



FIRST EPARCHIAL ASSEMBLY LINEAMENTA

SYRO-MALABAR CATHOLIC EPARCHY OF MISSISSAUGA



THEME

BE A MISSION & BUILD THE CHURCH

2

**THEOLOGICAL LEGACY & MISSIONARY ZEAL
OF THE SYRO-MALABAR CHURCH**



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SYRO-MALABAR CHURCH AT A GLANCE

Second largest
Eastern Catholic
Church, after the
Ukrainian
Church

Priests:
8,547
(3,556 Diocesan
Priests & 4,991
Religious)

Eparchies
outside Kerala:
13

Syro-Malabar
faithful:
5,207,615
(over 5 million)

Eparchies within
Kerala:
13

Archebishops:
5

Bishops:
64

Women Religious:
32,114

Eparchies
outside India:
4+1 Apostolic
Exarchate of
Europe

Major Seminarians:
1214



Theological Legacy of the Syro-Malabar Church



THE WAY OR LAW OF THOMAS

The intimate and personal Christ experience of St. Thomas, the Apostle

Proclamation of St. Thomas, “My Lord and My God”

The source of the theological patrimony of the St Thomas Christians

The profession of faith by St. Thomas

⤵:

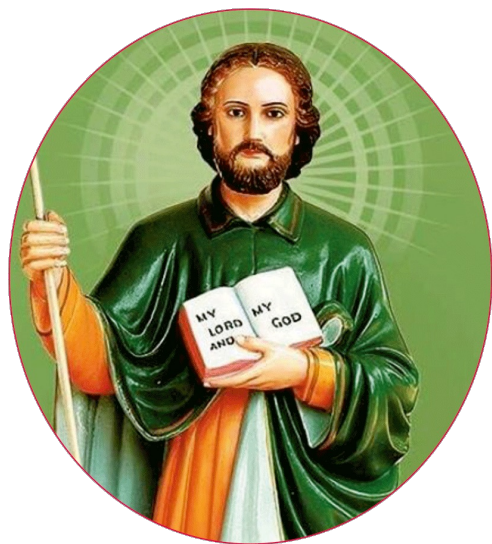
By professing the Risen Christ as “My Lord and My God,” St. Thomas declared that he had not only seen Christ (the Lord) but also in and through Christ, he saw God (the Father) and thus he confessed “My Lord and My God”.



Saint

Thomas





The Missionary Zeal of St. Thomas the Apostle

The great missionary among the twelve apostles

Well known for his love for Jesus, his spirit, and his courage

His determination to follow his Master is reflected in his words,
“Let us also go, that we may die with him” (Jn 11:16).

An important truth of the spiritual life of the missionary: “... never
to distance oneself from Jesus”(Pope Benedict XVI)

A great missionary who travelled to Edessa in Syria, and then to
India, where he founded many churches and died a martyr's death



The Apostolic Heritage of the Syro- Malabar Church

The Apostle Thomas reached South India in **in AD 52**.

The early Christians who received faith from the Apostle Thomas have been called “*the Christians of Saint Thomas*,” known today as the Syro-Malabar Church.

For St. Thomas Christians, Christianity is a way of life (margam) to reach God the Father and to obtain salvation.

St. Thomas Christians faithfully preserved and diligently observed “*the Way or Law of Thomas*” .

The term, “the Way or Law of Thomas,” meant the faith, liturgy, spiritual life, discipline, traditions, and customs, as well as the whole socio-political and cultural mode and activities of the St. Thomas Christians.



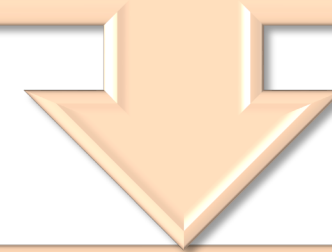
Syro-Malabar Church is Missionary by Nature

The Son was sent by the Father.



He sent the apostles all over the world.

“Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always to the end of the age” (Mt 28:19-20).



The Syro-Malabar Church received her missionary zeal from St. Thomas the Apostle.





Syro-Malabar Church is Missionary by Nature



Legacy of St. Thomas:

Believe with conviction, confess with enthusiasm and witness with courage.



The Syro-Malabar Church has developed a unique way of witnessing the Gospel, endowed with the Eastern Catholic faith and rooted in Indian culture and tradition.



The expression of the missionary zeal of the Syro-Malabar Church in the fourth ***Gehanta prayer*** of the Holy Qurbana:

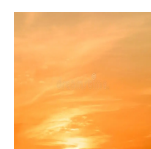
“Let all the people on Earth know that you are the only true God the Father and that You have sent your only begotten Son Jesus Christ...”.



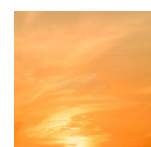
Liturgical Theology of the Syro-Malabar Church



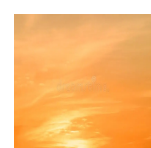
Eucharistic Celebration (Holy Qurbana)



The source and summit of the Christian life.



The advanced Earthly experience of the ultimate encounter with God in Heaven.



Sacred Liturgy is the public worship which our Redeemer as Head of the Church renders to the Father, as well as the worship which the community of the faithful renders to its Founder, and through Him to the Heavenly Father. It is the worship rendered by the Mystical Body of Christ in the entirety of its Head and members (Pius XII).



Liturgical Theology of the Syro-Malabar Church

Liturgy plays a key role in preserving and transmitting the faith and early traditions of the Church from generation to generation.

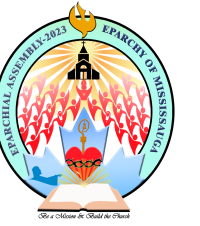
Faith is formally declared and celebrated in the Liturgy. Therefore, all Eastern Churches, including the Syro-Malabar Church, always look to the liturgy for the proper formulation of faith since the changes in the formulae in the liturgy can alter the faith itself (Pope Benedict XVI).

A fruitful participation in the liturgy requires one be personally conformed to the mystery being celebrated, offering one's life to God in unity with the sacrifice of Christ for the salvation of the whole world

The Latin axiom, *Lex orandi, lex credendi*, means the law of prayer establishes the law of faith. Faith is formally declared and celebrated in the Liturgy.



Transmission of Faith



Family-Centered Catechesis

Home is the place where faith is born, nourished, and transmitted.



Families gave a religious dimension to every event in the family.

Families developed many domestic rites in connection with birth, the beginning of education (*Vidhyarambham*), marriage, death, funeral, and memorials for the dead.

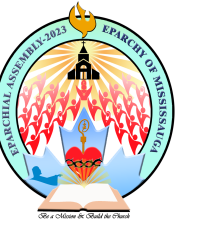


Community-Centered Catechesis

Liturgy was the principal mode and source of catechesis among the St. Thomas Christians.

Liturgical celebrations, catechetical instructions during Holy Qurbana, celebration of feasts, and customary practices helped in faith transmission.

Abstinence, asceticism, penance, and austerity were the salient features of the spirituality of St. Thomas Christians.



Living an Ecclesial Memory in a New Culture

Syro-Malabar immigrants in the early years practiced their Catholic faith in the local Latin Catholic parishes. However, the strong desire to go back to the roots of their liturgy, traditions, and faith formation were successful in obtaining proper pastoral care of their own Church sui juris by the erection of the Apostolic Exarchate of Mississauga in 2015 which was later elevated as the Eparchy of Mississauga in 2018.



Process of Identity Transmission

LIVING IN FAITH FOR THE SECOND GENERATION

CHALLENGES

Misrepresentation by the media

Secularized societies

Degradations of religiosity and value

Mixed marriages

Conflict of legality and morality

WAYS TO ADAPT TO CHALLENGING SITUATIONS TO UPHOLD FAITH

Liturgical services

Youth Retreats

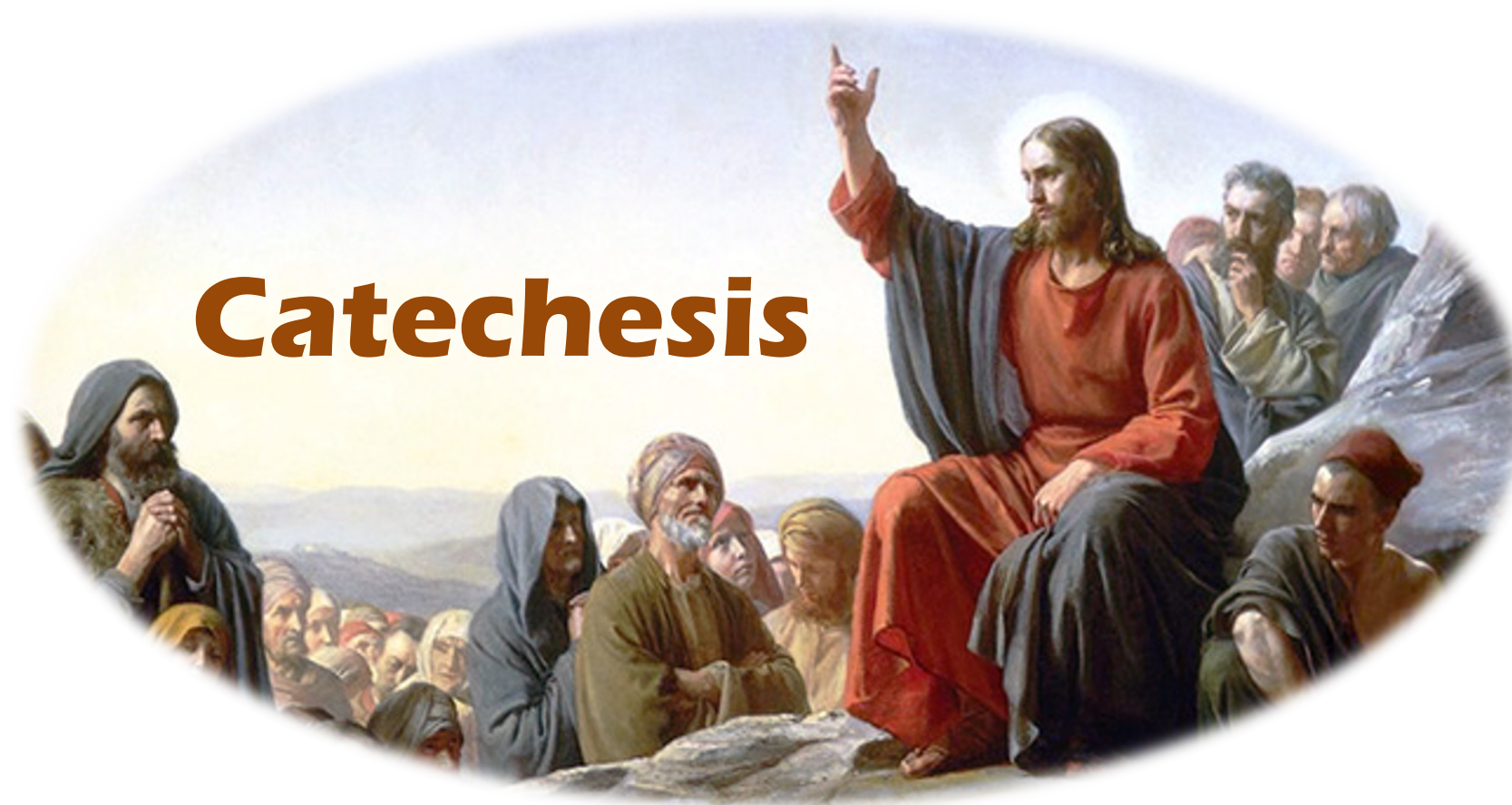
Catechetical formation in English

Youth in family units

Syro-Malabar Youth Movements



Faith Formation



“Catechesis is an education in the faith of children, young people, and adults which includes especially the teaching of Christian doctrine imparted, in an organic and systematic way, with a view of initiating the hearers into the fullness of Christian life”

(CCC # 5)

(CCC # 2)

hearers into the fullness of Christian life”



Faith Formation of children



- Parents - the primary teachers (Catechists) of the Catholic faith.
- Family Catechesis precedes, accompanies, and enriches other forms of instruction in faith.
- Parents have the mission of teaching their children to pray and to discover their vocation as children of God.
- The parish - the Eucharistic community and the heart of the liturgical life of Christian families; a privileged place for the Catechesis of children and parents.

Uniqueness of the Syro-Malabar Church - the age-appropriate Catechetical formation for children.



Isn't it the time to rethink whether the present Catechetical formation equips our children to be a sacrament of Christ in Canada?

Isn't it the time to rethink whether the present Catechetical formation equips our children to be a sacrament of Christ in Canada?



Youth

“A blessed time for the young and a grace for the Church and for the world.

It is joy, a song of hope and a blessing”.

Pope Francis

Empower the youth

Two main courses of action:

OUTREACH

The way we attract new young people to an experience of the Lord.

GROWTH

Help those who have already had the experience of the Lord to mature in it.





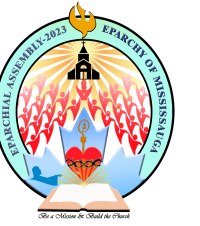
Missionary Call of adults



The mission of Church and its adult faithful in and to the world:

To share the message of Christ to renew and transform the social and temporal order.

Our faith and life as adult disciples are grounded in developing a personal relationship with Jesus and becoming “salt of the earth” and “light of the world” (Mt 5: 13-16).



The Syro-Malabar Church is “Indian in Culture, Christian in Religion, and Oriental in Worship.” It is the duty of every Syro-Malabar Catholic to believe in the Risen Christ with conviction, confess Him with enthusiasm and witness Him with courage.

I Believe
WITH GOD ALL THINGS ARE POSSIBLE.

I Confess

I witness

Thank You!

SYRO MALABAR CATHOLIC EPARCHY OF MISSISSAUGA