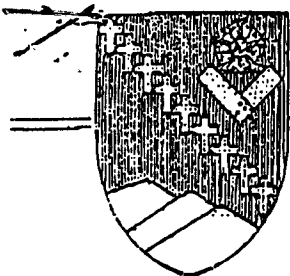


# DIOCESE OF SAN JOSE



## 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