is a member of Knanaya community and Holy Family Catholic Church Nattassery and he is entitled to get vivahakuri and directed the Vicar and bishop to issue vivahakuri to the plaintiff for his betrothal and marriage within a period of one month from 24.11.90.

The plaintiff waited for the said period and the defendants did not issue any vivahakuri to the plaintiff as directed by the court. After completion of one month, the plaintiff filed execution petition against the defendants for executing the decree. Then also the defendants were not ready to issue Vivahakuri. Finally the court ordered the arrest and detention of the bishop for the non-compliance of the decree. At that stage the plaintiff did not take any further step for arrest and detention of the bishop since he is an ardent believer in Christ and his teachings and he believes that the bishop is the successor of the disciples of Jesus Christ.

Finally Biju's marriage was conducted with the direct intervention of Apostolic Pro Nuncio who directed Metropolitan Archbishop of Changanassery, Mar Joseph Powathil to conduct the marriage without relinquishing his membership from Kottayam diocese. This was in response to letter written by Mar Joseph Powathil and direct telephone conversation between them to resolve the issue amicably. Fr. Jacob Chollambel in Lourdes Forane Church finally conducted the marriage without relinquishing Biju's membership from Kottayam diocese.

Instead of complying the decree, the defendants filed appeal

before the District Court, Kottayam and it was transferred to District Court, Ernakulam which was finally numbered as AS 244 and 245/04 of District Court, Ernakulam. Sri. Ashok Menon the 2nd Addl. District Judge heard the appeal elaborately on several days and finally passed the judgment on 20.12.08 and dismissed the appeal upholding the judgment of lower Court. Sri. P.V. Thomas and Francis Thomas, the same advocates who appeared for the plaintiff before the Munsiff Court, Kottayam appeared for Biju in the appeals also. In the District Court, M.J. Thomas and Adv. Jayakumar appeared for appellants.

After dropping the execution petition, the marriage of the plaintiff was conducted at Lourdes Forane Church, with the intervention of Apostolic Pro-Nuncio and the marriage was conducted by Fr. Jacob Chollambel by retaining the membership in Kizhakke Nattassery Holy Family Church. A daughter was born out of that wedlock and her baptism was conducted at Knanaya Catholic Mission Chicago on 16.6.2002 while Biju's family went on Sabbaticals to the U.S for 15 months.

During the pendency of the appeal, the plaintiff approached the vicar to enter the name of her daughter Leeba Ann Chacko in the Baptism register of the Holy Family church Nattassery. At that time, the vicar said that appeal is pending and they will consider the same after the disposal of the appeal. After the disposal of the appeal, again the plaintiff approached the defendants for entering his daughter's name in the Baptism register of the church. The defendants denied it and now the plaintiff filed a suit as O.S. No. 298/12 before the Munsiff Court, Kottayam for directing the defendants to enter the name of her daughter in the Baptism register of Holy Family Church Nattassery.

The above is the story of the Oravanakalam Knanaya case

from the legal point of view from the legal team that fought for this Knanaya case and brought victory for a family that stood for justice for all people who are persecuted by the mighty.

APPENDIX A : List of Exhibits & Witnesses for Case No O.S 923/89

Plaintiff's Exhibits

Filed on date	Plaintiff's Exhibits
A1 6-12-90	Certificate issued by Rev. Fr. Abraham Paradiyil Vicar Little flower Knanaya Catholic Church dated; 13-8-86.
A2 16-12-90	Certificate issued by Rev. Fr. Jacob Chokkacheril on 20-4-89
A3 16-2-90	Baptism Certificate issued by Rev. Fr. Jose Tharapputhottiyil Vicar Little flower Knanaya Catholic Church West Othara dtd: 26-2-89
A4 16-2-90	Baptism Certificate issued by Parish priest of St. John's Vellara. Church, Kumarakom dtd.24-2-89
A5 1-3-90	Marriage Certificate issued by Vicar St. Xavier's, church Kannankara dated 20-10-89
A6 2-3-90	Birth Certificate issued by Vicar St. Xavier's Church Kannankara dtd: 1-2-89
A7 16-2-90	Letter issued by the Vicar Holy family Church Nattassery East dtd. 5-7-87.
A8 16-2-90	Marriage Certificate issued by Rev. Fr. Thomas Nedumkombil Cathedral Administrator dtd: 5-9-88.

- A9 16-2-90 Receipt issued by Fr. George Manjungal Holy Family Church Nattassery East dtd; 12-7 -87
- A10 2-3-90 Baptism Certificate issued by Fr. George Manjungal Vicar Holy Family Church Nattassery d td: 31-5-89.
- A11 9-11-89 Appeal petition by O. M. Uthup dtd: 21-4-89 along with the report of Parish priest.
- A12 9- 11-89 Photostat Copy of the representation by O. M. Uthup to Apostolic Pro-Nuncio in India, dated: 1-5-89
- A13 1-12-89 Photostat Copy of the plaint in O. S. 1068i88 of the Munsiff's Court, Kottayam
- A14 16-2-90 Receipt for Rs.30/- issued by the Holy Family Church Nattassery dl. 1-1-87.
- A14(b) 16-2-90 Receipt for Rs. 5(.0/- issued by the Holy Family church Nattassery dt: 1-1 ~87
- A14(c) 16-2-90 Receipt for Rs. 500U/- issued by the Holy Family church Nattassery dtd: 17-7-88
- A15 1-12-89 Photostat Copy of the Application Reeb13. Achamma Thomas dt: 8-7-87
- A16 2-3-90 Code of Oriental Canon Law- Law on marriage.
- A17 7-1-90 Photostat Copy Of Page No. 96 of the marriage Register
- A17(a) 7-1-90 Colmn No.6 of the Ext. A17
- A18 2-7-90 Photostat Copy of the Marriage register of Uzhavoor Church.
- A18(a) 2-7-90 Colmn No.2 of Ext. A 18

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THE STORY OF A MAN AND A MOVEMENT

3

THE MARRIAGE ISSUES IN THE DIOCESE OF KOTTAYAM

JOSEPH PULIKKUNNEL

(REPRINTED WITH PERMISSION- ORCHART)

(Documents referred to by Prof. Mathew Makil:

- 1. The decree issued by Pope Pius X in 1911 establishing the diocese of Kottayam*
- 2. The diary of Bishop Mathew Makil, the person behind the establishment of diocese of Kottayam)*

I have already seen the two documents that the respected Prof. Mathew Makil quotes. The rules of the Catholic Church promptly respond to the social issues that sprout up at every turn of history. All the orders and decisions except the authentic declarations relating to faith matters are changed and need to be changed in keeping with the changes in human culture and thinking.

Nobody disagrees with the fact that there are communities of diverse traditions in the Catholic Church of Kerala. Each of these communities has different racial customs. The Church is ever ready to honour these social practices for historical reasons, if

they do not oppose the basic faith. The Syrian Christians and the Latin Christians have stood as different communities in the Church of Kerala. It is believed that the Syrian Christians belong to the Namboodiri traditions, who were baptized by St. Thomas. Of racial purity, they too were once zealous like the knanayites. The tradition is that when untouchability was prevalent, those things made impure by the touch of low castes will become pure by the touch of a Syrian Christian through whose veins Brahmin blood flows.

There was a time when Syrian Christians (present day Syro Malabar Church) did not marry a Latinite. Even if it happens, those married in that way were expelled from the community as is the practice in the Knanaya community today.

Rome permitted separate dioceses and hierarchy for the Syrian Christians as a result of demands made on the basis of such traditions. But neither the Pope nor the Church has ever declared at the establishment of a diocese that it is for preserving the purity of blood of a community. There is a common rule for it. As per the Eastern Canon Law, if a man of any rite marries from another rite, the bride will by itself be included in his rite.

The decree published in 1904, when Mar Makil was the bishop of Changanassery says: "The parents should obtain the consent of their children before their marriage is decided. It should be expressed before the Vicar of the parish as given below: The parents should enquire more about the virtue and character of the concerned boy or girl rather than their wealth or respect in selecting the bride or groom before the betrothal" (page 112). He has written the conditions for marriage in 13 pages in Chapter 17 of the Decree. It does not contain the condition that the sacrament of Matrimony should be administered on racial grounds.

If the knanayites desire to maintain purity of blood, they have the right to do it socially. But the issue of marriage in the diocese of Kottayam raises the question whether the sacrament of Matrimony and the spiritual authority of the Church can be misused for preserving the purity of blood of the knanayites. What will be the consequences if tomorrow those married from knanaya church or Latin Church are ostracized from the Syrian church for the sole reason that the Syrian Christians are of the Brahmin tradition?

Marriage is a sacrament. Through faith it is divine. The theological validity of using a divine sacrament for perpetuating material tradition is inherent in this issue. Sacrament of Holy Orders is just like that of Matrimony. In marriage, the man and woman sacramentally bonded become one body in the Church. In the Holy Orders, a priest proclaims his faith, makes vow of obedience before the bishop and accepts the sacrament of ministering the church. Bishop Makil received the sacrament of Holy Orders from a Latin bishop. He was secretary to the Latin bishop Marcellinos. This was during the time when Syrian Christians were united in a concerted effort for self-rule to preserve their traditions that he worked as the secretary to the same bishop who was dead-set against it. He even worked in a Latin Seminary.

The hypocrisy in raising the matter of division between rites only when there is a need to administer sacraments to the laymen has been mentioned in April volume of Osana. Pope has never declared that the knanaya diocese was established not just to meet the spiritual needs but also to preserve the blood purity of that community. The main problem that has risen in this issue is the same. The best thing that the present Kottayam bishop Kunnasserry can do to resolve this problem is to write to Rome requesting for an explanation to the order of Pope Pius X. He should try and obtain an order from the Pope that

this diocese was established also to preserve the blood purity of knanayites.

The immediate reasons behind the establishment of Kottayam diocese were some eventful happenings. Rome's aim which led to this diocese can be fully understood only when those events are taken in to consideration.

After Koonan Kurisu oath, the Syrian Christians split into two, Jacobites and Catholics. Catholics have been ruled by foreign bishops and Jacobites by native bishops. Due to opposition towards foreign bishops there were several disputes within the Church in the last century. The arrival of Rochos and Meloos resulted in the split in the Church. Taking this situation seriously, native bishops Mar Makil, Mar Pazhayaparambil and Mar Menacherry were appointed to tackle it. All these three were favourites of Church leadership. (Mar Mathew Makil served Latin Bishop Marselinus and Mar Louis Pazhayaparambil was a loyal disciple of Bishop Lavigne.)

Bishop Lavigne was a strategic ruler. He knew very well the idea of divide and rule and he appointed Mar Makil as the bishop of Changanassery to emotionally separate the Syrian Christians. It is not because he belonged to the knanaya community that the appointment of Mar Makil as the Changanassery bishop was resisted. But because he had stayed away from all the painstaking efforts by Syrians for self-rule and that he had served Latin Bishop as a secretary. It was Mar Makil's need to convert this ideological resistance in to a communal resistance, all for his own survival.

The Jacobites at this time tactically carried out the plan to fish in troubled waters. In 1910 the Church of Antioch established a diocese just for knanayites. This led Rome to an impression that members of Catholic Church here may migrate to Church

of Antioch. In order to prevent this, the Pope established the Kottayam diocese in 1911. There are no evidences to prove that this diocese was established to preserve their blood purity.

Mar Makil, who pledged allegiance to a Latin bishop and worked as his secretary, is a priest who accepted the Latin priestly lineage. If he can go on to become the bishop of knanayites, then what is the justification in denying Mr. Biju Uthup membership in a knanaya Parish just because his mother was a Latin Catholic? Priest and bishop can become Latin or go with the Latins. But isn't it quite over the line that it is not permitted for laymen?

The soul of Indamthuruthi

Indamthuruthi Namboodiri was a man who strongly insisted that no one except the high caste are to be allowed to walk through the temple road and he worked for the strengthening of caste purity. Once, Mahatma Gandhi decided to go to his house to talk some sense in to him. But he received Mahatma in a newly built gate house and not in his own house arguing that otherwise his caste purity will suffer.

We should not forget that today the house of that Indamthuruthi is the office of the Communist Party and toddy tapping workers! We live in India where the castles of caste separations and pure blood legacies have crumbled in the call for reforms. We follow the footsteps of Peter who exalted: "My brothers, you know that in the early days God made a choice among you, that I should be the one through whom the Gentiles would hear the message of the good news and become believers. And God, who knows the human heart, testified to them by giving them the Holy Spirit, just as he did to us; and in cleansing their hearts by faith he has made no distinction between them and us. Now therefore why are you putting God to the test by placing on the neck of the disciples a yoke that neither

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our ancestors nor we have been able to bear?” (Acts 15:7-10)
Is it not pure audacity to nurture the vain hope of building holes of
blood purity even after the end of 20th century?

PART III
ENDO GAMY
AND
KOTTAYAM DIOCESE

1

HISTORY OF ESTABLISHMENT

KCNS

Divide and rule is a very powerful strategy of every imperial force. The human community is divided ethnically, racially religiously and provincially. But when culture deepens in people's hearts, the boundary walls of this divisiveness collapse on its own and peoples become one. At the time of the birth of Jesus Christ the division as Jews and Gentiles was very strong. The supreme influence of the message of Christ was that it helped in uniting the entire mankind. The divisiveness on the basis of caste, was very hard when he commanded " Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And I am with you always, until the end of the age" [Mathew 28; 19-20] His commandment was this ; " I give you a new commandment; love one another . As I have loved you, so you also should love one another " [John :13:35]

When Apostle Peter filled with the Holy Spirit proclaimed, the Jews gathered there from many nations listened to it ; “For the promise is made to you and to your children and to all those far off, whomever the Lord our God will call and those who believed the Word of God , were together and had all things together. The community of believers was of one heart and mind, and no one claimed that any of his possessions was his own, but they had everything in common” [Ref. Acts 2:5., 2:44.,4:32].Jews and Gentiles became one in Christ.Peter looking at the face of the pure blood bred people who wished to build towers of Jewish elitism said; “ And God, who knows the heart , bore witness by granting them the Holy Spirit just as he did us. He made no distinction between us and them,for by faith he purified their hearts. Why then , are you now putting God to the test by placing on the shoulders of the disciples, a yoke that neither our ancestors nor we have been able to bear ? On the contrary , we believe that we are saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus, in the same way as they” [Acts 15: 8-11]

James strongly supporting Peter proclaimed: “It is my judgement , therefore ,that we ought to stop troubling the Gentiles who turn to God , but tell them that by letter to avoid pollution from idols, unlawful marriage, the meat of strangled animals, and blood’s ” [Acts 15:19]. “ This was to make known the riches of his glory to the vessels of mercy , which he has prepared previously for glory, namely, us whom he has called, not only from the Jews but also from the Gentiles. As indeed, he says in Hosea: ... and in the very place where it was said to them, ‘You are not my people,’ there they shall be called ‘children of the living God.’ ” [Rom.9 : 24,26]

It can be seen in the Gospel that the divine gift of salvation was showered on all , beyond castes. The message of Christ united in faith the people of the Roman empire who were split on the basis of caste and race.

Casteism and the knanayites

During the 4th century our ancestors left their native land and came to the distant land of Kerala to safeguard their faith. The early Christians and heterogenous kings welcomed them with respect. For sixteen centuries we lived here, in the same faith in the same church, receiving sacraments of the same salvation praying to the same Lord. Though we did not forget our racial history we were never separated from the Christian brethren of this land. There is nothing in history to show that our ancestors maintained purity of blood during those 14 centuries .

History discloses the bold leadership given by our forefathers to our Church and social life. Anjilimootil Itty Thomman kathanaar , a sudhist gave leadership to the community when the Christians of Kerala raised their voice at Koonan Kurisu against the petty tactics of the western missionaries. The North-South divide was very weak till the last century.

Divide and Rule

During the last century, the Syrian Christians initiated a very powerful fight against the western dominance. There was no Northern side or Southern side differentiation. When this struggle for the local bishops intensified, the foreign Carmelite bishops centred around Varappuzha, formulated the policy of divide and rule in order to weaken that struggle.

When the authoritarian rule of the foreign bishop became

intolerable, majority of the churches in Kerala stood firmly against them under the leadership of Rev. Kudakkachira Anthony achan, an ardent lover of the community. In order to mitigate the egotism of Varappuzha, the Malankara Syrians invited bishop Rocos of Kaldaya. At that time bishop of Varappuzha used Fr. Chavara Kuriakose Elias as a tool to divide the Syrians who stood as an entity. He was appointed as the vicar general of the Syrians in Varappuzha. It is a very prominent style of the political strategy of divide and rule, to divide a section of the warring people by appeasing them offering important rank and positions. It may be remembered that the British in order to stabilise their rule in India gave away 'Raja' rank and 'Padusha' rank to some people. When Bishop Rocos left Kerala, the foreign bishops resumed their authoritarian rule. Syrians under the leadership of Nidheerical Maani kathanaar opposed this. The Kerala Carmelites also joined the wagon. Seven Carmelites sent an anonymous letter to Rome. A priest called Marcellinos was appointed as an agent of Varappuzha to take action against these Carmelites and weaken the struggle for independence. As for this priest, he was a staunch fighter against the Malankara national march (please refer Mar Louis Pazheparambil, life and time by A.C Chacko). He was rector, malpan and confessor of Makil who was a student of Varappuzha Puthen palli seminary (History of establishment of Kottayam diocese by Mathew Makil, page 1)

The priest who searched for an aide found one in Makil Mathai kathanaar. Marcellinos appointed him, the then vicar of Kaippuzha church as his secretary. In 1887, the Syrians were separated from the Varappuzha Carmelite rule and two diocese Kottayam and Thrissur were established for them. The charge of the diocese of Kottayam which completely included the sudhists and their churches was with Bishop Lavigne who was a French Jesuit. Varappuzha

which opposed the establishment of two dioceses solely for the Syrians needed aides to restore the authority they lost. They sent a memorandum to Rome requesting to retain sudhists under the rule of Mar Marcellinos, the Latin bishop of Varappuzha with Makil Mathai Kathanar as the Chief (History of Diocese of Kottayam, page 2). It is clear from this that Makil Mathai kathanar tried to divide Kerala Syrians who stood united in opposing the foreign missionaries and bring the knanayites under Varappuzha. The Northist and Southist did not enjoy any special consideration under the rule of Varappuzha till that time. It is evident that bishop Marcellinos was tactically using Makil Mathai kathanar to weaken the national struggle of the Syrian Catholics, dividing as Northists and Southists. Makil Mathai kathanar was not the only one who stood with the Varappuzha. Carmelites, Fr.Thattassery, Fr.Karadan, Fr.Manattu (all Northists) were on that side. Nidheerical Maani kathanar strongly opposed those moves in favour of Varappuzha.

In 1887, Dr. Carlose Lavigne was appointed as bishop of the diocese of Kottayam. With this appointment, Fr. Makil left Varappuzha and took the side of Lavigne. Mr. I C Chacko wrote on this change of attitude on the part of Fr. Makil. The Jesuits and Carmelites were equally foreigners to Nidheerical Maani Kathanar and other freedom loving priests and laity. For this reason the rule of Bishop Lavigne was to them, a temporary change of rule. Maani kathanar tried to bring together all who stood separated in the Syrian church of Kerala. He formed an organization named 'Jathykhya Sanghom'. Fr. Joseph Tharayil was one of his co-workers. Fr. Nidheerical and Fr. Tharayil, priests with great leadership qualities were both counsellors to the bishop. They submitted a plan for unity, putting an end to the division based on caste. Then the bishop approved it. The plan was like this; a prominent priest of one faction will request for transfer as vicar to any of the churches

belonging to the other faction. Under his initiative, will encourage inter-factional matrimonial relationships among the members of the influential families and put an end to the 'casteism'. But with the sudden demise of Fr. Tharayil the plan did not work out. This 'casteism' could have been solved at the level of priests and bishops before eight years of the rule of Bishop Makil. It is told that it was forbidden for both factions to receive priests from other dioceses into their parishes. But at the time of Bishop Makil when the caste divide was strong, Monsignor Mathew Kooplikatt, a Knanayite priest served as the vicar of the Muhamma church of the Northist as they desired and to their utmost satisfaction. If the caste divide, with no scope for reconciliation was prevalent among the northist and southist even before the rule of Bishop Makil, Rome would have known about it. As St. Chrysostom says, the one who adorns the Roman Throne knows that Indians also are its members. Rome will not knowingly manifest its imprudence, installing one man from the minority over the majority to carry the big cross for fifteen years. It'll be correct to mention that when Southists got a separate diocese it became essential in the vested interests of the installed diocese to show that it was an unavoidable necessity. So the pure blood extremists stood for protecting the vested interest of the diocesan authorities. The Tharayil-Nidheerikkal plan referred to earlier is sufficient proof of the divisiveness. This casteism which would have met its natural death long ago is not anything the laity vigilantly preserved. Instead this is mere justification for defending their achievements such as a diocese, a bishop and positions related to them. The personal rivalry to bishop Makil was depicted as racial.

On 8th September 1889 Bishop Lavigne appointed Nidheerikkal Maani kathanar as Vicar General with special powers. In the

administrative matters of the diocese, Fr. Maani's vision was entirely different from that of the Latin rite and suited to the traditions of the Church of Kerala. His stance was to select four priests to advise the bishop and, 'to accept their suggestions in all matters related to the Church.' Bishop is only the constitutional ruler. But this was contrary to the Latin system of governance. Due to the limitations ordered by Maani, regarding the authority of the Vicar Apostolic, many misunderstandings occurred between Bishop Lavigne and him.' (Mar Louis, page 502). Bishop Lavigne opposed any and every move to unite the Syrian Christians. Fr. Palakkunnel comments on a speech made by Bishop Lavigne in a meeting at Changanassery. 'To those assembled there. The bishop very strictly instructed that nobody should move close with the new comers and should not study in school along with them. It was a ban. He has shattered the desire of this poor people for unity in this church.' (page 525-535) Bishop Lavigne convinced of his inability to continue his rule once unity is achieved in the Syrian community, attempted at dividing it. Fr. Makil was made the vicar general of the Sudhists by creating two posts of vicar general. Bishop Lavigne used another tactic to deepen the division. On 7th January, 1890 Fr. Kuriakose Elias of Porurkkara, the second prior general of the Carmelite congregation of Kerala died. The prior general was considered as the unofficial spiritual leader of the Syrians. In spite of requests from many quarters, Bishop Lavigne who was a resident of Kottayam refused to go to Mannanam and take lead of the funeral services. He did not even permit Fr. Maani to participate wearing his official insignia (Mar Louis - I C Chacko, page 502). Yet the bishop went to the far away church at Kaduthuruthy and took part in the installation ceremony of Fr Mathew Makil as the vicar general of the southist. It is beyond doubt that the bishop had done this to fan the

flame of divisiveness. Further he removed Fr. Nidheeri from the post of vicar general. Fr. Mathew Makil and Fr. Nidheeri stood by the bishop in all these acts. Fr. Louis later became the bishop of Ernakulam. His influence succeeded in appointing his dependant Fr. Mathew Makil as the bishop of Changanassery and Fr. Louis Pazheparambil as the bishop of Ernakulam.

Rome acted on complaints against these autocratic practices of Bishop Lavigne that led to his dismissal from the diocese of Kottayam. The protest against Fr. Mathew Makil appointed as the bishop of Changanassery was not against his being a knanayite. Instead it was against the moves he made in the beginning with Varappuzha and Latin bishop Lavigne, when the Syrian Christians fought for their unity and freedom. The protest was against installing the one who joined with Varappuzha in submitting a request to Rome asking to retain the Southist in the Latin rite as the bishop of the Syrians. The tactful Bishop Makil tried to depict the protest against him as the protest against the community. Bishop Mathew acted as an instrument in materialising the goal of the foreign bishops to divide the Christians who had for the last 14 centuries worshipped God in the same Church as northists and southists, at the time of independence. The protest was not racial. Bishop Makil tried to name it as racial. It is worth mentioning that many prominent persons and families of the northists gave him immeasurable love and support.

Establishment of the Diocese of Kottayam

Bishop Makil was nurturing the seeds of divisiveness that the foreign bishops sowed in the Syrian church of Kerala. The Southists were divided among the Catholic as well as the Jacobite Community. When the division among the Northists and Southists in the Catholic Church deepened the Patriarch of Antioch decided

to exploit the situation. In 1910, he established a diocese for the southists with Chingavanam(Kerala) as head quarters. An unfounded fear that the establishment of this diocese would cause the exodus of the faithful from the Catholic Church to the Jacobite community reared. It was on this basis the diocese of Kottayam was established ‘for the spiritual advancement of the Sudhists.’

Today The Catholic community of Kerala is divided among various rites. Every rite is building up their own forts making it impossible to unite for their legitimate rights in the church. They divide the people in the name of liturgy, race etc. When the walls of divisiveness are brought down worldwide, the bishops are consciously trying to build up walls of racism in the Christian community of Kerala. Those in positions of power and authority have much to gain. They try to present history in a distorted form and to transfuse this venomous seeds to the present day generation.

Christ, the uniting point

When legends and traditions keep us apart as Latins, Syrians, Anjoottikkars, Ezhunnoottikkars, Southists, Northists, Malankara Catholics, Nadar Catholics, Harijan Catholics, we forget one thing: that Christ exhorted all who believe in Him to become one above all the divisive forces. The rulers of the church who reckon their authority, power, position and vain glory as most important than Christ and His resplendent message of fraternity, divide us today and ensure their seats of authority ever more strongly.

The practice of same blood marriage is nowhere in the world. Diocese of Kottayam was established for the spiritual advancement of the Southists and not for preserving the pure blood doctrine. The Syrian Christians of this land took pride that once they were Namboothiries. It was not for preserving the ‘Namboothiry pure

blood' of the Syrian Christians that the Syro Malabar dioceses were established. The Southists have some rituals that are infructuous and not related to the liturgy. For the past 16 centuries they could not nurture a paternity essential for a rite which will be different from that of the Northists. It is liturgy that creates a personal church. Customs are man made and communalism is its off spring. Church life is based on faith. Faith is not human. It evolves from revelation. A diocese is a church and is above caste. There was a period in Kerala when churches were built exclusively for recent converts to Christianity. Cultural development and deepening of the spirit of the message of Christ put an end to it. The divide as black and white and untouchability express cultural poverty. Thus when the whole world is in birth pangs for a new culture, the bishop of Kottayam, some priests, and certain feudalists are insulting the educated members of the community; dishonouring the human fraternity envisaged by Jesus Christ. Let us fight together to bring down the walls of separation. May the Love of Jesus Christ unite us to become one body, so as to enable us to call upon the Almighty as "Our Father!"

2

CAN 'PURITY OF BLOOD STANCE' BE JUSTIFIED

FR. DAVIS KACHAPPILLY

Two elderly persons of the diocese of Kottayam, whom I met during my travel painfully shared the practical problems and hardships they faced in the name of pure blood tradition, which was being seriously debated in their diocese for the last 25 years. They wound up the conversation categorically stating that in the present day church and the cultural fabric of the society, the pure blood tradition believed to be in force right from the beginning of their community cannot be attributed with any stature or value. A section of the members of the diocese is voicing for the renewal of the diocese, in the light of the IInd Vatican Council. So this issue is not alone of the knanaya Catholics. It should pave the way for reflection, response and just renewal of the Kerala Catholic community.

Christian church of India and Knayi Thomman

St. Thomas, one of the twelve apostles of Jesus, landed in the port of Muziris near Kodungalloor in A.D.52. His missionary activities resulted in the conversion of some families to Christianity. Later seven churches were established in Kerala for those who were baptized. That is how St. Thomas came to be known and respected as the father of the Christians

History makes it clear that the Christian community of Kerala spread far and wide and gained strength with the coming of 400 Christians from the 72 Syrian families who voyaged to Kerala from Bagdad, Jerusalem, Nineveh under the leadership of Thomas of Cana [Knayi Thoma] Cyriac was the language used in the religious functions. Use of Malayalam began with the renewal of the holy ceremonies envisaged in the IIInd Vatican Council. It was on the basis of this tradition, the Kerala Nasranis are known as Syrian Christians [Survey of Kerala History by Sreedhara Menon Page 84,85]. This is the lingual basis of the Syro-Malabar rite.

Syro Malabar Church

The Syro Malabar Church consists of 29 Syrian dioceses in six local churches under the control of the Major Archbishop. Of this the diocese of Kottayam is the local church with only one diocese. This is established including all the Knanaya Syrian Catholics. Pure blood tradition is said to be the basis of this stand alone. It is painful that the members of this diocese do not have the freedom to choose a life partner from any other Catholic diocese. Nothing is seen either in the written and approved rules, the Holy Bible or any directive of the Universal Catholic church as basis for this pure blood tradition. Knanaya Catholics should be given the freedom

to outlive this tradition which hinders progress and cultural development to the community. This compulsion could be reckoned only as violation of human rights.

Christian churches and Christian blood

I have read the book titled 'Njangalililla christvaraktham '[Christian blood is not within us] authored by Fr. Raphel Chittilappally. That gave me a deep insight into the abundance of the power, importance and glory of the Christian blood. Christ is the source of the Christian blood. He is the only perfect man ever born on earth. Because, in Christ, we see the divine and the humane in its fullness. Christ alone can be pointed out as the most perfect man. That is why, Pontius Pilate pointed out the blood soaked Christ wearing the crown of thorns to the whole world and stated, under the great providence of God: "Here is the Man" [John 19:15]

The Catholic Church is the community of those who received baptism, believing in Jesus, who exhorted them to grow into His perfection. It is the mystical body of Christ. It is the spiritual blood of Jesus that is flowing through every Christian who is a living organ of the body of Christ. As a result, Christians become divine persons who produce fruits of eternal goodness in abundance. This is the promise that Christ gives his followers through the parable of the grapevine and its branches [John 15:1-8]. Jesus also said that we ' must know this truth and that the truth will set us free' [John 8:32] Then how can the belief that there is another pure blood line within the Church over and above the Christian blood of the members of the mystical body of Christ, be justified ?; how far it is acceptable ? Can any Christian, who gets sanctified by obtaining remission of sin and receiving the body and blood of Jesus Christ

ever think of another blood purity ?

Medical science resorts to the process of dialysis for purifying blood. Besides, those who do not have enough blood are given blood of the same Rh factor. This can be seen anywhere in the world without any discrimination on any ground. In brief, when spiritual blood match pervades in all Christians and physical blood match pervades in all humans, it is not fitting to the Christian belief or human intelligence to believe that only a section of the Catholic Church has a spiritual blood purity or physical blood purity.

According to Thomas Merton, the great spiritual writer, 'no man is an island'. Is this isolated life of blood purity tradition of the knanaya community an antithesis to this? Knanya Catholics , wherever they are, they remain as solitary islands. This should change. When the world is fast growing into one world community and progressing, the self isolation of the Knanaya community will lead to its extinction.

The will and call of Jesus is that all who are baptised should live as a community in the unity of love and fellowship. Jesus prayed "that they all be one" [John17:21-22] Therefore there is no place for any kind of divisiveness in the Catholic Church. Jesus has taught that it is not Christian to consider oneself superior and just than others. Pharisees think likewise. The IIInd Vatican Council teaching makes it clear that all Catholics should join the pilgrimage to holiness as they are called to holiness. There should not be any place for divisiveness or difference among the believers. [1 Corin1:10-13] "For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, slaves or free persons, and we were all given to drink of one Spirit [1Cor. 12:13 NAB]..I have become

all things to all, to save at least one” [1 Cor..9:22] and so we have to be all for all .All must be able to accept the teaching that St.Paul gives. We must follow the model of St. Peter, who united in faith all Christians rejecting the Mossaic practice of circumcision prevalent in the early church.

Let us gain strength through unity

In the light of what is said above, Christian fellowship should be the countenance of the Christians. Fellowship alone is the basic strength of Christians. It should be fostered through inter relationships. Matrimonial relationship is the most powerful unifying force in human life. Therefore for the members of the Knanaya Catholic community to enter into matrimonial relationship with members of the universal church is considered as greatness of Christian fellowship. So all Catholics and church authorities should join hands to accelerate Christian growth aimed at greater Christian unity. Let it be inscribed on the inner walls of our hearts that, Christ alone is the law and the Law giver. Let us commit ourselves to embrace the teachings of Jesus and put them into practice. Then only we can be eternal partners of His glory. Let all our prayers and practices be for this alone.

3

VATICAN II AND THE KOTTAYAM DIOCESE

P.A. JACOB

(FORMER PRESIDENT K.C.N.S.)

(REPRINTED WITH PERMISSION- ORCHART)

The terminology used by the IInd Vatican Council for ‘dioceses’ is Particular churches.’ In Article 2 on ‘Missions’ the Council says The Pilgrim church is missionary by her very nature. ‘By nature’ means ‘innate’. The innate character of anything is possessed by itself and not given from without. As such, the Church cannot be exempted from this character by any ecclesiastical authority. Pope St.Pius X when he erected the Kottayam Diocese in 1911 did not and could not exempt the Kottayam diocese from the missionary mandate which Christ has given to His Church. In fact the very objective of the Church is evangelization.

Article 20 on Missions says: “Since particular churches are bound to mirror the Universal church as perfectly as possible, let them rightly realize that they have been sent to those also who are living in the same territory with it, and who do not yet believe in Christ”. The Council further teaches:” The bishop should be first and foremost a herald of faith, leading new disciples to Christ”.

Feeding the faithful flock and celebrating divine worship is not enough. Preaching the gospel to those outside also, is the duty of the particular church. And that is missionary activity.

Missionary Activity is the Kerygma of salvation. The Church of God is Catholic and is foreign to no people or nation (Mater et Magistra - Pope John XXIII Missionary activity comprises preaching the gospel, conversion in the hearer and incorporation of the converted into Christ by baptism, and into the Church which is His body. It is different from pastoral activity exercised among the faithful as well as from undertakings aimed at restoring unity among Christians (Mission 6 & 7).

Without incorporation by baptism there is no missionary activity.

The Kottayam diocese performs only pastoral work. It co-operates in ecumenical movement also. But it does not have the missionary nature of the Church of Christ because it does not give membership to non-knanites in that particular Church.

Out of sheer racial prejudice it expels anyone who takes a partner in matrimony from other dioceses. It may be noted that the Council exhorts Christians to altogether avoid racial prejudice and bitter nationalism (missions-15)

The Council declares that the Church transcends all limits of time and of race (L.g.9). Hence, as a particular church, the Kottayam diocese has no right to confine itself to the protection of the purity of blood of the Kananaya community forsaking the universality of the Church of Christ.

In Article 58 of the Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World, the Council teaches that as the Church is sent

to all peoples of every time and place, it is not bound exclusively and indissolubly to any race or nation, nor to any particular way of life or any customary pattern of living, ancient or recent, and that she has to be conscious of her universal mission when she enters into communion with various cultural modes.

The Infallible Council proclaims that the whole church is missionary and the work of evangelization is a basic duty of the People of God, and summons all to a deep interior renewal (missions-35). As the Kottayam diocese is not missionary, it does not partake in the universality of the Church of Christ. This is an error to be rectified. And without rectifying this dogmatic error in its character and functioning, any praise or exaltation of this particular church and its prelate will be a defiance of the Lord's mandate and the conciliar teaching of the Church

4

A DIOCESE FOR CASTE

KCNS

Today the Catholic church is facing many obstacles. In the west churches are shut down due to spiritual anarchy and sexual scandal related to priests. In Kerala the people are leaving their faith due to the autocracy of the bishops, non transparent financial setup and malfunctioning of the institutions of the Church.

Each diocese of the Syro Malabar Church impliments reforms of their choice contrary to those decided by the Synod of bishops.

Even Eucharistic celebration varies from one diocese to another making the faithful more confused. Clashes between priests and religious occur regarding management of institutions and often end in police cases. Medical colleges, hospitals and educational institutions are means for amassing wealth rather than avenues for service.

The church rulers who are the successors of the Apostles are not brave enough to correct the wrongful customs and practices. The words of prophet Ezekiel 33:5-9 do not influence them. Craving for position and respect makes them blind. The subordinates are no more under their control. Diocese of Kottayam is a century old mistake of the Catholic Church. This diocese exists and acts contrary to the Holy Bible and rules of the Catholic Church. Racial extremism is propagated and thrust upon. It violates the constitution of India and human rights. In keeping with the past history of the Catholic Church this diocese should have been expelled from the Church for its blasphemous conduct. But the church authorities are keeping silence surrendering to the financial and racial influence of the diocese.

The words of Jesus in St. Mathew chapter 28 verses 19,20 declare that the Church is founded to proclaim the gospel to all the nations and to baptise and receive into the Church those who believe. Contrary to this, the diocese of Kottayam do not accept into it, those who believe. This attitude in the name of race is against the Holy Bible.

The people are misguided to believe that diocese of Kottayam is exclusively for knanaya race. In the Catholic Church there is no diocese for a caste. St. Paul in the letter to Colossians says “here there is not Greek, and Jew, circumcision and uncircumcision, barbarian, Seythian, slave, free; but Christ is all and in all”. [Col.3:11]

Therefore the racism of the diocese of Kottayam is a testimony against Holy Bible and Holy Catholic Church. The diocesan authorities teach and propagate that the people of the diocese of Kottayam has certain traditions and practices and it is the duty of the diocese to perpetuate them. This too is contrary to the Holy

Bible and Holy Catholic Church. In the Gospel according to St. Mathew chapter 15: 6-9 we read “In this way you have made God’s word null and void by means of your tradition. Hypocrites! It was you Isaiah meant when he so rightly prophesied: “ This people honours me only with lip service while their hearts are far from me. The worship they offer me is worthless, the doctrines they teach are only human regulations” (Is. 29:13)

The diocesan authority compels the members to marry the members of the diocese of Kottayam only. If anyone marries from anyother Catholic dioceses he/she will be expelled from the diocese of Kottayam. This is a savage system said to be followed by ancient tribes. Untouchability was once prevalent in our country too. The practice of endogamy in the diocese of Kottayam is against teachings of Jesus and the Church. (Please ref. Mathew 19:5; John 10:16; 17:21)Again it is contrary to the Constitution of India and is a violation of human rights.

When the wife who is from any other diocese dies, the knanaya husband will be re-admitted to the diocese of Kottayam. He can marry a member of this diocese. Consequently, a state where his children from the first marriage belong to another diocese, while the second wife and children will belong to the diocese of Kottayam comes into existence. This is really a very delicate situation in the family. Most of the families of the diocese of Kottayam has this strange situation were the members belong to two Catholic dioceses at the same time.

There are many people in the diocese who suffers from being denied of the right for burial in the tombs where their parents are laid to rest. Children adopted by couples without children are denied membership in the parish. The adoption act defines this as punishable. Eventhough these children have right to their parent’s

properties, they have no right to the parish of the parents who adopted them. As many youth do not find suitable life partners from the diocese of Kottayam, and as they are frightened about being ostracised, they remain unmarried. This is the sad plight of many youngsters.

When families of a parish meet on ward basis, for 'Koodarayogam' the members sent out for marrying from outside, have to remain outside.

Those who stay close to the parishes and cemetery under the diocese of Kottayam, have to go far to meet their spiritual needs. There are so many burning cases in the family and in the community. These transgressions are in the name of pure blood tradition. But the pure blood is only a concept. The diocesan authorities still maintain the notion, that the people of diocese belong to Jewish race who migrated to Kerala in A.D. 345 under the leadership of Knayi Thomman and take pride in preserving the pure blood traditions. But there is recorded history to show that Knayi Thomman had married woman of India and had persuaded his followers to do the same for racial growth. The members of the diocese of Kottayam make it clear in their colour, language, dress etc. Had these people followed the Jewish tradition they would have been fair complexioned and beautiful as the Jews. They should have used Jewish language in their families and also their dress code. This itself shows that they do not maintain the Jewish identity, but belong to the Dravidian mix class.

The diocesan authority propagates that St. Pius X had established this diocese for the ritualists and that is why this racialism is maintained. This is an utter misrepresentation. Whenever a new diocese is sanctioned the papal order will say that it is for the development of a section of people. And that is how this is said to be

for the Sudhists. This has provided the diocese ample opportunity for formation of priests and nuns from the diocese and to nurture them racially giving them education and good health. The papal bull does not say that the diocese is established for perpetuating racism, or maintaining blood purity or it should not admitt others or must not enter into matrimonial relationship with members of other Catholic Diocese or must be sent out. Practically they are insulting St. Pius X who sanctioned the diocese of Kottayam.

It is high time that the diocesan authorities come forward to correct or else the Church authorities will be compelled personalized to correct the wrong doings of the dioceses of Kottayam for the past 100 years. Or else people will come forward for correcting. They have already come.

The KCNS has taken the responsibilty and leadership for this renewal.

5

QUOTE COUNCIL TO CHEAT PEOPLE

P. A. JACOB

(REPRINT OF THE ARTICLE PUBLISHED EARLIER- ORCHART)

I have received from New York the 'History of the Kottayam Diocese' written by Rev. Dr. Jose Tharayil. Obviously this learned Doctor has laboured to vindicate the racial existence of the Kottayam Diocese in the Universal Church in the light of Vatican II. For, among the factors of diversity which the Church fosters, he cleverly enlists 'race' and then quotes Articles 2 and 4 of the Decree on Eastern Churches confusingly mixed up and with additions and deletions to bluff the reader. I may reproduce what he has quoted and then furnish the conciliar pronouncement exactly as they are.

"The variety within the Church in no way harms her unity, but rather manifests it. For it is the mind of the Catholic Church that each individual or particular Church or rite retain its traditions whole and entire, while adjusting its way of life to various needs of time and place. Therefore attention should be given to the

preservation and growth of each individual church. For this purpose parishes and special hierarchy should be established for each, where spiritual good of the faithful so demands, The ordinaries of various individual churches can have jurisdiction in the same territory (0. E. 2, 4)”. (underline supplied by me).

This decree on Eastern Churches under the Sub-head ‘Individual Churches or Rites’ speaks as follows:-

THE INDIVIDUAL CHURCHES OR RITES

2. That Church, Holy and Catholic, which is the Mystical Body of Christ, is made up of the faithful who are organically united in the Holy Spirit through the same faith, the same sacraments, and the same government and who, combining into various groups held together by a hierarchy, form separate Churches or rites. Between these, there flourishes such an admirable brotherhood that this variety within the Church in no way harms her unity, but rather manifests it. For it is the mind of the Catholic Church that each individual Church or rite retain its traditions whole and entire, while adjusting its way of life to the various needs of time and place

4. Therefore, attention should everywhere be given to the preservation and growth of each individual Church. For this purpose, parishes and a special hierarchy should be established for each where the spiritual good of the faithful so demands. The ordinaries of the various individual Churches which have jurisdiction in the same territory should, by taking common counsel in regular meetings, strive to promote unity of action.....”

The words ‘or particular’ which are underlined are an insidious insertion into the sacred pronouncements of the infallible General Council. In these articles the Council dwells on

individual Churches or Rites and not on particular churches. By the term ‘particular churches’ the Council means only ‘dioceses’, and for dioceses one has to look into the Decree on the Pastoral Office of the Bishops.

An Individual Church may have many particular churches within it. Only the Individual Church or the Rite is permitted to retain its traditions whole and entire. Even this permission to the Individual Church is not an absolute one, because an adjustment of its way of life to the various needs of time and place is also emphasized. The Syro-Malabar Church is an Individual Church.

The Kottayam Diocese is not an Individual Church or Rite. It is only one among the many dioceses within the Syro-Malabar Church. Hence it is entitled to only such traditions as are attributed to the Syro-Malabar Church. It may be noted here that churches are liturgical assemblies and not ethnic groups or races.

An Individual Church is one that has its own liturgy, ecclesiastical discipline and spiritual heritage. The Kottayam diocese has neither of these as its own but has only those common to all the dioceses of the Syro- Malabar Church. If it were the ceremonious shaving of the bridegroom on the eve of marriage and the howling (shouting ‘nada, nada’) that are reckoned as traditions, it would be ludicrous as they are extraneous to liturgy and ecclesial life.

A word about ‘race’ in the Council’s view. *Lumen Gentium*, the Dogmatic constitution of the Church, teaches that the Church transcends all limits of time and of race. It further teaches that the whole church or the new People of God, unlike that in the Old Testament, is made up of Jew and Gentile, making them one, not according to the flesh but in the Spirit and that they are reborn not from a perishable but from an imperishable seed through the

Word of the Living God, not from flesh but from water and Holy Spirit, and established as a 'chosen race'.

It follows that among all the nations of earth there is but one People of God, which takes its citizens from every race, making them citizens of a Kingdom which is of a heavenly and not an earthly nature. The Church has no care of blood but only care of souls. It reckons no race within that 'chosen race' which emerges from the Word of the Living God. In the Decree on Missionary Activity, in Article 15 the Council exhorts Christians to altogether avoid 'racial prejudice'. How can a church like this be said to foster 'race' by creating particular churches or dioceses for all races on the earth?.

Apart from the fact that he has profaned Sacred Council with his fraud in quoting its document, Dr. Jose Tharayil shows his ignorance of the Old Testament through his article. He upholds endogamy as a custom of the Suddists from their Jewish legacy. But the Jews did not practice endogamy at all. Ruth was not a Jewess but a Moabitess. Boaz who was a Jew, married her, and Obed the grand-father of David, was born to them which shows that God blessed the Jew and the Gentile abundantly when they stood before Him in matrimony.

It is a sad and unfortunate state of affairs in our Church that there is none to bridle such publications which mislead the faithful with adulterations in the authentic teachings of the Church. Exactitude and fidelity are imperative on the part of the clergy when exposing the solemn pronouncements of the General Councils. It is hoped that the Pontifical Delegate to the Syro- Malabar Church, who is also the Major Arch - bishop de facto now, will rise to the occasion

6

A ROW OVER ENDOGAMY

JAMES KOTTOOR

(Following is an edited version of the keynote address by James Kottoor at the Knanaya seminar held at St. Thomas Cathedral Hall, Chicago on August 3- Orchart)

“**U**nless the Lord builds the house, they labour in vain who build it, unless the Lord guards the city, they labour in vain who guard it.” This is the great lesson I have learned for certain during the last seven decades and eight years of life and we present here would be toiling in vain like the apostles at sea without Jesus to guide us. So all of us need an awful lot of humility to bow and prostrate before truth if and when we find it.

We are here to find a way out of the bitterly fought issue of “Endogamy” preserving purity of blood in a mixed up world among the members of the so- called knanaya community in the Kottayam Diocese in Kerala. The practice includes expelling man or woman marrying into their community from outside and denying sacraments and membership in parishes even to children adopted from outside. They are believed to be descendants of 72 families of 7 tribes in today’s Iraq who landed in AD 345 at

Kodungalloor led by Knayi Thomman, a trader. Now this virus is being imported also to the US via Chicago Syro- Malabar Diocese.

I have only two very simple, very basic messages to share with you: 1. What does Jesus mean for you: Son of God, Son of Man or just a Role Model? 2. What does Church mean for you: The Pope; Bishops and Clergy; Lay People; Your Syro-Malabar Parish; or your Knanaya Parish?

If you can answer these two questions right, the issue of practicing endogamy or living with in such water-tight domestic walls of imagined purity of blood will evaporate like a mountain of ice before the scorching sun. The issue is as simple as asking: Is it right to promote Manu's code on caste system? We don't need a Solomon to answer that.

Wisdom of Ages

Just listen to the wisdom of ages: The UN declaration of human rights of 1948 says: "All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood." It was preceded by Magna Karta (1215), the English Bill of Rights (1689), the French Declaration on the Rights of Man and Citizen (1789) etc. If we go back to our own roots, St. Paul of the Apostolic times says: " There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus " (Gal.3.28).

And what does the prayer "Our Father" mean? Does the word "Our" include only the endogamous of Kottayam diocese and exclude all the rest? See the same idea expressed in the age old Indian thought: "Vasudaiva Kudumbakam" (The whole world is one family). Listen also to the spiritual yearning of the Indian

soul:”Loka Samasta Sukhino Bhavanthu” (May the whole world be happy and contended.) Also think of the assertion of that universal vision by Sri Narayana Guru: “One God, one religion, one caste, human caste.”

A Human Rights Issue

All these must have weighed heavily on late Cardinal Varkey Vithayathil when he said often: “This is just a human rights issue” meaning there is nothing to say in favour of endogamy. But then comes a statement from Cardinal George Alencherry: endogamy is inseparable part of Syro-Malabar Church (SM), and its promotion among knananites is part and parcel of SM mission, as reported in knanaya Media (weekly). It is like politicians conducting caste based political rallies for vote- bank politics and provoking Allahabad High Court to come down heavily on them. Are top officials in SM church imitating her and playing vote-bank politics for social and financial gains?

While it is true that spiritual and religious values have to be cultivated in personal and community life, it is also a disturbing truth that organised and aggressively proselytising ones are the biggest threat to peace and harmony in today’s world. It is the duty of all of us to be a good citizen of the country you belong to and to be an honest, upright and spiritual (if you are a believer) person. For being a good citizen you don’t have to be part of any organised political party. I am not a card carrying member of any party, since I see all parties are looters of the people and public funds in the name of serving the poor. I have always voted for good candidates - Congress, Communist or BJP, but never for parties. Because both the democracies - the oldest and the largest - they say, have become governments of hypocrites, by hypocrites and for hypocrites.

Publicity and Advertising

What then is the difference between true and organised religions? It is that exists between Publicity and Advertising. Jesus gives a very telling easy to grasp example when he says: Do not light a candle and put it under a bushel, but put it on a lamp stick, so that it may shed its light on all in the house, so that seeing your good works people glorify your Father in heaven. Something similar is said of USA: the land of the free, home of the brave and a city seated on a mountain top to inspire and guide. A lighted lamp expels all darkness without saying a word. It is like St. Francis telling his followers to go and preach the good news to the ends of the world, but never to open the mouth, that is, by example. Goodness is enticing, infectious and contagious like leaven.

The essence of advertising is exaggeration par excellence like presenting oneself as the matchless leader, I have also become an example of such advertising when they announced me in the notice as “renowned theologian and noted journalist. The truth is I am here only in the role of a Simon of Cyrene, just a passer-by. My friends here in Chicago have been carrying the heavy, ridiculous cross of endogamy for long and falling down repeatedly. They saw me passing by and begged for help to shoulder it for a while and I am just obliging.

Similar exaggerations are resorted to sell all goods and services in our age of cut-throat competition in the world of international marketing. Thus we hear of “The best tooth paste”, “the tastiest food in the world’s cuisine”, “the only remedy for bald head” even if it is advertised by a bald man, and “the only means of salvation” the Catholic Church. Under the onslaught of damaging criticisms from within and without, of course the Catholic Church is changing a lot. The sum and substance is Jesus never resorted to such dishonest advertising techniques.

Exhibiting Humane Humanity

Then what was Jesus doing if he was not advertising a new religion? He was presenting himself as the exemplar of a humane humanity for others to imitate. For that purpose he presented himself more as THE SON OF MAN, 85 times in the gospels as against SON OF GOD, only 38 times. The message is resoundingly clear: He was presenting himself the ideal Man (humane human person) for all places, peoples, times, countries, cultures and climates, an ideal world citizen in our modern global village. To this day no one has contested that claim. Didn't Gandhi himself say: I love Christ, not Christians? Hence we see a G. K. Chesterton, a Protestant became Catholic, writing a book: "The Everlasting Man" and Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen writing his "Eternal Galilean" and Vivekananda describing Him as the visible human face of invisible God.

The best and briefest description of Jesus is: "He went about doing well. No one could accuse him of sin." It was long after his death his followers were called Christians in Antioch. By that time St. Thomas must have brought Christianity to Kerala. But his followers were not called Christians, but Margam Koodiyavar (Those that tread the path of Jesus) which I think is the only right description and I want to be one among them only. In concrete what did he do? Unlike us scribes, he never wrote anything, but preached. Similarly unlike his present followers, he never built any church or temple, never ordained any priest or claimed to be a priest, never went to any temple either to offer sacrifice or even to pray.

Jesus builder of Living Temples

Although Jesus was not interested in temples of brick and mortar, his disciples were fascinated by grand concrete structures. For the

disciples Jerusalem temple was such a structure. So pointing to it they told Him: Look master what huge stones they used for that marvellous temple and his reply was: “Not a stone upon a stone will be left.” We know how it was razed to the ground during Roman invasion and how similar man-made churches in brick and mortar are either destroyed or left abandoned. Let us hope that the same fate would not happen to our Syro-Malabar Cathedral.

He never offered any sacrifice in any temple either. But he had something very thought provoking and pertinent to tell us about sacrifice. He told us to go and get reconciled to our brother who has something against us first, before offering sacrifice which shows that sacrifice was of no significance at all for him compared to mercy and reconciliation. It looks Jesus never went to temple even to pray. My God, what can you think of it? What else are temples for, if not to offer sacrifice and pray? But Jesus went to mountain tops to pray in silence. He told us to pray ‘in silence’ and not shout like heathens as if God is hard of hearing. He did go to temple to drive out buyers and sellers who made the house of God into a den of thieves.

Scripturally, his mission was not to found a new religion but: 1. to bring back the lost sheep of Israel on to the right path. For that didn't he say: “I am the way”? 2. He was to bring the prodigals back into their father's home. For that didn't he say: “I am the door” 3. He came to recreate the lost paradise with a humane humanity. For that didn't he exhort us to build God's Kingdom “here on earth as it is in heaven”, in the prayer “Our Father”?

In short one thing that was very special about Jesus was, from the moment he was born in a cattle shed, to his end on Calvary he was constantly mixing with the low castes, outcastes, untouchables, pavement dwellers, the sullied sections of society, drunkards and

prostitutes with impure, polluted or tainted blood and never with the palace people, with noble blood, blue blood, royal blood, sacred blood or undefiled endogamous blood people. If He could find no room in the inn at first Christmas perhaps the inns, I suspect, were all occupied by people with pure blood, blue blood or royal blood. The message is: You can't just sup with Jesus and sleep with the Brahmanic lot.

Resurrect Church Citizenship

Another thought I want to share is what I consider the real, original idea of Church as fellowship of faithful with unity, universality, equality and fraternity without any clergy-laity divisions of hierarchical ups and downs. Historically Jesus turned upside down his own Jewish pyramidal religious structure with high priest at the very top, when he washed the feet of Peter and laid the foundation for a domestic church of perfect equality. Nay he did more. He called upon the highly placed to come down to vie with others to take the lowest place.

Since the first Christian community had all things in common there was no one in need or want. So outsiders were compelled to say: "How they love one another." Since the community enforced the principle: "To each one according to his needs and from each according to his capacities", the first communist society was also helped to sprout and flourish. Fulton J. Sheen described it saying: "Christian communists said: all that is mine is yours while present communists say: all that is yours is mine." This was the heyday of the domestic church. It went into catacombs in Rome during persecutions from 100 to 300 AD. All this time the head of the family, male or female, presided over all prayer meetings and table fellowships in different homes because the priestly class was non-existent then.

Then came the Royal Imperial Church with the conversion of Emperor Constantine in 312 AD and the domination of the palace and princely culture ruling roost to the time of Pope John XXIII. He presided over the dawn of the Church of collegiality and co-responsibility in theory, not in practice due to constant resistance by successive popes. Now they are being implemented bit by bit by Pope Francis. What is to be buried is the hierarchical structure which developed with Constantine, the “Holy Father Church” and the church of the Clergy with various grades which ended with good Pope John XXIII.

What is to be resurrected is the assembly of the people of God consisting mainly of the laity who are not only in the forefront of the church but constitute the church according to Vatican II. It still remains to be implemented as the laity are still nowhere in the decision-making and leadership roles in any sphere-spiritual, moral, social and administrative of the church. A conversation between Grand Inquisitor and Jesus in jail, in the novel *Brothers Karamazov*, describes best the emasculated sad plight of laity as headless chicken in the church. In the novel Jesus comes to visit his flock in the church in Seville, Spain where he does some miracles similar to the ones narrated in the gospels. The people make a hue and cry for Jesus and against the cruel Inquisitor Cardinal. Sensing instant danger to his throne, the Cardinal locks up Jesus to be burned at stake the very next day. But fearing serious consequences, he visits Jesus in the prison by night to persuade him to go back to heaven. In the cell he tells Jesus that the biggest blunder of his life was not to heed to the three temptations of the devil in the desert. Even the devil must be given his due!

Jesus not only refuses to accede to this advice but also teaches his followers to disobey such orders of the devil, nay to resist such temptations. In contrast the grand inquisitor doesn't

allow Christians under him to act on their own but to be remote controlled by him. All moral decisions for them are taken by the Inquisitor and his minions while the faithful are exploited like slaves using the mantra “Pray, Pay and Obey”. So everything in the church of the Grand Inquisitor moves quite smoothly, orderly and dignified way. Hence he tells Jesus not to disturb this perfect order and discipline in the church under his royal dispensation. The church does not need Jesus any more. So to escape being burned at the stake, he advises Jesus to go straight back to heaven as he came and so he does. The principle is: “Anyone who can appease a man’s conscience can take all freedom away from him.”

The moral of the story is that laity is neither ready nor allowed to take decisions on moral and leadership issues in the Church. They are simply led by the nose by the clergy so they just do what is pleasing to the clergy. It is high time that laity stop being weaklings hanging on to the apron strings of the clergy and start becoming full-fledged citizens electing their leaders from top to bottom based on merit and charisma. Didn’t Pope Francis say: In the Church if one is holy, let him pray for the rest, if one is learned, let him teach others and if prudent let him govern? The cry for the practice of endogamy in Kottayam diocese and elsewhere, to my mind, is due mainly to a staggering theological illiteracy about what it means to be a follower of Jesus and member of his church. His church, no matter whatever name it is called, has to be a gathering committed to Christian practice, human rights and rules of the land.

Jesus always stood for the underdog, the last, the least and the lost. The present Pope is yearning for a poor church for the poor. The endogamy issue in the knanaya community is just tempest in a tea cup as it is just a spec in the universal Church which cannot and should not compromise on this human rights issue. According to reports, Pope John Paul II at the fag-end of his life had set

up a commission to study and settle this issue once and for all. That commission had reportedly recommended to suppressing the Kottayam diocese in case it refused to implement Christian teachings. But the recommendation could not be executed as the Pope was in his dying days. So it is in the best interest of the Knanaya community everywhere to reform itself following Jesus' example of becoming humanely human and all embracing, lest it should meet the fate of a sinking ship from which over 500 people are reportedly leaving every year.

(The author can be contacted at jkottoor@asianetindia.com)

7

ENDOGAMY: A CLOSER LOOK

MATHEW IDIKKULA

The world is an amazing display of diversity. We live within this sense of diversity, recognizing ourselves through it. We are Hindus, Christians, Muslims, Indians, Italians, French - you name it. Yet despite this diversity, we crave for unity, consciously or unconsciously. Our life itself is a flight towards unity in one form or another. Unity is our true nature, and that alone is the ultimate truth that we are all destined to realize some day. We must swim through the ocean of diversity until we reach the shore of unity - the divine ground of our existence. This is the unchangeable plan of nature into which we all are born.

The voyage of humanity began with the savage man who loved only his own self - his animal personality. But love cannot be contained; love has to flow freely. And so the love of self began to expand into wider circles; thus emerged the concepts of family, community, state, nation, etc. Every union is bonded by the force

of love. The further out this love is extended, the lesser is its impact felt. The love of a nation is not as strong as the love of one's family. That is because we are all born egocentric, centred on our own self. It is natural that people squeeze the range of their love to a limited area. Typically, the love of one's own people - same lineage, same language, and same religion - is as far as the love extends.

Knanaya community is a typical union. We began as one people, we are presently one people, and we want to stay as one people. To realize this end, the community holds to the practice known as endogamy, limiting marriage to within the walls of one's own community. It is not a new concept to the knanaya community. It is as old as the community itself. A vast majority of our members endorse the custom of endogamy.

Endogamy serves the purpose of keeping a community separate from the rest. The community claims that it is "different" by virtue of its unique heritage. A marriage alliance outside the community is viewed as a major threat to its own distinctive existence. The community aims to protect this homogenous society, and endogamy, the community believes, will meet the task.

The whole sequence of events leading to the notion of endogamy, it seems, began with the idea of difference, and the subsequent "identification" of the knanaya people with our community. It is probably not too much to say that we have put our heart and soul into our community. We have become emotionally "attached" to it. Identification and attachment go hand in hand; both are mental processes. As a rule, what is identified with is perceived to be in contrast with what is not identified with. The result is a sense of obvious disparity in which one class of people is set against another.

What's more, true love disappears. The love that is unconditional becomes conditioned. The love that knows no bounds becomes

bound within the confines of the artificial fence we have erected around our community to serve our own interests, while disregarding the concerns of the many that are presumably outside the fence.

The Need for Nonattachment

Given the fact that attachment invariably played a major role in the life of the community, which, in turn, warranted the import of endogamy, a brief discussion of attachment may not be out of place. Attachment is possessiveness. Imagine, for instance, that you are travelling in an airplane. You are not attached to your seat and feel no uneasiness in parting with your seat at the conclusion of your flight. You are “free” to part with your seat at will. That wouldn’t be the case had you been attached to your seat.

There is no freedom of action in attachment; neither is there true love. “Whenever you love anything inordinately, no matter how tiny it may be, it still holds you back from your Supreme Good and can only bring harm to your soul,” says Thomas A Kempis, a 15th century Catholic monk and the author of the famous Christian classic, “The Imitation of Christ.” He continues: “To the degree that you love a creature and are attached to it, to that degree it holds you back...” Most of us are attached to our immediate relations, possessions, positions, friends, and so forth. We mistakenly believe we can serve them better this way, but can we really? Listen to Eknath Easwaran, a renowned scholar and mystic:

“If you want to give your best to any relationship, you have to be detached - not from others, but from yourself. Otherwise you’ll always be thinking about what you can get from that relationship. If you’re completely detached from yourself, you’ll be thinking about what you can give. You come to feel the needs of everybody else exactly as if they were your own, which means you cannot be

negative, you cannot be unkind, you can only be supportive.”

These teachings might appear unappealing to the orthodox. Being devout Christians, they may want to hear from Jesus himself. If so, listen to Jesus: “Love not the world, nor yet what is in the world; if anyone loves the world, love for the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the desire of the flesh and the desire of the eyes and the proud glory of life, belongs not to the Father but to the world; and the world is passing away with its desire, while he who does the will of God remains forever.”

Make no mistake: none of these teachings requires us to turn our backs on our families, communities, associations, societies, or conventions. The opposite is true: We must serve them, giving our best care and love, but without being entangled. We must do everything we possibly can for them, but with a sense of non-attachment. Jesus warns us not to get attached to the world or its objects. The world and its objects are only the means, never the end, to reach our life journey’s destination—the unity of life.

What do these teachings mean for the knanaya community, one might ask. And why pick the knanaya when most people are attached to one thing or another? The answer is that we have gone a step further than normal attachment with our endorsement of endogamy. In embracing endogamy, we have given a green light, a formal sanction, to the notion of attachment. Anytime we feel a sense of difference from others, it is a step against truth. It is a step against nature as well. We are swimming against the current. Any move against nature or truth is inviting misery into our life.

The Underlying Oneness

Knowledge is the key to learn who we are and how we should conduct our worldly interaction. The truth about our worldly

existence is that we are all equals. There is no high or low; there is no pure blood or impure. Even the slightest notion of difference - that I am different from others - is false. The entire creation, whether we know it or not, is a unified whole. The same “I” or Self (also called Paramatman, Father, Brahman, Allah, God, etc.) that is in me as my life force or divinity is in others as well. Remember, the Self is beyond the limitations of our physical bodies. We are not our bodies, as most of us have come to believe. We are spirit, the Self. That’s our true nature; that’s what we truly are. The whole of creation, perceived as the world of diversity, is permeated with the same Self. This one Self appears as the world of many. The One - the Paramatman or God - is absolute truth, while the world of diversity is relative or lower truth.

Let me illustrate with an analogy: Look at the ocean and its waves. Countless waves, big and small, come and go. But they are nothing but the ocean. The waves depend upon the ocean for their existence; whereas, the ocean does not depend upon the waves for its existence. Here, the ocean is the absolute truth; the waves are only appearances in the ocean - lower truth. Likewise, the one and only eternal Self manifests as the world of diversity. When we perceive diversity, know that God alone is in and through it. Listen to Thomas Merton, a Catholic monk, mystic, and a great thinker:

“We are already one. But we imagine that we are not. And what we have to recover is our original unity. What we have to be is what we are.” On the same theme, Kabir, a great Muslim poet-saint of India, says, “Behold but one in all things; it is the second that leads you astray.” It is the world of diversity - “the second” - that makes us lost.

The world is the play of the Supreme Magician. He is the ultimate Reality that we call God hiding behind the many manifestations

of his magic. Once again, listen to Eknath Easwaran: “On the surface level of awareness, everyone seems separate. We look different, wear different clothes, have different speech patterns, different ambitions, different conditioning. The deeper we get, the more clearly we shall see that our differences with others are superficial, and that ninety nine per cent of what we are is the same for everyone.”

It is out of ignorance that we see things as separate and different. Worst of all, we believe what we see is real! This is the reason why the great men of wisdom relentlessly point to a different view. Listen to Swami Ramdas, a man of great wisdom: “Ordinary love based on the physical affinity is a source of misery both to the lover and the loved. But Divine love based on the feeling of spiritual oneness is sublime. It is a source of pure bliss. Here you love another not because he is a relation of yours, but because you and he are one in spirit.”

The perception of the many is a superficial truth below which everything is one. Didn't Jesus teach that he and his Father are one? Didn't he teach that he is in you and you in him? Didn't he teach to love not only your neighbour but also the stranger as your own self? The implication is that we are all one in terms of the same Self residing in all of us. You are the neighbour and the stranger; you are the good man as well as the wicked. It is God that manifests in different forms just as the ocean manifests as different waves. Consider another teaching on the supreme truth of oneness from Bhagavad Gita, regarded as a storehouse of spiritual wisdom. “For one who sees Me everywhere and sees everything in Me, I am never lost, nor is he ever lost to Me.”

We must develop the conviction that everything we perceive in the world is but a reflection of the one infinite existence, God

Accordingly, we must treat all with a sense of equality. This means we don't judge anyone or disown anyone. Listen to Swami Vivekananda, a spiritual genius, thinker, and philosopher, who spoke the following words in a speech delivered in England: "You are one with this universe. He who says he is different from others, even by a hair's breadth, immediately becomes miserable. The difference between man and man, between angels and man, between man and animals, between animals and plants, between plants and stones, is not in kind - because everyone, from the highest angel to the lowest particle of matter, is but an expression of that one infinite ocean - but the difference is only in degree."

What is even more remarkable is the fact that modern science also has arrived at the same conclusion. According to modern physics, whatever we perceive through our senses appears different only on the surface level; they are one on the sub-atomic level. Not only Physics but the Life sciences as well offer a unified view of life. Listen to Dr. Fritjoff Capra, a renowned physicist and author of *The Tao of Physics*, in the following words: "At the fore front of contemporary science, the universe is no longer seen as a machine composed of elementary building blocks. We have discovered that the material world, ultimately, is a network of inseparable patterns of relationships; that the planet as a whole is a living, self-regulating system."

The message again is that God alone is; everything is in Him even as the waves are in the ocean. Nothing exists outside of Him. Therefore, whatever we do to others, we indeed do it to ourselves - to our own indwelling divinity. It is standing from the same premise that Jesus also cautions us on the same truth as follows: "In as much as you have done it unto one of the least of these brethren, you have done it unto me."

What else could be more specific than these two teachings to convince us that we are all one in God. Truth also is one, regardless of the ways in which it is told by different teachers and scriptures. Rig Veda, the most ancient scripture, says: “Truth is one, sages call it by various names (Ekam Sat Viprah bahudha Vadanti).” And this truth - the Kingdom of God - is within all of us, which is where we need to experience the universal oneness of life.

J. Krishnamurthy, one of the modern thinkers of India, has rightly described the relationship between the One and many when he said, “In the greater the lesser is, but in the lesser the greater is not.” The waves are in the ocean, but the ocean is not in the waves. The implication is that the truth of unity cannot be experienced in the world of diversity as long as we are focused on it. We have to shift our focus from the plane of diversity (the external) to the spiritual (within ourselves) where alone the unity is realized. It is a matter of shifting our focus from one plane to another.

We Are All Brothers and Sisters

In the world of diversity, we are surrounded by people of different cultures, different languages, different religions, different heritage, and different belief systems. But these are labels. Living people, which we all are, are beyond labels. We are the Self — neither the body nor the mind. The Self is the same for all. Unfortunately, most men of the ancient and the medieval world didn't know this supreme truth. They firmly believed that men were not equal in that some were born noble, some more base. The Romans, the Germans, the French, and the British, among others, believed that they were men of a better breed. In India, the Brahmins believed that they belonged to a higher class. The segregation of people based on prejudice has always been a sad

commentary on the depth of our own ignorance. Listen to the strong words coming from the great thinker, Leo Tolstoy: “Wherever we may live and whatever language we may speak, we are all brothers and are subject to the same law of love implanted by our common Father in our hearts. Whatever the opinions and degree of education of man of today, whatever his shade of liberalism, whatever his school of philosophy, or of science, or of economics, however ignorant or superstitious he may be, every man of the present day knows that all men have an equal right to life and the good things of life, and that one set of people are no better nor worse than another, that all are equal.”

None of the great teachers of humanity, past or present, have ever endorsed the separation of people on any count whatsoever. Delivering a memorable speech at the Shivagiri ashram (Kerala) on March 13, 1925, Mahatma Gandhi spoke the following words: “Look at the huge tree, under the shade of which we are seated. How vast and diverse are its leaves! None of the leaves in the tree are identical. Yet they all sprang up from a single root. No matter how diverse the leaves are, they all have harmoniously blended into making a beautiful tree. Similarly, regardless of our apparent differences as men, we can also unify into a beautiful human family. But that becomes possible only when we are prepared for mutual love and mutual tolerance, despite our seeming differences.”

What does this mean for endogamy?

A traditional, conservative stand on the issue of endogamy argues that it has been practiced by a long line of ancestors, and this gives it legitimacy. Since many ethnic groups have practiced endogamy, it must be good. To argue on the basis of history is weak. Our ancestors also performed human sacrifice, which we now know is wrong. And our ancestors approved and maintained the

institution of slavery for centuries. And child marriage. The events of history are the products of their time. They do not measure the same on our modern scale.

The great teachers have spoken. We now realize that the unity of life is not just talk but a living truth which is grounded in reason, religion, and science. All points of view unanimously attest the truth. This truth has come to possess the psyche of the thinking man of today. Leaving the traditions of the old world, the thinking man is encouraged to embrace a new world in which truth reigns supreme. He is attracted more by reason than tradition. Instead of living for a chosen few, he finds it more rewarding to live for the whole of humanity; instead of living for yesterday, he lives for the present in the present. The world is indeed marching forward, not backward.

Is it not strange that while the world, in general, is advancing forward, the knanaya community is still in reverse? It is time for the community to shift gears - make a radical change in our way of thinking - and assimilate a broader perspective based on truth. This larger truth would then filter down into the outlook of the community as a whole and to our relationships. Instead of identifying with just a few, we would identify with all and join the march of humanity. We would uphold truth by living it.

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8

A CATHOLIC BISHOP WHO DENIED BAPTISM

JOY ORAVANAKALAM, CHICAGO

Mar Kuriakose Kunnassery, the bishop of Kottayam denied a baptism: the reason being the child's grandmother was a Latin Catholic.

The controversial Biju Uthup case related to the letter for marriage (vivaha kuri) created great turbulence in the church as well as in the society. The civil court ordered the church authorities to issue the prescribed document for conducting the marriage of Mr. Biju Uthup. The diocesan authority filed appeal challenging this order. After two decades, the Hon. High court dismissed the appeal.

Meanwhile the Apostolic Pro Nuncio and Mar Joseph Powathil Arch Bishop of Changanachery found that it is not advisable to prolong the marriage. As per their instruction, the marriage was solemnised without letter from the parish. A girl was born to Mr. Biju Uthup who is to be later baptised in the Holy Family church Kizhakke Nattassery. Bishop, of Kottayam issued orders forbidding

the baptism of the child in her father's parish stating that her grandmother was a Latinite.

The supreme commandment of Jesus is this: "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me... Go, therefore, make disciples of all the nations; baptise them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit and teach them to observe all the commandments I gave you And know that I am with you always; yes, to the end of time" (Mathew 28:18-20 JB). Is this not in the bible of the diocese of Kottayam? Denial of baptism in the name of racism is never heard of anywhere. But it happened in the universal Catholic Church. Diocese of Kottayam is a part of the Catholic Church. Diocese of Kottayam is a church, not a knanaya community Perpetuation of caste or race is not the duty of the Church The primary and important duty of a bishop is pastoral care and spiritual service. The diocese of Kottayam which denies sacraments in the name of caste or race is a shame to the universal Church.

As in the case of the marriage of Biju the Pro Nuncio and Arch bishop of Changanacherry interferred and instructed the bishop of Kottayam to minister the sacrament of baptism. Yet the bishop did not oblige. Subsequent happenings confirmed that God's plan is really beautiful and glorious.

During 2001 Biju had to travel to USA to do research work related to his job. Biju came along with his family. The research in the University of Mississipy was for two years. During the vaction he came to Chicago with his family. There he discussed the baptism issue. We met Bishop Angadiyath and gave all the details. As instructed by him I met Fr. Philip Thodukayil, Director of Knanaya Catholic Mission in person. He told me that he knows all the details of this issue. He promised to administer the

sacrament of baptism and fixed the time and date for it.

Even then, I had an apprehension whether baptism would be obstructed applying knanaya communal pressure on this priest. So I discussed this matter with Mr. Peter Lukose, the then president of KANA and few others. If baptism is denied on racial grounds, it could be brought to the notice of the Church through the media interference. This may lead to the closure of Knanaya Catholic mission which does not care to impliment the 1986 order of Rome. Accordingly we approached several TV channels and a prominent channel recognizing importance fixed date and time and asked us to inform them of any such happenings. Our anxieties are over. Father Thodukayil administered the sacrament in June 2002, as decided earlier. We place on record our gratitude and we respect and greet him. All the invitees, brothers, sisters, relatives and friends witnessed this auspicious occasion.

9

UNIVERSALITY BAFFLED

KCNS

(REPRINTED FROM KCNS NOTICE
DATED 20-02-2003- ORCHART)

Recently the Holy Father declared from Jerusalem that the Church will not encourage racialism in any form. Catholicism does not reckon segregation of the believers on the ground of race or caste. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female; for all are one in Christ Jesus (Gal. 3: 28).

The knanites or suddists are part and parcel of the Syro Malabar Individual Church. In faith, colour, language, liturgy, ecclesiastical discipline and spiritual heritage they have nothing alien to the Syro-Malabar People of God. Why then the Catholic Church gives recognition to the so-called Global Convention of the knanites in Rome by sending the Cardinal Prefect of the Oriental Congregation as the papal Legate to it?

The Universal Church declares that among all nations of the earth there is but one people of God, which takes its citizens

from every race, making them citizens of a kingdom which is of a heavenly and not an earthly nature(L.g. 13 Vat.II).

The Church transcends, all limits of time and of race. It is not bound exclusively and indissolubly to any race or nation (L.g.9, Gaudium ct spes 58-Vat. II).

The Kottayam Diocese has published a souvenir in connection with its platinum jubilee in 1986. It is claimed to be an authoritative document about that diocese. Very Rev. Jacob Kollaparambil, the vicar general of that diocese had the main role as its editor. What is stated in the last para of page 34 of this souvenir is worth quoting here; “One thing is certain; it was in the back-ground of the caste system in this country itself that the two communities- the Suddists and the Northists- emerged among the St. Thomas Christians”.

Caste is unchristian and not of divine ordinance. Even in the caste set-up of Kerala there is no entity for the knanites or the Suddists as recognised by the civil society. It has lapsed into the Syrian Christian caste or community since centuries. Except some aristocratic members of the Kottayam diocese, the knanites as a rule do not foster any sentiments for the so called endogamy. This is proved by their hundreds of intermarriages every year with the other communities within the Syro-Malabar as well as the Latin Catholics. It is fun to say there should be a diocese solely for the sake of preserving a peculiar custom in marriage. Christian marriage has only one formula.

Why then this countenance, recognition or blessing to this racialism by the Church?

10

DIOCESE OF FARIDABAD

Archbishop Kuriakose Bharanikulangara

Dear Fr. Rev. Jacob

21st April 2014

And the Knanaya Community in Faridabad

With the present I would like to formally acknowledge receipt of your Memorandum dated 28th January 2014, Submitted to my Vicar General Very Rev Msgr. Sebastian Vadakkumpadan. The subject matter was to have separate Knanaya parishes within the diocese of Faridabad-Delhi.

Ever since I took charge as the first Bishop of the new diocese, I have been cordially receiving you and keenly attending your queries with utmost pastoral solicitude. Let me reiterate what has been explained to you in the regard.

Since the creation of the diocese of Faridabad, the Catholic Church in this capital city is all the more called for maintaining the unity- unity with other Churches and unity with in the Syro- Malabar Church (SMC). It is with the objective in mind, that the recent Joint- Pastoral Letter was signed so that those SM faithful with the Latin parishes may be brought under the fold of Faridabad diocese. You may recall that when I took charge, there were centres in Delhi organized by different dioceses and having

pastoral services for particular groups. For the sake of unity and communion in the diocese, I have managed to stop all that. Those faithful frequenting such centres are now part of the parishes of our dioceses. In the case of knanaya community, I had permitted to continue the practice of having a “Special mass” once a month, in Dilsad garden.

The current position of the universal Church (Holy See) and of the Syro-Malabar Church and consequently of the diocese of Faridabad is that the knanaya Catholics, with their two bishops, are integral part of the SMC. These two bishops form part of the SMC Hierarchy and Synod. Archbishop Moolakkat is also member of the permanent Synod and of many synodal Commissions.

It has been stated during the recent CBCI by the SM leadership that the knanaya community is within the SMC and about them an “inclusive approach” has to be adopted. In other words, at the level of the CBCI nowhere in India separate parishes will be allowed outside (exclusively) the SMC parish for the knanaya community; that’s against the inclusive policy. At this CBCI meeting both bishops from the arch diocese of Kottayam were present. And they also abide by the position of the Universal Church, SMC Synod and CBCI.

Outside India, you know well what’s happening wherever such “Exclusive” and endogamous parishes were created- e.g. Diocese of Chicago. They are now instructed by the Holy See not to promote endogamous parishes within the Catholic Church- and within the SMC. Recently, in Melbourne during the installation of its first bishop, it was publically stated that regarding the Knanaya Catholic faithful the SMC leadership has adopted an “inclusive Policy”

In Kalyan, a diocese that exists since 25 years, and where a good

number of knanites live, no such parish has been created since 25 years. All the knanaya faithful settled there benefit the pastoral care of the diocese of Kalyan and at the same time continue their social and cultural activities within the community.

This inclusive policy, as I understand, is not against having occasional Masses exclusively for the knanaya community. Just like in the SMC and its diocese, such separate Masses are conducted for family units' anniversary, youth day celebration, etc. In our context, there is a priest with additional charge of the knanaya community and occasional masses are celebrated for them. In fact, there is nothing called "Knanaya Masses and sacraments". We all follow the same liturgy. We have the same faith. We are under the same Major Archbishop.

I would earnestly exhort you that you should bring up your children with the conviction that the Holy Mass and sacraments celebrated by a knanaya priest and a Non- knanaya Catholic priest is the same. Otherwise, when they grow up and are in a particular situation where no knanaya priest's service is available, especially in a migrant background, they will not go for Mass and sacraments. Is that what you want? Please for the sake of at least your own children, try to understand this. By attending a SM Mass celebrated by a non-knanaya priest, communion from a non- knanaya parish, a knanaya is not losing anything. Please do not brain wash your children and community and inculcate a feeling of "untouchability" and antipathy with the SMC. You are within the Church, not outside. You are part of the SMC.

About occasional Holy mass for the knanaya community on a Saturday, you may please recall that I have allowed once a month such a Mass to the knanaya community. In addition, when there is a particular celebration, you get permission for special Masses. Before

the diocese was created, other than the monthly Mass, not even one special Mass was permitted to you and you know very well that even zonal meeting of the 'koodara yogam' were not held since three years. I permit you additional masses for special occasions; even for 'koodara yogam' zonal meetings, I had allowed you a Mass. You should not underestimate the fact the when only one monthly Mass is allowed, the community was satisfied with that and it grew up keeping up the unity and identity; that time communion services were held in the local SM parishes; church support fund was regularly contributed, etc. You were all happy with the arrangements, made by that time Latin Authorities. I wonder then why now you are changing the position and demanding for exclusive parishes and do not co-operate with first communion in the SM parishes, Church fund to the SM parishes, etc.

As the bishop of Faridabad I assure you that while acknowledging your knanaya identity and tradition, I consider all the knanaya faithful as integral part of our diocese and parishes; we abide by the "inclusive policy" towards the knanites held by the universal Church and the Syro-Malabar Church as well as the CBCI. With sincere pastoral solicitude, I am concerned with the unity of our church and with the sacramental life and faith formation of the knanaya community, in particular that of the youth and children. Please try to cooperate with the policy of the Catholic Church and try to evaluate what has happened in places where 'exclusive' initiative was launched. Instead of spending your time and energy for something that is against the policy of the Church, Please utilize them for the good of your own community and your children.

Wishing you the Risen Lord's abundant blessings,

Sd/-

The Original letter appears in the next pages- Orchart



DIOCESE OF FARIDABAD
Syro-Malabar Catholic Church

21 April 2014

Dear Fr. Rev. Jacob,
and the Knanaya community in Faridabad-Delhi,

With the present I would like to formally acknowledge receipt of your Memorandum dated 28 January 2014, submitted to my Vicar General Very Rev. Msgr. Sebastian Vadakkumpadan. The subject matter was to have separate Knanaya parishes within the diocese of Faridabad-Delhi.

Ever since I took charge as the first Bishop of this new diocese, I have been cordially receiving you and keenly attending your queries with utmost pastoral solicitude. Let me reiterate what has been explained to you in this regard.

Since the creation of the diocese of Faridabad, the Catholic Church in this capital city is all the more **called for maintaining the unity** – unity with other *sui iuris* Churches and unity within the Syro-Malabar Church (SMC). It is with this objective in mind, that the recent Joint-Pastoral Letter was signed so that those SM faithful with the Latin parishes may be brought under the fold of Faridabad diocese. You may recall that when I took charge, there were centers in Delhi organized by different dioceses and having pastoral services for particular groups. For the sake of unity and communion in the diocese, I have managed to stop all that. Those faithful frequenting such centers are now part of the parishes of our diocese. In the case of the Knanaya community, I had permitted to continue the practice of having a “special mass” once a month, in Dilsadgarden.

The current position of the universal Church (Holy See) and of the Syro-Malabar Church and consequently of the diocese of Faridabad is that the Knanaya Catholics, with their two Bishops, are integral part of the SMC. These two bishops form part of the SMC Hierarchy and Synod. Archbishop Moolakkat is also member of the Permanent Synod and of many Synodal Commissions.

It has been stated during the recent CBCI by the SM leadership that the Knanaya community is within the SMC and about them an “inclusive approach” has to be adopted. In other words, at the level of the CBCI, nowhere in India separate parishes will be allowed outside (exclusively) the SMC parish for the Knanaya community; that’s against the inclusive policy. At this CBCI meeting both bishops from the Archdiocese of Kottayam were present. And they also abide by the position of the Universal Church, SMC Synod and CBCI.

Outside India, you know well what’s happening wherever such “exclusive” and endogamous parishes were created– eg. Diocese of **Chicago**. They are now instructed by the Holy See not to promote endogamous parishes within the Catholic Church – and within the SMC. Recently, in **Melbourne** during the installation of its first bishop, it was publically stated that regarding the Knanaya Catholic faithful the SMC leadership has adopted an “inclusive policy”.

In Kalyan, a diocese that exists since 25 years, and where a good number of Knanites live, no such parish has been created since 25 years. All the Knanaya faithful settled there benefit the pastoral care of the diocese of Kalyan and at the same time continue their social and cultural activities within the community.


This inclusive policy, as I understand, is not against having occasional Masses exclusively for the Knanaya community. Just like in the SMC and its dioceses, such separate Masses are conducted for Family units’ anniversary, youth day celebration, etc. In our context, there is a priest with additional charge of the Knanaya community and occasional masses are celebrated for them. In fact, there is nothing called “Knanaya Mass and sacraments”. We all follow the same liturgy. We have the same faith. We are under the same Major Archbishop.

I would earnestly exhort you that you should bring up your children with the conviction that the Holy Mass and sacraments celebrated by a Knanaya priest and a non-Knanaya Catholic priest is the same. Otherwise, when they grow up and are in a particular situation where no Knanaya priest’s service is available, especially in a migrant background, they will not go for Mass and sacraments. Is that what you want? Please for the sake of at least your own children, try to understand this. By attending a SM Mass celebrated by a non-Knanaya priest, they are not losing their Knanaya identity; receiving sacraments and first communion from a non-Knanaya parish, a Knanaya is not losing anything. Please do not brain-wash your children and community and inculcate a feeling of “untouchability” and antipathy with the SMC. You are within the Church, not outside. You are part of the SMC.

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As the bishop of Faridabad I assure you that while acknowledging your Knanaya identity and traditions, I consider all the Knanaya faithful as integral part of our diocese and parishes; we abide by the “inclusive policy” towards the Knanites held by the Universal Church and the Syro-Malabar Church as well as the CBCI. With sincere pastoral solicitude, I am concerned with the unity of our Church and with the sacramental life and faith formation of the Knanaya community, in particular that of the youth and children. Please try to cooperate with the policy of the Catholic Church and try to evaluate what has happened in places where “exclusive” initiatives were launched. Instead of spending your time and energy for something that is against the policy of the Church, please utilize them for the good of your own community and your children.

Wishing you the Risen Lord’s abundant blessings,



Archbishop Kuriakose Bharanikulangara
Diocese of Faridabd-Delhi

11

CONGRATULATIONS

GEORGE J. POOZHICKALA

[Excerpts from the letter to the Archbishop Mar Kuriakose Bharanikulangara sent as a response to the Archbishop's letter to Fr. Jacob and knanaya community of Delhi- Orchart]

The racial purity factions have come to be recognised in the Catholic Church without any scrutiny due to the failure of the Church hierarchy in imbibing the gospel message of Jesus Christ. The Church, Syro Malabar hierarchy and the Christian spirit have recognised violation of moral codes in preserving racial purity. That is why the Church is not permitting such a stance.

Neither the decree of 1911 or any other rules of the Church provide for expulsion of any member from the Church for violation of purity of blood. The Church authorities cannot deny sacraments to any of the faithful on this ground. A close scrutiny of the decree reveals that expulsion is not in the agenda of Vatican and it is Mar Makil and his successors who are the culprits. The decree does not mention about any punishment to be meted out to those who do not follow endogamy. Marriages among members

of various rites and different races are very common. There is no question of expulsion from the Church for marital relationship among the faithful of different dioceses.

If the expulsion of those marrying from outside the diocese is in accordance with the decree, it will clearly establish lack of wisdom of those who prepared that decree. That itself will render the decree invalid and as such the diocese of Kottayam also will be no more a legal entity.

Those who advocate for endogamy on the basis of the said decree have not observed the following.

1. In the universal Church, marriages are allowed without any caste consideration.
2. Even today the Church follows the process of approving marriages without any caste or race consideration.
3. Neither the decree nor any other rules of the Church provide for the discontinuance of sacraments to those who are expelled on endogamous grounds.

The diocese of Kottayam perpetuates the practice of endogamy against the directives of Vatican. Denial of sacraments in the unit of the universal Church is a violation of rules of the Church. Every member of the Church has the right to receive the sacraments from a Catholic priest of the unit of the universal Church unless and until he is banned for other reasons to be specified. There is no justification in the denial of sacraments to an innocent person for the sole reason that he/she has married a member of another Catholic diocese. The act of marrying from outside the diocese makes one guilty of a crime not defined under the Church laws or the law of the land where he resides.

12

LETTER TO APOSTOLIC NUNCIO, USA

Cyriac Parathara

Your Eminence

It is with profound sadness and despair, I would like to bring to your attention the recent developments that emerged in the Knanaya churches under the St. Thomas Syro-Malabar Diocese of Chicago. On August, 31st, 2014, a pastoral circular from Vicar General of Syro-Malabar Diocese of Chicago, Rev. Fr. Thomas Mulavanal, was read in Knanaya Churches in USA. As per the above letter, it was announced that an agreement has reached among Syro-Malabar Bishop of Chicago Mar Angadiath, Archbishop of Kottayam, Mar Moolakkat and Major Archbishop of Syro-Malabar Church, Cardinal Mar Allenchery, that the non-Knanaya spouse and children will not get membership in the Knanaya churches and they will get membership only at the nearby non-Knanaya Syro- Malabar churches. The above pastoral circular stated that knanaya churches are only for knanaya Catholics and those who marry non-kananites can remain at the Knanaya church but his or her spouse and children will not get membership in the Knanaya church. When some of our friends contacted Mar Angadiath to enquire about the circumstance that led to this decision, Mar Angadiath stated that it is the decision of the Syro-Malabar Synod

held on August 28 to 30, 2014, at Kerala, India and he has nothing more to add. It is our understanding that this infamous policy was adopted to overcome and circumvent the Rescript Prot N 124/83 of 1986 issued by Rome. Membership in two different churches to one family unit is unheard of in the history of Catholic Church and it is discriminatory, derogatory and humiliating.

The 1986 Rescript states “the special ministry for the knanaya community can be faithfully conducted only on the basis that those knanaya Catholics who married non-knanaya spouses enjoy equal status in the ministry. This congregation does not accept that the customary practice followed in Kerala, of excluding from the community those who marry non-knanaya spouses, is extensible to the United States of America”. Please see Chicago Archdiocese letter to Mar Kunnacherry dated April 1, 1996 reaffirming Oriental Congregations’ 1986 Rescript as Enclosure-1. There is no doubt that splitting the family unit based on ethnic purity does not give “equal status” to anyone who married from outside the community.

At the formation of the St. Thomas Syro- Malabar Diocese of Chicago, the Oriental Congregation issued the Prot No. 85/2001, dated Nov. 21, 2001 stating, “This congregation foresees a pastoral care which is sensitive to the knanaya expectation to be served by knanaya priests, but does not make any allowance for endogamy to play a role in defining the membership of faithful in any mission or parish established by the Eparchy”. Please see the copy of the above Prot. N. 85/2001 as Enclosure-2. This instruction has given more clarity in defining the membership by saying that endogamy should not play a role in defining the membership of the faithful in any mission or parish. The said agreement reached at the Syro-Malabar Synod clearly violates and contradicts this directive issued by Rome, which categorically stated that endogamy should not play a role in defining the membership and that the practice of

endogamy is not acceptable in the United States. Please note that the above Prot No 85/2001 issued by Oriental Congregation also stated “Holy See continues to follow the directives outlined in the Rescript Prot N. 124/83 issued in 1986”. In two places in the Prot there are references about Holy See and apparently it is clear that the above Prot was issued as per the advice of Late Pope John Paul II who was elevated to Sainthood. I am disheartened to say that that the new agreement sabotages the holy decision taken by Saint John Paul II.

The Knanaya priests were denying membership to non-Knanaya spouses and children and when the undersigned sought membership at St. Mary’s Knanaya church in San Jose, California, the then vicar, Fr. Dominic Joseph, took similar stand towards my wife and children. The undersigned then sought clarification from Mar Angadiath and Mar Angadiath issued me a letter stating “No Knanaya Mission in this diocese is strictly endogamous. Knanaya Catholics who get married to non-Knanaya spouses will continue in their Knanaya Missions along with their spouses and children”. Please see the attached copy of the above letter dated December 19, 2003 as Enclosure-3. On 03/01/2012, the Archbishop of Kottayam, Mar Moolakkkat, publically and directly told the Parishners of St. Mary’s Knanaya Catholic community, Chicago, that membership in the Knanaya Missions/ Parishes are exclusively for those born to Knanaya parents. Aggrieved by this interpretation, the undersigned again sought clarification from Mar Angadiath and in his letter Prot No.968/2012 dated June 5, 2012, Mar Angadiath reconfirmed that “No Knanaya Parish/ Mission in my diocese is strictly endogamous. I think that the words in my previous letter are clear enough. Let us pray for genuine Christian communion and brotherhood in the Knanaya Catholic Community”. Please see the copy of the above Prot as Enclosure-4.

On December 20, 2012, Mar Angadiath issued a pastoral circular Prot No. 6/2012 and this was read out at all Knanaya Parishes which quoted the instruction he has received from Rome through Prot. No. 85/2001. Mar Angadiath also stated in that pastoral circular “ since family is one unit and its unity is very important, his/her spouse and children will enjoy all pastoral and spiritual care from Knanaya priests at knanaya parish/ mission where his/her Knanaya spouse belongs. The priests in charge of Knanaya parish/ Mission should see that the spiritual and pastoral needs of these non-knanaya faithful are fully attended. Family unity and spiritual well-being are our primary concerns”. Please see the attached pastoral circular prot No. 6/2012 as Enclosure-5. This being the stand taken by Mar Angadiath over the years, the new agreement prohibiting membership to non-knanaya spouses and children in the Knanaya church is a clear retreat from his previous position thereby violating the Rescripts and Prots issued by Mar Angadiath himself, Oriental Church and Holy See over the last three decades.

In this context, I would like to also add that I am an innocent victim of this endogamy practice. I was married from within the Knanaya church as per the Knanaya traditions and customs followed in Kerala, India and we were continuing as Knanaya church members for many years after our marriage. The proposal of my marriage alliance was sought and finalized only based upon my wife’s membership in Knanaya church and, at that time, there was no controversy about her Knanaya identity. My Marriage was solemnized at my birth parish at St. Xavier’s Knanaya Church, Kannankara and both my children were baptized in my parish. Our Marriage and our children’s baptism are recorded in the Marriage Register and Baptism Register of my parish, respectively. Please see the Marriage Certificate issued from St. Xavier’s Knanaya Church as Enclosure-6. Please note that as per the Knanaya church practice

followed in Kerala, India, if a Knanaya member decide to marry a

non-knanite, the Knanaya Church will not solemnize his/her marriage in his/her church and he/she is forced to join the nearby Syro-Malabar church. The children in their wedlock will not be baptized in the in the knanaya church and their baptism will not enter in the Baptism Register. My family was allowed to remain as full fledged members of the Knanaya church, however, many years later, the Knanaya church decided to revoke our membership based on someone's complaint that my wife's maternal grandmother had some non-knanaya ancestry. The proponents of the endogamy practice argue that, as per Knanaya practice, those who marry from outside are aware of the consequent expulsion but in my case I did not even get an opportunity to choose to remain or not. The Knanaya Church endorsed my marriage and many years later, labeled it as non-endogamous. There is no justification for victimizing me now after allowing my wife's family to remain as Knanaya Catholic Church members for several years and approving my marriage as "endogamous marriage". Four of my siblings and their families are members of the Knanaya church in San Jose, California, and they are invited to all the spiritual and social activities sponsored by the church but my family is facing social isolation. My children have a close attachment with their cousins, however, this social isolation under the umbrella of the church sponsored endogamy practice denying them Christian communion and brotherhood and also the opportunity to worship together. My family is emotionally traumatized and mentally tortured by this discriminatory practice. It is against the principles of natural justice, Divine Law, Canon Law, Common Law and the civil law prevalent in this country.

It is my understanding that the Archbishop of Kottayam and Syro- Malabar Synod has no jurisdiction over St Thomas Diocese of Chicago and the administrative matters are directly under

Rome. Time to time, Oriental Congregation has reiterated that the practice of endogamy should not be exported to United States and it is not acceptable in any jurisdiction outside of the proper territory of the Syro-Malabar Church. (Please see the instruction given in Prot No.85/2001 in the Enclosure-2). Rome has reaffirmed and reconfirmed several times that the membership issue has to be determined considering the social expectations prevalent in the United States and also in conformity with the mindset of the Catholic Church in the United States. As it is well known, the Latin Church was against this endogamy practice and, when a dispute came up, the initiative taken by the Archbishop of Chicago has resulted in Rome issuing the 1986 Rescript. During the period from 2000 to 2008, Knanaya Mission in San Jose, California, was functioning under the

premises of the Diocese of San Jose, California, and Bishop Patrick McGrath, took a firm stand against the endogamy practice. In his letter addressed to Mar Angadiath dated October 10, 2001, Mar McGrath wrote, “Endogamy breeds a sense of classism and racism and is totally out of keeping with ecclesial or civil life in the United States. Had I been aware of this, I would not have welcomed Bishop Kunnasserry’s efforts to establish a Knanaya community in this diocese”. Please see the above letter as Enclosure-7. As a result, the membership was open to non-endogamous families when Knanaya Mission was functioning in the premises of San Jose Diocese, but the moment the knanaya church moved out, this practice reverted back. The alleged new agreement is contrary to the policies followed by the Latin Church and Oriental Congregation.

It is my intention and long-standing desire to continue in my Knanaya church but my wife and children are devastated by the proposed new policy that denies them membership in my parish, thereby dividing us into two different parishes. This divisive

policy will break the integrity and harmony of our family life. The implementation of the 1986 Rescript also remains a far cry. Even the said Synod agreement is unacceptable to most of the racial elements in the Knanaya church and they continue their agitation against St. Thomas Diocese of Chicago and Rome. They already intensified their pressure tactics and non-cooperation in order to revoke 1986 Rescript and also to get separate Knanaya Diocese and Bishop. Your Eminence was kind enough to listen to our prayers in the past and we urge your Eminence's immediate intervention to stop this divisive membership policy implemented in the United States and also to strictly implement the 1986 Rescript by giving membership to the spouse and children in all knanaya Parishes/ Missions.

Yours obediently in Christ

Sd/-

Cyriac Parathara
1755 Yellowstone Ave,
Milpitas, CA
USA-95035

September, 17, 2014

To,
Archbishop Carlo Maria Vigano,
Apostolic Nuncio, United States
Washington, DC, USA

Copy to:
Cardinal Leonardo Sandri, Prefect, Oriental Congregation.
Bishop Mar Jacob Angadiath, St. Thomas Diocese of Chicago.
President, US Conference of Catholic Bishops.
Major Archbishop Cardinal George Allencherry.
Rev Mar Patrick McGrath, Bishop of San Jose.

13

DIOCESE OF KOTTAYAM THAT REIGNS OVER THE RULE OF LAW

JOSE KALLIDIKKIL, CHICAGO

What prompted me to read the news article titled ‘Knanayite new clergy’, published with importance in 1989 in the Bangalore edition of the daily *Indian Express*, again and again was the helplessness of a beloved friend who was ostracized and also denied sacraments from the parish church I once considered mine. The reason being, he married a girl from another Catholic community with the support of his family members. We friends used to spend most of our time within and outside our church and so we had a special attachment to the parish church beyond that of a place of worship. When Biju Uthup met with the same plight as my friend, he moved the court to abolish such injustice, something for which I privately lauded him. I have been following the developments in this case ever since.

After reaching Chicago in late 1990, I happened to get a chance to be in close touch with an organization called KANA and its

activities supporting brothers who could not follow endogamy. During one of the meetings of KANA, copy of the judgment in Biju Uthup case was distributed. On reading, I felt an added respect towards the justice system and Judiciary in India. Uthup Sir had to go through social estrangement along with physical and mental stress in his efforts for this case which lasted over two decades. The fact that he did not get the chance to witness the full compliance of the court order in their favour, still remains as a great pain in us.

Our clergy had at all times propagated that the religious laws originate from God's commandments and any attempt at revising them is nothing but sin. In reality, the religious laws which contain many conditions which are uncivilized, in human, illogical and discriminating are manmade. Religious laws protect priestly authority and rights from being questioned. When male supremacy and social inequality prevailed in the society, religious laws were a means to provide such attitudes, a status and legal protection.

The constitutional set up that guarantees freedom of opinion, free thought and equality is contrary to the religious laws that command duties and control over the faithful. When such controversies take shape, the rulers of the land are committed to implement laws of the land that have supremacy over the religious laws. Unfortunately the Central and State Governments who considers religious appeasement especially of the minority as their duty, yield to the pressure of the socio-religious forces, ignore and endanger individual freedom and natural interests.

The Supreme Court of India through the judgment in Shabanu and Mary Roy cases gave a firm message that individual freedom and the right to live will never be permitted to be denied in

the face of infractions of religious rules, conservative and clergy interests. The judgments widely applauded as progressive, led to the open discussion in public domain on the discrimination and suffering the women of Muslim, Christian religions undergo.

Shabanu, a Muslim woman was divorced by her husband, an advocate of the High Court of Madhya Pradesh. He denied alimony to his ex-wife and children born of her on the basis of background support of Shariyat law which even a section of Muslims does not approve. She approached the Supreme Court challenging the discriminatory set up that pushed her and her children to poverty and misery. The judgment of the Supreme Court, ordering to give alimony to her, literally shocked conservative Muslims and clergy. Muslims all over India protested against this judgment and Congress party found this a chance to harness the votes of Muslims which form 15% of the total. Progressive Islam religionists who are prominent in the fields of art, culture, literature and education joined the majority of Indians in welcoming this verdict. But the Central Government leader Rajiv Gandhi was seeking means to supersede this judgment through Constitutional amendments. Arif Mohammed Khan, a member of the Union Cabinet of ministers, resigned as a protest against this move. However the party whip, a cheap trick, forced him to vote in favour of the bill in the Lok Sabha.

Even after obtaining freedom in 1947, Christian women in Kerala were denied of their right in the paternal wealth. This right was provided to them through the courageous legal battle by Mary Roy and the historical Supreme Court judgment in favour of it. When Mary Roy moved court against her brother who refused to give her share of their ancestral wealth, all the Christian religious leaders united against her in the case. The reason that prompted

them to do so still remains a mystery. Through this praise worthy verdict in favour of Mary Roy based on equality, the Christian women in Kerala were granted the right for ancestral wealth which had been denied for them for more than a decade. “There is neither Jew nor Greek; there is neither slave nor free; there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.”-These words of St. Paul are often quoted by our priests in Sunday homilies. They became the ambassadors of male chauvinism as they tried to oppose the fight against discrimination, the Christian women in Kerala were facing, which was against the biblical virtues and different from the policies of other similar Christian Churches in India.

Through Shabanu and Mary Roy cases the Supreme Court of India conveyed a strong message that religious laws will not be allowed to rule over or be considered as alternatives to Constitutional statutes in any way. These verdicts which were discussed all over India received immense support from the people. The judges, by turning down the shameful and childish arguments of Kottayam diocese and passing the judgment in favour of Biju and family, actually gave the diocesan officials a chance to correct an injustice that had been followed all those years.

“Justice delayed is justice denied”- is a core idea of our judiciary. If an Indian citizen is denied the implementation of a verdict he received in his favour even after 22 years, it points to the weakness and limitations of the justice system. It is dangerous to let individuals, communities or churches backed by money, influence, institutions or vote bank to challenge or to disregard the justice system of our country. This is a matter of stability of our democracy along with the self esteem of each and every citizen of India.

There is a saying-“Character lost, everything lost.” When a Christian community proclaims that their main goal is to safeguard and nurture their blood purity, the Christian virtue of that community is completely lost. The basic characteristics of Catholic Church such as one, common, brotherhood and the main goal of Church- the missionary activity is unknown to Kottayam diocese. The former major archbishop of Syro Malabar church, late Mar Varkey Vithayathil has declared that the activities of Kottayam diocese such as excommunication, denial of Sacraments and isolation in society are human rights violations. Yet the act of raising Kottayam diocese to Archdiocese must be strongly doubted as a means to continue and increase the gravity of these human rights violations.

Those who deny the sacraments which the Church consecrated in Christ’s name to those who wish to receive them, cannot possibly claim to be the representatives of Christ. When the Kottayam diocese, a part of Catholic Church, forces a person to move the court to receive a sacrament and makes him struggle for years on end, it becomes not a faithful community but a new face of the uncultured. Their attitude that they won’t accept the court decision or let it come in to practice is just a reflection of their antisocial and anti national mentalities.

The Congregation of Oriental Churches in Vatican has repeatedly demanded from 1986 that those who do not follow endogamy should be granted membership in the Knanaya Catholic missions and parishes in North America. The St. Thomas Syro Malabar diocese in Chicago has taken the same stand. But the Kottayam diocese leaders and American knanaya parish priests have taken the public stance that this order from Vatican will not be obeyed. In a situation like this Holy Father Pope Francis, Syro Malabar Major Archbishop Cardinal Alenchery and all the other

Catholic chiefs in India should seriously consider whether it is advisable to let Kottayam diocese be a part of Catholic Church. It is the duty of UN and the International community to destroy or keep in check those countries which use their military might to terrorize neighboring countries and maybe its own people. Such agencies usually banish, isolate or slap different bans on the terrorizing countries in an attempt to persuade them to abandon their ways. Such severe actions have become necessary to bring to the right way, the Kottayam diocese which torments its own people mentally, socially and religiously. Remember, negligence and co-existence with criminals in itself is a crime of the same gravity.

A PUBLIC STATEMENT

An excerpt from the statement made by the bishop of Kottayam ADW1 on the side of defendants in OSNo. 923/89 of Kottayam Munsiff Court filed by Mr. Biju Uthup for getting vivaha kuri for his betrothal:

“When a knanite intends to marry a non-knanite, he usually submit an application through his Parish Priest for permission to change his parish to a parish other than Kottayam diocese and the permissions are never denied. He or she become a member of the parish and their marriage is conducted in that parish. Such marriages are never conducted in Knanaya parishes, as it is considered as an offence or an insult to the entire community. Besides such marriages are suicidal to the community and it will undermine the community and diocese.”

AND A SECRET ORDER

The same bishop issued an order with no. 41/1990 on 05th April 1990 granting permission to conduct the marriage of Sherry son of Mathai, Annamma Vettukallel of Uzhavoor parish with Mariam, alias Beena daughter of Abraham, Rosamma Kaipparath at the parish church Uzhavoor with instruction to collect the fine for exemption from public announcement of the marriage. Beena's mother Rosamma is a member of St. George Orthodox Syrian church, Pathiyoor. Rosamma's parents belong to the Orthodox church. They are still members of the Uzhavoor parish of the diocese of Kottayam.-

PART IV
KCNS ACTIVITIES,
NEWS AND EVENTS

1

A NOTE OF DISSENT

C.K. PUNNEN

(A note of dissent dated 14th February 2014 sent to the editor "Sathyadharsanam" on the article by Prof. J.C. Madappatt titled 'A salutation to Servant of God Mar Mathew Makil'- Orchart)

The author says that when the vicariyath of Changanacherry was established on 11th August 1896, the long cherished dream of the Syrians for a bishop from their own community and rite was being materialised. Makil Mathai Kathanar was the one who opposed tooth and nail, the protest organised under the leadership of Nidheerikal Mani Kathanar demanding appointment of native bishops relieving the Syrian Christians from the supremacy of the foreign bishops. As the secretary to Mar Marcelinos, he went to the churches and spoke against this protest.

When Mar Charles Lavigne became the vicar apostolica of the vicariate of Kottayam, Mar Makil joined him. When the need for a vicar general arose, Mar Lavigne made Nidheeri, the vicar

general superceding Makil Kathanar whom he liked very much. The agitated Makil Kathanar threw the trump card of divisiveness and declared that “the visit of the northist vicar general to the churches of the southists is a hurt and insult”. Bishop Lavigne who knew very well the tactics of divide and rule made Makil Kathanar the vicar general of the southists with permission from Rome.

At that time many letters, in favour of and opposing the appointment of native bishops were being sent to the apostolic delegate of Rome. In 1896, when three vicariaths were established for the Syrian Christian Makil Kathanar who was servile to the foreign bishops was appointed as the vicar apostolica of Changanacherry. Why this person who declared that ‘the visit of northists vicar general to the churches of the southists is to hurt and insult to us’ took charge as the vicar apostolica of the northists who form the majority? Is it not greed for power? He showed favouritism and worked solely for knanayites.

Some excerpts from the diary of Mar Makil are given below. Favourable replies are received from the apostolic delegate and through him from Rome to our various grievances. They are with me now.

“The Bishop of Trichur had agreed to come with us. By the grace of God he couldn’t make it. Had he come that would have made it difficult to get the diocese for us”. (Bishop of Trichur could not let them play games Here too Makil sought God’s help) “ If it is said that the diocese is for knanayites, it would be racial. We won’t get it. So said that diocese is for the southist.”

It is clear that Pope Pius X did not sanction the diocese for a race. He took it just like the difference between SouthAmerica and North America. That is why he asked wheather they are only 12

miles apart. By itself, this saint has not said anything either about perpetuating purity of blood defying the Word of God or about ostracising which is, violation of basic human rights. Which Pope permitted to racially obscure this diocese and the parishes under it as knanaya? The CBCI/ KCBC and the Major Arch bishop failed to intervene when the word 'knanaya' was inserted in the writings etc. I invite their attention to this.

Now this diocese propagate that it was blessed and sanctioned only after the Pope and the cardinals offered many prayers for it. This was added by Fr. Mathai Vattakalathil. He came back only after one month of the arrival of Makil and his secretary. He could not violate the orders of the bishop. As he became disheartened later, he did not give his consent to become a bishop. Then he moved to Vakathanam, built a church dedicated to St. Mathew and settled there.

2

KCNS - SLOGANS

1. Catholic Church has no diocese for a community.
2. The Church and the community are separate.
3. The diocese of Kottayam must observe the Canon Law of the Catholic Church.
4. The diocese of Kottayam must impliment the IInd Vatican council decrees.
5. The diocese of Kottayam is a part of the Catholic Church.
6. The diocese of Kottayam must have the features of the Catholic Church.
7. The diocese of Kottayam must include universal nature of the Catholic Church.
8. Any one who believes in Catholic Church should be made a member of the diocese through baptism.
9. End the norms and formalities that ostracizes those of the diocese of Kottayam for marrying non-knanaites.
10. Withdraw the practice of denying sacraments to those who marry from other dioceses.
11. Major arch bishop of the Syro Malabar church should intervene to put and end to the anti christian practices prevalent in diocese of Kottayam

3

MEDIA SCAN



ദേശക്കുറി കൊടുക്കാൻ വിധി

കോട്ടയം: കോട്ടയം രൂപതാഗത കീഴടക്ക നട്ടാഴ്ത്തി ഉറവണക്കള ത്തിൽ ഉതുപ്പിന്റെ മകൻ ബിജു ഉതുപ്പിന് വിവാഹത്തിനുള്ള ദേശക്കുറി ഒരുമാസത്തിനകം നൽകുവാൻ കോട്ടയം രൂപതാബിഷപ്പിന്റേ ഇടവകയിൽ കർമ്മം നിർദ്ദേശം നൽകിക്കൊടുക്കുക കോട്ടയം അഡീഷണൽ മുൻസിഫ് കെ. ജോർജ്ജ് ഉമ്മൻവിധി പ്രസ്താവിക്കുന്നു.

അനിയമ വിവാഹത്തിനു ദേശക്കുറി നൽകേണ്ട കോട്ടയം ബിഷപ്പിന്റേയും കൂറ്റാക്കോസം കുന്നൂർപ്പിന്റേയും നൽകിയ ഹർജിയിൽ ലോണ് ക്രമമായ ഇ വിധി കോടതി പുറപ്പെടുവിച്ചു.

ബിജു ഉതുപ്പിന്റെ മാതാമഹിക നായകന്മാരിൽ ഒരാളായി നാൽ ബിജുവിന് കോട്ടയം രൂപതയിൽ അംഗമായിരിക്കാൻ അർഹതയില്ല എന്നു കോടതി പറഞ്ഞാണ് ബിഷപ്പും ദേശക്കുറി എന്നറിയപ്പെടുന്ന വിവാഹത്തിന് അനുവാദം നൽകുന്ന പത്രിക നൽകേണ്ടതു്. എന്നാൽ ബിജുവിന്റെ മാതാവിനെ കോട്ടയം രൂപതയിൽ ഉൾക്കൊള്ളാൻ കോട്ടയം രൂപതയിൽ അംഗമായി ചേർത്തിട്ടുണ്ടെന്നും അതും രൂപതാ അധികാരികൾക്കും അറി

വുള്ളതായിരുന്നു എന്നും കോടതി കണ്ടെത്തി. രണ്ട് പരിശുദ്ധിയുള്ള വർഷം മാത്രമേ കോട്ടയം രൂപതയിൽ അംഗമായിരിക്കാൻ അവകാശമുള്ളൂ എന്ന പ്രതിഭാഗം വാദം കോടതി തള്ളി.

പ്രതിഭാഗം വാദിച്ചതുപോലുള്ള ആപാരങ്ങൾ സഭയിൽ നിർബന്ധം തുടരുന്നൂ എന്നത് തള്ളിയിടുകു വാൻ കഴിഞ്ഞിട്ടില്ല എന്നത് കോടതി വിധിസാധത്തിൽ പറഞ്ഞു. സഭയിലുണ്ട് എന്നു പറയുന്ന ആപാരങ്ങൾ ദൈവനീതിക്കും സഭാവിക നീതിക്കും നിരക്കുന്നതല്ല എന്നും ഇത് കാനൻ നിയമത്തിന് എതിരാണ് എന്നും കോടതി കണ്ടെത്തി. ബിജു ഉതുപ്പിന്റെ മാതാപിതാക്കളുടെയും സഹോദരങ്ങളുടെയും വിവാഹങ്ങൾ കോട്ടയം രൂപതയ്ക്ക് കീഴിലുള്ള പള്ളി കളിൽ വെച്ചു നടത്തി എന്നതുകൊണ്ട് അവർ രൂപതയിലെ അംഗങ്ങളാ വുന്നില്ല എന്ന പ്രതിഭാഗത്തിന്റെ വാദം നിരർത്ഥകം ആണെന്ന് കോടതി ചൂണ്ടിക്കാട്ടി.

ആകമാന കത്തോലിക്ക സഭയിൽ നിന്നു വ്യത്യസ്തമായ ഒരു നിലപാട് ഇക്കാര്യത്തിൽ എടുക്കുവാൻ കോട്ടയം രൂപതയ്ക്ക് അവകാശവും അധികാരവുമില്ല എന്നു കോടതി വി

ധിസാധത്തിൽ പറഞ്ഞു. ജനശ്രദ്ധയാകർഷിച്ച ഈ കേസിൽ കാനായ കത്തോലിക്ക കോൺഗ്രസും കമ്മീ ചേർന്നിരുന്നു. ഹർജിക്കാരന് വേണ്ടി അഡ്വ. പി.വി. തോമസ്, അഡ്വ. ഫ്രാൻസിസ് തോമസ് എന്നിവർ കോടതിയിൽ ഹാജരായി.

സമ്മേളനം നിരോധിച്ചു

ചണ്ഡീഗഢ്: ബായറാജ് അന്തർദ്ദേശ സമാഗമിയിൽ ചേരുന്നതിനു അക്രമി വിഭാഗങ്ങളുടെ എല്ലാ യോഗങ്ങളും സഹാനുഭൂതിയോടെ നിരോധിച്ചു. മുൻകരുതൽ നടപടിയെന്ന നിലയിൽ ഭരണ നേതാക്കളെ അറസ്റ്റ് ചെയ്യിട്ടുണ്ട്.

അതുസംബന്ധിച്ചുള്ള തരക്കേടായിരിക്കുന്നതായും രാഷ്ട്രീയ പ്രവർത്തകർ സമാഹിച്ച ബോംബ് പൊട്ടിത്തൊട്ടിച്ച് പോലീസ് സുപ്രണ്ട് ഹർജിത് സിംഗും അദ്ദേഹത്തിന്റെ മൂന്ന് അംഗരക്ഷകരും മരിച്ചു. ബോംബു സ്ഫോടനത്തിൽ എസ്. പി. യും സംഘവും യാത്ര ചെയ്തതുകൊണ്ടു് പ്രാഥമികർ തകർന്നു പോയി.

നിയമയുദ്ധത്തിനു വിരാമം; ബിജുവിനു ദേശക്കുറി

കോട്ടയം: കോട്ടയം നിയമയുദ്ധത്തിനു വിരാമം നൽകിയിട്ടുണ്ട്. കോട്ടയം രൂപതയിൽ അംഗമായിരിക്കാൻ ബിജു ഉതുപ്പിന് വിവാഹത്തിനുള്ള ദേശക്കുറി ഒരുമാസത്തിനകം നൽകുവാൻ കോട്ടയം രൂപതാബിഷപ്പിന്റേ ഇടവകയിൽ കർമ്മം നിർദ്ദേശം നൽകിക്കൊടുക്കുക കോട്ടയം അഡീഷണൽ മുൻസിഫ് കെ. ജോർജ്ജ് ഉമ്മൻവിധി പ്രസ്താവിക്കുന്നു.

അനിയമ വിവാഹത്തിനു ദേശക്കുറി നൽകേണ്ട കോട്ടയം ബിഷപ്പിന്റേയും കൂറ്റാക്കോസം കുന്നൂർപ്പിന്റേയും നൽകിയ ഹർജിയിൽ ലോണ് ക്രമമായ ഇ വിധി കോടതി പുറപ്പെടുവിച്ചു.

പ്രതിഭാഗം വാദിച്ചതുപോലുള്ള ആപാരങ്ങൾ സഭയിൽ നിർബന്ധം തുടരുന്നൂ എന്നത് തള്ളിയിടുകു വാൻ കഴിഞ്ഞിട്ടില്ല എന്നത് കോടതി വിധിസാധത്തിൽ പറഞ്ഞു. സഭയിലുണ്ട് എന്നു പറയുന്ന ആപാരങ്ങൾ ദൈവനീതിക്കും സഭാവിക നീതിക്കും നിരക്കുന്നതല്ല എന്നും ഇത് കാനൻ നിയമത്തിന് എതിരാണ് എന്നും കോടതി കണ്ടെത്തി. ബിജു ഉതുപ്പിന്റെ മാതാപിതാക്കളുടെയും സഹോദരങ്ങളുടെയും വിവാഹങ്ങൾ കോട്ടയം രൂപതയ്ക്ക് കീഴിലുള്ള പള്ളി കളിൽ വെച്ചു നടത്തി എന്നതുകൊണ്ട് അവർ രൂപതയിലെ അംഗങ്ങളാ വുന്നില്ല എന്നു പ്രതിഭാഗത്തിന്റെ വാദം നിരർത്ഥകം ആണെന്ന് കോടതി ചൂണ്ടിക്കാട്ടി.

ആകമാന കത്തോലിക്ക സഭയിൽ നിന്നു വ്യത്യസ്തമായ ഒരു നിലപാട് ഇക്കാര്യത്തിൽ എടുക്കുവാൻ കോട്ടയം രൂപതയ്ക്ക് അവകാശവും അധികാരവുമില്ല എന്നു കോടതി വി

ധിസാധത്തിൽ പറഞ്ഞു. ജനശ്രദ്ധയാകർഷിച്ച ഈ കേസിൽ കാനായ കത്തോലിക്ക കോൺഗ്രസും കമ്മീ ചേർന്നിരുന്നു. ഹർജിക്കാരന് വേണ്ടി അഡ്വ. പി.വി. തോമസ്, അഡ്വ. ഫ്രാൻസിസ് തോമസ് എന്നിവർ കോടതിയിൽ ഹാജരായി.

ചണ്ഡീഗഢ്: ബായറാജ് അന്തർദ്ദേശ സമാഗമിയിൽ ചേരുന്നതിനു അക്രമി വിഭാഗങ്ങളുടെ എല്ലാ യോഗങ്ങളും സഹാനുഭൂതിയോടെ നിരോധിച്ചു. മുൻകരുതൽ നടപടിയെന്ന നിലയിൽ ഭരണ നേതാക്കളെ അറസ്റ്റ് ചെയ്യിട്ടുണ്ട്.

Creditors urge for Crime Branch investigation

Express News Service

Palghat, Nov 24: An action committee of creditors of Venkateswara Enterprises, Puthur, out of business now, has demanded that the case be handed over to the Crime Branch.

Committee President K. B. Nair and other members told newsmen here on Thursday that C. Anandan, the proprietor of the firm, had absconded in mid-October with more than Rs 50 lakh he collected from about 4,000 customers.

As more than a month had already passed, further delay would mean the money Anandan had stashed away would change hands, they said.

The customers felt that neither the usual police procedure nor civil suits would secure justice for them.

They alleged that Anandan had six partners or collaborators and hoped that if these persons were immediately arrested the money could be recovered. Anandan now in judicial custody, had confessed to the crime.

The local police were unable to proceed against these six described by Anandan as his "employees". The only way out was an immediate enquiry by the Crime Branch, the committee felt.

18 films for panorama '89

Cochin, Nov 24 (PTI): Eighteen feature films, including last year's best feature film 'Piravi' and Telugu film 'Das', have been selected for the Indian panorama 1989 to be held during the 13th international film festival of India in Calcutta in January.

The films included five in Hindi and three each in Bengali and Malayalam, according to Kerala Film Chamber sources here.

There were 93 entries in the feature category and 68 in the non-feature, the sources said. They added the films selected for the panorama would also be considered for selection for foreign film festivals.

Youth festival

Cochin, Nov 24 (UNI): Over 1,000 children from 106 schools will take part in the three-day 'Irakkulam Sub-District School

Denial of bans to Knanaya youth sparks controversy

Express News Service

Kottayam, Nov 24: The denial of marriage bans to a Knanaya youth here by the head of the Knanaya Catholic Diocese, who invoked a canon breach done two generations ago to justify his act, has not only exposed the bishop to litigation but has spawned a controversy among the laity.

It is Biju Uthup, 31, who challenged the ecclesiastical will. He submitted a writ to the Munsiff Court here seeking directions to the church to conduct his wedding according to Knanaya rites.

The bishop of the Knanaya Catholic Diocese, Rt. Rev. Kunnassery, had refused to issue the "vivaha kuru" to Biju to solemnise his betrothal to a Knanaya girl chosen by his parents from the same parish.

"If he is not permitted to marry now, when is he going to marry? It is already late", cries his mother Annamma in anguish.

The Knanaya church has plunged the faithful Knanaya family in to despair, with Biju's father even chucking a lucrative job in distant Brunei to confront the church authorities in court.

Biju's matrimonial designs fall within the canonic contours of the Knanaya practices and the community's self-imposed insularity. Though a strict Knananite, he is being penalised for a violation by his grandparents later condoned and accepted by the then church head, Dr Thomas Tharayil.

Biju's grandfather, K. C.

Chacko, a Knananite, married Lily, a Latin Catholic. A Knananite, can marry only another Knananite. Marriage outside the sect invites expulsion from the diocese.

There are exceptions. Like the marriage of Biju's father Uthup to his mother Annamma, the daughter of Lily, a Latin Catholic. This marriage was solemnised by the Knanaya church. Issuing the "vivaha kuru", Dr Thomas Tharayil, the predecessor of the present Bishop, invested Annamma with Knanaya identity entailing the family to all the traditions and practices, rituals and formalities exclusive to the Knanaya sect.

It is this that is the centre of the controversy because of its non-recognition or unacceptability to the present bishop who has ruled that the admission of Annamma into the fold has "defiled" the racial purity of the Knanaya sect.

The Knanaya Church has questioned the purity of Biju's blood, attributing defilement to the race because his grandmother was a Latin Catholic. It is this rethinking, that Biju challenges.

"I can always marry outside the church. But why should I? It is my right to marry in the Kottayam Diocese", asserts Biju, project manager, A.D.A. National Aero-nautical Laboratory, Bangalore.

Says a traumatised Annamma, "Our image in society is damaged because of the attitude of the church. For the last 34 years, we

have been in the mainstream of church life. Suddenly we are out-castes". According to her, the bishop wants them to go out of the parish and marry and return when and if they win the case.

Annamma and her son contend that all their attempts to reason with the Bishop failed because he refused to even grant them an audience. They, therefore, represented to the Pope in June. A representation was also made to the Apostolic Pronuncio of India, New Delhi, who issued directions to the Bishop as follows. "If Uthup's son is successful in establishing to be a member of the Knanaya community no ecclesiastical authority will certainly deny his marriage appeal if he requests."

But Bishop Kunnassery is firm in his stand, said his secretary, Fr. Jose. "The marriage is not permitted because Biju's mother is not a pure Knananite". When asked about the permission accorded by Dr. Tharayil for the admission of Annamma into the community, Fr. Jose said: "Let them prove their purity in court".

In his petition before the court, Biju Uthup contends that as a member of the Parish church of Kottayam Diocese he is entitled under common law as well as canon law and rules and regulations governing the affairs of the church to get the "vivaha kuru" and that denial of the same violates all canons and principle of the Holy Catholic Church in these days of ecumenism.

Project to study antiquities

Express News Service

Calicut, Nov. 24: Dr Hari Narain, senior scientific officer of the National Research Laboratory for Conservation of Cultural Property, Lucknow, has said that the laboratory has taken up a pilot project with Calicut University Department of History for scientific studies on metal antiquities excavated by John Othanthuruth, archaeologist of the History Department from the Nadunil megalithic site in Taliparamba taluk of Cannanore district.

Prof Othanthuruth had recently excavated chamber tomb of megalithic power (4th century BC in Kerala) containing wide variety of metal antiquities.

Areas for development of industries identified

Express News Service

Cochin, Nov 24: The thrust areas for development of industry in the State by taking advantage of various financial assistance schemes of the Industrial Development Bank of India were identified at a meeting of the representatives of industry associations, consultancy organisations and statutory bodies like the NPEDA convened by Dr K. U. Mada, Executive Director of IDBI in Cochin on Tuesday.

The thrust areas identified included chemicals, marine products, food processing, export un-

export processing zone directly even if the project cost was less than Rs 3 crore since after allowing for duty concessions and waon, such projects, if established outside the zone, might require investment of more than Rs. crore.

There was a consensus on the need to assist export-oriented units on a fast track. It was agreed to follow up the deliberations by having a continuous interaction with different industry groups.

Dr Mada also met leading bankers from the State and viewed the progress of assistan-

ദേശക്കുറി കേസു വാദം തുടങ്ങി

കോട്ടയം: വിവാഹം സ്വന്തം സമുദായത്തിൽപ്പെട്ട പള്ളിയിൽ നടത്തുവാൻ ദേശക്കുറി നൽകുന്നതിന് മതമേധാവികൾ അനുമതി നിഷേധിച്ചതിനെ തുടർന്ന് കോട്ടയം അഡീഷണൽ മുൻസിഫ് കോടതിയിൽ നിലനിൽക്കുന്ന കേസിൽ വാദം ചൊവ്വാഴ്ച ആരംഭിച്ചു.

കുന്നായ സമുദായംഗമായ കോട്ടയം ഇറഞ്ഞാൽ ഓവണക്കളത്ത് മാത്യു ഉത്സപ്പിന്റെ മകൻ ബിജുവും വിതൂര ഞ്ഞൈക്കൽ മേഴ്സിയുടെ മകൻ ലിനിയും തമ്മിലുള്ള വിവാഹം സംബന്ധിച്ച പ്രശ്നമാണ് കോടതിയിൽ പത്തുമാസത്തോളമായി നിലനിൽക്കുന്നത്.

ബാംഗ്ലൂരിലെ ഏറോനോട്ടിക്കൽ ഡവല്പ് മെൻ്റ അതോറിറ്റിയിൽ പ്രോജക്ട് മാനേജറായ ബിജുവും ബിരുദധാരണിയായ ലിനിയുമായുള്ള വിവാഹത്തെക്കുറിച്ച് ആലോചനകൾ തുടങ്ങിയത് ഒന്നുവർഷത്തോളമായി. ബിജുവിന്റെ അമ്മയുടെ അമ്മ കുന്നായ സമുദായക്കാരിയല്ലായിരുന്നെന്ന് കാരണം പറഞ്ഞാണ് വിവാഹത്തിന് കോട്ടയം ബിഷപ്പ് അനുമതി നിഷേധിച്ചത്. പക്ഷേ, ബിജുവിന്റെ പിതാവ് മാത്യു ഉത്സപ്പ് ആകട്ടെ, താൻ അമ്മയെ വിവാഹം ചെയ്തതും തന്റെ മൂത്തരും മക്കളുടെ വിവാഹം നടന്നതും കുന്നായ പള്ളിയിൽ വെച്ചായിരുന്നു എന്ന് ചൂണ്ടിക്കാട്ടുന്നു. ബിജുവിന്റേയും വിവാഹം സ്വന്തം സമുദായം വക പള്ളിയിൽ നടത്തിക്കൊടുക്കണമെന്നാണ് മാത്യു ഉത്സപ്പിന്റെ അഭിപ്രായം.

കോട്ടയം രൂപതാ ബിഷപ്പ് വിവാഹ അനുമതി നിഷേധിച്ചതിനെ തുടർന്ന് മാത്യു ഉത്സപ്പ് ബന്ധപ്പെട്ട കേന്ദ്രങ്ങളിൽ പരാതി നൽകി. കഴിഞ്ഞ നവംബറിൽ ബിജു കോട്ടയം അഡീഷണൽ മുൻസിഫ് കോടതിയിലും കേസും ഹയർ ചെയ്തു.

വിവാഹ പ്രശ്നത്തിനാൽ കേസും കൂടുതൽ നിട്ടിക്കൊണ്ടുപോവരുതെന്ന് ഹൈക്കോടതി നിർദ്ദേശിച്ചിട്ടുണ്ട്. ആഗസ്റ്റ് 24-ന് മുമ്പം വിധിയുണ്ടാവാണെന്നാണ് നിർദ്ദേശം. ചൊവ്വാഴ്ച ആരംഭിച്ച വാദങ്ങൾക്കിടയിൽ വാദം ബുധനും വ്യാഴവും തുടരും.

ക്രിസ്തുമതത്തിൽ ജാതി വിവേചനം ഇല്ല: ഹൈക്കോടതി

കൊച്ചി: ക്രിസ്തുമതം ജാതി വിവേചനത്തെ അംഗീകരിക്കുന്നില്ല. അതുകൊണ്ട് ക്രിസ്തുമതത്തിൽ പട്ടിക ജാതി വിഭാഗമുണ്ടെന്ന വാദം അംഗീകരിക്കാനാവില്ലെന്ന് ഹൈക്കോടതി വിധിച്ചു.

കോട്ടാരക്കര തേവലക്കണ്ണൂർ ലക്ഷം വീട് കോളനിയിലെ ടി. ചിന്നമ്മ സമർപ്പിച്ച ഹർജി തള്ളിക്കൊണ്ട് ഹൈക്കോടതി ജസ്റ്റിസ് കെ. ശ്രീധരനാണ് ഈ വിധി പ്രസ്താവിച്ചത്.

ചിന്നമ്മ 1984-ൽ ഒന്നര മാസക്കാലം താലൂക്ക് വെൽഫെയർ ബോർഡിൽ താൽക്കാലിക നിയമനം വഴി എൽ.ഡി. ക്ലർക്കായി ജോലി നോക്കിയിരുന്നു. പട്ടിക ജാതി-പട്ടിക വർഗത്തിൽ പെട്ടവരായ താൽക്കാലിക ജീവനക്കാർക്ക് സർവ്വീസിൽ സ്ഥിരം നിയമനം നൽകണമെന്ന 1985 ലെ സർക്കാരിന്റെ ഉത്തരവ് തനിക്കു കൂടി ബാധകമാക്കണമെന്ന് ആവശ്യപ്പെട്ടായിരുന്നു ചിന്നമ്മയുടെ ഹർജി.

'പുലയ ക്രിസ്ത്യാനി'യായ താൻ ആര്യസമാജം വഴി 1981-ൽ ഹിന്ദു പുലയ ആയി. അതുകൊണ്ട് പട്ടിക ജാതി-പട്ടിക വർഗക്കാർക്കുള്ള പരിരക്ഷയ്ക്ക് അർഹതയുണ്ടെന്നായിരുന്നു ചിന്നമ്മയുടെ വാദം.

എന്നാൽ ഹർജി തള്ളിക്കളഞ്ഞ ഹൈക്കോടതി, ഹർജിക്കാരി ഹർജിയിലൊരിടത്തും താൻ ഹിന്ദു പുലയ വിഭാഗത്തിൽ ജനിച്ചതാണെന്ന് അവകാശപ്പെടുന്നില്ലെന്ന് ചൂണ്ടിക്കാട്ടി. ക്രിസ്തുമതം ജാതി വിവേചനത്തെ അംഗീകരിക്കുന്നില്ല. ക്രിസ്തുമതത്തിൽ പട്ടിക ജാതി വിഭാഗവും ഇല്ല - വിധി പറഞ്ഞുകൊണ്ട് ജസ്റ്റിസ് ശ്രീധരൻ ചൂണ്ടിക്കാട്ടി.

വിവാഹ നടത്തിക്കിട്ടാൻ കോടതിയിൽ

സുരഭി ലേഖകൻ

കേരളം കുന്നായ സഭാഭരണസമിതിയുടെ സമരപരിപാടികൾക്ക് വിവാഹം കഴിഞ്ഞതിനുശേഷം ഇതുവരെ സഭാഭരണസമിതിയുടെ സമരപരിപാടികൾക്ക് വിവാഹം കഴിഞ്ഞിട്ടില്ല. സഭാഭരണസമിതിയുടെ സമരപരിപാടികൾക്ക് വിവാഹം കഴിഞ്ഞിട്ടില്ല. സഭാഭരണസമിതിയുടെ സമരപരിപാടികൾക്ക് വിവാഹം കഴിഞ്ഞിട്ടില്ല.

സഭാഭരണസമിതിയുടെ സമരപരിപാടികൾക്ക് വിവാഹം കഴിഞ്ഞിട്ടില്ല. സഭാഭരണസമിതിയുടെ സമരപരിപാടികൾക്ക് വിവാഹം കഴിഞ്ഞിട്ടില്ല.

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Junior courts' directive to Ktm Bishop upheld

Express News Service

Kochi, Feb 27: Kerala High Court has upheld the orders of courts below directing Bishop Kuriakose Kunnassery of Kottayam diocese and Fr George Manjankal, former vicar of Kizhakk Nattassery Holy Family Church, to issue, within one month, the vivahakuri to Mr Biju Uthup, project officer, National Aeronautical Laboratory, Bangalore, for his betrothal and marriage.

Mr Biju Uthup had been defied vivahakuri on the ground that he was not a member of the Knanaya Catholic Community for the reason that his mother was a non-Knanite.

Allowing a suit filed by Mr Biju Uthup, the Munsiff's Court, Kottayam, held that he belonged to the Knanaya community and was a member of the parish and decreed that he be granted kuri for the conduct of the marriage fixed two years ago.

The bishop and the priest filed an appeal and also moved an application for stay of execution

of the decree, on which a conditional order was passed by the Principal Sub-Court, Kottayam, directing issue of vivahakuri.

Dismissing a civil revision petition filed by the bishop, Mr Justice P. Krishnamoorthy pointed out that the marriage of the parents of Mr Biju Uthup had been conducted in the very same church under the defendants.

Mr Biju Uthup, his brothers and sisters were baptised in that church. The marriage of a brother and a sister of Mr Biju was conducted in that church.

Only when the question of Mr Biju's marriage came up in 1989 was the dispute raised by the church authorities.

For the last 30 years, all the members of the family were being treated as members of the parish and of the community.

In these circumstances no serious prejudice would be caused to the defendants in complying with the order of the courts below, the judge said.

ദേശക്കുറി കേസും കീഴ് കോടതിക്കും നിർദേശം നൽകി

കേരളം: കുന്നായ സഭാ ഭരണസമിതി, വിവാഹസമരപരിപാടികൾക്ക് വിവാഹം കഴിഞ്ഞിട്ടില്ല. സഭാഭരണസമിതിയുടെ സമരപരിപാടികൾക്ക് വിവാഹം കഴിഞ്ഞിട്ടില്ല.

ദേശക്കുറി കേസും ബിജുവിന്റെ കുന്നായ സഭാഭരണസമിതിയുടെ സമരപരിപാടികൾക്ക് വിവാഹം കഴിഞ്ഞിട്ടില്ല. സഭാഭരണസമിതിയുടെ സമരപരിപാടികൾക്ക് വിവാഹം കഴിഞ്ഞിട്ടില്ല.

കുനായ വിവാഹക്കേസ്സ്

ഉതുപ്പ് നൽകുന്ന പ്രസ്താവന

എന്റെ മകൻ ബിജു OS 923/89 ആയി കോട്ടയം മുൻസിഫ് കോടതിയിൽ ഫയൽ ചെയ്തിരുന്ന കേസിൽ, അവൻ കോട്ടയം രൂപതയിൽപ്പെട്ട നട്ടാറ്റേരിപ്പള്ളി ഇടവകാംഗമാണെന്നും ബിജുവിന്റെ വിവാഹം കോട്ടയം രൂപതയിൽ വച്ചു നടത്തുന്നതിന് ആവശ്യമായ വിവാഹക്കുറി മുപ്പതു ദിവസത്തിനകം നൽകുന്നതിന് കോട്ടയം രൂപതാഭ്യക്ഷനോട് കല്പിച്ചുകൊണ്ട് ബഹു: കോടതിയിൽ വിന്നും, വിധിയുണ്ടായി. തുടർന്നു എതിർ കക്ഷിയായ കോട്ടയം രൂപതാഭ്യക്ഷൻ ജിപ്പാ കോടതിയിൽ അപ്പീൽ ബോധിപ്പിക്കുകയും മേൽപ്പടി അപ്പീൽ കേസിൽ കീഴ്കോടതി വിധി സ്റ്റേ ചെയ്യുന്നതിന് അപേക്ഷബോധിപ്പിക്കുകയും, ആയത് വാദം കേട്ടതിൽ തർക്കത്തിന് വിധേയമായി 10 ദിവസത്തിനകം വിവാഹക്കുറി കൊടുക്കുന്നതിന് നിർദ്ദേശിച്ചു കോട്ടയം സബ്കോടതിയിൽ നിന്നും 31-1-91-ൽ ഉത്തരവാകുകയും അതിനേൽ, രൂപതാഭ്യക്ഷൻ ബഹു: ഹൈക്കോടതിയിൽ റിവീഷ്യൻ ഹർജി ബോധിപ്പിക്കുകയും, ടി റിവീഷ്യൻ ഹർജി തള്ളി ഉത്തരവാകുകയും ചെയ്തിട്ടുള്ളതാണ്. അതിനുശേഷവും വിവാഹക്കുറി തരുന്നതിന് രൂപതാഭ്യക്ഷൻ മാർ കര്യാക്കോസ് കന്നശ്ശേരിയോ പള്ളിവിക റിയോ തയ്യാറായില്ല.

ഈ കേസിൽ അന്തർവേിച്ചിരിക്കുന്ന മൗലികപ്രശ്നം ബിജു കോട്ടയം രൂപതയിലെ അംഗമാണോ എന്നുള്ളതായിരുന്നു. ബഹു: കോടതി തെളിവുകൾ ശേഖരിച്ചും വിശദമായ വാദപ്രതിവാദങ്ങൾക്കുശേഷവും ബിജു കോട്ടയം രൂപതയിലെ അംഗമാണെന്നു കണ്ടുകയുണ്ടായി. ബഹു: കോടതികളെ അനുസരിക്കാൻ തയ്യാറാകാത്ത പരിതസ്ഥിതിയിൽ ഇനി ബിജുവിന് കരണീയമായിട്ടുള്ളത് അദ്ദേഹത്തിനെന്നിന്റെ മറ്റു നടപടിമേടുകാൻ കോടതിയെ സമീപിക്കുക മാത്രമാണ്.

ഒരു മതാധികാരി എന്നനിലയിൽ നിയമവാഴ്ചയ്ക്കു കലവറയില്ലാതെ പിന്തുണ നൽകാൻ ധർമ്മികമായി ബാധ്യസ്ഥതയുള്ള ഒരു മെത്രാൻ അതിനു തയ്യാറാകാതിരിക്കുന്നത് ഗർഹണീയവും ശിക്ഷാർഹവും അധർമ്മികവും ആണെന്നുള്ളതിനു സംശയമില്ല. എന്നാൽ ഇത്തരം അവസരങ്ങളിൽ ഒരു ക്രൈസ്തവനെന്ന നിലയിൽ ക്രിസ്തു കാണിച്ചു തന്ന മാർഗ്ഗത്തിലൂടെ അധർമ്മികമായ ഈ പ്രവർത്തിയെ സമാധാനപരവും ധർമ്മികവുമായി ചെറുക്കാൻ മാത്രമേ ബിജു ഉദ്ദേശിക്കുന്നുള്ളൂ "കൾപ്പിനുള്ള കഞ്ഞാടിനെപ്പോലെ അവനെ കൊണ്ടുപോയി രോമം കത്രിക്കുന്നവന്റെ മുമ്പിൽ നില്ക്കും നില്ക്കുന്ന കഞ്ഞാടിനെപ്പോലെ അവൻ വായ് തുറക്കാതെന്നിന്നു. അപമാനിതനായ അവൻ നീതി നിഷേധിക്കപ്പെട്ടു." (അപ്പോ 2:32) എന്നു എഴുതപ്പെട്ടിരിക്കുന്നതുപോലെ സംസ്ഥാനത്തെ പരമോന്നത നിയമാസനം കല്പിച്ചിട്ടുപോലും കോട്ടയം മെത്രാൻ ബിജുവിന് നീതി നിഷേധിച്ച നിലയ്ക്കു് ആ നിയമ നിഷേധത്തെ വീണ്ടും ചോദ്യം ചെയ്യാൻ ഉദ്ദേശിക്കുന്നില്ലെന്നവിവരം ഞങ്ങളുടെ അഡോക്കേറ്റർ പാസ്യുമായി പ്രസ്താവിച്ചിട്ടുള്ളതു്, അതിന്റെ അടിസ്ഥാനത്തിൽ കോടതിയിൽ അറസ്റ്റ്, ജപ്തി മുതലായവ സ്വീകരിക്കാതെ ഇരുന്നിട്ടുള്ളതുമാണ്.

ശുഭാശുഭകാരം ഹൃദയത്തിനും കാതുകളിലും പാടിപ്പേനമേല്ലാത്ത മനുഷ്യന്റെ നിങ്ങളുപരിശുദ്ധാത്മാവിനോടു് ചെറുത്തു നില്ക്കുന്നു. നിങ്ങളുടെ പിതാക്കന്മാർ ചെയ്തവതന്നെ നിങ്ങളു ചെയ്യുന്നു. നിങ്ങളുടെ പിതാക്കന്മാർ പീഡിപ്പിക്കാത്ത പ്രവാചകർ ആരുണ്ടു് (അപ്പോ. 7:57) എന്നു വിശുദ്ധ സ്റ്റേഫാനോസു് യഹൂദന്മാരുപരോഹിതരോടുപറഞ്ഞ വാക്കുകൾ ഇന്നും സാർഥകമാണെന്നു് ഈ കേസ്സിലൂടെ തെളിയിക്കാൻ കഴിഞ്ഞിരിക്കുന്നു. ഇല്ലാത്തതു് കോടതിയുടെ മുമ്പാകെ തെളിയിക്കാൻ കഴിയാത്തതുമായ പാരമ്പര്യത്തിന്റെ

(മുറവൾ)

പേരിലാണല്ലോ എളിയവനായ ബി.കു.വി. സഭാവിശ്വാസമനുസരിച്ചുള്ള കൂലിശകൾ അവന്റെ പള്ളിയിൽവെച്ചു നൽകുന്നതിനെ കോട്ടയം ചെ.ത്രാൻ നിഷേധിച്ചത്. നിങ്ങൾ എന്തു കൊണ്ടാണു് നിങ്ങളുടെ പർവ്വതത്തിനുവേണ്ടി വൈകല്യം നിരസിക്കുന്നതു് എന്ന് യഹൂദന്മാർ പരാഹിതരോടു ചോദിച്ചു യേശുവിന്റെ സഭയിൽ ജാതിയതയും രക്തശുദ്ധിയും പരിരക്ഷിക്കുന്നതിനു് അന്ധരായ വഴികാട്ടികളെപ്പോലെ ഒരു വിഭാഗം ദ്രോഹക്കാർ നീങ്ങിയപ്പോൾ അവരിൽ നിതിബോധം സൃഷ്ടിക്കുന്നതിനു് ഇതു കേന്ദ്രീകൃതം കഴിയുന്ന മെന്ന ബി.കു.വി. വ്യവസ്ഥാവിഷയം. ജാതിവ്യവസ്ഥയുടെ പ്രാബല്യമായിരുന്ന ചേരളത്തിൽ ഹിന്ദുക്കളിൽ ജാതിവ്യവസ്ഥയുടെ മണൽതട്ടുകൾ തകർന്നു പോയെങ്കിലും ജാതി രക്ഷ സി കോട്ടയം കത്തോലിക്കാ രൂപതയിൽ അവരുടെ അവസാനത്തെ രക്ഷാസങ്കേതം കണ്ടുപിടിച്ചു എന്നതു് ഒരു സാമൂഹ്യസത്യമായിത്തീർന്നിരിക്കുന്നു.

സ്വന്തം രാജ്യത്തും ലോകത്തെമ്പാടും മാതൃഭൂമിയെക്കുറിച്ചുള്ള അടിസ്ഥാന പുത്തൻ ദർശനങ്ങൾ ഉരുത്തിരിയ്ക്കുവാൻ അവയൊന്നും കണ്ടില്ലെന്നു നടിച്ചു മതം നൽകുന്ന പരിരക്ഷയുടെ തുരുത്തിലിരുന്ന സംസ്ഥാനത്തെ പരാമോന്നത കോടതിത്തീർപ്പിനെപ്പോലും വെല്ലുവിളിക്കുമ്പോൾ അതു നിയമപ്രശ്നത്തിലുപരി ഒരു സാമൂഹ്യപ്രശ്നമാണു് എന്നു ഞാൻ കണക്കാക്കുന്നു.

സ്ഥാപിതതാല്പര്യക്കാരായ മത പുരോഹിതർ എന്നും, സാമൂഹ്യമാറ്റത്തിനെതിരെ നിലകൊണ്ടിട്ടുണ്ടു്. പഴകി മുർച്ഛലമായ ആചാരങ്ങളുകളിൽ പ്രാഥമികമണ്ഡലമായിത്തീർന്നു കിടന്നിരിക്കുന്നതുള്ള വ്യവസ്ഥാവിഷയം, "മാറ്റവിൻ പട്ടങ്ങളെ, സാധനങ്ങളിൽ മാറ്റമുള്ള കളി നിങ്ങളെത്താൻ" എന്ന മഹത്തരമായ ആശയത്തിന്റെ മാറ്റാൻ തക്കതായ ജാതിയുടെയും പാരമ്പര്യത്തിന്റെയും മണൽകോട്ടകൾ യഥാസ്ഥിതികൃത്യത്തിന്റെ പട്ടടയിൽ ഇന്നു് എഴുതിത്തീർന്നിരിക്കുന്നു. കത്തോലിക്കാസഭയിലെ ജാതിവ്യവസ്ഥയും കാലത്തിന്റെ തിരിവിലെ സഭയും ഇല്ലാതാകുമെന്നു് എനിക്കുറപ്പുണ്ടു്. അതുകൊണ്ടു് കോടതിയുടെ ഉത്തരവിനെ ലംഘിച്ചു കോട്ടയം രൂപതാമെത്രാൻ മാർ കുന്നപ്പേരിയെതിരെ ഒരു നിയമനടപടിയും എടുക്കാൻ ഞങ്ങൾ സത്യക്രിസ്ത്യാനികൾ എന്ന നിലയിൽ ഉദ്ദേശിക്കുന്നില്ല. ആയതു് ഞങ്ങളുടെ വിശ്വാസത്തിനു് ചേർന്നതല്ല.

മഹാപുരോഹിതന്മാർ വായിച്ചു കേൾക്കുന്നതിൽ അടിയായ സത്യം അവരുടെ എല്ലാ ശ്രമപ്രതീക്ഷകളെയും നിരാശപ്പെടുത്തുകൊണ്ടു് ഉമഞ്ഞഴുന്നുന്നതുപോലെ കോടതിയുടെ ഉത്തരവിൽ അന്തർവേച്ചിരിക്കുന്ന പരമസത്യം കത്തോലിക്കാ സഭയും നാളെ കണ്ടെത്തുമെന്നും, ഇന്നു് അവരെ ബന്ധിച്ചിരിക്കുന്ന പാരമ്പര്യത്തിന്റെ കെട്ടുകൾ കാലത്തിന്റെ തിരിവിൽ സഭയും ജീണ്ണിച്ചുപോട്ടുമെന്നും ഞാൻ വിശ്വസിക്കുന്നു.

ജാതിവ്യവസ്ഥയുടെ ജീണ്ണിച്ചു കോട്ടകൊത്തളങ്ങളിൽ സഭയും സംരക്ഷണത്തിനായി ക്രൈസ്തവമാതൃകയേയും, സഭയുടെ നിയമങ്ങളെയും, പരാമോന്നത നിരന്ദ്രായകോടതിയേയും തള്ളിപ്പറയുന്നവർ, കാലത്തിന്റെ കത്തിച്ചെടുപ്പിൽ സഭയും അപ്രത്യക്ഷമാകും.

ക്രിസ്തുവിനെ ക്രൂശിച്ച മഹാപുരോഹിതരുടെ അധികാര സിംഹാസനങ്ങൾ ഇന്നെവിടെ?

ക്രിസ്തുവിന്റെ പരമോദാരമായ മനുഷ്യ സാഹോദര്യത്തേ ക്രൂശിലേറിയവർ, അവർ ചെയ്യുന്നതെന്തിനെക്കുറിച്ചു ബോധവാന്മാരാകുവാൻ വേണ്ടി പ്രാർത്ഥിക്കാം.

ഉത്തരപ്പം
വൈ.എ.കെ.എ., കോട്ടയം-4

ആരംഭം പ്രസ്തുതം, കോട്ടയം.

ക്രൈസ്തവസഭകൾ ഒരു കൈയായി മുന്നേറണം

തിരുവല്ല: ക്രൈസ്തവ ഐക്യം പ്രകടമാക്കാൻ സഭകൾ വ്യക്തിത്വം നിലനിർത്തി ഒഴുകെട്ടായി മുന്നേറണമെന്ന് തിരുവല്ലയിൽ ചേർന്ന മത മേലദ്ധ്യക്ഷന്മാരുടെയും വൈദികരുടെയും സംയുക്ത സമ്മേളനം ആഹ്വാനം ചെയ്തു. പുതിയ വെല്ലുവിളികളെ നേരിടുവാൻ ഇത് അനിവാര്യമാണെന്ന് വിവിധ സഭാ നേതാക്കൾ ചൂണ്ടിക്കാട്ടി.

ഇക്കാര്യത്തിൽ അടുത്തുതന്നെ വൈദികരുടെയും അൽമായരുടെയും മത മേലദ്ധ്യക്ഷന്മാരുടെയും സംയുക്ത സമ്മേളനം നടത്തുമെന്ന് തിരുവനന്തപുരം ആർച്ച് ബിഷപ്പ് ബനഡിക്ട് മാർ ഗ്രിഗോറിയോസ് യോഗത്തിൽ അറിയിച്ചു. തിരുവല്ല സെൻറ് ജോൺസ് കത്തീഡ്രൽ ഹാ

ളിൽ ചേർന്ന യോഗം ഡോ. അലക്സാണ്ടർ മാർത്തോമ്മാ മെത്രാപ്പോലീത്ത ഉദ്ഘാടനം ചെയ്തു.

ആർച്ച് ബിഷപ്പുമാരായ ജോസഫ് പൗവത്തിൽ, ബനഡിക്ട് മാർ ഗ്രിഗോറിയോസ്, ബിഷപ്പ് മാറായ എം.സി.മാണി, കൂര്യാക്കോസ് മാർ കുറിലോസ്, മാർകൂര്യാക്കോസ് കുന്നശ്ശേരി, മാർത്തോമ്മാ സഭാ സെക്രട്ടറി റവ. ഡോ. കെ.വി. മാത്യു, റവ. ഡോ. കണിയാമ്പറമ്പിൽ കുര്യൻ കോർ എപ്പിസ്കോപ്പ, റവ. മാത്യു മാത്യു, തിരുവല്ല രൂപതാ വികാരി ജനറൽ ഫാ. ജോൺ വർഗീസ് ഈശ്വരൻ കുടിയിൽ, റവ. ഡാനിയേൽ, ഫാ. ജോസഫ് കളരിക്കൽ എന്നിവരും പ്രസംഗിച്ചു.

4

LETTERS AND CERTIFICATES

BLOOD WEDDINGS

THE STORY OF A MAN AND A MOVEMENT

ARCHDIOCESE OF CHICAGO

Office of the Archbishop



Post Office Box 1979
Chicago, Illinois 60690

(312) 731-8230
Fax (312) 337-6279

April 1, 1996

Dear Bishop Kunnacherry:

Father Thomas Paprocki, Chancellor of the Archdiocese and my delegate for the Archdiocese's Knanaya Catholic Mission, has given me a copy of your letter of March 21, 1996 to Father Simon Edachiparampil, the Mission's Director. I am very grateful for your efforts to help bring unity to Knanites living in the Chicago area. You are correct in saying that the continued existence of the two separate organizations, K.C.S. and K.A.N.A., will do more harm than good.

At the same time, I must express my serious concern about the following statement in your letter:

One who fails or refuses to observe the custom relating to endogamy forfeits his right to be a member of the Kottayam Diocese and the Knanaya Community. He also forfeits his right to be a member of an association or society of Knanites. There can be no compromise on this. It is better to close down the Mission and withdraw the priest if it becomes necessary to compromise on our basic principles.

This is contrary to the instruction which we have been following from the Congregation for Oriental Churches in Rome, stating that

the special ministry for the Knanaya Community can be faithfully conducted only on the basis that those Knanaya Catholics who married non-Knanaya spouses enjoy equal status in the ministry. This Congregation does not accept that the customary practice followed in Kerala, of excluding from the community those who marry non-Knanaya spouses, is extensible to the United States of America.

It is in keeping with this instruction and my own wishes that Father Simon established a pastoral council in February, 1996 which allowed for non-endogamous representation. When Father Simon was assigned to the Mission last year, you wrote to Father Paprocki on July 5, 1995, with assurance that Father Simon "will be working under the authority and jurisdiction of His Eminence Cardinal Bernardin and that he will comply with the policy of the Chicago Archdiocese with regard to the Knanaya Catholic Mission there." That is why I was surprised to see your recent letter to Father Simon, telling him that it is "necessary to continue the pre-February 1996 position in the Knanaya Catholic Mission in order to facilitate the unity among our people."

Mar Kuriakose Kunnacherry
April 1, 1996
Page Two

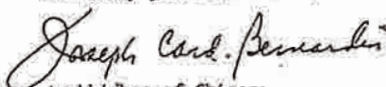
A return to the pre-February 1996 position, excluding non-endogamous representation on the pastoral council, would be contrary to my wishes and the policy of the Archdiocese. While unity among the social organizations would be desirable, those groups are independent of the Archdiocese. My primary and direct concern is for the unity of the Mission, and I do not see how unity can ever be achieved if non-endogamous people are excluded from full participation.

It is my understanding that Father Simon will be going to India after Easter and that he will have an opportunity to speak with you. I ask that you please communicate to Father Simon that he is to follow my wishes and the Archdiocese's policy for the Mission. Specifically, this means that he is to continue with the February 1996 plan for the Archdiocese's Knanaya Catholic Mission, which provides for non-endogamous persons to enjoy full participation in the Mission and representation on the Mission's pastoral council.

Your understanding and cooperation will be greatly appreciated.

With cordial good wishes for a blessed Easter, I remain

Sincerely yours in Christ,


Archbishop of Chicago

Mar Kuriakose Kunnacherry
Bishop of Kottayam
The Catholic Bishop's House
F.B. No. 71
Kottayam - 686001
Kerala, India

cc: Reverend Thomas J. Paprocki, Chancellor, Archdiocese of Chicago
Ms. Teresita Nuval, Asian-American Consultant, Office of Ethnic Ministries
Reverend Simon Edathiparampil, Director, Knanaya Catholic Mission
Mr. Jose Kaniyaly, President, Knanaya Catholic Congress of North America
Mr. Joy Vachachira, President, Knanaya Catholic Society
Mr. Joseph Mullaappallil, President, Knanaya Association of North America

Congregatio
Pro Ecclesiis orientalibus
Prot. N. 85/2001

Instructions

1. This Congregation has been aware for some time of the delicate nature of the position of the Knanaya Community in the United States. A serious dispute in the 1980's prompted the late Archbishop of Chicago, Joseph Cardinal Bernardin, to request directives from this congregation concerning the Special Ministry for the Knanaya Catholic Community in the Archdiocese. With Rescript Prot. N. 124/83 of 30 January 1986, this Congregation made clear the position to be taken regarding the endogamous practice of those Knanaya faithful of the Eparchy of Kottayam who had emigrated to the greater Chicago area (Enclosure 1). When Mar Kuriakose Kunnacherry, the Bishop of Kottayam, requested a review of the policy embodied in the Rescript, this Congregation responded with letter Prot. N. 24/91 of 3 October 1997, upholding the previous decision of the Congregation and informed the present Major Archbishop of Ernakulam-Angamaly, His Eminence Varkey Cardinal Vithaythil, of the decision (Enclosures 2-3). As Your Excellency will not from these letters, this Congregation explained clearly that the practice of endogamy was not acceptable in the United States, or in any jurisdiction outside of the proper territory of the Syro-Malabar Church. Furthermore, the letter clarified the fact that the Knanaya Catholic Mission was responsible to the local Latin Archbishop and the Major Archbishop of Ernakulam - Angamaly and not the Bishop of Kottayam.

With the erection of the Eparchy of St. Thomas of Chicago and your nomination of the first Bishop, the Holy See foresees the necessity to provide adequate and proper pastoral care to Syro-Malabar faithful of the Eparchy of Kottayam who now reside in the United States. The care of these faithful is to be marked by great sensitivity and patience, based upon an appreciation of the cultural atmosphere from which they have arrived. However, this pastoral care must also recognize the values and societal expectations present in the United States and even more fundamentally, the evangelical values requisite in all pastoral care. Therefore, this Congregation foresees a pastoral care which is sensitive to the Knanaya expectation to be served by Knanaya priests, but does not make any allowance for endogamy to play a role in defining the membership of faithful in any mission or parish established by the Eparchy. The further establishment of missions and even parishes for the Knanaya faithful, as presently practiced in the United States, is understood to be beneficial. However, the Holy See continues to follow the directives outlined in the Rescript Prot. N. 124/83 mentioned above.



Mar Jacob Angadiath
Bishop
Permanent Apostolic Visitor to Canada

St. Thomas Syro-Malabar Catholic Diocese of Chicago

3009 S. 49th Avenue
Cicero, IL 60804
Tel: 708-656-3362, 708-656-3365
Fax: 708-656-8663
www.stthomasdiocese.org
bishop@stthomasdiocese.org

December 19, 2003

Mr. Cyriac Parathara
1709 Clear Lake Avenue
Milpitar, CA 95035

Ref.: Knanaya Mission

Dear Mr. Cyriac,

Your letters dated Nov. 11, 2003 and Dec. 16, 2003 have reached me in due time. Sorry for the delay to respond to your request.

Knanaya Catholic Missions are recognized as missions of this St. Thomas Syro-Malabar Diocese of Chicago based on the "Instructions" I have received from the Congregation for Oriental Churches in Rome. Knanaya Missions are for all Knanaya Catholics. But no Knanaya Mission in this diocese is strictly endogamous. Knanaya Catholics who get married to non-Knanaya spouses will continue in their Knanaya Missions along with their spouses and children.

May I wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Yours sincerely in the Lord,

Mar Jacob Angadiath
Bishop

Copies: Most Rev. Patrick J. McGrath
Rev. Fr. Dominic Joseph

BLOOD WEDDINGS

THE STORY OF A MAN AND A MOVEMENT



St. Thomas Episcopal Diocese of California

372 S. Prairie Avenue
Elmhurst, Illinois 60126-4020
Phone: 630-279-1383, 630-279-1386
Fax: 630-279-1478
www.stthomasdiocese.org

June 5, 2012

Prot. No. 968/2012

Mr. Cyriac Parathara
1755 Yellowstone Avenue
Milpitas, CA 95035

Dear Mr. Cyriac,

Glory to God in the highest! Amen.

This is to acknowledge your letter of March 14, 2012 and I re-confirm what I have written to you on December 19, 2003. No Knanaya parish/mission in my diocese is strictly endogamous. I think that the words in my previous letter are clear enough. Let us pray for genuine Christian communion and brotherhood in the Knanaya Catholic Community. I invoke God's blessing upon you and your family.

Yours sincerely in the Lord,

+ *Jacob J. Angadiath*

Mar Jacob Angadiath
Bishop



St. Thomas Syro-Malabar Catholic Diocese of Chicago

372 S. Prairie Avenue
Elmhurst, Illinois 60126-4020
Phone: 630-279-1383, 630-279-1386
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www.stthomasdiocese.org

December 20, 2012

Prot. No. 6/2012

Establishment of Syro-Malabar Knanaya Catholic Parishes/Missions

Dear and Rev. Fathers and dear faithful of Knanaya Community,

During this period of Advent, let us prepare ourselves in the spirit of prayer and penance, to welcome Infant Jesus, born for us as our Savior.

I would like to recall the instructions given to me by the Congregation for Oriental Churches in Rome (Prot. No. 85/2001, Nov. 21, 2001): "This congregation foresees a pastoral care which is sensitive to the Knanaya expectation to be served by Knanaya Priests, but does not make any allowance for endogamy to play a role in defining the membership of faithful in any mission or parish established by the Eparchy."

Based on these instructions, things have been clarified in many occasions. The membership of those Knananites who marry from outside Knanaya Community has been a question. All parishes and missions for Knanaya people in this Eparchy (Diocese) are established only on basis of this instruction. So no parish/mission is strictly endogamous.

In the analysis of this statement, we understand that those Knananites who marry non-Knanaya spouses, will not be excluded from their Knanaya parish/mission. It is true that the Syro-Malabar parish/mission is open to welcome those Knananites who marry non-Knanaya spouses. If they wish they can continue as members of the Knanaya Parish/mission. Since family is one unit and its unity is very important, his/her spouse and children will enjoy all pastoral and spiritual care from Knanaya priests at Knanaya parish/mission where his/her Knanaya spouse belongs. The priests in charge of Knanaya parish/mission should see that the spiritual and pastoral needs of these non-Knanaya faithful are fully attended. Family unity and spiritual well-being are our primary concerns.

Let us understand the mind of the Church and be united to give full support to our priests and thus build our Knanaya parishes/missions as faith filled communities during this Year of Faith.

May the Infant Jesus, Our Savior born for us, bless us at this Christmas and all through the New Year.

+ *Mar Jacob Angadiath*

Mar Jacob Angadiath
Bishop

BLOOD WEDDINGS

THE STORY OF A MAN AND A MOVEMENT

Phone: Thanneermukkom 31

Fr: VICAR

St. Xavier's Church
Kannankara P. O.
Alleppey Dt., Kerala
Pin- 688 527

Date.....

MARRIAGE CERTIFICATE

DATE OF MARRIAGE : 29th DECEMBER 1985.
PLACE OF MARRIAGE : ST. XAVIER'S CHURCH,
KANNANKARA.
FULL NAME OF PARTIES:-
BRIDE GROOM : CYRIAC JOSSY PARATHARA.
BRIDE : BEELA (MARIAMMA) ORAVANA
KULAM.
CONDITION OF PARTIES:-
BRIDE GROOM : BACHELOR
BRIDE : SPINSTER.
NAME OF PARENT'S:-
BRIDE GROOM : POTHEN JOSSY & KUNJAMMA
JOSSY PARATHARA.
BRIDE : O.M. UTHUP & ANNAMMA
UTHUP, ORAVANAKULAM.
NAME OF WITNESS:- : XAVIERKUTTY PARATHARA
& JOSSY ORAVANAKULAM.
BLESSED BY:- : Fr. ALEX CHETHATH.

CERTIFIED THAT THE ABOVE IS A TRUE
EXTRACT OF THE MARRIAGE REGISTER MAINTAINED
IN THIS CHURCH.

PLACE: KANNANKARA.

DATE : 20-10-1987

Alex Chethath

V I C A R.





DIocese OF SAN JOSE

OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

October 10, 2001

Most Reverend Jacob Angadiath
Eparchy of St. Thomas of Chicago of the Syro-Malabar
Mar Thoma Shleeha Center
5000 St. Charles Road
Bellwood, IL 60104

Your Excellency,

Please allow me to congratulate you on your recent ordination as bishop and the establishment of your Eparchy

As you are aware, Father Dominic Joseph, a priest of the Eparchy of Kottayam, has begun ministering to Catholics of the Syro-Malabar Rite here in the Diocese of San Jose. From all reports, Father Dominic's work as Parochial Vicar at the Latin Rite parish of Saint Frances Cabrini and as Chaplain of the Syro-Malabar community is being very well received

There is a difficulty, however, in relation to the practice of endogamy in the Knanaya community. Father Dominic has explained in very clear terms that this practice affects the community's social activities and in no way curtails his pastoral, liturgical or spiritual work with Syro-Malabar Catholics. While this may be the case, such a practice is unacceptable in the Diocese of San Jose. It breeds a sense of 'classism' and racism and is totally out of keeping with ecclesial or civil life in the United States. Had I been aware of this, I would not have welcomed Bishop Kunnacherry's efforts to establish a Knanaya Community in this Diocese.

Further, endogamy is contrary to the 1988 instruction from the Congregation for Oriental Churches, which states that

the special ministry for the Knanaya Community can be faithfully conducted only on the basis that those Knanaya Catholics who married non-Knanaya spouses enjoy equal status in the ministry. This Congregation does not accept that the customary practices followed in Kerala, of excluding from the community those who marry non-Knanaya spouses, is extensible to the United States of America

BLOOD WEDDINGS

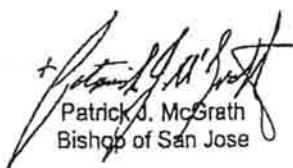
THE STORY OF A MAN AND A MOVEMENT

I realize that, with the establishment of your Eparchy, jurisdiction in this matter is yours. However, since the facilities used for both Syro-Malabar liturgical and Knanaya social events are those of a Latin Rite parish, I, too have some jurisdiction in these developments

I am grateful to you for your attention to my concerns in this matter. As we work together to foster that unity which has the Spirit as its origin, may we and our people rejoice in the one God and Father of us all

With every best wish and kind regard, I remain,

Sincerely yours,



Patrick J. McGrath
Bishop of San Jose

cc: Mar Kuriakose Kunnacherry
Rev Dominic Joseph



ARCHDIOCESE OF CHICAGO

POST OFFICE BOX 1479

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60690

of the Chancellor

312) 751-5220

June 7, 1986

Dear Members of the Knanaya Community,

As you may know, matters relating to the various Oriental rites of the Church are governed by the Congregation for Oriental Churches in Rome, which is headed by Cardinal Lourdasamy. In light of the differences of opinion in the community over the norms to be followed for membership in the Ministry to Knanaya Catholics, Cardinal Bernardin presented the issue to Rome. Recently he received word from the oriental Congregation stating that "the special ministry for the Knanaya community can be faithfully conducted, only on the basis that those Knanaya Catholics who married non-Knanaya spouses enjoy equal status in the ministry. This Congregation does not accept that the customary practice followed in Kerala, of excluding from the community those who marry non-Knanaya spouses, is extensible to the United States of America."

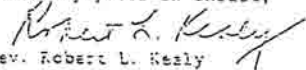
The Congregation also went on to point out that the Bishop of Kottayam has no authority over the faithful outside of his territory and that the community here in Chicago is under the exclusive jurisdiction of the Archbishop of Chicago.

We realize that some will be pleased with this decision and some will not, however everyone should receive this decision in a spirit of humility and charity. Everyone must do his or her part to build bridges of understanding and to move on from here in a spirit of brotherhood and cooperation.

We will be writing to the Bishop of Kottayam again, now that these norms have been decided, and we will ask him to send a priest to serve the community. We hope that it will not be too long before a priest arrives to minister to the Knanaya Catholics. In the meantime we ask you to support the leadership of the Interim Committee which is authorized to plan and organize the spiritual services to the community.

With cordial good wishes, I am

Sincerely yours in Christ,


Rev. Robert L. Kealy
Chancellor

APOSTOLIC NUNCIATURE
IN INDIASAC. OTTAVIO MARI, CHALAKKAVAYIL
NEW DELHI 110021

4 August 1989

N. 35.699

Your Excellency,

The Congregation for the Oriental Churches has written to me in reference to the case of Mr. Biju Uthup, son of Mr. O.M. Uthup.

The Congregation has carefully examined Mr. Uthup's letter and accompanying documentation and has considered the arguments he presents in support of his claim to be a member of the Eparchy of Kottayam to all intents and purposes.

All things considered and bearing in mind the various aspects of the case, the above Congregation judges it is not in a position to pronounce on the case in hand, this being a local matter, to be resolved by the "Sudhist" or "Knanaya" Catholic community itself in accordance with its traditional statutes and customs.

If Mr. O.M. Uthup's son is successful in establishing his claim to be a member of the Knanaya or Sudhist Catholic community, the Ecclesiastical Authorities concerned will certainly not deny the nuptial blessing he requests; if, on the other hand, he is judged to be legally extraneous to that community, he shall be 'ipso iure' a member of the Syro-Malabar Eparchy of the territory in which he has his domicile or quasi-domicile.

The Congregation is confident that Your Excellency will offer prudent and paternal counsel to help Mr. O.M. Uthup solve his spiritual problems and also manifest gratitude for all this person has done for his parish in these past years.

With cordial regards and every good wish, I remain,

Yours sincerely in Christ,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Ottavio Mari', with a flourish extending to the right.
Apostolic Pro-Nuncio

His Excellency
Rt. Rev. Kuriakose Kunnacherry
Bishop of Kottayam

MAR JOSEPH POWATHIL
METROPOLITAN ARCHBISHOP
OF
CHANGANACHERRY



TEL 20040,
ARCHBISHOP'S HOUSE
P. B. NO. 20
CHANGANACHERRY-686 101
KERALA, S. INDIA

February 5, 1991

His Excellency
Rt. Rev. Dr. George Zur
Apostolic Pro-Nuncio
50-C, Niti Marg
Chanakyapuri
New Delhi 110 021

Your Excellency,

In the light of Your Excellency's letter dated January 4, 1991 and the telephone conversation we had yesterday I am pleased to inform Your Excellency that we are prepared to arrange for the blessing of the marriage of Mr. Biju Uthup. Hope Mr. Biju Uthup will approach me and fix the details.

With warmest regards,

Yours sincerely in Jesus

Archbishop Joseph Powathil

- copy to: 1 ✓ Mr. Biju Uthup
Dravanakalam house
Eranjal, Kottayam 686 004
2. His Excellency
Mar Kuriakose Kunnassery
Bishop of Kottayam

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KNANAYA COMMUNITY

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 28, 2007

PAPAL BULL IN ENGLISH AND LATIN ESTABLISHING THE VICARIATE IN

1911

AND

DECREE ELEVATING AS ARCHDIOCESE

The Papal Bull

by Pope St. Pius X instituting the

Vicariate Apostolic of Kottayam for the

Knanaya Community.

IN ENGLISH AND LATIN



The Papal Bull by St Pius X instituting the Vicariate Apostolic of

Kottayam

for the Knanaya Community.

Pius PP. X

Ad futuram rei memoriam. In Universi Christiani gregis regendi munere Nobis divinitus commisso Nostrum praesertim esse ducimus eos Ecclesiae fines terminare qui cum praesidium optatis, tum fidei bono apprime respondeant. Hac mente ad ducti quo gentis Syro-Malabaricae fidei ac pietati melius consultum sit novum Vicariatum Apostolicum in illorum regione constituere decrevimus. In hac enim natione rec. me. Leo PP. XIII Dec. Noster suis hinc similibus litteris die duodecesimo Julii anno MDCCCXCVI datis, tres Apostolicos Vicariatus id est Trichurem, Ernakulensem et Changanachensem condidit, eisque tres antistites ex ipso Syro-Malabarico populo delectos praeficiendos censuit et curavit. Nunc vero cum tres Vicarii Apostolici eorundem, quos supra memoravimus, Vicariatum, in initis inter se consiliis per epistolam diei primi Martii huius vertentis anni a Nobis enixe petierint, ut ad spirituali illarum regionum commoditati satius prospiciendum et ad dissidentium animos consiliandos novus Apostolicus Vicariatus in urbe vulgo "Kottayam" nuncupata erigeretur. Nos omnibus rei momenti cum VV. Ffr. NN. S.R.E. Cardinalibus S. Congregationis Christiano nomini propagando pro negotiis ritus orientalis mature ac sedulo perspectis, huiusmodi preces benigne excipere, atque illi preafatae nationi benevolentiae Nostrae pignus exhibere statuimus. Quare motu proprio, ex certa scientia ac de potestate Nostrae plenitudine a duplici Vicariatu Apostolico Ernakulensi et Changanacherensi omnes paroecias et Ecclesias Suddisticas dismembramus easque in novum Vicariatum Apostolicum in urbe vulgo "Kottayam" pro gente Suddistica constituimus. Quis idcirco complectatur omnes Ecclesias et Sacella pertinentia ad Deccanatum Kottayamensem et Kaduthuruthensem in Vicariatu Apostolico Changanacherensi una cum Ecclesiis Suddisticis Apostolici Vicariatus Ernakulamenensis. Haec volumus ac precipimus, decerentes praesentes litteras firmas, validas, efficaces semper existere et fore suosque plenarios et integros effectus sortiri et obtinere, illisque ad quos spectat et in posterum spectabit in omnibus et per omnia plenissime suffragari, sicque in praemissis esse iudicandum, atque irritum esse et inane si secus super his a quoquam quavis auctoritate scienter vel ignoranter contigerit attentari. Non obstantibus Nostrae Cancellariae Apostolicae regula de iure quaesito non tolenda aliisque Constitutionibus Apostolicis in contrarium facientibus quibuscumque. Datum Romae apud S.

Petrum sub anulo Piscatoris die XXIX Augusti MCMXI Pontificatus
Nostris Anno Nono.

PIUS.X.
PONT.MAX(Seal)

Sd/-

RaffaeleCard.MerrydeVala

Secretis Status

THE PAPAL BULL BY POPE ST. PIUS X INSTITUTING THE APOSTOLIC
VICARIATE OF KOTTAYAM FOR THE SOUTHISTS PEOPLE.

PIUS PP. X

For the future record of the fact. In the office divinely entrusted to Us for governing the Universal Christian flock we consider it especially ours to determine for the churches such boundaries which correspond to the good of the faithful and to the desires of those who preside over them. For this reason in order to provide better for the faith and piety of the Syro-Malabar people we have decreed to constitute a new Apostolic Vicariate in their region. For this people our predecessor of happy memory Pope Leo XIII by a letter similar to this dated July 28, 1896, established three Apostolic Vicariates, namely of Trichur, Ernakulam and Changanacherry and thought it fit to appoint over them three prelates selected from among them.

Now, however, since the three Vicars Apostolic of the same above mentioned Vicariates, after mutual consultation have insistently petitioned us by a letter, dated March 1 of this year, that a new Apostolic Vicariate may be erected in the town commonly called Kottayam in order to satisfactorily cater to the spiritual needs of those regions and to reconcile the minds of the dissidents, we having maturely and diligently considered all the important facts of the matter with our venerable brethren the Cardinals of the Holy Roman Church in the Sacred Congregation of propagating the Christian Name for the Affairs of the Oriental Rite, decided to kindly accept such request and show proof of our benevolence to the aforesaid nation.

Therefore, by motu proprio, with sure knowledge and fullness of our power we separate all the Southist parishes and churches from the two Apostolic Vicariates of Ernakulam and Changanacherry and constitute them into a new Apostolic Vicariate in the town commonly known as "Kottayam" for the Southist people. On that account it shall include all the churches and chapels pertaining to the Kottayam and Kaduthuruthy foranes in the Apostolic Vicariate of Changanacherry and also the Southist churches of the Apostolic Vicariate of Ernakulam.

We want and command these things, decreeing that this letter shall always exist firm, valid and efficacious, and shall gain and obtain full and integral effect and shall most fully favour in all things and every way those whom it pertains and shall pertain in the future, and thus it must be judged invalid and void if it happens to be tampered with by any one of whatever authority knowingly or unknowingly.

Notwithstanding our apostolic chancery's rule of not removing the acquired right, and whatever other Apostolic constitutions to the contrary,

Given at Rome before St. Peter under the fisherman's ring on the 29th day of August 1911, in the ninth year of our pontificate.

PIUS X
THE SUPREME PONTIFF.

(Seal)

Sd/-

R. Card. MerrydelVal

Secretary of State.

Decree of elevating the Eparchy of Kottayam to the Metropolitan See

6

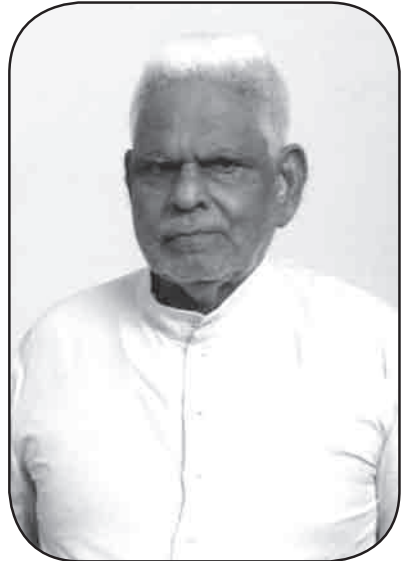
PHOTOS



His Eminence Joseph Cardinal Bernardin



Fr. Jacob Chackacheril



Fr. Jacob Chollambel





OM Uthup and Annamma Uthup

BLOOD WEDDINGS
THE STORY OF A MAN AND A MOVEMENT



Wedding Photo



Baptism in Chicago



Sacred Heart High School, SH Mount, Kottayam



Govt. High School, Kumarakom

BLOOD WEDDINGS

THE STORY OF A MAN AND A MOVEMENT



Little Flower Knanaya Church,
West Othara



St. John Nepumsianos Church,
Vellara, Kumarakom



Holy Family Church, Kizhakkenattassery





P.A Jacob





BLOOD WEDDINGS

THE STORY OF A MAN AND A MOVEMENT

Here is the story of the fight of O. M. Uthup. His fight against the denial of justice in the name of tradition brought him victory. He forgave those who persecuted him and upheld his Christian identity. The renewal movement initiated by him continues the fight for those who are still victims of injustice.

Jesus asks us:

"And why do you break the commandment of God for the sake of your tradition?"
[Matthew 15:3]

Pope Francis exhorts us,

'to reexamine the rituals which are not directly related to the heart of the gospels,
however deeply rooted in historical tradition'



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