



Prot. No. 1292/2021

05 December 2021

To

**All Archbishops and Bishops of the Syro-Malabar Church**

Dear Archbishops and Bishops,

Greetings in our Lord Jesus Christ!

I write this letter to express my sincere gratitude to all of you for having implemented the uniform mode of celebration of the Holy *Qurbana* in our Church. The Holy *Qurbana* is celebrated in the uniform mode from 28 November 2021 in all the Archeparchies and Eparchies, with two or three exceptions. This marks the beginning of a new era of greater communion and unity in our Church. It is the Spirit of the Lord who guided us in a very special way for this historic moment. It was made possible as a result of the wholehearted collaboration from the part of the Bishops, priests, consecrated persons and the lay faithful of our Church. As I wrote in my letter to the priests of our Church, this is the only possible consensus formula that we could arrive at for the unity of our Church. I am happy that as humble ministers of Christ and His Church, we could put aside our personal likes and dislikes and come to a consensus regarding the mode of celebration of the Holy *Qurbana*. We should be grateful to Holy Father Pope Francis for his solicitude expressed through his exhortation, for the directives given by the Congregation for the Eastern Churches and the support of the Apostolic Nuncio.

I understand that the execution of this decision was not an easy task for some of you who had to face resistance from various corners. But, as you stood for upholding the decision of the Synod for the greater unity of our Church, you were strengthening our Synod and acting as faithful stewards of our Church. I am sure that this will strengthen our Church to face future challenges.

We know that there are a few places where the decision of the Synod could not be implemented. We should not be discouraged by seeing the failures in the implementation of the decision. I am convinced that one day there will be perfect unity and harmony regarding the mode of celebration of the Holy *Qurbana*. “We know that in all things God works for good with those who love him, those whom he has called according to his purpose” (Rom. 8:28). All of us should be guided and inspired by this

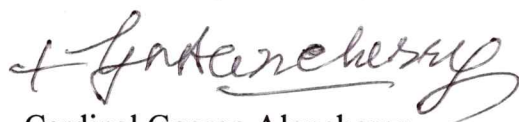
conviction and continue to work together as a Synod to attain the lasting unity for the greater glory of God and the good of the Church.

In the forthcoming Synod, we will evaluate the situation of the Eparchies that could not implement the decision and take necessary steps to find solution for the impasse. The Permanent Synod evaluated the situation in the Church in the wake of implementing the Synodal decision. Its assessment is that the dispensation granted in some eparchies as per c. 1538 §1 does not conform to the specifications made by the Congregation for the Eastern Churches by its letter dated 09 November 2020. The dispensation is to be granted only in special cases and that also for a well defined period of time to safeguard the spiritual good of the faithful. It should not be used as a convenient tool to overturn a common law for protecting personal or eparchial interests. The Permanent Synod has communicated these concerns to the Congregation for the Eastern Churches. As per the decision of the Permanent Synod, I have written to the Bishops who did not implement the Synodal decision, asking them to review their stand from the point of view of c.17 of CCEO which safeguards the inalienable right of the faithful “to worship God according to the prescriptions of their own Church *sui iuris* and to follow their own form of spiritual life in accord with the teachings of the Church”.

Dear Archbishops and Bishops, as a Synod we have travelled a long way from 1999 to 2021 to arrive at this point. From here we have to continue our journey towards unity, respecting the permissible diversities in all aspects of life in the Church. In this journey, the uniformity in the mode of celebration of the Holy *Qurbana* will help us as a basic factor.

Wishing you all a fruitful Season of Annunciation,

Yours cordially in Christ,



Cardinal George Alencherry

Major Archbishop of the Syro-Malabar Church

