

The Times of India, 17/8/21

Key Syro-Malabar Church synod begins

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Kochi: Major Archbishop of the Syro-Malabar Church cardinal George Alencherry said that the Synod of the Church, which began on Monday, would be inscribed in golden letters in its history. His comment came in the backdrop of the Synod's plan to decide on implementing a uniform mode of celebrating holy mass across all dioceses in the Church.

The cardinal was speaking at his inaugural address in the Synod on Monday evening via video conferencing. The cardinal thanked the Holy See for the letter issued by Pope Francis, exhorting all the clergy, religious and lay faithful of the Church to proceed to a prompt implementation of the uniform mode of celebrating the holy mass. The cardinal reminded the Synod about the Church's duty to humbly follow the direction of the Pope.

The Synod is being presided over by cardinal Alencherry, and he declared the initiation of the Synod after lighting a candle on Monday evening at St Thomas Mount in Kakkanad, the headquarters of the Church. The cardinal in his inaugural address expressed his concern



Cardinal George Alencherry declared the initiation of the Synod after lighting a candle at St Thomas Mount in Kakkanad on Monday

over the rise in Covid cases in Kerala and the country and urged the faithful to cooperate with the government to fight against the pandemic. The Synod will be held for two hours each evening from Monday to Friday till August 27. This arrangement is based on the time difference between countries.

Protests outside Church HQ

Almaya Munnettam, a laity organisation in the Ernakulam Angamaly archdiocese, staged a protest outside the Church headquarters where cardinal Alencherry was presiding over the synod. They demanded action against the cardinal in the backdrop of the HC directing him to face trial in the case relating to the land deal issue in the archdiocese.

Synod of Syro-Malabar Church gets under way

Mass celebration one of key points of discussion

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
KOCHI

The 29th Synod of the Bishops of the Syro-Malabar Church, led by Cardinal and Major Archbishop George Alencherry, got under way here on Monday.


The deliberations of the Synod will be conducted online in the background of COVID-19.

A total of 61 Bishops from India and abroad will participate in the Synod, said a spokesperson for the Syro-Malabar church.

The Synod will continue up to August 27 with each of the days having two hours of interactions among the Synod members in view of the differences in the time zones of the participating Bishops.

One of the key issues that will come up before the Synod is the way Mass should be celebrated.

There have been differences of opinion over the issue. While there is a group

 A total of 61 Bishops from India and abroad will participate in the Synod

SPOKESPERSON
Syro-Malabar church

that has argued for the Mass being celebrated facing the people, there is another group that advocates the more traditional celebration of the Mass with the celebrant facing away from the congregation.

A group of 466 priests from the Ernakulam-Angamaly Archdiocese has written to the Vatican demanding that the Mass should be celebrated with the celebrant facing the people.

The group of priests said that the practice had been on in the archdiocese for the past 50 years and it should be continued.

Similar petitions are learnt to have been sent to the Vatican from dioceses where "people-facing"

Mass is celebrated.

Protest by laity forum
Meanwhile, Almaya Munnettam, a group of reform-minded Catholics in the Archdiocese of Ernakulam-Angamaly, demanding more transparency in church administration, has protested against Cardinal Alencherry heading the Synod.

The group staged a protest in front of Mount St. Thomas, the headquarters of the church at Kakkanad on Monday.

A spokesperson for Almaya Munnettam said that since the Kerala High Court had said that the Cardinal should face trial, he should step down from his position.

The group also reiterated its demand that the Cardinal should make good the loss suffered by the archdiocese on account of the sale of lands that belonged to the archdiocese.

The New Indian Express. 12/8/21

Uniform Mass celebration: Priests appeal to Pope

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Kochi

SEEKING a continuance of performing the Holy Mass that has been followed over 50 years, the priests of Ernakulam-Angamaly archdiocese sent a memorandum to the Pope on Tuesday. The memorandum was signed by 466 priests belonging to the archdiocese.

The memorandum has also been sent to the Prefect of the Oriental Congregation and Apostolic Nuncio in India.

“The mind of Pope Francis does not want to impose the uniform mode celebration in all eparchies. This will definitely create conflict over unity. If the bishops are walking together with the people like in the revision of the text in

the Mass, the mode of celebration would have been discussed at the diocesan level, especially in eparchies where the Holy Mass is celebrated by facing the people for more than fifty years,” stated Fr Kuriakose Mundadan, Presbyteral council secretary,

Major Archeparchy of Ernakulam-Angamaly, in the letter of appeal to the bishops of Syro Malabar Synod.

“In our Major Archeparchy, the mode of celebration other than Holy Mass facing the people will have drastic repercussions. Our situation is not all ready for a 50-50 formula of celebrating the Mass. If the Synod is going to impose it, that will be the most imprudent action in the history of Syro Malabar Church,” said Fr Mundadan.



the money as per their demand. They broke his leg and hit him on his face and stomach," said 31-year-old Dayana George. As

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The New Indian
Express, July 21, 2021

Priests call for further discussion on new liturgy

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Kochi

THE Syrian Catholic Liturgical Forum, a body of priests from various dioceses of the Syro Malabar Church, on Friday urged the upcoming Synod — to be held online — not to decide on stopping the Holy Masses where the priest faces the faithful throughout the ceremony. According to the members of the priests' body, the crucial decision of completely stopping that particular mode of conducting the Holy Mass, which has been so in certain dioceses for centuries, should be taken only after discussing the issue at length.

"It is a crucial decision and shouldn't be made in an online meeting. In this Covid situation, the Holy Mass itself is not taking place in various churches. So such a decision shouldn't be taken in haste. It should be taken in a forum where the bishops are present in person and after detailed discussions," said Fr John Ayyankanayil, general convenor of the Forum. "As per the direction of the Synod, the revision of the liturgical text was discussed in all dioceses and submitted to the Pope for approval," said Fr Ayyankanayil.

"We will write to the authorities concerned in India and Rome regarding the underlying issues and conflicts that may arise due to the forceful imposition of the revised liturgy," said the secretary of the Forum, Fr Rajan Punnackal.

29th Synod begins, Mar Alencherry hints at crucial decisions

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE@Kochi

HINTING that the Synod of the Syro-Malabar Church will decide on implementing a uniform mode of celebrating the Holy Mass across all dioceses of the Church, Major Archbishop Cardinal Mar George Alencherry said the 29th Synod that began here on Monday would be inscribed in golden letters in the Church's history.

The cardinal was speaking at the inaugural session. The cardinal reminded the Synod about the duty of the Church to follow the directions of the Pope.

He also thanked the Holy See for the letter issued by Pope Francis exhorting all clergy and religious and faithful laity of the Church to proceed to a prompt implementation of the uniform mode of celebrating the Mass.

Expressing concern over the Covid situation in Kerala and the rest of the country, the cardinal urged the faithful to cooperate with the government to fight against the pandemic. The synod prayed

for those who died due to Covid. The cardinal also shared his condolences and prayers over the passing away of Bishop Pastor Neelankavil, a member of the synod, who died of Covid in February.

Protest outside Synod venue

Almaya Munnettam, a laity organisation in the Ernakulam-Angamaly archdiocese, staged a protest outside St Thomas Mount, the Church's headquarters, in Kakkanad on Monday. The protest took place while Cardinal Alencherry was presiding over the Synod. In the backdrop of the High Court directing the cardinal to face trial in the case relating to the controversial land deals in the archdiocese, they demanded action against the cardinal. Protestors also demanded the synod to discuss making restitution for the losses incurred by the archdiocese.

Manoj Kumar visited Jayachandran's house and took his

ing on and further action will be taken based on it

This is not the first time he had come up with controversial

anyone. His remark also reeks of anti-women sentiments," accused DYFI state secretary A A Rahim.

The Indian Express Aug 29, 2021

'Peace in parishes may be disrupted if letter read out'

CONTINUED FROM P1

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Kochi

THE priests told the Archbishop that peace in the parishes might be disrupted if the pastoral letter is read out.

"Since the pastoral letter has not been issued officially, we have requested the Vicar not to send it to the parishes," said Fr Sebastian Thaliyan, senior priest of the archdiocese.

"Till 1989 the Church followed a uniform of mode of



celebrating the Mass in which the celebrants faced the faithful.

"A change was brought about through the involvement of the Changanassery bishop's house. That was when the celebration by facing the altar began. For close to 25 years the uniform mode was followed. But when it

was changed, we did not question it, nor made an issue out of it. Now when a decision is made for uniform celebration, they are not discussing with the priests and the faithful. This is what we are protesting against," said Fr Jose Vailikodath, another senior priest.

Fr Mundadan said there are 16 foranes under the archdiocese and most of the parish councils have already passed resolutions saying they will allow only celebration by facing the faithful.

Priests of the Ernakulam-Angamaly Archdiocese addressing the media after their discussions with Archbishop Mar Antony Kariyil at Bishop's House in Kochi on Saturday | ALBIN MATHEW

clergy and the faithful to set aside "individual preferen-

dioceses Mass is celebrated with the priest facing

rotation of Mass to cement the overall unity and betterment of the Church.

The Hindu Aug 29, 2021

Priests' team seeks status quo

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

KOCHI

A delegation representing more than 500 priests belonging, among others, to the Ernakulam-Angamaly and Thrissur archdioceses and the Irinjalakuda diocese of the Syro-Malabar Church has appealed to the church hierarchy to maintain status quo with regard to the celebration of the Mass.

The group of priests said archdiocesan administrator Archbishop Antony Kariyil assured them on Saturday that, in consultation with the bishops, the decision to implement a uniform code for the Mass by the synod earlier this week would be re-examined and that a delegation would represent the demand before Pope Francis in Rome.

The priests demanded



Voice that differs: A delegation of priests of the Syro-Malabar Church addressing the media in Ernakulam on Saturday. ■ THULASI KAKKAT

that a pastoral letter from Cardinal George Alencherry, head of the Syro-Malabar Church, instructing priests to implement the uniform code of celebrating the Mass from November 28 should not be despatched to the parishes to be read out on September 5. They said reading out the circular would end up in a law and order problem.

The priests alleged that Pope Francis' message of unity in the Syrian church was being "misinterpreted."

They also said at least one-third of the bishops who attended the online synod was in favour of continuing the status quo.

They had favoured the celebration of the Mass with the celebrant (priest) facing the congregation.

cases of minors were reported from plantation areas, and cited the latest incident that

seph Augustine said such assaults on minors have largely increased during the lock-

down. He said the responsible caretaker to look after them.

on the digital lives of the children," said the official.

tember, but the weather will not go completely dry.

The Times of India Aug 29, 2021

Ekam-Angamaly archdiocese to appeal to Pope

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Kochi: A day after the synod of the Syro Malabar Church decided to establish uniformity in the holy mass, priests of the Ernakulam Angamaly archdiocese, which opposes the move, on Saturday made their objection public and demanded dispensation in a press conference held at Ernakulam Bishop's House.

The priests who met archbishop Antony Kariyil, the metropolitan vicar of the archdiocese to discuss the issue said the bishop has promised to take necessary action for filing an appeal against the synod's decision before Pope Francis.

At the same time, the Syro Malabar Church is going ahead with the decision with cardinal George Alencherry writing a pastoral let-

ter urging the faithful against raising disagreements over the issue.

"During the pandemic times, the faithful found it confusing when they observed differences in masses broadcasted from various dioceses online. The Holy See was also surprised by the non-uniformity in the Church's holy mass."

AGAINST CHANGES IN HOLY MASS CELEBRATION

the letter issued with the direction to read it in churches during Sunday mass on September 5, says.

In the letter Alencherry said Pope Francis, through a letter addressed to members of Syro Malabar Church, had exhorted liturgical uniformity and that every faithful person in the church had a duty to obey him.

But the priests of the Ernakulam Angamaly archdiocese have said that they have requested the metropolitan vicar to not send the pastoral letter to parishes as reading it may even cause a law and order issue in their diocese. The priests said that they have also urged the archbishop not to force them into reading it at churches.

The priests of the archdiocese, including presbyteral council secretary Fr Kuriakose Mundadan and PRO of the archdiocese Fr Mathew Kilukkan, made the comments while addressing the press conference.

Fr Kilukkan said that bishop Kariyil has promised the priests that he will discuss the matter with other bishops and do the needful for filing an appeal against the synod's decision before the Pope so

that the decision be reconsidered. The priests have also demanded that the archbishop make arrangements for maintaining the status quo till Vatican announces its decision.

Fr Mundadan said that canon laws permit granting of dispensation based on special circumstances to a general rule and that they believe that they will receive dispensation. He added that they are opposing the new style of conducting the mass for theological reasons.

Fr Jose Vailikodath, a senior priest, said that the synod was presided over by a person (cardinal Alencherry) who has several police FIRs filed against him and that he recently faced a setback in the high court as well. This is just an effort to divert the topic, he said in the press meet.



'Confine debate on Holy Mass within Church'

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @Kochi

THE Syro-Malabar Media Commission has condemned attempts from certain quarters to spread 'misinformation' about the decisions of the Synod. "The decisions were very clearly articulated with no scope for misinterpretation," said Fr Alex Onampally, secretary, Syro-Malabar Media Commission.

The Media Commission said the Holy Mass and related issues are internal and spiritual affairs of the Church, which should be restricted within the Church.

Meanwhile, the Archdiocese Protection Forum said the Syro-Malabar Media Commission was misleading the laity on the issue of uniform way of conducting the Holy Mass. Fr Jose Vailikodath, PRO of Archdiocese Protection Forum, said the archdiocese of Ernakulam-Angamaly, Thrissur, Irinjalakuda, Thamarassery, Mananthavady, etc, which have been conducting the Holy Mass with the celebrant facing the laity, are disturbed.

Thrissur archbishop warns priests

Ramavarman T | TNN

Thrissur: Thrissur archbishop Mar Andrews Thazhath has directed the churches under the archdiocese to follow the new instructions of the Syro-Malabar Church Synod on the conduct of Holy Mass, even as the dissenting priests are intensifying the protests. The dissenting priests are demanding the continuation of Janabhimukha Kurbana (conduct of the Holy Mass facing the faithful) while the recent Synod has decided to adopt the new practice of conducting Holy Mass facing the altar.

UNIFORMITY IN HOLY MASS

The archbishop in his letter to the priests has directed them to read the pastoral letter of the major archbishop of the Syro-Malabar Church on the new mode in all the parish churches and associated institutions on Sunday. He pointed out that the Synod held from August 16 to 27 had decided to implement the new mode of celebrating the Holy Mass as exhorted by Pope Francis, from November 28.

Mar Thazhath said he has come to know that a section of the priests is planning to hold a meeting on the decision of the Synod and its implementation, without the permission of the head of the archdiocese. "Holding such a meeting to discuss a decision approved by the Pope and Synod could lead to sectarianism. That will also run against the spirit of the oath taken by the priests during ordination. I humbly request to avoid such meetings," the letter said.

However, the dissenting priests allege that the decision was taken without holding discussions with them. A senior priest that a Zoom meeting of the priests is planned. They are also planning to send a delegation to the Vatican to directly inform the Pope about their objections. They will first meet the Pope's representative in Delhi.

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Row over uniform code for Mass rages

Protesters prevent reading of Cardinal's pastoral letter at several parishes, burn copies

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
KOCHI

The controversy over the way the Mass is celebrated in the Catholic Syrian Church took a new turn on Sunday with members of several parishes, including at Holy Family Parish Church at Prasannapuram, near Aluva, preventing the reading of a pastoral letter from Cardinal George Alencherry, Major Archbishop of the Ernakulam-Angamaly archdiocese and head of the Syro-Malabar Church, and burning copies of the letter.

The pastoral letter contained a directive from the synod of the Syro-Malabar Church advising priests and parishioners on celebrating the Mass in a uniform way. It involves celebrating the Mass with the celebrant (priest) facing the congregation during one half and facing the tabernacle (away from the congregation) during the other half.

Priests and parishioners from the Ernakulam-Angamaly, Irinjalakuda, and Thrissur dioceses are among those who have opposed this instruction stridently.

These dioceses have been following a system of celebrating the Mass in which the priest faces the people for the entire duration of rituals. A delegation of more than 500 priests from the three dioceses had submitted a petition to the Syrian Church authorities not to impose the uniform system.

'More than 50 years'

Riju Kanjookkaran of Almaya Munnettam, a combine of lay people, the religious, and priests calling for more transparency in the church administration, said 16 parishes had appealed to keep the synod decision on uniform Mass in abeyance.

"We have been celebrating the Mass for more than half-a-century facing the pe-

ople and it will be against the will of the parishioners to impose another system," said a senior priest of the Syro-Malabar Archdiocese of Ernakulam-Angamaly.

Appeal to Pope

He said those who opposed the new directive from the synod had gone in appeal before Pope Francis. Until a decision was taken by Rome, the system would remain suspended and the Mass celebrated as earlier.

A priests' delegation from the Ernakulam-Angamaly and Thrissur archdioceses and the Irinjalakuda diocese had appealed to maintain status quo on the celebration of the Mass. The group also claimed that archdiocesan administrator Archbishop Antony Kariyil had assured them that, in consultation with the bishops, the decision to implement a uniform code for the Mass would be re-examined.



Venting ire: Members of Prasannapuram Holy Family Church, near Aluva, in Ernakulam district, burn a copy of the pastoral letter from the Major Archbishop on Sunday.

Reading of pastoral letter: Ruckus at church in Aluva

Protesting parishioners enter altar, snatch mike away from vicar. Police register case for unlawful assembly following priest's plaint



Protesters burn the pastoral letter outside Holy Family Church in Aluva

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @Kochi

THE pastoral letter issued by Cardinal George Alencherry, head of the Syro Malabar Church, regarding the implementation of the uniform mode of celebrating the Holy Mass was read out in most of the parishes on Sunday, even as those who oppose the change in the Mass refrained from reading the letter.

Creating ruckus, a group of parishioners interrupted the vicar of the Holy Family Church at Prasannapuram in Aluva while reading the pastoral letter during the Sunday Mass. The parishioners entered the altar and snatched the mike away from Fr Celestine In-

chackal, the vicar. The Holy Family Church, under the Ernakulam-Angamaly Archdiocese, was following the celebration facing the faithful.

"It was my duty to inform the parishioners regarding the official information of the church. The formal directive from the archdiocese was to read the letter in the church. Usually, such information is passed through the chancellor with the permission of the metropolitan vicar. Some among the protesters were parishioners and some were from outside. The emotional approach towards the change is understandable. Only with time would they understand matters and tension would ease," Fr In-



For over half a century, we have been conducting the Holy Mass by facing the faithful. A decision has been taken to approach the Pope to re-examine the new decision of the Synod

A senior priest of Ernakulam-Angamaly Archdiocese

chackal said. Based on a complaint lodged by Fr Inchackal, the Nedumbassery police have registered a case for unlawful assembly and ruckus in front of the altar.

The pastoral letter stated the directive of the Synod of the Syro Malabar Church, advising priests and parishioners on implementing a 50-50 formula in conducting the Mass.

As per the newly-approved format, the celebrant would face the altar during the Anaphora (the Liturgy of the Eucharist).

In certain dioceses — including Ernakulam-Angamaly, Thrissur and Irinjalakuda — the Holy Mass is conducted by facing the faithful throughout. Therefore, some of the parishes under these dioceses did not read the pastoral letter.

Earlier, the priests of the Ernakulam-Angamaly Archdiocese — who opposed the implementation of the uniform way of conducting the Mass — had decided not to read the pastoral letter issued by the Cardinal.

"For over half a century, we have been conducting the Holy Mass by facing the faithful. A decision has been taken to approach the Pope to re-examine the new decision of the Synod that will create a division in the Church," said Fr Jose Vailikodath, a senior priest belonging to the Ernakulam-Angamaly Archdiocese.

According to the pastoral letter, the priests and bishops have been advised to put the new directive into practice from November 28 this year.

if India is to walk the talk on Quad and its Indo-Pacific ambitions.

Times of India Editorials 22/9/2021

Divide And Rue

Kerala Church's "love jihad" obsession widely and negatively impacted state's and nation's body politic

Conceived by the Kerala Catholic Church in 2009, the "love jihad" bogey – never proven – has returned over a decade later to its manger, after perambulating through some north Indian states where it became fodder for criminalising interfaith marriages. That a bishop of the dominant Syro Malabar Catholic Church openly warned of a "love jihad" and "narcotic jihad" threat to the faithful had shocked Kerala into a vigorous public debate. But the Church now finds itself cornered after an influential Catholic priest alleged the equivalent of "love jihad" by OBC Ezhava youth. The heavyweight Ezhava organisation SNDP has hit back, alleging it was Christians, not Muslims, at the forefront of conversions and "love jihad" targeting Hindus.

India's only state with a sizeable religious diversity of Hindus, Muslims and Christians has always struggled with various community organisations never chary of brandishing their political heft. Yet Kerala has miraculously preserved remarkable communal amity despite the occasional rancour. What has publicly surfaced was drawing room chatter across Christian homes since 2019 amid an explosion of Islamophobic content propagating in Malayalam through WhatsApp, and hence under the radar.



The bishop's remarks led to Muslim groups marching in protest, BJP demanding investigation into "narcotic jihad", CM Pinarayi Vijayan asking those in responsible positions to be guarded in their statements, and the leader of opposition VD Satheesan of Congress, which loses most in the Christian-Muslim cleavage, critiquing the bishop for being way out of line. Women groups weren't far behind either, noting the assault on female agency and autonomy by politically-charged religio-conservative outfits.

The recent Kerala assembly polls saw the Christian vote pulled in different directions, further compounding its waning clout. Church-leaders' complaints of dwindling numbers haven't overturned a general phenomenon observed across India. A rapid, secular fertility rate decline has touched all communities equally, although Muslims, as per current data, will take longer to catch up. Turning this state of flux and resultant insecurities into dog whistles and hate speech against other communities is dangerous: Take the Church's 2009 bogey and its national, individual and social ramifications today. It fed divisive political discourse, led to intrusive laws interfering with interfaith relationships, and now burdens the judiciary, which must reverse an oppressive legal template.

after autopsy.

men are residents of Neduve-

CITU and INTUC members,

Times of India 24/9/2021

Muslim brothers wounded, withdraw remark: Priests

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Kochi: Calling for an immediate end to the controversy stirred up by the "narcotic jihad" remark made by Pala bishop Joseph Kallarangatt, an organization of priests in the Ernakulam Angamaly archdiocese on Thursday demanded to withdraw the statement.

NARCOTIC JIHAD

"Since it is the bishop's statement which is against the facts that sparked the controversy, the only solution is to withdraw it publically to avoid further disputes. The church teaches that it is human to err but divine to make rectifications," the statement issued by Fr Jose Vailikodath, PRO of Athirupatha Samrakshana Samithi, said.

The statement said that almost all political parties in the state, except for one, have

made their stand clear that the bishop's comments were inappropriate. "The CM himself dismissed the statement and said that drug trade has no religion. The statement issued on Wednesday by the Public Affairs Commission of the Syro Malabar Church justifying the bishop is condemnable. What we realize is that our Muslims brothers have been wounded by these statements. This needs to be talked out with them," said the statement.

It further asked if the bishop's comments were made during a private talk like it is claimed in the church's statement, then why was it telecasted through a Catholic TV Channel? The priests said the comments made against the Ezhava community by a priest and a controversial booklet issued by the Thamarassery diocese were also meant only for the congregation and the

commission which issued the statement did not intervene in them. They were settled when the concerned parties expressed regret. The priests said if a section of leaders of the Syro Malabar Church decides to start a fight instead of talking out the matter with the Muslim community, then the entire church cannot be used for it. They reminded the church leadership that the church should maintain a healthy distance from politics.

Meanwhile, Sathyadeepam, a weekly published by the archdiocese, said in its editorial regarding the school reopening and Sunday school that catechism, which bases its teachings on hatred toward other religions, was not real catechism. It further said if youths are getting "trapped" in romances, they should be brought back with the realization that they lost Christ first.

The Hindu 27/10/2021

No compromise on Mass rituals, say dissenting priests

Decision by Synod of Bishops envisages uniformity in liturgy

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
KOCHI

A meeting of more than 300 priests from the Ernakulam-Angamaly Archdiocese here on Tuesday reiterated that there would be no compromise on continuing with the practice of celebrating the Mass with the celebrant (priest) facing the congregation throughout the duration of the Mass.

Senior priests Kuriakose Mundadan, Joseph Vailikodath, and Mathew Kilukkan

told mediapersons after the meeting that they expected the Vatican to intervene in the matter after an appeal was made to Pope Francis not to impose the decision by the Synod of Bishops of the Syro-Malabar Catholic Church to bring about uniformity in the celebration of the Mass.

The priests insisted that the Universal Synod of the Catholic Church, the Second Vatican Council, had said that when liturgy is re-

newed, unity should be the matter of essence.

There was no recommendation from the council to impose uniformity if matters of the faith were not involved.

The priests expressed optimism that a favourable decision by the Vatican on the issue would be conveyed before November 28, the first Sunday of Advent, which marks the beginning of the liturgical calendar for the Catholic Church.

Holy mass facing altar unacceptable: Priests

Kochi: A resolution has been adopted by the priests of Ernakulam-Angamaly archdiocese, who gathered at Kaloor Renewal Centre on Tuesday, stating that they would not accept the decision of the Syro-Malabar Synod 2021 against the mode of celebrating the holy mass facing people. The priests said that the decision was unilateral and was imposed on them with no prior consultation.

They demanded that a fresh Syro-Malabar synod be convened urgently to revoke this decision and to allow them to continue the practice of celebrating the holy mass facing the people. Or else the

synod must authorize the metropolitan vicar of Ernakulam-Angamaly archdiocese to formally legalise the custom/tradition, that has lasted uninterrupted for more than 30 years, as per Canon law.

“Syro-Malabar Synod (2021) made the decision with no prior consultation with the people of God: neither with the bishops, clergy and religious nor with the lay faithful. We are fully aware of the Constitution of the Second Vatican Council on sacred liturgy which states in no uncertain terms that while undertaking liturgical reforms rigid uniformity is never to be imposed “on matters

that do not involve the faith or the good of the whole community”. The present decision on the mere rubric of the mode of celebration, which will destroy the prevailing peaceful atmosphere in the parishes of our archdiocese, is unilateral and unacceptable,” said a statement by Fr Kuriakose Mundadan, secretary, presbyteral council.

Various dioceses under the Syro-Malabar Church follow at least two different modes of celebrating the mass, an obvious difference being the priest facing the churchgoers during the ceremony in certain dioceses and facing the altar in other dioceses. TNN

VATICAN SENDS MISSIVE TO BISHOPS ON HOLY MASS DISPUTE

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @Kochi

AFTER receiving multiple complaints from a section of the clergy and laity regarding the Syro-Malabar Church synod's decision to change the mode of celebrating the Holy Mass (from facing the laity to facing the altar), the Holy See at the Vatican responded by sending a letter to the diocese heads. The head of the Oriental Congregation for the Eastern

Churches Cardinal Leonardo Sandri sent the missive to each bishop of Syro-Malabar Church.

According to a Church source, in the letter the Cardinal has requested the local eparchs to submit a report answering a set of questions. The Cardinal has also sought information on the mode of celebration of the Holy Mass in each parish and community of the diocese.

The Indian Express Oct 29, 2021

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Moreover, the fellowship

pally Ramachandran launched a veiled attack

the current disposition for not having considered the

returning officer for Kerala, signalling the start of the or-

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The Hindu, Nov. 08, 2021

Bishops told to submit report on Mass

Congregation for Oriental Churches takes views of bishops on synodal decision

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
KOCHI

The Congregation for the Oriental Churches, a part of the Roman curia looking after the Eastern Catholic Churches, has requested bishops in-charge of the Syro-Malabar dioceses to submit a report on the ground situation regarding the celebration of the Mass in their jurisdiction in the background of a recent decision by the Syro-Malabar synod of bishops to unify the way the Mass is celebrated across the Syro-Malabar church.

The dispute

There is now a dispute over the synodal decision be-

cause a vast majority of the Syro-Malabar Church dioceses are in favour of celebrating the Mass with the celebrant (priest) facing the congregation (those attending the Mass).

By November 15

The recent synodal decision was that the priest would face the congregation for one half of the celebrations while he would face away from the people during the other half.

The decision to implement the uniform method, as per the synodal decision, will come into effect on November 28.

The heads of all the dio-

ceses in the Syro-Malabar church were expected to submit their replies by November 15, sources added.

The Congregation for the Oriental Churches also sought the opinion of the bishops on the problems facing the implementation of the synodal decision on the uniform way of celebrating the Mass.

Meeting with Nuncio

Sources in the Ernakulam-Angamaly Archdiocese, who are in favour of celebrating the Mass with the celebrant facing the congregation (faithful or participants) throughout the Mass expressed the hope that the

survey of opinion would lead to a reconciliation.

In the meanwhile, four members of the permanent synod of bishops of the Syro-Malabar Church-Thrissur Archbishop Andrews Thazhath, Thalassery bishop George Njaralangatt, Kottayam bishop Mathew Moolakkatt, and Palakkad bishop Jacob Manamthodath, have met Leopoldo Girelli, the Apostolic Nuncio in Delhi.

Church sources did not confirm whether the bishops were summoned by the Nuncio or they went as a delegation on their own to submit their views on the issue of the way the Mass is celebrated.

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The Indian Express Nov 12,

UNIFORM HOLY MASS

2021

Section of priests to intensify protest, hold prayer meet at HQ

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @Kochi

STRENGTHENING the protest against the Synod's decision to implement a uniform mode of conducting Holy Mass across the Church, a section of priests will hold a prayer meet on Friday at Mount St Thomas in Kakkanad, the headquarters of the Syro-Malabar Church.

"We have been practising Holy Mass by facing the faithful for more than 50 years. We will not accept any decision other than that. The Synod meeting should be called and a decision should be taken to accept the conduct of Holy Mass facing the public," said a priest.

"It is likely that there will be discord in many parishes after November 28. Therefore, the Bishops of the Synod should keep their ego aside and reexamine their decision," he said.

Meanwhile, the Major Archbishop of the Syro-Malabar Church, Cardinal George Alencherry, said the way of worship is a priceless possession and a symbol of its tradition. The Cardinal was speaking at the inauguration of the webinar 'Liturgia 2021'. Organised by



'Decision unilateral'

'Sathyadeepam', the weekly published by the Ernakulam-Angamaly archdiocese, yet again came out criticising the Church's decision. In its latest editorial, the weekly termed the unification unilateral. "The Syro-Malabar Church is passing through unparalleled times of crisis. The Holy Qurbana, which is a celebration of the Church's unity, has become an occasion to display its internal differences. The new service will come into force on the 28th of this month. The directive that the new uniform way of conducting Holy Mass service should be followed everywhere has triggered new problems within the Church," said 'Sathyadeepam' editorial.

the Church's Liturgy Commission, the webinar discussed the new service rites.

Alencherry asserted that the Church is looking forward to the day uniform rites of service are followed by all, and reiterated that it would show the unity of the Church.

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The Times of India, Nov 12, 2021

Dissident priests to stage protest prayer meet today

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Kochi: With the date to implement the unified mode of conducting the Holy Mass in the Syro Malabar Church approaching, protest from priests and laity who are against the move has intensified.

UNIFORM CODE FOR HOLY MASS

As per the Syro Malabar Church Synod's decision, the uniform mass would come into effect from November 28.

A singular mode of celebrating the mass has long been a bone of contention within the Syro Malabar Church as various dioceses follow at least two different

As per the Syro Malabar Church Synod's decision, the uniform mass would come into effect from November 28

modes of celebrating the mass, an obvious difference being the priest facing the churchgoers during the ceremony in certain dioceses and facing the altar in certain other dioceses. The unified way is a combination of both.

A section of priests who have been traditionally practicing the mass facing the people announced on Thursday that they would stage a prayer meet as a protest at the headquarters of the Church in Kochi on Friday.

According to sources ,

priests from Ernakulam, Irinjalakuda, Thrissur and Palakkad dioceses would attend the protest gathering.

Meanwhile, Syro Malabar Church on Thursday issued a statement of Cardinal George Alencherry. As per the statement, the Cardinal said while inaugurating a webinar on liturgy that the Church was eagerly waiting for the day in which the whole Church would conduct the mass in a unified way.

Sathyadeepam, the weekly published by the Ernakulam Angamaly archdiocese, came out with criticism and termed the unification unilateral.

The protesting priests are demanding an immediate withdrawal of the Synod decision.

VACCINATION SO FAR
4,07,51,665

1st dose
2,54,89,472

2nd dose
1,52,62,193



VACCINATED ON FRIDAY **2,24,430**

newindianexpress.com

TOTAL RECOVERIES
49,43,813

TOTAL DEATHS
35,511

412 DEATHS ADDED TO COVID TOLL

The state health department added 412 more previously excluded Covid deaths to the tally, taking the total to 35,511.

- CONFIRMED CASES
- PATIENTS UNDER TREATMENT
- ▲ POSITIVE CASES ON FRIDAY
- CONFIRMED DEATHS

Palakkad ● 3,77,239 ■ 2,176 ▲ 260 ■ 2,986
Kozhikode ● 5,35,758 ■ 7,391 ▲ 620 ■ 3,888

Wayanad ● 1,28,737 ■ 2,729 ▲ 247 ■ 549

Kannur ● 2,79,963 ■ 4,000 ▲ 397 ■ 2,598
Kasaragod ● 1,40,239 ■ 1,293 ▲ 178 ■ 706

Uniform Holy Mass: Priests stage protest at Syro-Malabar Church HQ

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @Kochi

DRAMATIC events unfolded at the headquarters of Syro-Malabar Church in Kakkanad on Friday as several priests protested by organising a prayer meet against the Synod's decision to implement a uniform mode of celebrating the Holy Mass in churches.

More than 200 priests from various archdioceses including Palakkad, Irinjalakuda, Thrissur, Thamarassery and Ernakulam-Angamaly took part in the protest. Though the protesters were denied entry into the headquarters, the memorandum detailing their concerns regarding the new decision, to be submitted to the cardinal, was collected by the curia chancellor of the Church at the gate.

As per the Synod's decision, the uniform mode of celebrating the Holy Mass will come into effect on November 28. The priests raised slogans re-



Dissenting priests at Mount St Thomas in Kakkanad, headquarters of the Syro-Malabar Church, on Friday | A SANESH

questing to legitimise the Holy Mass facing people.

"The memorandum detailing our concerns of parishes that have been following the Holy Mass facing the faithful over 50 years has been submitted to the cardinal. We have urged the Synod to review its decision and legitimise the Mass that has been followed for so many years. At least,

they should be ready to hold discussions with those raising concerns," said Fr Rajan Punnackal, secretary of Syrian Catholic Liturgical Forum.

Meanwhile, a section of laity members, who are in favour of the Synod's decision, protested against the dissenting priests. Police intervened to avoid confrontation between both the groups.

on Saturday.

complaints that some colle-
ge heads and managements

ideas cannot be entertained
at any cost," Bindu said.

Times of India Nov. 13, 2021

Priests intensify stir against uniform mode of Holy Mass

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Kochi: High drama prevailed when around 200 priests wearing black badges took out a march to the headquarters of the Syro Malabar Church at Kakkanad here on Friday. The priests were protesting the uniform mode of celebrating the Holy Mass being implemented in the Church.

Tension escalated when a group of laity activists came out supporting the Church Synod's decision. Police had to intervene to separate the two groups.

Though the protesting priests from Palakkad, Irinjalakuda, Thrissur, Thamarassery, and Ernakulam-Angamaly dioceses were denied entry into the headquarters premises, the Church curia chancellor accepted a memorandum they submitted.

The priests were holding banners demanding the legitimisation of mass facing the people, which was prevailing in these dioceses.



Jipson Sikhera

Priests protest outside the gates of Mount St Thomas at Kakkanad on Friday against the unification of the mode of conducting Holy Mass

The issue pertains to the differences in conducting the holy mass in various dioceses of the Church, an obvious difference being the priest facing the congregation in some dioceses and facing the altar in others. The uniform mode, a combination of both, is to come into effect from November 28.

"We have urged the Synod to review its decision. They should at least be ready to hold discussions with us," said a priest who protested under the banner of Syrian Cat-

holic Liturgical Forum.

However, Syro Malabar Church laity secretary Tony Chittilappally said that there are over 9,000 priests in the Church and the number of dissenters is very less. "The Liturgical Forum the priests have created is not recognised by the Church. Protesting on the streets is not the appropriate way to raise concerns. The decision regarding the Holy Mass has been approved by the bishops and the Pope. It is not right for these priests to challenge it," he said.

register a case.

The Indian Express, Nov 15, 2021



Laity of the Syro-Malabar Church protesting against the Synod's decision to unify the Holy Mass at Mount St Thomas on Sunday

Laity protest against unified Holy Mass

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Kochi

HUNDREDS of laity from Ernakulam-Angamaly Archdiocese held a protest march to Mount St Thomas, headquarters of Syro-Malabar Church on Sunday against the unification of the Holy Mass.

According to the laity, for decades churches under Ernakulam-Angamaly Archdiocese have been conducting the Holy Mass facing the people.

As per the Synod's decision, the uniform mode of conducting Holy Mass will come into effect in the churches from November 28. It means the Holy Mass will be a combination of both facing the altar and facing the people.

The protest was organised by Almaya munnettam, a laity organisation of the Church.

"If our requests are unheard

and not been addressed in the coming days before November 20 then more stronger protests forms will be staged.

Sunday's march was attended by nearly 1000 representatives from various parishes of the diocese," said Riju Kanjookkaran, PRO of Almaya Munnettam.

On Friday, around 200 priests from various archdioceses including Palakkad, Irinjalakuda, Thrissur and Tamarassery held a protest march to the headquarters of the Syro Malabar Church raising the same concerns. A memorandum detailing their requests and concerns was submitted to Cardinal.

However, as per officials of the Church the uniform mode of conducting the Holy Mass is a decision approved by the bishops and the Pope.



Up in arms

The Hindu Nov.15, 2021



Venting their ire: Members of the Archdiocese of Ernakulam-Angamaly taking out a march to the headquarters of the Syro-Malabar Church at St. Thomas Mount, Kakkanad, on Sunday, protesting against a recent circular issued by bishops on celebration of Mass. ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT (REPORT ON PAGE 5)

The statement further ad- will calculate the liabilities of ived KIIFB as a model that can me

Times of India, Nov. 15, 2021

Now, laity protests against uniform mode of Holy Mass

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Kochi: Protests over unification in the style of conducting Holy Mass in Syro-Malabar Church escalated further on Sunday as hundreds of churchgoers held a protest march to the Church headquarters on Sunday evening. The protesters were laity from the Ernakulam-Angamaly archdiocese.



Protestors march to Syro-Malabar Church headquarters in Kochi on Sunday

SYRO-MALABAR CHURCH

The issue pertains to the differences in celebrating Holy Mass in various dioceses of Syro-Malabar Church, an obvious difference being the priest facing the churchgoers during the ceremony in some dioceses and facing the altar in others. The unified way is a combination of both. As per the Syro-Malabar Church synod's decision, the uniform mass would come into effect from November 28.

According to the protesters, for the past five decades in Ernakulam-Angamaly archdiocese, the priest conducts the ceremony facing the people.

der the banner of Almaya Munnettam, an organisation of laity members of the Church.

"We have warned of stronger protest forms in the coming days if a favourable decision is not made before November 20. Sunday's march was attended by nearly 1,000 representatives from various parishes of the diocese," said Riju Kanjookkaran, PRO of Almaya Munnettam.

On Friday, around 200 priests from Palakkad, Irinjalkuda, Thrissur, Thamarassery, and Ernakulam-Angamaly dioceses had marched to the Church headquarters, raising the same issue. The priests we-

re denied entry into the compound of the headquarters even as the curia chancellor of Syro-Malabar Church accepted a memorandum detailing their concerns. The protesting laity members on Sunday criticised the Church authorities for denying entry to the priests and demanded an apology.

However, as per officials of the Church, the uniform mode of conducting the Holy Mass is a decision approved by the bishops and the Pope. The second summit of the 29th synod of Syro-Malabar Church had envisaged a complete transformation into the new way of conducting mass by the Easter Sunday of 2022.

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Standoff between laity body, Church continues

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Kochi: The row over the introduction of a unified mode of offering the Mass in the Syro Malabar Church (SMC) refuses to die down with Almayya Munnettam, a laity organisation in the Ernakulam-Angamaly archdiocese, on Wednesday warning of grave consequences if the Church pushes ahead with the directive.

Various dioceses have been following different modes of celebrating the mass in SMC, an obvious difference being the priest facing the churchgoers during the ceremony in certain dioceses and facing the altar in certain other dioceses. Most churches in the SMC have formally switched to the uniform Mass code as directed by the Church synod, except for Ernakulam Angamaly archdiocese, Irinjalakuda diocese and Faridabad diocese,

UNIFORM MASS

where the bishops have issued exemptions. Almayya Munnettam's call for protest comes in the backdrop of a press release from the Church that it is expecting an explanation from the oriental congregation about the validity of the dispensations given by certain archdioceses.

"We are concerned about the moves to sabotage the dispensation order, which had the blessings of Pope Francis and Cardinal Leonardo Sandri, prefect of the oriental congregation," said advocate Binu John, the general convener of Almayya Munnettam.

The media commission of the Church had on Monday issued a statement saying that the exemptions under 1538 of the canon law were temporary and regional. It said that these dioceses would also start conducting the Mass in the same way as all other dioceses in the coming days. Later, the Church issued another statement in which it said that hopefully the oriental congregation would be giving a clarity on the validity of dispensations given in certain dioceses.

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Uniform Mass: Church trying to sabotage exemption, alleges laity

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE@Kochi

IN a new development in the row over the unification of Holy Mass, a statement issued on Monday by the Media Commission of the Syro Malabar Church has sparked an uproar. The Church's statement said that the dioceses which have declared the exemptions would also be brought into the fold in the coming days, as Canon 1538 has been misinterpreted and used by some dioceses.

The Almaya Munnettam, laity organisation of the Ernakulam-Angamaly Archdiocese, protested, saying that it is another tactic of the Church to deprive them of the exemption they earned.

The media commission issued the statement saying that the exemptions under 1538 of the canon law were temporary and regional. It said these dioceses would also come into the style of conducting the Mass followed by all other dioceses in the coming days. Hopefully, the oriental congregation would be giving a clarity on the validity of "dispensations" given in cer-

tain dioceses, the church said in another statement. Meanwhile, representatives of the Almaya Munnettam said the statement issued by the Church's Media Commission "has sowed the seeds of misunderstanding and it contains veiled threats".

"The circular issued by the Media Commission lays bare their intention when it states that the congregation will explain the dispensations issued by certain dioceses. We will protest any deliberate attempts to sabotage the exemption that we received from the Holy See," Binu John, general convenor of Almaya Munnettam.

"The circular that Archbishop Antony Kariyil, Metropolitan Vicar of Ernakulam-Angamaly Archdiocese, had sent to all faithful has ushered

in a fresh breath of life for all people. It has given us the much-needed impetus to voice our concerns and stand united for the progressive approach the archdiocese has always adopted. However, we are concerned as there are initiatives from different dioceses to sabotage this order," said Binu.



The circular issued by the Media Commission lays bare their intention when it states that the congregation will explain the dispensations issued by certain dioceses.

Binu John, general convenor of Almaya Munnettam

The Indian Express Dec. 04, 2021

Priests' forum objects to saying Cardinal's name during Mass

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @Kochi

THE members of the Syrian Catholic Liturgical Forum, a body of priests from various dioceses of the Syro Malabar Church, said on Friday that it was against their conscience to say the name of Major Archbishop Cardinal George Alencherry, head of the Church, in the midst of the Holy Mass. Cardinal Alencherry has "challenged the decision of Pope Francis", the members said in the statement.

"Even after the Metropolitan vicar granting dispensation for the Ernakulam-Angamaly Archdiocese, those favouring the implementation of the new mode with the support of some members of the Permanent Synod are causing ruckus in some regions including the Faridabad diocese, which also invoked the Canon 1538. Deliberate attempts are made to create misconceptions in the exemption that we received," said Fr John Ayyankkanayil of the Forum.



UNIFORM MASS: CARDINAL DIRECTS BISHOPS TO 'CORRECT' EXEMPTION

Section of Ernakulam-Angamaly Archdiocese priests says cardinal is creating confusion

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @Kochi

THE Syro-Malabar Church has issued a statement that it had received a clarification letter from the Oriental Congregation in Rome on Friday which stated that an entire archdiocese could not be given exemption from implementing the liturgical rules approved by the Synod.

The letter was sent from Rome after the Church sought clarity from the Oriental Congregation on Canon law 1538 that permits bishops to provide dispensation from certain rules.

The Church had sought the clarification after the recent uproar on implementing the uniform mode of Holy Mass.

The uniform mode of conducting the Holy Mass came into effect on November 28. Most of the churches and parishes under the Syro-Malabar Church conducted the Mass in the new format approved by the

Synod. Only Ernakulam-Angamaly Archdiocese and Irinjalakuda diocese retained the old mode of the Mass, as exemptions were given here under Canon law 1538.

The statement issued by the Church said the letter undersigned by Prefect of the Oriental Churches Cardinal Leonardo Sandri and Secretary Archbishop Giorgio Gallo, explaining the canon law, was received on Friday at the major archbishop's office.

However, Ernakulam-Angamaly Archdiocese has also issued a statement stating that the metropolitan vicar of the archdiocese received a letter seeking clarifications on the dispen-

sation on Thursday and that Mar Antony Kariyil explained the context in which the exemption was given. The explanation was given orally, and it would be submitted in writing as well, the archdiocese said.

Cardinal Mar George Alencherry has written a letter to all bishops informing them of the clarification from the Oriental Congregation.

"Based on the letter received from Rome, the major archbishop has given the direction to correct the action which exempted the whole of certain dioceses from conducting the unified way of conducting the Mass," the Church said in the statement.

Meanwhile, Fr Jose Vailiko-



Based on the letter received from Rome, the major archbishop has given the direction to correct the action which exempted the whole of certain dioceses from conducting the unified way of conducting the Mass

Statement from the Church

dath, PRO of Athirupatha Samrakshana Samithy, an outfit of priests, said Cardinal Alencherry is spreading confusion and misconception regarding the canon law and the dispensation granted by the Vatican.

"The Synod of the Syro-Malabar Church or Oriental Congregation has no right to cancel the canon law of the Catholic Church. On December 7, Leonardo Sandri had sent a letter to Metropolitan Vicar of the Ernakulam-Angamaly Archdiocese Mar Antony Kariyil seeking clarification regarding the dispensation and it was clearly clarified when it was received on December 9," said convenor of the outfit Fr Sebastin Thaliyan.

"The letter received by Major Archbishop or Metropolitan Vicar from the Oriental Churches does not mention any cancellation of the dispensation entitled to Ernakulam-Angamaly Archdiocese as per the law," said Fr Sebastin.

The Hindu, Dec 11, 2021

New turn to row over Mass in Syro-Malabar Church

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

KOCHI

The controversy over the mode of celebrating the Mass in the Syro-Malabar Church - whether the priest must face the congregation in the initial part of the service or face the tabernacle (holy of holies) later in the service, as decided by the Synod of Bishops - took a new turn on Friday with the church, in a statement, saying that it had received a letter from the Vatican that an archdiocese could not be exempted from implementing the liturgical rules approved by the synod.

The unified way that has been approved by the synod is a combination of both the modes.

The archdiocese of Ernakulam-Angamaly, the Irinjalkuda diocese and Faridabad diocese preferred to go ahead with the priest facing the congregation from November 28. This was after the Bishops of these dioceses issued dispensation from following the new format invoking Canon 1538, a law which allows exemption.

The Athiroopatha Samrakshana Samithi, which has been fighting the synod decision, claimed that there was

no mention of the cancellation of the dispensation in any letters received from the Vatican.

The samithi said any decision for dispensation was taken with the blessings of the Pope and that the reports about its cancellation were false.

The samithi's public relations officer, Father Jose Vailikodath, said the practice of priests facing the congregation dated back over 50 years. The synod did not consult priests and the laity while deciding for a mix of both the modes of Mass, he said.

The Times of India, Dec 11, 2021

Controversy over unified Holy Mass erupts again

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Kochi: Controversy over the unified mode for conducting Holy Mass in the Syro-Malabar Church has erupted again as Cardinal George Alencherry on Friday issued a direction to 'correct' the exemption to the unified mode of Mass provided to certain dioceses in the Church.

The Church, in a statement, said they received a letter from Rome on Friday which stated that an entire archdiocese cannot be provided dispensation from implementing the liturgical rules approved by the synod. However, Ernakulam-Angamaly archdiocese issued a statement saying that they had also received a letter asking for clarity on the exemption and the archdiocese has explained the same to Rome.

In the Syro-Malabar Church, various dioceses had been following different modes of Mass. The difference is that the priest faces churchgoers during the cere-



mony in certain dioceses and faces the altar in others. The unified way is a combination of both.

Apart from the Ernakulam-Angamaly archdiocese, Irinjalakuda and Faridabad diocese, the rest of the dioceses switched to the unified format from Nov 28. This happened after bishops of these dioceses issued dispensation from following the new format using Canon 1538. The Church later wrote to the Oriental Congregation in Rome seeking clarity on Canon 1538.

"We received a clarification letter on Friday dated Dec 9, undersigned by the Oriental Congregation prefect and secretary. As per the letter, it has been made clear that by using Canon 1538, an entire diocese cannot be exempted from implementing liturgical rules approved by the synod and issued as an or-

der by the major archbishop," the Church said.

It further said that the Cardinal Alencherry has written to all bishops about the directions given by the oriental congregation.

However, Ernakulam-Angamaly archdiocese, in a statement, said that a letter sent by the Oriental Congregation on Dec 7 seeking clarity on the dispensation was received by archdiocese apostolic vicar Mar Antony Kariyil on Dec 9. Mar Kariyil explained the context of the dispensation orally, and the same would be submitted in writing, the archdiocese said.

Meanwhile, Athiroopatha Samrakshana Samithi, an outfit of priests, claimed there was no mention of cancellation of dispensation in any letters received from Rome. Convener Fr Sebastian Thaliyan claimed the decision for dispensation was taken with the blessings of the Pope and that the reports about its cancellation were false.

The Indian Express Dec 12/21 Priests appeal to legitimise existing mode of holy mass

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Kochi

A DAY after Syro-Malabar Church head Cardinal Mar George Alenchery's direction to bishops to 'correct' the dispensation given to churches and parishes, a section of priests from Ernakulam-Angamaly archdiocese on Saturday met metropolitan vicar Mar Antony Kariyil and submitted a memorandum seeking his intervention to resolve the recent confusion regarding Holy Mass.

The priests submitted a written request stating that until the existing mode of mass facing the people is legitimised, they will not cooperate with the major archbishop and Syro-Malabar office at Mount St Thomas.

"It is our right to celebrate the mass in the same mode which we have been doing for the past 50

years. Hence, we demand that the mass verus populum (mass facing the people) be legitimised rather than being allowed as a dispensation. We the priests along with the faithful have decided that we will continue our struggle against the synod and the Oriental Congregation until this right is guaranteed and formally legitimised," said Fr Sebastin Thaliyan, convener of Athirupatha Samrakshana Samithi, in the appeal submitted on Saturday.

After the visit to the Vatican, Mar Kariyil has issued a circular granting exemption to churches and parishes under the Ernakulam-Angamaly archdiocese citing Canon 1538. Synod's decision to implement the uniform mode of holy mass came into effect on No-

vember 28. The priest said in the memorandum that they will not compromise with the cardinal and the synod on the mode of celebrating the holy mass. "When the synod tried to enforce its injudicious decision about the uniform mode of celebration of holy qurbana upon this archdiocese, it was the timely intervention of Pope Francis that created an atmosphere of peace and harmony here. A conflicting situation was thus effectively averted when Mar Antony Kariyil was authorised by the Pope to make use of the provision of Canon 1538 to dispense with the synodal decision for good of the

faithful," memorandum stated.

"We earnestly request you to inform the Pope immediately about the latest volatile and anarchic situation created in our archdiocese by the major archbishop together with the Oriental Congregation. We, all priests and lay faithful, request archbishop Kariyil to take all necessary steps in consultation and obedience to the the Pope to bring back peace and unity by getting the mass legitimised. We also request him to brief all the bishops of the synod that their attempt to enforce uniformity over unity is not only an utter failure, but also contrary to the will and instruction of Pope Francis," memorandum said.



We demand that the mass verus populum (mass facing the people) be legitimised rather than being allowed as a dispensation

— Fr Sebastin Thaliyan, convener of Athirupatha Samrakshana Samithi

The Times of India, Dec 2/12/11

'Formally legalize mass facing people'

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Kochi: A day after the major archbishop of the Syro-Malabar Church, cardinal George Alencherry, directed all bishops — who granted dispensation to their dioceses from following the unified mode of mass in the Church — to correct the action, priests of the Ernakulam-Angamaly archdiocese on Friday upped their ante and demanded that rather than being allowed as a dispensation, the mass facing the people should be formally legalized.

The Church had said in a statement on Friday that the cardinal had issued the directive after receiving clarity on the validity of such dispensations from Rome. Priests of the Ernakulam-Angamaly archdiocese on Saturday met



File photo

Cardinal George Alencherry (c) conducted the Holy Mass in the new format on November 28

with the metropolitan vicar of the archdiocese, Mar Antony Kariyil and submitted a written appeal stating that until the mass facing the people is legitimized, they will not cooperate with the major archbishop and the Syro-Malabar office at Mount St Thomas.

"The major archbishop

and the oriental congregation have again joined hands to create confusion... we will not compromise with the cardinal and the synod on the mode of celebrating holy mass. We declare that it is our right to celebrate the mass in the same mode, which we have been doing for the past 50 years. We demand that the mass *versus Populum* (the liturgical stance of a priest who, while celebrating mass, faces the people) be legitimized rather than being allowed as a dispensation," the petition said.

The petition said that Mar Kariyil was authorized by the Pope (through the oriental congregation) to make use of the provision of Canon 1538 (CCEO) to dispense with the synodal decision for the good of the faithful.

"Cardinal Sandri (oriental congregation prefect) instructed Mar Kariyil to allow a dispensation after he received express, written instructions to this effect from Pope Francis. The same oriental congregation has now come up with a bizarre interpretation," the petition said.

It further said that the latest letter from Alencherry is to be considered challenging and defying the authority of the Pope himself. "We earnestly request you to inform Pope Francis immediately about the latest volatile and anarchic situation created in our archdiocese by the major archbishop together with the oriental congregation. All these are simply because they don't heed the Pope's instructions," the petition submitted to Mar Kariyil said.

The Hindu, 07/01/22

Priests' forum seeks exemption for archdiocese on uniform Mass

Memorandum to be submitted to 30th Synod of Bishops

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
KOCHI

The Athiroopatha Samrakshana Samithi (forum for protection of the Archdiocese of Ernakulam-Angamaly), comprising members of the community of priests of the archdiocese, said it would submit a memorandum to the Synod of Bishops of the Syro-Malabar Catholic Church to either permanently exempt the archdiocese from the purview of a synodal decision in August last year on the way the Mass is celebrated or to grant a special privilege to celebrate the Mass as it is being done now.

The 30th Synod of Bishops of the Syro-Malabar Church will begin here at Mount St. Thomas, Kakkanad, near Kochi, on January 7 and conclude on January 15. The samithi expressed the hope the synod would

be an occasion to reconcile the differences of opinion over the way the Mass is celebrated in the archdiocese.

'Not practical'

Senior priests Sebastian Thalian and Jose Vailikkodath of the samithi and leader of Alamaya Munnettam (a collective of lay people) Binu John said a Bishop had been consecrated in the Antiochian rite in the Kottayam archdiocese despite it being a part of the Syro-Malabar Catholic Church. It was thus clear that uniformity was not practical in the Syro-Malabar Church, they said.

The synod ruled in August last year that the Mass should be celebrated with the celebrant (priest) facing the congregation (participants) for the first part, and then face away from the congregation for the second

half. However, over the last half-a-century, the Ernakulam-Angamaly archdiocese has been practising fully congregation-facing Mass. The synod has recommended the new way of Mass celebration without consultation or discussions, the samithi leaders said.

'Imposition'

The decision on uniform Mass celebration was an instance of imposition from top and does not jell with Pope Francis' ideas and was not in keeping with the spirit of the Second Vatican Council, they said.

The priests and lay members also said that it was not right for Major Archbishop Cardinal George Alencherry, an accused in several civil cases, to continue as the president of the Synod of Bishops.

The Indian express, 07/01/22
Synod of Syro-Malabar
Church begins amid tension

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Kochi

THE 30th major archiepiscopal Synod of the Syro-Malabar Church will begin at Mt St Thomas, Kakkanad, on Friday. Cardinal Mar George Alencherry, head of the Church, will lead the Synod in which 57 bishops, including those retired and from abroad, will take part.

The nine-day Synod will end on January 15.

Meanwhile, the Syrian Catholic Liturgical Forum, a body of priests from various dioceses of the Church, has urged the Synod to revisit its decision to implement the new format of the Holy Mass in the churches and parishes.

“In Thrissur, Irinjalakuda, Thamarassery, Palakkad and

Mananthavady dioceses the new Holy Mass was implemented forcibly despite the protests of the diocesan priests. There should be an arrangement by the Synod considering the emotions of the faithful and priests who have been following the old format of the Holy Mass for decades,” said Fr Rajan Punnackal, secretary of Syrian Catholic Liturgical Forum.

However, the latest editorial of Sathyadeepam, the weekly published by Ernakulam-Angamaly Archdiocese, expressed hope the Synod will resolve issues within the Church and dioceses.

According to church authorities, the Synod will discuss on relevant topics of the church and societal issues.

...up to the boat jetty, and up to mangalavanam on sewage treatment plant learnt. ...negative in Mumbai and fo

The Hindu, 09/01/22

Laity forum submits memorandum to Synod over uniform Mass celebration

30th conclave of Bishops of Syro-Malabar Catholic Church begins at Mount St. Thomas in city

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
KOCHI**

Almaya Munnettam, representing a section of lay people in the Archdiocese of Ernakulam-Angamaly of the Syro-Malabar Catholic Church, submitted a memorandum to the Synod of Bishops of the Syro-Malabar Church on Saturday to either

permanently exempt the archdiocese from the purview of a Synodal decision in August last year on the way the Mass is celebrated or to grant the archdiocese special privilege to celebrate the Mass as it is being celebrated now.

The representation was submitted to the 30th Synod

that began here at the headquarters of the Syro-Malabar Church at Mount St. Thomas, Kakkanad, near Kochi, on Saturday. It will conclude on January 15.


The group of lay people was allowed to submit the representation after they were initially disallowed. The group threatened to organise


a sit-in if they were not allowed to submit the representation and later, Almaya Munnettam leader Binu John and Pastoral Council general secretary P. P. Gerard submitted the representation. They said they were optimistic that the Synod would be an occasion to reconcile the differences of opinion over

the way the Mass is celebrated in the archdiocese.

Though priests in the archdiocese had initially planned to submit a memorandum to the Synod on the issue, they withdrew from the move after a group of senior Bishops expressed their opinion against the imposition of a uniform method.




The group of lay people and priests had come out against a Synodal decision in August last year. The Synod ruled that the Mass should be celebrated with the celebrant (priest) facing the congregation (participants) for the first part, and then face away from the congregation for the second half.


TIMES 
Masterclass



Does digital detox mean giving up technology all together?
Devina Bajaj, Class XI, The Kalyani school, Pune

■ **Sister Shivani:** All depends on how we use technology and what kind of content we consume. If we are using our laptop for six hours to study, consuming positive content, at max we will strain our eyes; but if we use technology to consume negative content 90% of the time, we are depleting our energy, and that should be curbed.

To view the full session log on to www.timesmasterclass.com on 8 & 9 Jan at 11:00 AM
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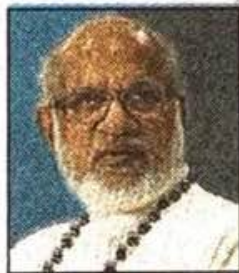


BENNETT UNIVERSITY
THE TIMES GROUP

Laity activists stage protest

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Kochi: Laity activists from the Ernakulam-Angamaly archdiocese on Saturday staged a sit-in outside Mount St Thomas near Kakkanad—the venue for the first session of the 30th Synod of the Syro-Malabar Church—after they were denied entry when they came to submit a memorandum.



Police were deployed in the area to avoid untoward incidents. Following the protest, the memorandum seeking permanent exception from the new format of Holy Mass, prescribed by the Synod, was accepted by church authorities from the leaders of the laity group at the reception of the headquarters.

Cardinal **George Alencherry**, during the inaugural address, said that implementing the unified format in 34 dioceses was a triumph for the unity of the Church. He added that the Synod will discuss the issues in some areas and give guidelines accordingly.

Kottayam

: **'Attacks against Christians across country a**

HOLY MASS: LAITY FORUM PROTESTS OUTSIDE CHURCH HEADQUARTERS

Activists submit petition against new format; allowed inside after hunger strike call

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Kochi

YET another protest was staged by laity in front of Mount St Thomas, headquarters of Syro-Malabar Church in Kakkannad, where the 30th synod of the Church is being conducted. On denying entry inside the headquarters, a sit-in protest was conducted by laity activists, who had reached there to submit a petition regarding the implementation of the new format of Holy Mass.

The representatives of Almayya Munnettam, laity organisation of the archdiocese, were stopped at the gate when they arrived at 10am by the police denying entry inside. They protested till 4pm and it was after announcing that they will stage a hunger strike that they agreed to let them inside and hand over the petition. Police were deployed in the area to avoid



Members of Almayya Munnettam protest in front of Mount St Thomas, Kakkannad, the headquarters of the Syro-Malabar Church on Saturday

untoward incidents. Mar Sebastian Vaniyapurackal, the Curia Bishop, received the petition from the representatives of the laity organisation.

The petition sought to exclude permanent exemption from the new format of mass prescribed by the synod. "The Holy Mass has been practised

for over 50 years. Forcefully implementing the 50-50 formula by the bishops of the Synod without any discussions cannot be accepted," said Riju Kanjookaran, spokesperson of the Almayya Munnettam.

While formally inaugurating the first session of the synod, Cardinal Mar George Alencher-

ry, head of the Syro-Malabar Church, pointed out that implementing the Holy Mass, approved by the synod in August, in 34 dioceses of the Church is the triumph of the unity in the Church. He added that guidelines will be issued to some churches that have difficulty in implementing the new format.

Concern over attack against Christians

The synod, during its session, raised its concern over the rising attacks on Christians across the country. "Contrary to the secular nature of the country, there is a rising tendency to search and attack Christian institutions. Also, deliberate attempts by authorities targeting various institutions of the Missionaries of Charity Congregation of St Mother Theresa are unfortunate," said a statement released by the Church.

AS OF NOW, KOCHI METRO HAS PLANNED EMBANKMENTS, LIGHT- ZIMBA LAST FEBRUARY

The Indian Express, 13/01/2022

Priests of Ernakulam-Angamaly archdiocese begin hunger strike

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @Kochi

DEMANDING a permanent exception from the new unified mode of celebrating Holy Mass from the ongoing Syro-Malabar Church Synod meeting, a section of priests of Ernakulam-Angamaly archdiocese began a hunger strike at Ernakulam Bishop's House.

Over 50 priests of the archdiocese took part in the protest. Meanwhile, laity activists of the archdiocese took out a vehicle rally to Mount St Thomas, headquarters of the Church, demanding the Synod to act on major issues in the Church including the discrepancies in the controversial land deals.

According to the priests, the Syro-Malabar Synod is trying to force Metropolitan Vicar Archbishop Antony Kariyil to revoke the relaxations that Ernakulam-Angamaly archdiocese has received with regard to the Holy Mass.

"When decisions regarding an archdiocese is taken, certain Canon samithis including the decision-making samithi and presbyterial council should be informed. Though we had approached the Synod to engage in discussions, no mem-



Fr Babu Kalathil on hunger strike at Ernakulam Bishops' House on Wednesday

ber was ready to do so. If the Synod is trying to force its decisions upon the archdiocese without any discussion, it will affect the unity in the archdiocese," said presbyterial council secretary Fr Kuriakose Mundadan. "The Synod should not come in the way of continuing the existing mode of the Holy Mass in the archdiocese. We will protest against any such decision taken by the Synod," added Mundadan. A committee of selected priests of the archdiocese along with two vicars-general and Forane vicars held a meeting and decided to call a meeting of all priests of the archdiocese on Thursday to decide on the future course of action.

The Hindu, 13/01/2022

Over 100 priests stage fast in front of Cardinal's residence

Demand to exempt archdiocese from uniform Mass

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
KOCHI

More than 100 priests from the Syro-Malabar Archdiocese of Ernakulam-Angamaly staged a protest fast in front of the residence of Cardinal George Alencherry, head of the Syro-Malabar Church, in the city to reiterate their demand that the archdiocese be allowed to continue with the tradition of fully congregation-facing Mass and be given permanent exemption from a directive of the Synod of Bishops of the Church last August in this regard.

A member of the Athirupatha Samrakshana Samithi (forum of priests for protection of the archdiocese) said there were around 350 priests, who could actually participate in the protest but the COVID-19 protocol saw around 100 of them taking part in the protest. The samithi leader said any at-



Almaya Munnettam, an organisation of lay people in the archdiocese of Ernakulam Angamaly, taking out a black flag march to the headquarters of the Syro-Malabar Church on Wednesday. ■ THULASI KAKKAT

tempt to impose the uniform Mass system would be resisted.

The day-long fast was staged even as the 30th Synod of Bishops of the Syro-Malabar Church was in progress

at the church headquarters at Mount St. Thomas in Kakkannad, near here. The community of priests had earlier submitted a memorandum to the Synod raising the same demand.

The 30th Synod, which began on January 7, will conclude on January 15 and the community of priests requested the Bishops to consider the occasion as an opportunity to reconcile the differences of opinion on the celebration of the Mass.

Meanwhile, Almaya Munnettam, a collective of lay people, organised a black flag protest march to the archdiocesan headquarters in the afternoon, demanding, among things, *the spirit of the Second Vatican Council should be preserved and the Synod, which had lost its synodality, should quit.* The Alamaya Munnettam is calling for more transparency in church administration and demanded that the fully congregation-facing Mass should be allowed in the archdiocese and alleged the Cardinal Alencherry was using the issue of Mass celebration to camouflage other issues.

Priests begin indefinite fast

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

TOI

Kochi: Even as the synod of Syro-Malabar Church is progressing in Kakkanad, priests of Ernakulam-Angamaly archdiocese started an indefinite hunger strike at Ernakulam Bishop's house on Wednesday night, seeking a favourable decision from the synod regarding the style of mass. The archdiocese wants a permanent exception from the new unified mode prescribed by the synod.



Fr Babu Kalathil on hunger strike at Ernakulam Bishop's house on Wednesday

UNIFIED HOLY MASS

The priests alleged that the synod was trying to pressure the metropolitan, vicar Mar Antony Kariyil who granted the exemption, to withdraw it. "It is not Christian for the synod to impose a decision on the archdiocese without agreeing to discussions or talks. Such decisions are aimed at destroying the unity of this archdiocese," said presbyteral council secretary of archdiocese Fr Kuriakose Mundadan.

The archdiocese has formed a committee of priests to counter any moves against 'Mass Versus populum',

the format of mass followed by the archdiocese. The sit-in strike that began at 11am, turned into an indefinite hunger strike by 8.45pm.

"We have decided to call a meeting of all priests of the archdiocese on Thursday. A decision on how to conduct further protests will be decided at this meeting," said a senior priest of the archdiocese. The committee met two vicar-generals and forane vicars of the archdiocese on Wednesday and the decision to call a meeting of all priests was taken.

Meanwhile, laity activists of the archdiocese conducted a vehicle rally waving black flags at Mount St Thomas as a token of protest against the synod for not giving a response to the memorandum submitted by them on Sunday.

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Over 250 priests protest at Bishop's House

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Kochi: Over 250 priests of the Ernakulam-Angamaly archdiocese on Thursday gathered at the Bishop's House in Ernakulam where a priest on Wednesday night started an indefinite hunger strike. The priests are protesting the synod's de-

HOLY MASS

cision to unify the style of Holy Mass and are demanding a permanent exception from the change.

Even as the hunger strike by the priest is progressing at the Bishop's House, a laity member from the archdiocese started an indefinite hunger strike at the gates of Mount St Thomas, the Church headquarters where the synod was progressing. Laity activists under the banner of Almayya



Protesting priests of the Ernakulam-Angamaly archdiocese gathered at the Bishop's House in Ernakulam on Thursday

Munnettam, a laity organisation, held a protest carrying torches to Mount St Thomas on Thursday evening, raising the same demands.

Meanwhile, a delegation of priests from the consultors' forum of the archdiocese on

Thursday night visited Mount St Thomas to meet with members of the permanent synod. However, Church sources were yet to confirm any official discussion between the bishops and priests on the issue.

The archdiocese on Wed-

nesday formed a committee of priests to counter any moves against 'Mass Versus populism', the format of the Holy Mass followed by the archdiocese.

Priests on Thursday stressed that they would protest any move by the synod to forcefully implement the new mode of Holy Mass. Fr Sebastian Thaliyan, convener of Athirupatha Samrakshana Samithy, a body of priests in the archdiocese, said that the permission of the canonical bodies of the archdiocese should be sought before taking any decisions pertaining to the archdiocese.

Fr Babu Kalathil is on hunger strike at the Bishop's House, while a laity member, Prakash P John started an indefinite hunger strike in a makeshift tent at the gates of Mount St Thomas.

The Indian Express, 14/01/2022



TWEET
OF THE
DAY



Ramesh Chennithala@chennithala

Glass ceiling has been shattered. So proud to see more women featuring in the Congress candidates list for UP assembly polls. And few names in the list shows how the oppressed under BJP regime are empowered. Hats off to @priyankagandhi for this path breaking initiative.

newindianexpress.com

Holy Mass controversy: After priest, laity member begins hunger strike

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @Kochi

DEMANDING a permanent exemption from implementing the new format of the Holy Mass approved by the synod of the Syro-Malabar Church, over 250 priests of the Ernakulam-Angamaly archdiocese on Thursday gathered at the Ernakulam Bishop's House where a priest had started an indefinite hunger strike on Wednesday night.

Meanwhile, a laity member from the archdiocese started an indefinite hunger strike at the gates of Mount St Thomas, the headquarters of the Church where the synod is progressing. The laity activists, under the banner of Almaya Munnettam, held a protest carrying flambeaus to Mount St Thomas on Thursday evening raising the same demand.

The priests stressed they will protest any move by the synod to forcefully implement the new mode of Holy Mass.



Priests protesting at Ernakulam Bishop's House on Thursday

"It is learnt that the synod is attempting to force Metropolitan Vicar Mar Antony Kariyil to withdraw the exemption granted by him to the archdiocese after a meeting with the Pope. When we realised that deliberate attempts were made by the synod, we started the hunger strike," said a priest.

"For over 50 years, we have been following the old mode of the Holy Mass, facing the people. We urge the synod not to make any form of changes to the Holy Mass we practice. It is

our right. The synod should officially recognise the Holy Mass that is in place at the archdiocese. The permission of the canonical bodies of the archdiocese should be sought if any decision pertaining to the archdiocese is taken," said Fr Sebastian Thaliyan, convener, Athirupatha Samrakshana Samithy.

Meanwhile, priests from the consultors' forum of the archdiocese visited Mount St Thomas to meet the bishops late on Thursday.

Row over Mass: priests seek meeting with synod

They warn of stepping up stir if demands are not met

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
KOCHI

The deadlock in the Syro-Malabar Church over whether to conduct the Mass facing the altar or congregation continued on Thursday as the consultative forum of the Ernakulam Angamaly archdiocese, mostly comprising priests, made it clear that they would step up the agitation against the Church leadership until their demands are met.

The representatives of the forum, who were asked to turn up at the Mount St. Thomas in Kakkanad where the synod of the Syro-Malabar Church was progressing, said in the evening that they



Burning issue: Priests and laity of the Ernakulam-Angamaly Archdiocese holding a torchlight procession to St. Thomas Mount at Kakkanad in Kochi where the Synod of the archdiocese was held on Thursday. ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

could not meet the members of the synod despite getting a clear assurance in the afternoon.

"We have decided to remain here on a fast demanding that the members of the synod meet us," they said. Representatives of the 'Almeya Munnettam,' a collective of lay people, staged a torchlight protest in front of

the church headquarters.

The differences over the celebration of the Mass had widened after 100-odd priests staged a fast in front of the residence of Cardinal George Alencherry, head of the Syro-Malabar Church, in the city on Wednesday to reiterate their demand that the archdiocese be allowed to continue with the tradi-

tion of celebrating the Mass facing the congregation the whole time and be given permanent exemption from a directive of the synod issued in last August in this regard.

The forum leaders had said earlier that any attempt to impose uniform Mass would be resisted. The situation had aggravated amidst the progress of the 30th synod of bishops of the Church at Mount St. Thomas in Kakkanad.

The community of priests had earlier submitted a memorandum to the synod raising the same demand. The 30th synod, which began on January 7, will conclude on January 15.

'Synod should quit'

Almeya Munnettam reiterated its demand that the spirit of the Second Vatican Council be preserved and the synod should quit.

The Hindu, 16/01/22

Fast continues against synodal decision on Mass celebration

Protest location shifted to Cardinal's house

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
KDC/30

Protest by groups of lay people and priests of the Archdiocese of Ernakulam-Angamaly under the Syro-Malabar Church continued on Satur-

day, with two lay persons and a priest continuing their fast in front of the Cardinal's house in the city.

No communication

A spokesperson for lay people's group *Almaya Munnattam* said the synod of bishops of the Syro-Malabar Church, which ended on Saturday, had not given any indication of making any com-

munication, and two lay persons - Prakash C. John and N.D. Thomas - who were initially fasting in front of the headquarters of the Syro-Malabar Church at Kakkannad here, had shifted the location of their protest to the Cardinal's house.

Arrested

Father Tom Mullanchira continued his fast in front of the

Cardinal's house on Friday after the police arrested and shifted Father Sabu Kalathil to a private hospital in the city.

Groups of lay people and priests have said there would be no compromise on Mass celebration.

The synod has decided that Mass should be celebrated with the priest facing the congregation for the first half

and face away from the people for the rest of the ceremonies.

Demand

However, there has been a strident demand from the Ernakulam-Angamaly Archdiocese that the Mass be celebrated with the priest facing the congregation for the entire duration of the ceremonies.

Row over unified Holy Mass: Laity wave black flag at bishops

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Kochi

BLACK flags were waved by laity at Bishops who came out of Mount St Thomas, headquarters of the Syro Malabar Church, where the Synod was going on. Meanwhile, in the wake of lack of response from the Synod regarding the issues relating to the mode of conducting Holy Mass, laity activists and priests decided to continue their hunger strike.

Fr Tom Mullanchira is continuing hunger strike at Ernakulam Bishops' House, while Fr Babu Kalathil is at the hospital where he was

Priests to continue hunger strike

In the wake of lack of response from the Synod regarding the issues relating to the mode of conducting Holy Mass, laity activists and priests decided to continue their hunger strike

forcefully shifted by police on Friday. With the Synod coming to an end, laity activists Prakash P John and Thomas Keecheri, who were protesting in front of the headquarters of the Church, shifted their venue of hunger strike to Ernakulam Bishops'

House.

A section of priests and laity of Ernakulam-Angamaly Archdiocese is seeking permanent exemption from the new format of Holy Mass approved by the Synod. As per the priests, the Synod was putting pressure on the metropolitan vicar of the archdiocese Mar Antony Kariyil to revoke the exemption that he had granted to the archdiocese from conducting the new mode of mass. The Church with the support of the Oriental Congregation has been taking a stand that the exemption granted to the archdiocese was against rules.

The Times of India, 16/1/22

New Archbishop, Bishop for Syro Malabar Church

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Kochi: The 30th synod of the Syro Malabar Church on Saturday elected Bishop Mar Joseph Pamplany as the new Archbishop of the Archeparchy of Tellicherry and Bishop Mar Peter



Kochupurackal as the new Bishop of the Eparchy of Palghat.

The first session of the synod, which began on January 7 at Mount St Thomas, Kakkanad, was concluded on Saturday. Major Archbishop Cardinal George Alencherry announced the appointment orders of the archbishop-elect and bishop-elect.

Mar Joseph Pamplany was born on December 3, 1969. He was ordained priest on December 30, 1997. He was



Archbishop-elect of the Archeparchy of Tellicherry Bishop Mar Joseph Pamplany seeks blessings of Major Archbishop Cardinal George Alencherry

the Auxiliary Bishop of the Archeparchy of Tellicherry since November 8, 2017. His appointment is following the retirement of present Arch-

bishop Mar George Njaralakkatt.

Mar Peter Kochupurackal was born in 1964 at Marangoly, Pala. He did his priestly studies at St Joseph's Pontifical Seminary, Aluva. He has a doctoral degree in Canon law from the Oriental Institute in Rome. He was appointed Auxiliary Bishop of Palghat on January 15, 2020, and was consecrated on June 18, 2020. His appointment is following the retirement of the present Bishop Mar Jacob Mananodath.

Black flags waved at bishops

Meanwhile, priests and laity of the Ernakulam Angamaly archdiocese continued their protest against the synod's decision to unify the mode of conducting Holy Mass. Laity activists on Saturday evening waved black flags at the bishops when they left Mo-

unt St Thomas after the synod's conclusion on Saturday evening.

Seeking a permanent exemption from the new format of conducting Holy Mass prescribed by the synod, Fr Tom Mullanchira is continuing his hunger strike at the Ernakulam Bishop's House. Earlier, Fr Babu Kalathil, who launched a hunger strike, was forcefully shifted to a hospital where he is continuing the strike. Two laity activists, Thomas Keecheri and Prakash P John, who were on hunger strike at the gates of Mount St Thomas, were shifted to the Bishop's House on Saturday evening.

Priests alleged that the synod was pressuring the metropolitan vicar of the archdiocese Mar Antony Kariyil to retract the exemption that he granted to the archdiocese from conducting the new mode of Holy Mass.

Priests and laity to continue hunger strike

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE@Kochi

THE post-Synod circular issued by Cardinal Mar George Alencherry saying that Mar Antony Kariyil had informed the Synod that he would issue a circular on January 23 retracting the exemption is only a pressure tactic, said Fr Sebastian Thaliyan, convenor, Athirupatha Samrakshana Samithy.

“The metropolitan vicar’s move to visit Rome to find a resolution for the issue of the Holy Mass was not liked by the cardinal and other bishops. It is known that the Synod is pressuring Mar Kariyil to retract the exemption,” said Fr Thaliyan. Meanwhile, the laity activists who protested at Ernakulam Bishops’ House was shifted to a hospital after they developed uneasiness on Sunday. They are continuing their hunger strike at the hospital. Around 200 including parishioners had pledged to retain the old mode of the Mass on Sunday. “We will continue with the hunger strike and more protests will be launched in the coming days against the Synod’s decision,” said Binu John, convenor of Almaya Munnettam, laity organisation of Ernakulam-Angamaly archdiocese.

The Hindu, 17/01/2022

Synod's move under fire as protest rages

Lay people, priest stage hunger strike

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
KOCHI**

The stand-off over the issue of uniform Mass celebration in the Syro-Malabar archdiocese of Ernakulam-Angamaly continues with lay people as well as a priest going on a hunger strike in front of the Cardinal's house here demanding the archdiocese should be allowed the free-

dom to continue with its half-century-old tradition of fully congregation-facing Mass celebration.

"Priests and lay people will strengthen their resistance against the arrogance of the synod of bishops," said a communication from the combine of priests under the aegis of Athirupatha Samrakshana Samiti (Forum for Protection of the Archdiocese) here on Sunday even as Cardinal George Alencherry, Major Archbishop and head of the Syro-Ma-

labar Church, insisted the dioceses should comply with a diktat on uniform Mass celebration.

Rightful place

Almaya Munnettam (a lay people's combine calling for more transparency and accountability in Church administration) said a recent circular from the synod on uniform Mass celebration would find its rightful place in the dustbins.

Father Sebastian Thaliyan, a senior priest and con-

vener of the samrakshana samiti, alleged that the synod was trying to confuse the Church members with self-contradictory messages.

Father Tom Mullanchira has continued his indefinite fast in front of the Cardinal's House.

Arrested

Father Babu Kalathil and two lay persons, Prakash P. John and Thomas Keecheri, have been arrested and shifted to hospital after their health condition deteriorated.