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Kozhikode - Calicut

"Calicut is a port for the whole Indian sea, which God forbid any craft to cross..." these words of Athanaseus Nikiten, the Russian traveler way back in the 13th century echo even today the glory of the historical town that is 'Koyil' (palace)'Kodu' (fortified). In May 1498, Vasco Da Gama landed at Kappad, 16km north of Kozhikode as the leader of a trade mission from Portugal & was received by the Zamorin himself. Kozhikode attained a position of pre-eminence in the trade of pepper & other spices which made it India's emporium of international trade. As Kozhikode offered full freedom & security, the Arab & the Chinese merchants preferred it to all other ports. The globe-trotter Ibn Batuta (A.D. 1342-47) notes: "We came next to Kalikut, one of the great ports of the district of Malabar, & in which

merchants of all parts are found." Associated with the Zamorins is Kottaparamba where stood their ancient palace. Mananchira was the bathing tank of the members of the Zamorin's household.

The temples & mosques of this district contain sculptures & inscriptions, which are of considerable interest to the students of art. Kozhikode town itself has many temples; the most important of which are the Tali temple, the Tiruvannur temple, Azhakodi temple, Varakkal temple, Bilathikuam temple & Bhairagimadom temple. Some of these temples contain sculptures & paintings of very high artistic order. The Thiruvilangad temple contains many ancient sculptures. Its gateway is interesting because it is built in the same style as the Jain Bastis.

At Meppayur, 16.09kms. Southeast of Vadakara, is the Elkavattara temple of Durga, in the grove attached to which are some sculptured images. Southeast of Vadakara by 4.92kms is the Lokanarkav, in the vicinity of which are three rock-cut caves. There is an art gallery & Krishna Menon Museum at East hill in Kozhikode city. Lalithakala Academy also has an art gallery adjacent to town hall, Kozhikode.

The district is famous for folk songs or ballads known as Vadakkan Pattukal. The most popular folk songs among them are those which celebrate the exploits of Tacholi Meppayil Kunju Othenan, 'the Robinhood of North Malabar'.

During temple festivals & important social functions entertainments like Koothu, Kathakali, Ottanthullal & Kaikottikali are performed. There are also ritual dances such as Thira & Theyyam.

One of the favourite pastimes of the Muslims of this district is the singing of the Mappilapattu & Oppana. These songs are sung in a distinctive tune & cover a wide range of themes. The songs are composed in a composite language of Arabic & Malayalam.

RELIGION & CUSTOMS

Hindus constitute the majority of the population & next come the Muslim & the Christian communities respectively.

The Hindu community is organised on the basis of caste & sub castes as elsewhere in the State. They worship all the major gods & goddesses of the Hindu pantheon as well as several minor deities Vishnu & Siva are the major gods worshipped. The temples here are in many respects different from those of the East Coast. Elaborate rules prescribed by the Sastras are followed in their construction. The Kavu dedicated to the Bhadrakali is a typical example. They have their own oracles called Velichappad. There are also temples devoted to such deities as Ayyappan, Hanuman & Garuda. Serpent worship has been widely prevalent here. The Hindus practise ancestor worship.

The Muslims of the district are known as Mappilas. A great majority of them are sunnis following the Shafi school of thought. They are noted for their piety.

Though Christianity is believed to have been introduced in Kerala in 52A.D., not much progress was made by the Christians of this district before the advent of the Portuguese towards the close of the 15th century. Almost all different sections of Christians are represented here. Christians of Travancore & Cochin have migrated to the hilly regions & have settled there.

FESTIVALS

Revathy Pattathanam

The famous intellectual debate for vedic scholars to win the coveted position of Pattathana takes place at thali temple during the month of thulam. It is said that this unique intellectual gathering commenced during the fag end of the 13th century. Many stories are attributed to the beginning of the pattathanam. The seven-day debate starts on Revathi day & concludes on Thiruvathira day of the Malayalam month of Thulam.

Climate

The district has a humid climate with a very hot season extending from March to May. The most important rainy season is during the SouthWest Monsoon, which sets in the first week of June & extends upto September. The northEast Monsoon extends from the second half of October through November. The average annual rainfall is 3266m.m. During December to march, practically no rain is received & from October onwards, the temperature gradually increases to reach the maximum in May, which is the hottest month of the year. The maximum temperature in the month of May comes to 36°C. The highest maximum temperature recorded at Kozhikode was 39.40°C during the month of March 1975 & the lowest temperature was 14°C recorded on 26th December 1975. Humidity is very high in the coastal region.

Flora & Fauna

There is an abundance of wild & marine life here.

The natural forests fall under 3 main categories; the southern tropical moist deciduous, western tropical wet evergreen & semi evergreen.

Rivers

The Chaliyar

Known in the lower reaches as the Beypore river, this is one of the major rivers of the state. The lower reaches form part of the West Coast Inland Navigation system.

As an inter-state river, this has a total drainage area of 2923 sq.kms, of which 2532 sq.kms. lie in Kerala & the rest, 388 sq.kms. in Tamil Nadu. With a length of 169kms, the Chaliyar river flows through Nilambur, Mambad, Edavanna, Areacode, Vazhakkad in Malappuram district & Feroke in Kozhikode district before it joins the Arabian Sea near Beypore.

The Kallai river

Though small in size, the Kallai is one of the most important rivers in the entire state from the commercial point of view. Kallai, a main centre of timber trade, is situated on its banks.

The Kadalundi river

The Kadalundi river, also known by the names, Karimpuzha & Oravanpurampuzha, is important from the navigation point of view.

The Mahe river

The Mahe River, also called the Mayyazhi puzha, originates from the forests on the western slopes of the Wayanad hills, which form part of the Western Ghats. This river flows through 15 villages including MAhe, before emptying into the Arabian Sea at the former French settlement of Mahe, about 6kms. South of Thalassery.

The Murad (Kuttiady) river

The Murad river, also known as the Kuttiady river, originates at the Narikota ranges on the western slopes of the Wayanad hills, a part of Western Ghats. This river flows through Vadakara, Koyilandy & Kozhikode taluks. It empties into the Arabian Sea at the historical Kottakkal fort, 7kms. South of Vadakara.

The Korapuzha

Formed by the confluence of 2 streams called Punnurpuzha & Agalapuzha, this river & its main tributaries are tidal in their lower reaches. The Agalapuzha is more or less a backwater, while the Punnurpuzha originates from Arikkankunnu. The Agalapuzha forms a part of the important West Coast Inland Navigation System. There is heavy traffic through this river

connecting all-important industrial towns lying in the coastal areas such as Vadakara, Kozhikode, Kallai, Beypore etc.

Forests

The forest spreads over the northeastern portion of the district

Total area under forests in Kozhikode district: 291.2268sq.kms.

Forest Area Vested Forests (in sq.kms.) Reserve Forests (in sq.kms.)

Thamarassery Range 99.7262

Peruvannamuzhy Range 41.5809 86.1388

Kuttiady Range 63.7809

Kozhikode taluk comes under the Range Officer, Thamarassery, whereas Koyilandy & Vadakara come under Range Officers, Peruvannamuzhy & Kuttiady respl.

A bamboo storage depot functions at Mavoor. It looks after the supply of raw materials such as bamboo, eucalyptus & other softwood to M/s. Gwalior Rayons, Mavoor. One timber depot is also functioning at Chaliyam of Kadalundy panchayat. Rosewood & teak brought from Wayanad, Nilambur, Palakkad etc. are the main timber available at this depot.

Crocodile farm

The Forest Dept. is maintaining a crocodile farm at Peruvannamuzhy near the dam site.

There is a Forest Complex, by name Vanasree, at Mathottom in Beypore panchayat just 5kms. Away from the city which accommodates the Regional Divisional & Range Offices.

Bird Sanctuary

One of the hillocks in the Kuttiady reservoir just 1.5kms. away from Peruvannamuzhy dam is a site proposed for bird sanctuary. The extent of the sanctuary area is about 16 hectares. Some fruit bearing trees have been planted here to attract birds.

There is also a proposal for a bird sanctuary at Kadalundy. The State Wild Life Board has approved the scheme. The proposed site is the Kadalundy river mouth, which is being visited by many migratory birds in summer.

There is a proposal to set up a veterinary hospital to nurse wild animals at Peruvannamuzhy range.

Catholic Diocese of Calicut History

By the Apostolic Brief dated June 12, 1923 of Pope Pius XI, the Diocese of Calicut was erected:

- a. by separating from the Diocese of Mangalore that portion of the Malabar district which till then was under it
- b. by adding on to it the Wayanad Taluk, till then under the Diocese of Mysore

c. likewise adding also the area west of the watershed of the Walluvanad Taluk, till then under the Diocese of Coimbatore

d. by a Decree of the S. Cong. de Propaganda Fide dated January 12, 1960, the Hosdurg Taluk was till then part of the Diocese of Mangalore was added to the Diocese of Calicut.

The extent, therefore, of the diocese may be described as the whole of the former Malabar district up to the Ponnani river, part of Palghat district and the area of the watershed of Walluvanad Taluk, with the addition of the present Hosdurg Taluk to the north. At the time of erection it numbered in all, 8000 Catholics, the majority of whom resided in the three old stations along the shore of the Arabian Sea, viz, Calicut, Tellicherry and Cannanore. Mainly due to the steady influx of information from Travancore and Cochin, the total Catholic population had risen by 1953 to 91,384 of which 17,217 were Latins and the rest Syrians. On March 19, 1954 with the erection of the Diocese of Tellicherry the faithful of the Oriental Rite passed under the Jurisdiction of the Ordinary of the Diocese.

For the first 32 years of its existence the Diocese of Calicut had been entrusted to the Mangalore-Calicut mission of the Society of Jesus; but with the erection of the independent Vice-Province of Mangalore on May 29, 1955 the territory of the Diocese of Calicut was temporarily assigned the Madurai province of the Society of Jesus, pending the erection of the independent Vice-province of Kerala, which took place on September 27, 1960. The vice-Province became Kerala Jesuit Province in the year 1983. With the appointment of Rt. Rev. Dr. Maxwell V. Noronha as the Bishop of Calicut, who took charge of the Diocese on September 8, 1980, the administration of the Diocese passed into the hands of the Diocesan clergy. His Holiness Pope John Paul II has created the Diocese of Kannur by bifurcating the Diocese of Calicut on December 09, 1998. The new Diocese consists of revenue districts of Kannur and Kasaragod. On May 19, 2002 Rt. Rev. Dr. Joseph Kalathiparambil was appointed as the Vth Bishop by the Holy See.

Thrissur - Trichur Ernakulam

History: On 28th July 1896 Pope Leo XIII by his Bull "Quae Rei Sacrae" reorganized the whole territory of the then existing two Vicariates Apostolic of Trichur and Kottayam and created three Vicariates in their place. One of them was Ernakulam. Mar Louis Pazheparampil was appointed as its Vicar Apostolic. On 21st December 1923 as the Syro-Malabar hierarchy was established Ernakulam became a Metropolitan See and the then Vicar Apostolic Mar Augustine Kandathil was nominated Metropolitan. On 10th January 1957 a new diocese,

Kothamangalam was erected separating parts of Ernakulam. On 16th December 1992 when the Syro-Malabar Church was made major archiepiscopal archdiocese of Ernakulam was made the See of the Major Archbishop and the name was changed to Ernakulam-Angamaly. The archdiocese comprises of the entire civil district of Ernakulam and portions of Trichur, Kottayam and Alappuzha in Kerala.

Kochi - Cochin Diocese of Cochin

The History of the Diocese of Cochin begins with the arrival of the Portuguese Missionaries in India.

These neo-apostles reached Kappad near Kozhikode on 20th May, 1498, along with Vasco De Gama, the famous navigator. History has it that their reception was far from friendly. In the violent encounter that ensued, quite a few of the visitors, including some anointed, were killed. As a result, Gama had to return to Lisbon. It is worth noting here that the first martyr among the Portuguese missionaries in Kerala was Fr. Fedro De Covilham.

A second expedition under Captain Alvarez Cabral, comprising 13 ships and 18 priests, anchored at Cochin on 26th November 1500. Cabral soon won the goodwill of the Raja of Cochin. Thus four friars could be assigned to do apostolic work among the early Christian communities scattered in and around Cochin. When King Goda Varma of Cochin was defeated by the Zamorin of Kozhikkode and kept prisoner at Vypeen, a third fleet under Admiral Albuquerque arrived on 3rd September, 1503. This new fleet with greater reinforcements defeated the Zamorin and rescued the Raja of Cochin. Out of gratitude, the Raja granted him permission to build a fortress at Cochin with a church at the centre.

The solemn blessing of the church was on November 1, 1503, after an elegant and magnificent procession in which all the Captains participated with the Holy Cross, the great sign and instrument of victory, held aloft. A Holy Mass in the Latin Liturgy was celebrated for the first time in Cochin. Later, as decreed by the King of Portugal, Albuquerque directed the priests, Franciscans and Dominicans, to proceed to the neighbouring villages to teach the Christians there.

When Admiral Francisco Almeida arrived in Cochin as the first Viceroy of the Portuguese India, he obtained permission to build a bigger church using lime and stone. Thus, on 3rd May,

1505, on the feast of "Invention of the Holy Cross", the foundation stone was laid for a new edifice. Subsequently, when the structure was completed, the new magnificent church was named "Santa Cruz".

At the behest of the zealous Catholic Emperor, John III of Portugal, more Franciscan friars and secular priests reached Goa on 6th May, 1542. Along with them landed a group of highly trained missionaries of the Jesuit Order led by Fr. Francis Xavier (St. Francis Xavier), a brilliant scholar. In time he moved south to Cochin and studying the situation, sought help from his Jesuit General St. Ignatius and the Emperor for more missionaries from Portugal. St. Francis Xavier visited Cochin several times and stayed for more than 120 days, offering Holy Mass at the St. Anthony's Church built by Portuguese Franciscans. This church is in existence even today but is known as St. Francis Church now. Locally known as "Lenthapally" (Dutch church), currently it is under the Department of the Archaeological Survey of India as an historical monument.

Earlier, the whole of east had been placed under the jurisdiction of the Diocese of Lisbon but on 12th June, 1514, by a Bull of Pope Leo X, Goa and Cochin became two important mission stations under the newly created funchal diocese in Madeira. Subsequently, many missionaries were sent to the region by the Portuguese King. Later, Pope Paul III, by the Bull "Aequem Reputamus" of 3rd November 1534, raised the funchal to the status of an Archdiocese and Goa to that of its suffragan, deputing the whole of India under the Diocese of Goa. Thus the importance of Cochin shot up and the Portuguese Viceroys furnished their town on the pattern of European cities, constructing well-planned roads, edifices, churches and monasteries. These are still visible in and around the present Fort Cochin.

BISHOP'S HOUSE, COCHIN

BISHOPS OF COCHIN

1. Dom Giorgio Temudo O.P 1557-1567

2. Dom Henrique De Tavora O.P. 1576-1578
3. Dom Antonio De Baja 1578-1578
4. Dom Matheus De Medina O.S.A. 1579-1588
5. Dom Andrea De Sant Maria O.F.M 1588-1610
6. Dom Sebastianos A Santa Pedro O..A. 1615-1624
7. Dom Luiz De Britto A Menezes O.S.A. 1628-1629
8. Dom Francesco Baretto 1630-1630
9. Dom Miguel Da Cruz Rangal O.P. 1633-1646
10. Dom Antonio Da Serpa 1647-1647
11. Dom Joao Celo 1650-1650
12. Dom Fabio Dos Reis 1668-1668
13. Dom Fernando Da santa Maria 1672-1672

14. Dom Antonio Da Santo Dionysio O.S.A. 1676-1685

15. Dom Pedro Da Silva 1688-1691

16. Dom Antonio Da Santa Teresa 1692-1692

17. Dom Pedro Pacheco O.P. 1694-1713

18. Dom Francesco Pedro Dos Martyres 1717-1717

19. Dom Francesco De Vasconselo S.J. 1722-1742

20. Dom Antonio De Conceisao 1745-1745

21. Dom Clement Jose Colacao Leita S.J. 1745-1776

22. Dom Sebastiao Da Costa 1777-1777

23. Dom Manuel De Santa Catherina O.C.D 1778-1785

24. Dom Jose De Soledad O.C.D. 1785-1818

25. Dom Tomas De Noronha E Britto O.P. 1819-1819

26. Dom Joakim De Santa Rita Boethello 1832-1832

27. Dom Joao Gomez Ferreira 1887-1897

28. Dom Matheas De Oliveira Xavier 1898-1908

29. Dom Jose Bento Martin Rebeiro 1909-1931

30. Dom Abilio Augusto Vas Das Neves 1934-1939

31. Dom Jose Vieira Alvarnaz 1942-1951

32. Rt. Rev. Dr. Alexander Edezhath 1952-1975

33. Rt. Rev. Dr. Joseph Kureethara 1975-1999

34. Rt. Rev Dr. John Thattumkal 2000-

On 4th December, 1524, Gama came to Cochin for the third time, now as the Viceroy of India. But on the 20th day of his arrival, to be precise on the day of Yuletide, he died. He was buried inside the nave of the Church of St. Anthony, the present St. Francis Assisi Church or the Dutch Church.

By the zealous activities of the missionaries of various congregations who arrived, the "Christ Order" in 1500, the Franciscans in 1503, Jesuits in 1541, Dominicans in 1551 and the Augustinians in 1579, all from Portugal, not fewer than 30,000 'St. Thomas Christians' on the Malabar coast were restored to the union of the Holy See. In recognition of this achievement, the Roman Pontiff, Pope Paul IV, established, by his famous Bull "Pro Excellento Praeeminentia", dated 4th February, 1557, the Diocese of Cochin and declared Goa as its Archdiocese. The Pope also declared thereby the magnificent Portuguese Church of Santa Cruz as the Cathedral of the new diocese. Its boundaries extended from Canannore in the north to Cape Comorin (Kanyakumari) and Ceylon (Sri Lanka) down south on the west coast and the whole east coast of the subcontinent going up north and stretching further east including Burma.

The first Portuguese Bishop of the Diocese of Cochin was a Dominican, Dom Giorgio Temudo O.P. (1558-1567). He herded his flock efficiently, settled many disputes and acted as the peace-maker between the St. Thomas Christians and the native Christians. By that time many early Christians had migrated from the region of Crangannore and settled at Fort Cochin and Mattanchery, the western and eastern parts of Cochin. It is but obvious that the city was rapidly developing under the Portuguese. Augustinian, Franciscan and Jesuit bishops followed Dom Giorgio. The Diocese of Cochin stood witness to many an important historical event during the period. One among them really worth mentioning is the Synod of Diamper held on 10th June 1599, conducted by the Archbishop, Alexis De Menezes of Goa. It was after this synod in which many 'St. Thomas Christians' pledged their fidelity to the Church of Rome, that a new vicariate was carved out of the diocese for these new followers. Since then the Diocese of Cochin has had the privilege to give birth to many new dioceses. As a result, the once vast 'mother diocese' has now shrunk to its present diminutive dimension.

Since 1646 the administration of the Diocese was not easy as it was often interrupted by the conquests of Cochin by the Dutch. Some prelates who were consecrated as Bishops of the Diocese either in Goa or in Lisbon could not even reach Cochin and those who did either Cochin or Kollam could not take charge. As a result, many factions, rebellions and schisms sprouted. In order to bring these dissidents back to the fold, the Holy See started sending Carmelite Missionaries. Thus was established the Vicariate of Malabar in 1657 which, later, on 13th March, 1709, was changed into the Vicariate of Verapoly with Bishop Angelo Francis OCD as its first Vicar Apostolic.

In 1663, the Dutch Calvinists captured the city of Cochin and destroyed all the Catholic institutions of the Portuguese except the St. Anthony's Church (the Dutch Church) and the Santa Cruz Cathedral. The protestant Dutch used the former for their religious services and the latter as an armoury. Hence the Portuguese Bishops who were appointed later on, had to tend to their diocese residing outside the city of Cochin. The next important development was

the conquest of Cochin by the British on 20th October 1795. They destroyed their enemy's armoury (old Santa Cruz Cathedral) first, of course but were more lenient towards the Catholics than the Dutch Calvinists.

During this juncture, due to the religio-political rivalries, the Holy See finally decided to hand over the major portion of the Diocese to the Vicariate of Verapoly. Thus on 24th April, 1838, the Diocese of Cochin was annexed to the Vicariate. This Papal Decree created some rift between Portugal and Rome but was solved later. On 23rd June, 1886, the great Pope Leo XIII promulgated the famous Concordat, called "Humanae Salutis Auctor" by which the Diocese of Cochin was restored to its original status and placed again as a suffragan under the Archdiocese of Goa. Simultaneously the Vicariate of Verapoly was raised to archdiocese and the Diocese of Quilon was erected as its suffragan. The emergence of these two dioceses was from the old Padroado Diocese of Cochin, which was erected on 4th February, 1557. Thus we can rightly say that Cochin Diocese, after Goa (1534) was the 'mother diocese' of all the bishoprics. From Cannannore in the north it stretched down to Cape Comorin and Ceylon in the south and went along the eastern coast of the peninsula all the way up north to include even Burma! The Diocese of Cochin is immensely pleased to see her progeny growing healthy and hearty though she herself has dwindled to the most diminutive in the country with only 236 sq.kms of territory!

After the Diocese was released from the 'care' of her daughter, Verapoly Vicariate in 1886, it was in a miserable condition. There was no Cathedral, nor any Bishop's House. The new Bishop Dom Joan Fereira lived in a rented house just in front of the gate of the present INS Dronacharya and later on at Alappuzha. He bought the current House (1888) from a Dutch family and began the construction of the existing Santa Cruz Cathedral. The 31st and the last Portuguese Bishop was Dom Jose Vieira Alvernaz (1942-1951). On 19th June 1952, by the Decree "Ea Redemptoris Verba" of Pope Pius XII, the new Diocese of Alleppy was erected, dismembering Cochin again and the administration of the Diocese was brought into the hands of the indigenous clergy. The first native bishop of Cochin was Dr. Alexander Edezhath (1952-1975) who was succeeded by Dr. Joseph Kureethara (1975-1999) on 22nd December 1975.

The late Bishop Joseph Kureethara was very keen on developing the Diocese at the socio-religious sphere. His Excellency established many institutions including a college, schools, hospitals and charitable homes, erected parishes and churches and established a new religious congregation for women called the 'Sisters of Holy Eucharist'. After a prolonged illness Bishop Joseph Kureethara was called to his heavenly reward on 5th January 1999. Rev. Dr. Josy Kandanattuthara, the then Chancellor, subsequently became the Apostolic Administrator of the Diocese. The Very Rev. Father served the fold and herded the flock diligently with his inborn qualities of humility and concern and care for all till the Diocese was

blessed with the appointment of a new bishop by the Pontiff, Pope John Paul II, on 25th June 2000.

The new Bishop, Rt. Rev. Dr. John Thattumkal, formerly a priest of the Diocese, is a member of the Congregation of the Fathers of St. Joseph Benedict Cottolengo. His Excellency had served the Diocese in different capacities like Judicial Vicar, Procurator and Pro - Chancellor prior to his joining the Religious Order. A brilliant scholar, he has taken his doctorate in Canon and Civil Laws from the Pontifical Urban University, Rome. His thesis on the social structure of the Catholic Church in India entitled "Caste and the Catholic Church in India" published by the Urban University had stirred a hornets nest way back in the 1980's. His Excellency's "UT UNUM SINT OMNIA OMNIBUS FACTUS SUM" is indicative of his outlook and attitude towards life, especially, spiritual. Within this short span of his reign the new prelate has put his own imprint on the history of the Diocese. Liked, loved and respected by the people in general and the faithful in particular, Rt. Rev. Dr. John Thattumkal has become quite notable among the Catholic Bishops and noteworthy among the intelligentsia

Idukki

History: The diocese of Idukki was erected as a suffragan diocese of Ernakulam-Angamaly, by Pope John Paul II on 19th December 2002 by his Apostolic Constitution "Maturescens catholica fideis" and appointed Fr Mathew Anikuzhikattil from the diocese of Kothamangalam as its first bishop on the same day. The news about the new diocese and the appointment of Fr. Anikuzhikattil was announced on 15th January 2003. The new diocese was bifurcated from the diocese of Kothamangalam which comprises of the high ranges and the low ranges in the district of Idukki. Fr. Anikuzhikattil was ordained bishop by Major Archbishop Cardinal Varkey Vithayathil, C.Ss.R., on 2nd March 2002 in St. George's Forane Church, Vazhathope. The new diocese comprises of the foranes of Churuli, Erattayar, Koompanpara, Parathode, Rajakkad, Thankamani, Vazhathope and Vellathooval. There are 112 parishes, one pastoral centre, 11 monasteries for men, 9 Higher Secondary Schools, one college, 17 High Schools, 47 Up and LP Schools, 7 CBSE Schools, One school for the mentally handicapped, one ITC, two nursing schools, three hospitals, 16 dispensaries three homes for the orphans and four boys' homes in the new diocese. St. George's Church, Vazhathope is the Cathedral of the new diocese.

Kottayam

Kottayam is an important commercial centre of Kerala, India, thanks to its strength as a

producer of cash crops. Most of India's natural rubber originates from the acres of well-kept plantations of Kottayam, also home to the Rubber Board, One of the country's primary commodities board. Kottayam, among the state's more mountainous districts, provides some of Kerala's finest natural scenes sandwiched as it is between serene palm-fringed backwaters on the west and the Western ghats on the east.

Catholic Diocese

History: Pope Pius X by his Bull "Universi Christiani" of 1911 erected the Vicariate Apostolic of Kottayam for the Suddists within the Syro-Malabar Church and transferred Mar Mathew Makil, the then Vicar Apostolic of Changanacherry to Kottayam. On 21 December 1923 when the Syro-Malabar hierarchy was erected Kottayam became a diocese. On 29 April 1955 the jurisdiction of the bishop of Kottayam was extended to all Suddists within the then existing Metropolitan Province of Ernakulam. On January 10th when the diocese of Changanacherry was made a Metropolitan See Kottayam was made its suffragan.

Bp. Mar Kuriakose Kunnacherry was nominated Co-adjutor Bishop of Kottayam on 9 Dec. 1967 and was ordained Bishop on 24 Feb. 1968. When Bp. Mar Thomas Tharayil retired, Mar Kunnacherry took charge of the diocese as Bishop on 5 May 1974. On 28 Dec. 1998, Fr. Mathew Moolakkat, OSB, was nominated Co-adjutor Bishop of Kottayam. He was ordained Bishop on 6 Jan. 1999.

Kollam - Quilon

Diocese of Quilon, in India on the Malabar coast, suffragan of Verapoly, comprises the southern half of the native state of Travancore, and the British territories of Tangacherry and Anjengo. It stretches from the northern branch of the River Ranee down to Cape Comorin, is bounded on the east by the slope of the Ghauts, and on the west by the Indian Ocean, on the coast of which, however, there is one narrow strip belonging to the Diocese of Cochin. Out of a total population of 1,600,000, the Catholics number 116,090, having 161 churches and 29 chapels, served by 59 priests, of whom 17 are Discalced Carmelite Fathers from various provinces of Europe, the rest being native clergy. The bishop's residence, cathedral, and the preparatory seminary with 32 students are all at Quilon, and there are 9 candidates for the priesthood at Kandy Seminary, Ceylon.

HISTORY

Down to 1838 the territory comprised by this diocese formed part of the Padroado Diocese of Cochin (see COCHIN, DIOCESE OF). In that year, by the Brief "Multa Præclare", jurisdiction was withdrawn from the See of Cochin, and this portion of its territory was placed under the Vicar Apostolic of Malabar (Verapoly). In 1845 its separation into a distinct vicariate was decreed by the Holy See. This arrangement was effected in 1853, and on the establishment of the hierarchy in 1886 it was finally elevated into an Episcopal see, suffragan to Verapoly.

List of prelates (all Carmelites):

Bernardino Baccinelli of St. Teresa, pro-vicar Apostolic, 1845-53; Bernardino Pontanova of St. Agnes, nominated 1853 but died shortly after; Maurice of St. Albert, nominated 1854 but died shortly after; Charles Hyacinth Valerga, 1854-64; Marie Ephrem Garrelon, 1866-68; Ildephonsus Borgna, 1871-83; Ferdinand Maria Ossi, 1883, became first bishop in 1887, died 1905; Aloysius Maria Benziger, present bishop from 1905. RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES
 Discalced Carmelite missionaries, 17; Convent of Discalced Carmelites at Trivandrum, 5 fathers; Sisters of the Third Order Apostolic of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, 37 (of whom five are Europeans) and 2 novices, for the education of girls and the care of orphans, with convents at Trivandrum, Quilon, and Tangacherry; Missionary Canonesses of St. Augustine, 14 European sisters and 13 native lay sisters, for the education of girls and the care of orphans, with convents at Mulagamude, Cape Comorin, and Nagercoil; Sisters of the Holy Cross (from Menzingen), 9 sisters, for nursing the sick in government hospitals at Trivandrum and Quilon; Sisters of the Holy and Immaculate Heart of Mary (from Pondicherry), 8 sisters, 3 novices, and 5 postulants, for instruction of girls in vernacular schools, with convent and novitiate at Cagneracode.

BOYS' SCHOOLS

The Children's Friend Normal School, Quilon, for training Malayalam schoolmasters, with 59 students; St. Francis's Normal School, Nagercoil, for training Tamil schoolmasters, with 72 students; St. Joseph's English High School, Trivandrum, with 633 pupils; St. Aloysius's English High School, Quilon, with 413 pupils.

GIRLS' SCHOOLS

Under Sisters of Third Order of Carmel: Holy Angels' Convent, Trivandrum, boarding establishment with 32 boarders, English high school with 435 pupils, industrial and technical school with 37 pupils; St. Joseph's Convent, Quilon, boarding establishment with 27 boarders, English middle school with 173 pupils, industrial school with 37 pupils; Convent of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, Tangacherry, boarding establishment with 15 boarders, English middle school with 71 in the English and 39 in the Malayalam department, industrial school with 31 pupils.

Under Canonesses of St. Augustine:

Convent of the Holy Infant Jesus, Mulagamude, vernacular school with 350 pupils, industrial school with 276 pupils, besides 1250 outdoor lace-workers; Convent of the Immaculate Conception, Cape Comorin, vernacular and industrial schools with 120 pupils; St. Joseph's School, Nagercoil, with 200 pupils.

Under Sisters of the Holy Heart of Mary:

Blessed Margaret's Home, Cagneracode, vernacular school with 60 pupils.

Besides these there are two mixed schools, viz., St. Joseph's Middle English School, Anjengo, with 173 pupils; St. Leo's vernacular middle school, Tekekaray, with 113 pupils. In other places, 132 vernacular primary schools with 7060 pupils. Total number of schools in the diocese, 144; total of pupils, 10,857.

CHARITABLE INSTITUTIONS

Orphanage for boys at Mulagamude, with 15 inmates; Holy Angels' Orphanage, for girls, Trivandrum, with 83 inmates; St. Joseph's Orphanage, for girls, Quilon, with 47 inmates; Mount Carmel Orphanage, for girls, Tangacherry, with 21 orphans; Infant Jesus Orphanage, Mulagamude, with 276 inmates, foundling home and widows' home; dispensary at Mulagamude; nursing department in general hospital, Trivandrum women and children's hospital, Trivandrum, and district hospital, Quilon, under Sisters of the Holy Cross.

Thiruvananthapuram - Trivandrum. Changanacherry

The place named Changanacherry entered into the history books in A.D. 90. It has been believed by some people that this name is derived from a place named "Changannattusserry".

An interesting story mentions that during the reign of King Udaya Marthanda Varma of

Travencore, steps were taken to build a Catholic church by giving out plots for sowing 'Changazhy', 'Nazhy' 'Uri', 'Payattupadu' (various malayalam terms of measuring grains). All these terms put together apparently made up the name of the place to Changanachery. There is also a school of thought which says that the former name of this place was "Shamghunadasserry". Still others vouch for the fact that it was named after "Thenganamsserry" which is an extension of the word Thengana, one of the suburbs of Changanachery. It was in 980 AD, that the famed Diwan of Travencore Veluthampy Dalava made a market place at Changanacherry, realizing the possibilities of development of this place. That market has grown to today's "Janapath". Towards the memory of the centennial celebrations of the place in 1905, the people installed the "Anchu Vilakku" (Five Lamps) seen near the Boat Jetty. The lamp signifies the 'unity in diversity' of the local ethnic and religious sects - a truly fitting tribute to the ethos of Changanachery. ETTUVEETIL PILLAMAR In the history of Changanachery, there is high regard for the local chieftains called Ettuveetil Pillamar. It is said that the King Marthanda Varma had put the eight chieftains to death and that the curse of these people were on the king. Whatever the truth behind this legend, the Kings of Travancore were rather superstitious and are said to have avoided Changanachery. The tomb of these heroes can be seen here.

In the vast land of India, the small town of Changanachery, is a good example of religious harmony, where people of all communities and ethnic backgrounds have amicably co-existed for centuries, enriching each other's lives.

HINDUS

One of the ancient place of Hindu worship in Changanacherry is the Subrahmanya Temple at Perunna. This temple was built in 753 A.D. 'Urazhma' Devaswam Board looks after the administrative affairs of the temple. The well known "Temple Entrance Declaration" that introduced a new age in the social set up of the state was first applied in this temple. During the reign of Tekkumcore kings, the temple called Kavil Ambalam or Sree Bhagavathy Temple (Puzhavath) was built. This is near the Munsif Court of Changanacherry that stands very close to the Old Muslim Mosque here. Bhadra Kali is the goddess of this temple. An Auditorium and a 'Kalyana Mandapam' (a special building for weddings) are associated with this temple. This temple welcomes the procession of the "Chandanakudam" celebration that starts from the Mosque at Puthoor. Sree Krishna Jayanthi (the celebration of the birthday of Sree Krishna) is the most important celebration of the Sreekrishnan Swamy Temple at Mathumoola. There are still many other famous temples such as Thrikkannapuram Temple (Perunna), Sree Bhagavathy Temple (Perunna), Sree Bhagavathy Temple, Sree Maha Deva Temple (Vazhapally) which are all within the Municipal confines of Changanachery. Another notable place in Changanachery is the "Anandasheem Guru Mandiram" which was founded by Mahatma Gandhi. The two visits of Sree Narayana Guru have added much to the significance of this Mandhiram. The things that were used by Sree Narayana Guru at that time have been kept as sacred relics to this day.

CHRISTIANS

In 1885, under the leadership of Maliekkal Muthachan, the Metropolitan church was established. The major celebration of the church is the festival of St. Sebastian (January) and of St. Mary (September). This Metropolitan Catholic church is the oldest Christian church in the diocese. The famous pilgrim festival of St. Mary is celebrated in Parel Church, located at Changanachery. The celebration lasts for three days, the 6th, 7th and 8th of December. A huge gathering from various religious beliefs and backgrounds visit this place during these days. The Parel Church is the only Marian pilgrim centre in the diocese. The Church measures 1000 Ft by 521 ft and has an area of 51,000 sq. ft. Holy Heart Church (Chethipuzha), Fathima Matha Church, Gethsemane Church (Mathumoola) St. Joseph's Church (Verloor) and Antony's church (Perunna) are the other main churches at Changanachery.

MUSLIMS

Ashur Meera Sahib from Madeena was the one who gave leadership to the construction of the old Mosque in Changanachery. Due to the request of this highly respectable personality for a Muslim place of worship at Changanachery, the King of Thekkumcore gladly gave him the land for it. The land was very close to the Kavil Temple and the Metropolitan church. The Puthoor Mosque which stands opposite to the State Transport office at Changanachery is said to have been built by a group of people from the old Mosque around 600 years back. For the last 329 years, the "Chandanakkudam" celebration has been held by the Puthoor Mosque on every 25th and 26th of December. It still continues without a break.

FESTIVALS

December is a month of celebration for the people in Changanachery. They celebrate Mandala Pooja (Hindus), Christmas (Christians) and Chandanakundam (Muslims) together during this time. People irrespective of their religious affiliations, go from one place of worship to another. There is a historical basis to the marvelous scene of the Christian, Hindu and Muslim worship places stands together in Changanachery. It is indeed a history of religious harmony. It was Udaya Marthanda Varama who built the Kavil Temple near the palace. He divided same land for the worship buildings of Hindus, Christians and Muslims. He wished to hear the different religious prayers at the same time from the same place. According to the guidance and construction of Udaya Marthanda Varma, the famous Chandanakundam (pot made up of Sandal wood) celebrations began. On every Christmas evening the 25th of December, the procession with Chandanakundam starts from, Jumma Masjid. The decorated elephants carry the young men with the sacred pots. It is the Kavil Temple that gives the first welcome to this procession. This procession, after receiving warm welcomes in various places by the people from different spheres of life, reaches of Puthoor Mosque by the morning of the 27th December. Changanachery is the centre of two major religious groups. The Arch Metropolis of Catholic church and the centre of Nair Service Society (N.S.S) are both located here.

Palai

History of Pala dates back to the Sanghaya period, when, it is believed, that a few Brahmin families settled in Pala.

The first settlements were known in connection with the cultivation of spices, especially tamarind. Even now the 'Pala tamarind' is world famous. Pala had contacts with the outside world long ago. An Armenian had an important role to play in the establishment of the Lalam Church (New) in 1663 A.D. The contacts with the outside world were mainly for commerce. It is assumed that the jungle route to Gudalloor through Pala, Bharananganam or Aruvithura brought a lot of 'Vellala Chettiyar' people from Tamil Nadu, for trade.

There are many legends about how this region became known as 'Pala'. Pala is believed to be an old time holy place of Hindus. The very word Pala was derived from 'Palazhi' the mythological Ocean of Milk from which nectar was churned out. It is also believed that the word comes from 'Palathu Chethyar' families the then prominent settlers of the region. Another school maintains that the first group of Christian settlers who came from 'paloor' was instrumental in christening the place 'Pala'. According to another school, the 'palayam' (fort) of the Meenachil Karthas (the ruling family) was situated in the region and so the name Pala got established. The first Kartha families were known as 'Njavakattu Karthas'.

Pala was the headquarters of the Meenachil region. 'Meenachil derives its name from the famous Meenachil river. It is believed that the famous Pala market was established in 1736. It is then Meenachil Karthas, who decided to allot a place to the Christians to form a market in and around the places where the present Government hospital is situated. It is believed that later a 'Meenakshi' temple was established somewhere on the shores and over centuries, the holy abode of Meenakshi became known as Meenachil. « Pala Municipal Bus stand.

The Athirampuzha, Erattupetta Road was established in 1868. The Pala, Thodupuzha Road became operational in 1893.

Buses started plying the Pala-Kottayam route in 1920 . Pala became a municipality in 1949.

Meenachilites are a very hospitable lot. They are nostalgic too. They return to their roots at least once a year, no matter how distant they are placed. Formally it used to be during the local festivals. Summer time special trains too can not contain the in flow.

People are generous. The best institutions in the town like the shrine (Kurushupally), and the famous colleges were built by contributions from its generous people.

Palaites are religious. On Sundays, roads bear a deserted look. Religious festivals are great occasions for celebrations. The way of the cross on Good Friday is a big draw.

Tapioca is the staple food.

Diocese of Palai, Syro Malabar Church

History: Pope Pius XII by the Bull "Quo Ecclesiarum" issued on July 25, 1950, bifurcated the Diocese of Changanacherry ' and out of the territory covered by the Foranes of Palai, Muttuchira, Kuravilangad, Anakkallu(including the present Foranes of Aruvithura, Cherpunkal, Elanji, Thudangnad) and Ramapuram erected the Diocese of Palai as Suffragan of the Archdiocese of Ernakulam, with Mar Sebastian Vayalil as the Bishop.

On August 1956, when the Holy See by the Apostolic Constitution "Regnum Coelorum" raised the Diocese of Changanacherry to the status of an Archdiocese and constituted the new ecclesiastical Province of Changanacherry, the Diocese of Palai became one of its suffragans.

Following the resignation of Mar Sebastian Vayalil, Mar Joseph Pallikaparampil, who was the Auxiliary Bishop from 1973, was appointed Bishop of Palai on 6th February 1981 and was installed on 25 March 1981. When Mar Joseph Pallikaparampil resigned, Mar Joseph Kallarangatt was appointed Bishop of Palai on 18 March 2004 and was ordained Bishop on 2 May 2004.

The Syro Malabar Church

HISTORY OF THE SYRO-MALABAR CHURCH

The Syro-Malabar Church was known as the Church of the St.Thomas Christians until the 18th century because it was founded by St Thomas, one of the apostles of Jesus Christ. St.Thomas came to India in 52 A.D. He died as a Martyr in a place called Mylapore near the present town of Chennai (Madras). His tomb is still venerated there.

As a Church that existed outside the Roman Empire, the Church of the St. Thomas Christians had little contact with the Roman or the other Churches within the Empire. At the same time it maintained communion with the Church of Rome through the Church in the Persian Empire, which later came to be known as the East Syrian or Chaldean or Babylonian Church. It is believed that Christianity in Persian Empire was introduced by the disciples of St. Thomas. It seems that the Christians in India had contact with these Christians of the Persian Empire from very early times. Given the commercial relations of India of those days such a contact was possible.

In the middle of the 4th century or later a group of Christians from these communities under the leadership of a merchant called Thomas of Kinayi migrated to the southern parts of India Known as Kerala now. The descendants of this latter group are called Knananites or Southists and the former Northists. Both of them belong the Syro-Malabar Church. Even now they live as two separate communities with their own diocese and parishes.

For some unknown reasons at least from the 8th century until the end of the 16th century the Bishops of the Syro-Malabar Church were sent from the East Syrian Church, appointed by the Patriarch of the East Syrian Church. There is a tradition which says that there were Indian Bishops in the beginning. But written proofs are very few to say anything concrete about them.

Because of the Portuguese colonisation of parts of India in the early 16th century and of the consequent ecclesiastical arrangements, from 1600 onwards European Bishops from the Latin Church were appointed by the Pope to govern the St.Thomas Christians. Their rule ended in 1896 in which year indigenous Bishops from among the St.Thomas Christians were appointed

to the Church of St.Thomas Christians. By that time the ancient name "Church of St.Thomas Christians" had given way to the present name "Syro-Malabar Church".

During the period from 1653 to 1887 many divisions took place in the Syro-Malabar Church mainly in the attempt of the Syro-Malabarians to get rid of the rule of the Latin Bishops who often gave little value to the ancient system of administration of the St.Thomas Christians and their Christian heritage. The missionaries seems to have had the impression that the St.Thomas Christians were not Catholics but Nestorians since they accepted Bishops from the East Syrian Church which officially had adopted Nestorianism. As they were living at a time soon after the council of Trent in which decision was taken to deal toughly with heretics, they were all out to "reduce the Syro-Malabarians to the Roman obedience." There were also the commercial interests of the Portuguese behind the appointment of Latin Bishops to rule the Syro-Malabarians. As the last Bishop appointed by the East Syrian Patriarch died in 1597 the Portuguese tightened their hold on the Syro-Malabarians and never permitted any more East Syrian Bishops to enter Malabar. In 1599 the Latin archbishop of Goa convened a synod at Udayamperoor in the present Kerala and made the people accept many customs with which they were not familiar. He also spread the news in Europe that Syro-Malabarians were "reduced to the Roman obedience" and accepted Catholicism as well the authority of the Pope in this Synod. The fact,however,was not so. The Syro-Malabarians had never accepted Nestorianism even though they had contact with the East Syrians and they were not at all involved in any of the Christological controversies. On the contrary whenever they got a chance they reiterated their allegiance to the Pope and their communion with the Church of Rome. In any case the rule of the Latin Bishops was never accepted by the Syro-Malabarians and the climax of their protest was what is known in the history as Coonan Cross Oath. The leadership of the St.Thomas Christian community pledged in this oath not to accept any more the rule of the Jesuit missionaries from among whom the Bishops were appointed. It was in 1653. History tells us that the St.Thomas Christians who gathered at Mattancherry near Fort Kochi under the leadership of the archdeacon to receive a Bishop from Persia took the oath touching the cross there that they would not obey any more the Jesuits who were the main European Missionaries in India at that time; Coonan Cross Oath was a revolt against the oppressive rule of the Europeans and not against the Pope or the Holy See. After the Oath 12 priests at the instigation of one of them laid hands on the head of the archdeacon and "ordained him Bishop". There began the division in the Church of the St.Thomas Christians.

There was tension in the Church because the faithful wanted to keep the true faith but not under the Bishop who was appointed by the Portuguese crown. Some remained in schism while others came back to the obedience of the Latin Bishop. Those who remained under the "pseudo Bishop" later accepted the tradition of the Antiochean non-Catholic tradition and were known as the Orthodox Church. Later because of the missionary work of the Protestants there arose other non-Catholic Churches in India, particularly in Kerala.

There were continuous attempts for reestablishing the lost communion. But nothing succeeded mainly because of the opposition from the European missionaries. It was to obtain permission for receiving this group into the Catholic Church that Fr. Joseph Kariattil and Fr. Thomas Paremmakkal, two priests from the Church of St. Thomas Christians, went to Rome in the 18th century. Fr. Kariattil was ordained archbishop of the St. Thomas Christians, and had received a mandate to receive the dissident group with its bishop to the Catholic communion. Unfortunately Bishop Kariattil on his way to Kerala died in Goa in 1786. Finally, in 1930 a group of them under the leadership of their archbishop called Mar Ivanios reestablished their communion with the Catholic Church and the Holy See accepted it as a separate Catholic Church with the name of Syro-Malankara Church.

Those who remained in communion of Pope after the Coonan Cross Oath later came to be known as the Syro-Malabarians. It was a name given by the Roman authorities to refer to the Catholic St. Thomas Christians. The name Syro-Malabar was chosen apparently to avoid confusion with the Malabar rite which existed as a part of the Latin Church in the Coromandel coast of India. Even those who remained in communion were fighting for getting Bishops of their own rite and nation. It became a reality only in 1896 when the Apostolic Vicariates of Trichur, Ernakulam and Changanachery were established and three indigenous priests were appointed as vicars apostolic.

Ever since the Syro-Malabar Church grew phenomenally in all aspects. Because of the increased mobility of people many members of the Syro-Malabar Church emigrated to other parts of India and foreign countries. Though they remain members of the Syro-Malabar Church, they had little chance of following their own traditions in their life of faith because only the Latin Church was present in many of the lands they migrated as U.S.A and Canada. As a result of the teaching of the second Vatican council there was an awakening both in the Bishops of this Church as well as the faithful scattered all over the world about their identity and their duty to preserve and promote their tradition. The Code of Canons of the Oriental Churches or the Oriental Canon Law prescribes that these traditions be preserved and fostered. That means that provision must be made for these faithful to practice and grow in their own tradition everywhere in the world.

Various ways are prescribed for providing pastoral care for these migrant Eastern Christians. The first one is to set apart a priest in the Latin Parish for the care of Eastern Christians. If that does not ensure proper care, then vicar general under the local Bishop is to be appointed. If that too becomes ineffective because of any reason, particularly because the number of the faithful to be taken care of is too big, then a diocese should be established for them.

The Kananaya community had their own parishes and in 1911 a separate vicariate apostolic, Kottayam was erected for them. Bishop Kuriakose Kunnacherry is their present bishop. He has jurisdiction over all the Kananaya faithful within the provinces of Ernakulam, Changanacherry, Trichur and Tellicherry. The auxiliary bishop of Kottayam as Syncellus or representative of the Bishop of Kottayam resides at Kannur in Northern Kerala and looks after the needs of the Kananaya faithful in the Northern Kerala.

At the time of the Coonan Cross Oath many of the Kananaya parishes also had accepted the "pseudo bishop" ordained by the twelve priests. In the course of time they too accepted the Antiochean way of worship and customs. When the reestablishment of communion came about in 1930 some of the Kananaya parishes also followed the same. However instead of joining the Syro-Malankara Church they joined the diocese of Kottayam in the Syro-Malabar Church even though they follow the Antiochean liturgy. They have separate parishes and parish priests within the diocese of Kottayam.

The St. Thomas Christians in India were under the rule of the Latin bishops from 1600 to 1896. In 1887 the St. Thomas Christians were given two separate ecclesiastical circumscriptions called Apostolic vicariates. They were Trichur and Kottayam. In 1896 there took place a reorganization as a result three vicariates, namely Trichur, Ernakulam and Changanacherry came into existence. Three Syro - Malabar priests were ordained bishops and put in charge of these units. These indigenous bishops were John Menacherry (Trichur), Louis Pazheparampil (Ernakulam) and Mathew Makeil (Changanacherry). In 1911 a new vicariate at Kottayam was established for the Kananites and Mar Makeil was transferred to this new vicariate. Later in 1923 the Apostolic Vicariates were made dioceses and the diocese of Ernakulam was made Archdiocese and its bishop archbishop. In the same year the Syro-Malabar hierarchy was established. In 1957 the diocese of Changanacherry was made archdiocese. Having two archbishops with no common head is not customary in the Eastern Churches. So this new provision created an anomalous juridical situation in the Syro - Malabar Church. As the new Oriental Canon Law was promulgated in 1990 this situation could not be continued.

Canon Law foresees only four categories of sui iuris Churches and the Syro-Malabar Church did not fall into any of them. The four categories are the following: Patriarchal, Major Archiepiscopal, Metropolitan and other. So on 16 December 1992 Pope John Paul II declared the Syro-Malabar Church as a Major Archiepiscopal Church and appointed Cardinal Antony Padiyara, the then Archbishop of Ernakulam as the first Major Archbishop. Had such a step not been taken the functioning of the Syro-Malabar Church would have been very difficult. Taking into consideration the particular situation of the Syro - Malabar Church and the poor state of health of Cardinal Antony Padiyara the Pope had appointed also a delegate of him to discharge the duties of the Major Archbishop. He was Archbishop Abraham Kattumana, who

was a Vatican Ambassador in African countries. Archbishop Kattumana died unexpectedly during his visit to Rome in April 1995. Since the post was a temporary one none else was appointed to take his place.

In November 1996 Cardinal Padiyara resigned from his office as Major Archbishop. In his place instead of allowing the synod to elect a new Major Archbishop the Pope appointed an Administrator in the person of Archbishop Varkey Vithayathil, C.Ss.R. He was a priest belonging to the Redemptorist Congregation. In December 1998 he was appointed Major Archbishop by the Pope. In February 2001 Archbishop Vithayathil was created a Cardinal by Pope John Paul II.

According to the Oriental Canon Law the Major Archbishop is the head of the Syro - Malabar Church immediately under the Pope. However his authority is limited to the dioceses that are the suffragans of the archdioceses of Ernakulam, Changanacherry, Trichur and Tellicherry. The Syro - Malabar dioceses in other parts of India and abroad are directly under the Pope. Even though according to the Oriental Canon Law the Synod of this Church has the right to appoint new bishops, these rights were reserved to the Pope until recently. On 3 January 2004 the Pope restituted this right to the Bishops' Synod.

The Major Archbishop of the Syro-Malabar Church is automatically the archbishop of Ernakulam - Angamaly archdiocese also because it is determined so by the Holy See. So whoever is elected as Major Archbishop or whoever exercises his authority unless otherwise decided by the Holy See will have two offices. As Archbishop of Ernakulam - Angamaly he has his office at Ernakulam. His office as Major Archbishop is at Mount St. Thomas.

ADMINISTRATIVE SYSTEM

As in the secular administrative systems there are three wings in the administration of the Syro-Malabar Church also: Executive or administrative, legislative and judicial. The Major Archbishop, his officials, various commissions and committees, the Permanent Synod and the Major Archiepiscopal Assembly form the executive. His officials include his chancellors and finance officer or officers. Various commissions are appointed by the Major Archbishop for dealing with matters as liturgy, pastoral care of the migrant Syro-Malabarians and so on. The members of the commissions are ordinarily bishops. The Permanent Synod is an advisory council of bishops to help the Major Archbishop in fulfilling his function. Three of them are elected by the Synod and one is nominated by the Major Archbishop. Among the three elected at least two must be bishops who govern dioceses. Including the Major Archbishop there are five members in the Permanent Synod.

The Major Archiepiscopal Assembly is a meeting of the representatives of the various sections of faithful of the Syro-Malabar Church. It is to meet at least once in five years. If necessary the Major Archbishop can convene it as often as needed. The first Major Archiepiscopal Assembly of the Syro-Malabar Church was held from 9 to 12 November 1998 at Mount St. Thomas.

The Synod of Bishops is the legislative body. All the bishops of the Syro-Malabar Church are members in it and have voting rights. It can enact laws for the Syro-Malabar Church. If they are liturgical laws they will be applicable for all the dioceses; but if disciplinary they are applicable only in those dioceses which fall within the proper territory of the Syro-Malabar Major Archbishop.

For judicial activities there are the Superior Tribunal and the Major Archiepiscopal Ordinary Tribunal. The Superior Tribunal is the Synod itself. However it exercises this function through three bishops elected from among the members of the synod. One of them is nominated as the Moderator. The Major Archiepiscopal Ordinary Tribunal will have its own personnel. They are not bishops. The personnel can be anyone with the prescribed qualifications. The head of the Ordinary Tribunal is known as president.

Dioceses and Bishops

Currently there are 26 dioceses in the Syro-Malabar Church. However according to the decision of the Holy See only 15 of them are considered to be the proper territory of the Syro-Malabar Major Archbishop. They are Belthangady, Changanacherry, Ernakulam-Angamaly, Irinjalakuda, Kanjirapally, Kothamangalam, Idukki, Kottayam, Mananthavady, Palai, Palghat, Tellicherry, Thamarassery, Thuckalay and Trichur. He has full authority only over these 15 dioceses. Out of these 15 dioceses four are archdioceses. They are Ernakulam-Angamaly, Changanacherry, Trichur and Tellicherry. Every diocese within the proper territory is a suffragan of one of these archdioceses. The archdiocesan wise distribution is as follows: Ernakulam-Angamaly: Kothamangalam; Idukki; Changanacherry: Kottayam, Palai, Kanjirapally and Thuckalay; Trichur: Irinjalakuda and Palghat; Tellicherry: Mananthavady, Thamarassery and Belthangady.

Eleven dioceses are outside the proper territory and they are directly under the Pope. Over them the Major Archbishop has only very limited authority. At the same time their bishops are members of the Syro-Malabar Bishops' Synod. These dioceses are not suffragans of any of the Syro-Malabar archdioceses but of the nearby Latin archdioceses. The eleven dioceses

outside the proper territory are: Adilabad, Bijnor, Chanda, Gorakhpur, Jagdalpur, Kalyan, Rajkot, Sagar, Satna, Ujjain and St. Thomas Diocese in Chicago.

In the archdioceses and dioceses within the proper territory and in the dioceses of Kalyan and St. Thomas in Chicago the authority of the respective bishops is over the Syro-Malabar Catholics only. The authority over the Syro-Malankara and Latin Catholics of these areas are under the respective Syro-Malankara or Latin bishop. On the other hand in all other dioceses the authority of the Syro-Malabar bishop is exclusive. That is to say all Catholics, whether they are Syro-Malabarian, Syro-Malankarite or Latin living in these areas are under the Syro-Malabar bishop of the place. Similarly the Syro-Malabarians living in other areas are under the local Latin bishop. For example the Syro-Malabarians even though they have many parishes in Bangalore are under the Latin archdiocese of Bangalore