

MALANKARA CATHOLIC CATECHISM

GLORY TO JESUS CHRIST

STANDARD - 3

**M.C.B.C. Commission for Catechesis
Santhinilayam, Tiruvalla – 689 101**

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GLORY TO JESUS CHRIST

Translation : Rev. Fr. Samuel Thykoottathil

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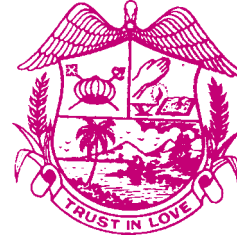
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FOREWORD

We praise the Lord for granting us His Grace to bring out a catechism text of our own for our Malankara Catholic Church. Indeed it is a unique moment in which a long cherished dream of the Church finds accomplishment. Let us be truly thankful to the Lord for these great blessings.

We have received in Jesus Christ the fullness of God's self-communication revealed invisibly in the Old Testament and visibly in the New Testament right from the creation of the universe especially that of Man. The story of revelation is the story of salvation. The core of catechism is this story of revelation and salvation. Through the Holy Spirit this story of salvation continues today in and through the Church. For us this salvation becomes a living experimental reality through the life and mission of the Malankara Catholic Church. Therefore the story of salvation and the patrimony or the venerable tradition of the Malankara Catholic Church become the fundamental sources for the Malankara Catechism. Thus our Catechism is founded on the Salvation History and the venerable patrimony of the Malankara Church.

I pray that this Catechism becomes a new force in the growth of the Malankara Catholic Church and I earnestly advise the faithful to receive this catechism and promote the progress of the Church.

My thoughts particularly are turned towards our faithful outside the canonical ecclesiastical territory, which we call for convenience Extra-Territorial Region (ETR). I appreciate the endeavour of Rev. Dr. John Berchmans OIC, the Coordinator of the ETR in India for the English catechism books he has prepared. Through the present texts we intend to bring all our texts into a unified series. Our children will learn our Catholic faith through our venerable tradition and they will become true sons and daughters of our Church. It is my hope that our new generation take legitimate pride in their patrimony and place in our Church and find their legitimate role in the universal Church. We know that the strength of our faithful is the strength of our local and universal Church.

Once again I express our sincere appreciation for this unique achievement. Our sincere thanks is due to Most Rev. Thomas Mar Koorilos, the Chairman of our Catechetical Commission and Rev. Dr. Antony Kakkanatt, the Secretary of the Commission. God bless them and all those who have collaborated with them in this noble mission.

+ Mar Baselios

+ Cyril Mar Baselios
Metropolitan Archbishop of Trivandrum

INTRODUCTION

The Command of Jesus Christ to “Go into all the world and proclaim the Good News to the whole creation” (Mark 16:15) is the foundation for Catechesis or faith formation. This faith formation has been continuing in the Church from the days of the early Church in different ways. Catechesis is based on the theological positions of each epoch. A serious awareness on the liturgical, spiritual, theological, disciplinary patrimony of the Malankara Catholic Church led to the promulgation of a unique catechism for the Malankara Catholic Church. The entire Church rejoices at the fulfilment of this desire.

Catechism should never become an intellectual pursuit. True Catechesis should lead the pupil to a Life of worship and witness. Catechesis should attempt to lead, nurture and confirm the pupil in the life of faith of the Church to which he or she belongs. Thus the catechumen will be able to know and experience Christ in and through the Church and participate in the mystery of salvation and be in communion with the Holy Trinity. Jesus Christ continues his Salvific Mission in and through the Church. Therefore we have concentrated on an ecclesial centred catechesis. This catechesis is founded on the spiritual heritage of the Malankara Catholic Church.

In the first grade our goal was to help the child to glorify God and in the second grade it has been to help the child to glorify the Triune God. In the third grade the thrust is to know Jesus Christ and to glorify Him. In the preceding grades Jesus Christ is presented in general. The child is confirmed in the faith that Jesus who was born in Bethlehem and grew up in Nazareth was not an ordinary lad but was God himself. We have attempted to relay that message throughout this textbook. Therefore concentration is on the miracles of Jesus Christ. Through these miracles the child should be able to praise and worship Jesus as God.

God sent his only Begotten Son into the world to save man who sinned. Jesus Christ is the incarnate Son of God: “The Word became flesh and lived among us” (John 1:14). Care also is taken to present the Father whom Jesus revealed and the Spirit whom Jesus would be sending. Along with this the miracles of Jesus are also introduced. Topics on the Holy Bible, which were written through Divine Inspiration, and the Church, which is guided by the Holy Spirit and which is also the body of Christ are explained. The fundamental tenets of faith and the life of those who bore witness to this faith and the universe and nature which God gave to man are also treated in this book. The revelation, which began with the creation, proceeded with the creation of man and became perfect in Jesus Christ is seen through this text.

The stress on the Holy Trinity centred on the figure of Jesus Christ is evident in this text. In the Liturgy we sing, "We offer praise and thanksgiving to You and to Your Father and to Your Holy Spirit". In this prayer we see a Trinitarian praise centred on Jesus Christ. Thus it is hoped that through this text the child will be able to understand the Father and the Holy Spirit and praise and glorify the Triune God in and through the person of Jesus Christ.

Based on the principle that "the rule of prayer is the rule of faith", this textbook will help our children understand better the prayers and songs that we recite in our services and thus allow them to truly experience our Liturgy. The prayers, hymns and practical suggestions given at the end of each lesson give more meaning and spiritual nourishment to the child.

We are profoundly grateful to His Grace Most Rev. Cyril Mar Baselios, Metropolitan Archbishop of Trivandrum and the other bishops of the Malankara Catholic Church for their constant prayers, support and suggestions. My special thanks are due to our beloved Aboon Isaac Mar Cleemis, Metropolitan of Tiruvalla and the Apostolic Visitor to America and Europe for his continued support and guidance.

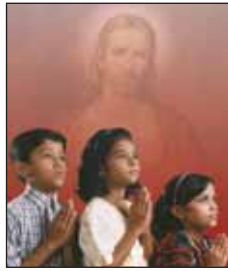
To the many priests, religious and lay faithful who have sincerely collaborated in this endeavour we offer our gratitude. I would like to thank Rev. Fr. Samuel Thykootathil for his effort to translate the Malayalam Text into English. We would like to thank the Professors of St. Mary's Malankara Major Seminary, Trivandrum, and especially Rev. Dr. Philip Chempakasserry, Rev. Dr. Kurian Valuparampil. I would like to extend our sincere thanks to the diocesan directors of catechism Rev. Fr. Johnson Charivukalayil, Rev. Fr. Philip Dayanand, Rev. Fr. James Mulackavila and Rev. Fr. Johny Cherikkayath. Our thanks are also due to the Text book committee – Rev. Dr. Joseph Konnath, Prof. Mary Mathew and Shri. M. V. Thomas. So also to Mr. Mathews Orathel for designing the text book and pictures. I would like to extend my sincere thanks to Rev. Fr. Joseph Kalariparampil for his assistance. Our indebtedness to Rev. Dr. Antony Kakkanatt who is the master brain behind this work is also sincerely acknowledged.

I pray that through this catechism text each child may be brought to and nourished in and confirmed in the faith of the Malankara Catholic Church and thus be able to know and experience Christ's love more profoundly.

+ Thomas Mar Koorilos
Chariman, MCBC Commission for Catechism

CONTENTS

Lesson - 1
Glory to Jesus Christ
Page - 8



Lesson - 6
Jesus and the Heavenly Father
Page - 23

Lesson - 2
Jesus in the Temple
Page - 11



Lesson - 7
Jesus Changes Water into Wine
Page - 26

Lesson - 3
Prepare the Way for Jesus
Page - 14



Lesson - 8
Jesus Cures the Leper
Page - 29

Lesson - 4
Jesus and the Apostles
Page - 17



Lesson - 9
Jesus Gives Sight to the Blind
Page - 32

Lesson - 5
Jesus Taught the People
Page - 20



Lesson - 10
Jesus Walks on Water
Page - 35

Lesson - 11
**The Transfiguration
of Jesus**
Page - 38



Lesson - 16
The Holy Bible
Page - 53

Lesson - 12
**Jesus Raises
Lazarus to Life**
Page - 41



Lesson - 17
Our Faith
Page - 56

Lesson - 13
**The Death and
Resurrection of
Jesus**
Page - 44



Lesson - 18
Our Church
Page - 59

Lesson - 14
**The Ascension
of Jesus into Heaven**
Page - 47



Lesson - 19
**The Confessors
of the Church**
Page - 62

Lesson - 15
**The Descent of the
Holy Spirit**
Page - 50



Lesson - 20
Love the Nature
Page - 66

Lesson 1

GLORY TO JESUS CHRIST



In the beginning God created heaven and earth. God created man as the crown of all creation. God made our first parents, Adam and Eve, to dwell in the Garden of Eden in all prosperity. God commanded, **“You may freely eat of every tree of the**

garden; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat” (Genesis 2:16-17). But they defied the commandment of God and ate the forbidden fruit. Then, they were afraid of God and they hid themselves. God sent them out of the Garden of Eden. Consequently they lost all their prosperity. Even though God punished them, He felt pity on them. He promised them a Saviour.

People multiplied on earth. Along with them evil also increased. There were many difficulties and sufferings in human life. They waited for the Saviour. In the fullness of time, Jesus Christ, the Saviour was born from Mary, the Blessed Virgin. He belonged to the family of David, who was a descendent of Abraham. He was born in Bethlehem, the city of David.

Both men and angels rejoiced when the Messiah, the Saviour, was born. The angels sang praising God, who was born for the salvation of man, **“Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favours”** (Luke 2:14). Having learnt the news of the birth of Jesus, the shepherds of that region and the wise men from the East came and they knelt down and worshipped Him.

The feast of the birth of Jesus is known as Christmas. It is celebrated on the 25th of December. Christmas is known in Syriac as ‘Yaldo’, which means ‘birth’.

Jesus Christ, Son of God, is the second person of the Holy Trinity. The word ‘Jesus’ means ‘Saviour’. The word ‘Christ’ or ‘Messiah’ means ‘the anointed one’. Jesus Christ is the Saviour of all men. Let us praise Jesus Christ, who is born for our salvation.

Let us Pray

"Glory to you, our Lord
Glory to you, our Lord
Glory to you, our refuge forever.
Barekmor".
(Order of the Malankara Qurbono)

Let us Sing

(Swargam bhoonija vasikalum...)
"The inhabitants of heaven and earth and all creatures
Sing praises to the Messiah;
Eternal Son of the Father, the unseen Messiah,
Made all happy by his birth".
(Hymn from the service of 'Yaldo')

Let us Do

I shall always offer praise and adoration
to Jesus Christ.

Let us Memorise

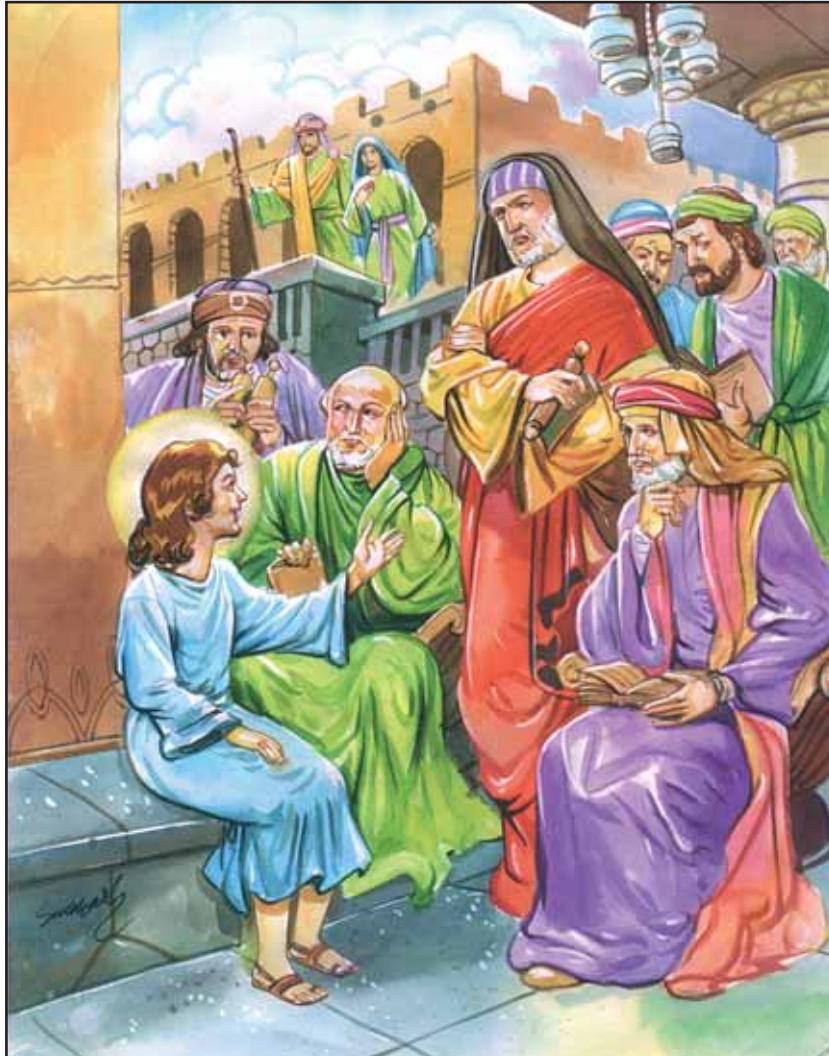
"Praise the Lord! Praise the
Lord from the heavens;
Praise him in the heights".
(Psalm 148:1)

Questions

1. What did God command to our first parents?
2. In whose genealogy was Jesus born?
3. In which city was Jesus born?
4. What did the angels sing at the birth of Jesus?
5. What is the equivalent in Syriac for the word 'Christmas'?
6. Give the meaning of the words, 'Jesus' and 'Messiah'.

Lesson 2

JESUS IN THE TEMPLE



Jesus lived in Nazareth, a town of Galilee, in His childhood. He lived in obedience to His parents. His parents, Mary and Joseph, used to go to Jerusalem every year for the feast of the Passover. When Jesus was twelve years old, He also went to

Jerusalem along with His parents for the feast. Many relatives and friends of Joseph also went with them.

Jerusalem is about 130 kilometres away from Nazareth. They returned after the celebration of the Feast. But, boy Jesus stayed back in Jerusalem. His parents did not know it. Supposing Him to be in the company of relatives and friends, they went ahead a day's journey. They sought Him among their kinsfolk and acquaintances; and when they did not find Him, they returned to Jerusalem, seeking Him.

After three days, they found Him in the temple. He was sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking questions. All who heard Him were amazed at His understanding and His answers. His mother said to Him, **“Child, why have you treated us like this? Look, your father and I have been searching for you in great anxiety”**. He said to them, **“Why were you searching for me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house?”** (Luke 2:48-49). Then He went with them to Nazareth. “Jesus increased in wisdom and in years, and in divine and human favour” (Luke 2:52).

Jesus was engaged in the affairs of God the Father. For He understood that it was His mission to do the will of His Father. In accordance with the will of God the Father, He lived in obedience to His parents.

We ought to obey our parents, respect our elders and honour our teachers while we love God.

Let us Pray

"O merciful God, we dedicate to you this day. We present before you all the holy sacrifices, and prayers offered and good deeds done everywhere in the Church this day. Along with them, we offer our own prayers, joys and sorrows and all our endeavours".

(Prayer for the dedication of the day)

Let us Sing

(Mose aa...Sakalesan...)

"Almighty called Moses

From within the thorny bush

And He had told him thus:

Receive you my power

Upon the tent of God

And on all things in it.

Am Halle-eluah

Eu halle-eluah

You perform the priest's duty".

(Order of the Malankara Qurbono)

Let us Do

I shall participate in the services of the church with devotion and attention.

Let us Memorise

"It is zeal for your house that has consumed me".

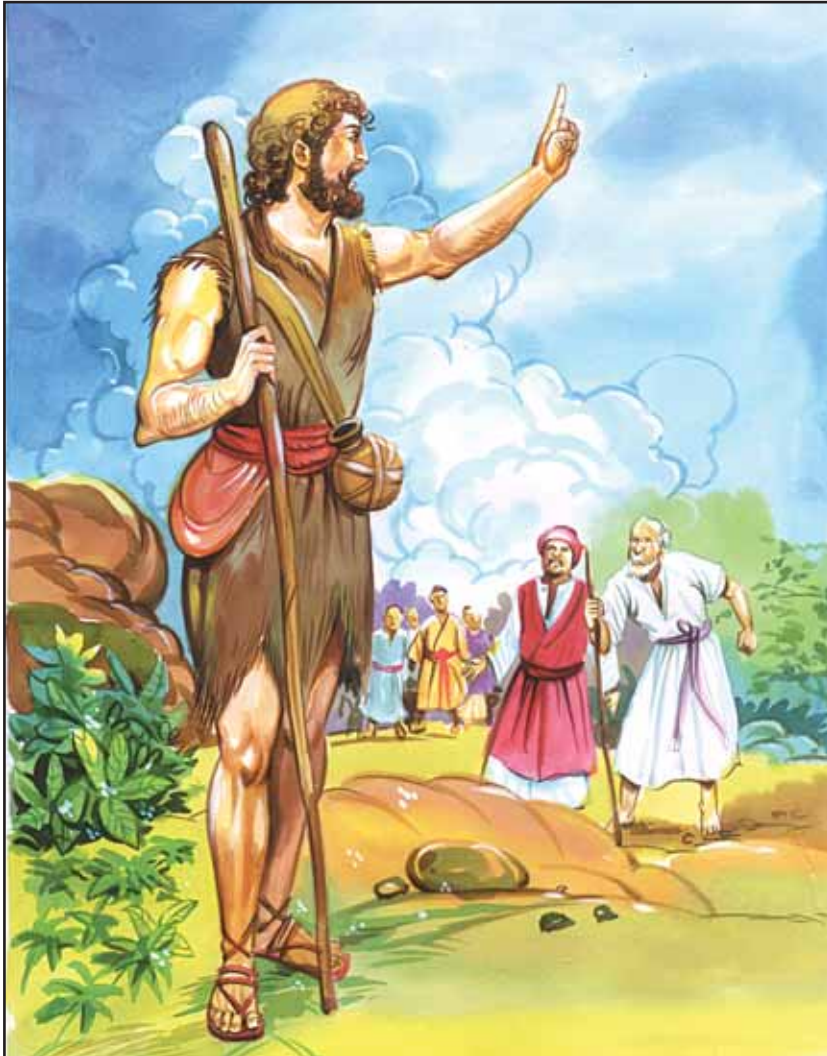
(Psalm 69:9)

Questions

1. Where did Jesus live during His childhood?
2. For what feast did Jesus go to Jerusalem at the age of twelve?
3. What did Jesus say to His parents when they came searching Him?
4. How did Jesus grow up in Nazareth?

Lesson 3

PREPARE THE WAY FOR JESUS



John is the son, born to Zechariah, the priest and Elizabeth, his wife in their old age. He was the prophet, who was sent by God to prepare the way for Jesus. Since he grew up as a hermit, John wore a garment of camel's hair and a leather girdle around his

waist; and his food was locusts and wild honey. He exhorted the people to receive Baptism for the forgiveness of sins.

John the Baptist preached to the people, **“Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near”** (Matthew 3:2). Many people came to him. They repented of their sins and were baptized. He advised them, **“Whoever has two coats must share with anyone who has none; and whoever has food must do likewise”**. Tax collectors asked him, “Teacher, what should we do?” He said to them, **“Collect no more than the amount prescribed for you”**. He said to the soldiers, **“Do not extort money from anyone by threats or false accusation, and be satisfied with your wages”** (Luke 3:11-14).

John said about Jesus thus: **“I baptize you with water; but one who is more powerful than I is coming; I am not worthy to untie the thong of His sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire”** (Luke 3:16).

One day when John was baptizing, Jesus came to him and was baptized by him. Then the heavens were opened. The Holy Spirit descended upon Him like a dove. A voice from heaven was heard: **“This is My Son, the Beloved, with whom I am well pleased”** (Matthew 3:17).

Once John pointed to Jesus and said, **“Here is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world”** (John 1:29).

John preached to the people about the kingdom of God and baptized them. He prepared the people to receive Jesus.

John protested against the injustice of King Herod. The king got angry with this and executed John the Baptist. John became God’s prophet through austere life and meditation. Jesus Himself testified about John,

that among those who were born of women there was no one greater than John the Baptist.

Let us also bear witness to truth, and fight against injustice.

Let us Pray

"O Lord God, the Son of the Father,
the Word and the Lamb of God, who
bore and bears the sins of the world,
have mercy on us".
(Praise of the Angels)

Let us Sing

(Cherthu salilam Yohannan...)

"Yooohanon prepared water that he may baptize,
Jesus by his baptism, gave it his splendour.
As soon as he – got out of the water,
Heaven and earth both – gave him due respect.
The sun has set her bright rays and stars have honoured him,
Who is to purify springs of water and rivers;
Halleluiah o halleluiah".

Let us Do

I shall introduce Jesus to my friends, who
never have known Him.

Let us Memorise

"Here is the Lamb of God who takes
away the sin of the world".
(John 1:29)

Questions

1. What are the names of the parents of John the Baptist?
2. What did John the Baptist preach to the people?
3. What did John say about the Baptism, Jesus was to give?
4. What witness did Jesus make about John?
5. Who executed John the Baptist?

Lesson 4

JESUS AND THE APOSTLES



Jesus spent forty days for prayer and fast in the wilderness after His Baptism. Thereafter, He began His public life. Jesus came to Galilee preaching the gospel. The word 'gospel' means 'good news'. He said, **“The time is fulfilled, and the**

kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news”
(Mark 1:15).

Jesus called the disciples to share in His mission. From among them He chose specially twelve. These are the Apostles, in Syriac, ‘Sleeha’. The word ‘sleeha’ means ‘one who is sent’. Most of them were fishermen and belonged to the ordinary class of people. “These are the names of the twelve Apostles: first, Simon, also known as Peter, and his brother Andrew; James son of Zebedee, and his brother John; Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; James son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus; Simon the Cananaean and Judas Iscariot, the one who betrayed Him” (Matthew 10:1-4).

Jesus called the twelve and gave them authority to cast out demons. He sent them to preach the kingdom of God and to cure those who suffer from diseases. They went to several places and preached the gospel and cured diseases. They accepted Jesus as their Master and Lord.

After the death and resurrection of Jesus, the Apostles preached His gospel in the four quarters of the earth. Peter was the chief of the Apostles. He preached the gospel in Antioch and Rome. He was martyred in Rome. The Pope is the successor of Peter, the head of the Apostles. It is Thomas, the Apostle of Jesus, who preached the gospel in India. He was martyred here. All the Apostles preached the gospel in different parts of the world. All of us who believe in Jesus are His disciples. So we too are obliged to preach the gospel.

We can be witnesses to the gospel of Jesus through our good thoughts, words and deeds. Let us try to lead others to Jesus. Thus we shall live as true disciples of Jesus.

Let us Pray

“Bless us O Lord through the prayers of those who have pleased you. The prophets who spoke of you inspired by the Holy Spirit, and the Apostles who made known your revelation and the martyrs who died for love of you, shall intercede with you on our behalf”.

(Morning Prayer)

Let us Sing

(Bhoovilasesham...)

"Chosen apostles

Went into the four quarters of this entire earth.

And among gentiles

Preached the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Saviour.

Blessed are those, who embrace

This gospel, for they shall

Inherit God's Kingdom".

(Order of the Malankara Qurbono)

Let us Do

I shall preach Jesus through my good deeds.

Let us Memorise

“He appointed twelve, whom he also named apostles, to be with him, and to be sent out to proclaim the message, and to have authority to cast out demons”.

(Mark 3:14-15)

Questions

1. What is the meaning of the word 'gospel'?
2. What is the meaning of the word 'sleeha'?
3. Who are the twelve Apostles?
4. Who is the head of the Apostles?
5. Where was Peter, the Apostle, martyred?
6. How is the successor of Peter called?

Lesson 5

JESUS TAUGHT THE PEOPLE



Jesus taught the people during His public life. He taught them as one who had authority. The people gathered together to listen to His teaching. They considered Jesus as a Divine Master and listened to Him.

He said, **“Love your enemies, pray for those who persecute you. Thus you will be the sons of your heavenly Father.. Do not do evil against those who do evil to you, but do good to them. Do not resist the evil one. But to the one, who strikes at the right cheek, turn the other also... If any one takes your coat, let him have your cloak as well”** (Matthew 5:38-48, Luke 6:27-36).

We ought to love those who harm us, and forgive their wrongs. God will forgive us only if we forgive those who do wrong to us.

Jesus taught, ‘Say the truth. Do not lie. Do not swear. Do good deeds. Do not get angry with your brother. If you have enmity with your brother, get reconciled with him’ (Matthew 5:21-26).

Help others. Give alms to the needy in secret. When we help others, we do service to God, taught Jesus.

Jesus again taught, ‘Pray unceasingly. Keep fast. Do not be anxious about the future. Put your entire trust in God’ (Matthew 6:1-8).

Jesus desires that all should be kind, humble, and merciful. He said, “Learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart” (Matthew 11:29).

Jesus taught thus: ‘We ought to serve all. He who desires to be the first must be the servant of all. Love your neighbour as you love yourself’.

We should always strive at putting into practice what Jesus taught us. Then only we shall become children of the heavenly Father.

Let us Pray

“Give me Lord thoughts that are lowly
and patient and every thing that is
pleasing to you”.
(Prayer of the Third Hour)

Let us Sing

(Dushtaril Neerasamaruthe...)
"Have no disgust on wicked men – Halleluiah
So also, no hatred - on sinners.
Do good, confiding in God – Halleluiah
Seek your faith in this - life on earth".
(S'himo, Tuesday – morning)

Let us Do

I shall deal lovingly with all and serve them.

Let us Memorise

“If you do not forgive others, neither will
your Father forgive your trespasses”.
(Matthew 6:15)

Questions

1. What did Jesus teach regarding our attitude towards our enemies and who do wrong to us?
2. What did Jesus teach about fraternal relationship?
3. What did Jesus say about helping others?
4. What did Jesus teach about those who desire to be the first in the community?

JESUS AND THE HEAVENLY FATHER



Jesus was praying in a place. When the disciples saw such devout prayer, they also wished to pray in like manner. They also had doubt as to whom Jesus, the Lord and God, was praying. When Jesus had finished praying, they approached

Him. One of them asked Jesus to teach them to pray. Jesus was pleased. He taught them to pray:

Our Father in heaven, holy be your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our sins as we have forgiven those who have sinned against us. And lead us not into temptation. But deliver us from the evil one. For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.

Jesus was always praying to God the Father. It is the Father, who sent Jesus to this world. The Father sent His Son to this world so that He may save all men from sin.

Jesus taught thus about the Father, **“Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect”** (Matthew 5:48). Jesus taught that His Father is the creator and protector of all of us. We are the children of God, the Father. He loves us very much.

We see God the Father, through Jesus. He said to the disciples, **“Whoever has seen Me has seen the Father”** (John 14:9).

Let us love our heavenly Father, praise Him and adore Him. Let us thank Jesus Christ, who has revealed to us God, the Father.

Let us Pray

"You, who sit in glory at the right hand of
God the Father; have mercy and
compassion on us".
(Praise of the Angels)

Let us Sing

(sudhan, sudhan,sudhan...)
"Holy, holy, holy
Lord God Almighty
Heaven and earth are full of his glory
Praise... his... glory
Hosa...anna, in... the highest.
Blessed is he, who came in his name
And who is to come again.
Glory to his majesty
In... the highest".
(Order of the Malankara Qurbono)

Let us Do

I shall obey my superiors.

Let us Memorise

“Whoever has seen me has seen
the Father”.
(John 14:9)

Questions

1. To whom did Jesus pray?
2. Which is the prayer Jesus taught His disciples?
3. What did Jesus teach about God the Father?
4. Through whom do we see God the Father?

Lesson 7

JESUS CHANGES WATER INTO WINE



There is a place called Cana near Nazareth of Galilee. There was a marriage banquet there. Jesus, His mother Mary and the Apostles were there to participate in it. There were lot of people there. When the banquet was in progress, the wine ran short. The

hosts and the steward were much upset. It is an insult to send away the guests without giving them enough wine.

The mother of Jesus knew this situation and said to Him, “They have no wine”. Jesus replied her, **“Woman, what concern is that to you and to me? My hour has not yet come”**. His mother said to the servants, “Do whatever He tells you” (John 2:3-5). There were six stone jars in that house for the Jewish rite of purification. Jesus ordered them, “Fill the jars with water”. They filled them up to the brim. Jesus raised His eyes heavenwards and prayed. After that He told them, **“Now draw some out, and takes it to the chief steward”**. They did so.

The steward tasted the water changed into wine. He called the bridegroom and said to him, “Everyone serves the good wine first, and then the inferior wine after the guests have become drunk. But you have kept the good wine until now” (John 2:10). This is the first of the signs Jesus did to manifest His glory.

It is this miracle that is read as gospel in the Malankara Catholic Church during Holy Mass, celebrated on the first Sunday of Lent. This day is known as ‘Kothine’ (Cana) Sunday, in Syriac. It is the glory of Jesus, born for the salvation of mankind, which is revealed through this incident.

Mother Mary helped them without the request of any member of the family. This incident teaches us the importance of the intercession of the holy Mother in the life of every Christian. We should beseech the intercession of holy Mary throughout our life. Jesus will work miracles in our life and bless us.

Let us Pray

"Let there be for us the help of prayers and blessings of the Mother of God and all Saints now and at all times. Amen".
(Evening Prayer)

Let us Sing

(Isa gnangale vazhthuka ni...)
"You changed water into wine
Likewise renew our hearts
That we may praise you and your
Father and the Holy Ghost".
(Hoothomo of Malankara Qurbono)

Let us Do

I shall always beseech the intercession of the holy Mother of God in my life.

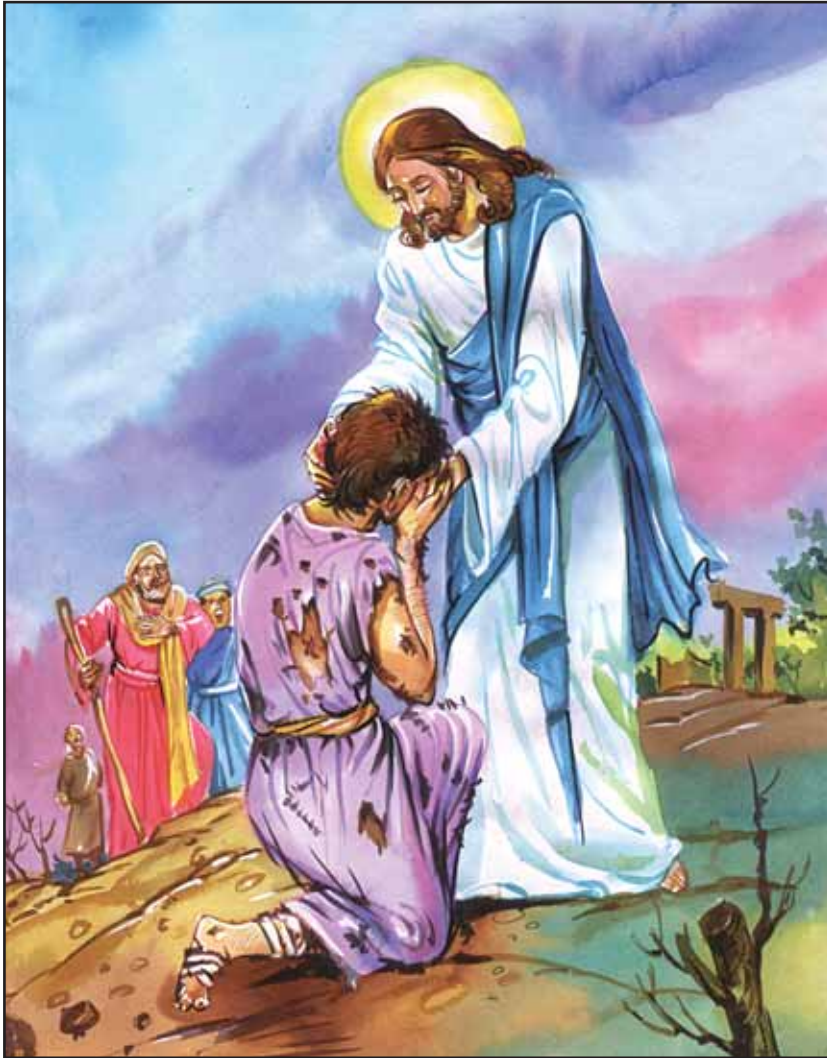
Let us Memorise

"It is good to give thanks to the Lord,
to sing praises to your name,
O Most High".
(Psalm 92:1)

Questions

1. Which is the first miracle Jesus worked?
2. What does the changing of water into wine signify?
3. Which is the gospel-reading of the first Sunday of Lent in the Malankara Catholic Church?
4. What is the part of Mary, Mother of God, in the miracle of the changing of water into wine?

JESUS CURES THE LEPER



Jesus worked many miracles. The curing of the leper is an important one among them.

Leprosy is a disease by which the limbs of the human body are decayed and gradually lost. Today there is effective

medical treatment for this. But at the time of Jesus, there was no such medication. Those affected with the disease had to go away from their homes. They were not allowed to go near others. The members of the society hated the lepers.

One day a leper approached Jesus and requested Him saying: “If you will, you can make me clean”. Jesus felt pity on him. Jesus touched the untouchable leper and said, **“I will; be clean”**. Immediately, the leprosy left him, and he got well.

Jesus told him, **“See that you say nothing to anyone; and offer for your cleansing what Moses commanded, as a testimony to them”** (Mark 1:40-45).

But he went out and began to proclaim many things and to publicize them. The fame of Jesus spread everywhere. Lot of people gathered around in order to get cured of their diseases and to hear His words.

This incident is commemorated on the 2nd Sunday of Lent, according to the liturgical calendar of the Malankara Catholic Church. This day is known as ‘Garbo Sunday’, the Sunday of the leper.

Jesus is kind hearted. He is merciful and heals the sick. We should serve the sick. We should pray for them; show pity on them. When we pray in our sickness, Jesus will grant us also healing.

Let us Pray

"Merciful Lord, the voice of our petition knocks at your door. Deny not the needs of those who worship you. We, who are weak, call on you for our assistance.

O Good One, hear the voice of our supplication and grant our petitions.

Amen".

(Prayer of Sutoro)

Let us Sing

(Karthave krupa cheyyaname...)

"Stretch your right hand upon this Body, which is your hands work.

And protect it like a shield
Within the fortress of mercy".

(Prayer of Sutoro)

Let us Do

I shall deal with sick people mercifully.

Let us Memorise

"I do choose. Be made clean".

(Luke 5:13)

Questions

1. How did Jesus cure the leper?
2. What was the attitude of people toward lepers at the time of Jesus?
3. Why did people gather around Jesus?
4. What is the Sunday, Jesus cured the leper, called?

JESUS GIVES SIGHT TO THE BLIND



Once Jesus was going from the city of Jericho to another place. His disciples and a large crowd accompanied Him. A blind beggar, named Barthimaeus, was sitting by the roadside. When he knew

that it was Jesus of Nazareth who passed that way, he cried out loudly saying, “Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me”. Many rebuked him to keep quiet. But he cried out all the more and said, “Son of David, have mercy on me”.

Jesus stood still and said, “Call him”. They called the blind man and said, **“Take heart, rise, he is calling you”**. Throwing off his outer garment, he sprang up and came to Jesus. Jesus asked him, **“What do you want Me to do for you?”** And the blind man said, “Master, let me receive my sight”. Jesus said to him, **“Go your way; your faith has made you well”**. Immediately he received his sight. He followed Jesus. (Mark10:46-52).

Barthimaeus, who had thought that he would never in life receive eyesight, believed that Jesus, Son of David, was the Messiah. Knowing the deep faith of the blind man in Him, Jesus gave him sight. Jesus will give all blessings to those who call upon Him, believing Him to be God.

There are many people around us who are blind and ignored. We are obliged to show mercy to them. We should feed them and give help for their treatment. We should behave toward them with love and mercy. Thus we, too, can become partners in the works of mercy of Jesus.

Let us Pray

"Open my eyes so as to see your truth and glorify your sacred name. Since I have placed my hope in your mercy, you guard my infancy".
(Evening Prayer of Lent)

Let us Sing

(Velivu niranjoreeso...)

"In your light we see the light Jesus, full of light.
You are the true light that enlightens all creation.

Let your light enli...ghten us
Heavenly Father's own splendour".
(Hymn before the Malankara Qurbono)

Let us Do

I shall help the blind.

Let us Memorise

"Jesus, Son of David,
have mercy on me".
(Mark 10: 47)

Questions

1. How did Bartimaeus address Jesus?
2. What did Jesus say when He gave sight to the blind?
3. Describe the incident how Bartimaeus received sight.
4. What should be our attitude to the blind people?

JESUS WALKS ON WATER



After the multiplication of the five loaves of bread and feeding 5000 people to their satisfaction, Jesus asked His Apostles, **“Go in the boat to the other side”**. They set sail to the other side of the Sea of Galilee. After having dismissed

the crowd, Jesus was praying in solitude. Darkness had set in. The boat in which the Apostles were sailing had gone far from the shore. A violent storm blew and the sea became turbulent. The boat was tossed by the waves.

At that time Jesus walked on the water of the sea and approached the Apostles. They were terrified seeing a man walking on the sea. They thought it to be a ghost and cried out for fear. Jesus, seeing them getting panicky, pacified them. He spoke to them saying, **“Take heart, it is I; do not be afraid”** (Matthew 14:27).

Peter recognized Him and said, “Bid me come to you walking on the sea”. Jesus agreed. Peter got out of the boat and walked towards Him. When he had covered a short distance, he saw the wind blowing hard and was frightened. He began to sink. He cried out, “Lord, save me”. Jesus immediately reached out His hand and catching hold of him said, **“O man of little faith, why did you doubt?”** When Jesus got into the boat, the wind subsided. The Apostles worshipped Him and said, **“Truly You are the Son of God”** (Matthew 14:22-33).

This incident testifies to the authority of Jesus over nature and the powers of the universe. The faith of the Apostles in the divinity of Jesus was corroborated through this incident.

Jesus comes near us when we feel lonely and are under anxiety and fear. Let us pray after Peter, ‘Lord save’.

Let us Pray

“We call upon you our Master and Lord,
come to our aid. Hear our petition and
have mercy on us”.
(Evening Prayer of Lent)

Let us Sing

(En nadha nin krupa ninne..)
“O Christ, who rose from the dead
With great power and glory
Raise us also in mercy
From the ocean of misery”.
(Evening Prayer, Qyomto)

Let us Do

I shall call upon Jesus when confronted
with difficulties in life.

Let us Memorise

“Jesus spoke to them,
Take heart, it is I; do not be afraid”.
(Matthew 14: 27)

Questions

1. Why were the Apostles frightened?
2. What did Jesus say in order to pacify them?
3. Why did Peter begin to sink in water?
4. What did the Apostles say adoring Jesus?
5. What does the walking of Jesus on the water signify?

THE TRANSFIGURATION OF JESUS



One day Jesus took with Him Peter, John and James and went to pray. He led them up a high mountain.

While He was praying, the face of Jesus shone like the sun. His garments glittered. Thus Jesus was transfigured. Then Moses and Elijah appeared. They spoke to Jesus. All the three were seen glorious. The Apostles saw the glory of Jesus.

Peter said to Jesus, **“Lord it is good for us to be here; I will make three dwellings here, one for You, one for Moses, and one for Elijah”**. At that time, a cloud overshadowed them. A voice from the cloud said, **“This is My Son, the Beloved; with Him I am well pleased; listen to Him”** (Matthew 17:5). The Apostles overcome by fear fell prostrate. Jesus made them brave. When they lifted up their eyes, they saw no one but Jesus.

This event of the Transfiguration of Jesus reveals His divinity and glory. Moses and Elijah were two important persons of the Old Testament. Moses was the leader of the Israelites. God prepared His own people, the Israelites, through Moses. God confirmed His covenant with the Israelites through Moses. Elijah was the chief of the prophets.

The Feast of the Transfiguration is one of the seven Feasts of our Lord. **This Feast is celebrated in the Malankara Catholic Church on 6th August**. This is the Feast, which celebrates the divinity and glory of Jesus.

Let us also glorify Jesus.

Let us Pray

“O glorious king, our Saviour, the
Messiah, grant us a peaceful evening and
a holy and blessed night”.
(Evening Prayer)

Let us Sing

(Sudhan, sudhan, sudhan ni nadha...)
“Holy, holy
Holy are you Lord.
Angels proclaim you holy;
Likewise on earth we praise you.
Heavenly Father declares you
“My beloved Son”.
(Order of the Malankara Qurbono)

Let us Do

I shall devoutly celebrate the feast of the
Transfiguration.

Let us Memorise

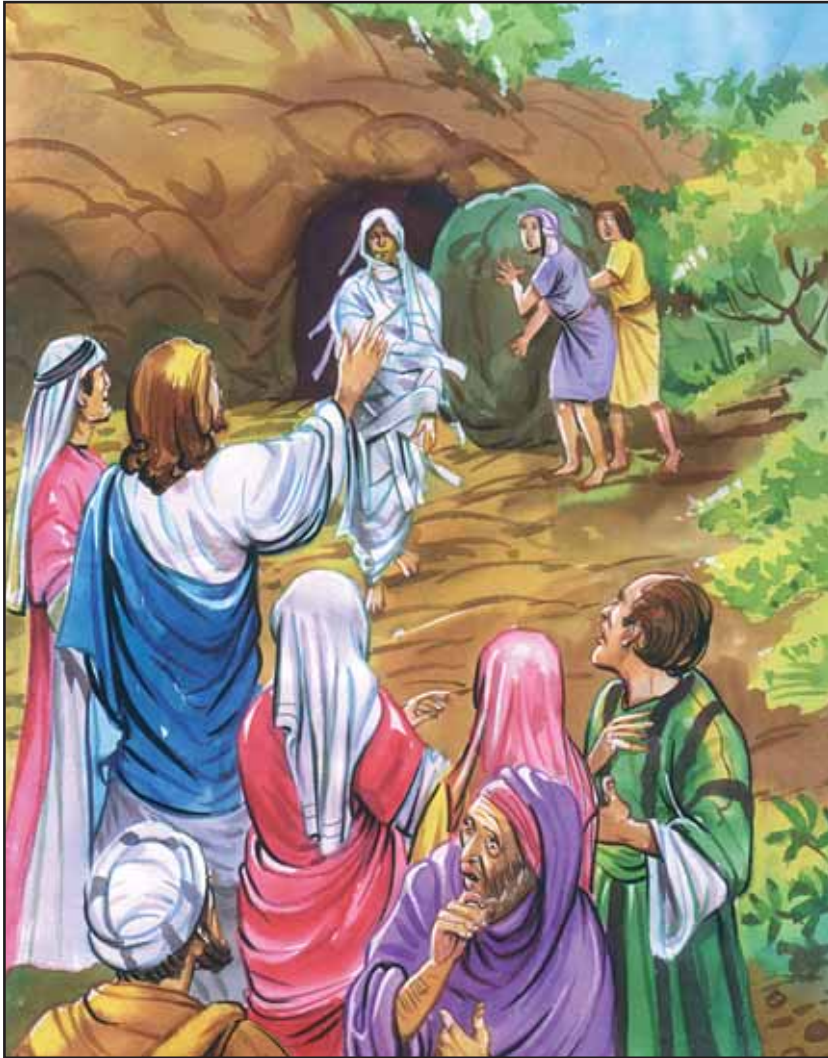
“This is my Son, the Beloved; with him
I am well pleased; listen to him”.
(Matthew 17:5)

Questions

1. Who were the Apostles present at the time of the Transfiguration of Jesus?
2. Whom did the Apostles see Jesus talking with, when He was transfigured?
3. What did Peter say when Jesus was transfigured?
4. What was heard from the cloud when Jesus was transfigured?
5. What is revealed through the Transfiguration of Jesus?
6. When is the Feast of Transfiguration celebrated in the Malankara Catholic Church?

Lesson 12

JESUS RAISES LAZARUS TO LIFE



Bethany was a village, near the mount of Olives in Jerusalem. It was there, that Lazarus, the friend of Jesus, lived. Martha and Mary were his sisters.

Lazarus was sick and he died. Though Jesus knew about the sickness of Lazarus, He arrived there only four days after his burial. Then Martha said, “Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died”. Jesus said to her, **“I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in Me, even though they die, will live”** (John 11:25). Martha confessed her faith and said, “Lord, I believe that You are the Messiah, the Son of God, the one coming into the world” (John 11:27).

When Jesus saw Martha and Mary mourn over the demise of their brother, He also wept. He came near the tomb and asked to remove the stone that covered the entrance of the tomb. Jesus raised His eyes and after praying said in a commanding voice, **“Lazarus, come out”**. The dead man came out. Jesus asked to unbind the bandages.

Only God can give life. Jesus is the Lord of life and death. Those who believed in Him, even if they died, would live. Many people believed in Jesus on account of this incident. It was after the raising of Lazarus to life that Jesus was caught. He endured torments and was crucified.

The raising of Lazarus to life is commemorated in the Malankara Catholic Church on the eve of Palm Sunday. It is known as the ‘Saturday of Lazarus’.

Only God can raise a dead man to life. It is the divinity of Jesus that is revealed through the raising of Lazarus to life. This event teaches us that Jesus has authority over death. Let us praise Jesus, who raises the dead to life.

Let us Pray

“Lord, console and sanctify all the faithful departed in the true faith. Forgive all offences committed by them and us before you, willingly or unwillingly; knowingly or unknowingly”.
(Order of the Malankara Qurbono)

Let us Sing

(Saranathale nin krupayil...)
“Your servants who departed
Trusting in your grace O Lord,
Let them be raised by your voice
To paradise from their graves”.
(Order of the Malankara Qurbono)

Let us Do

I shall pray for the dead.

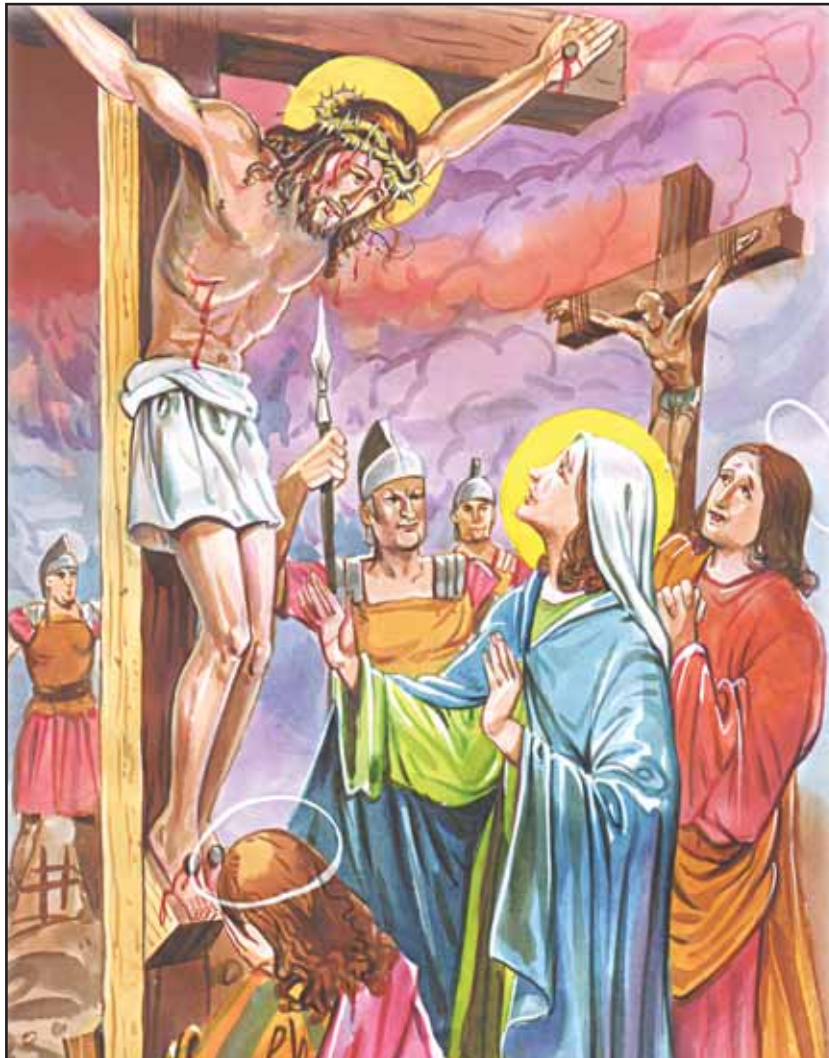
Let us Memorise

“This is indeed the will of my Father, that all who see the Son and believe in him may have eternal life; and I will raise them up on the last day”.
(John 6:40)

Questions

1. Where did Lazarus live?
2. Who were the sisters of Lazarus?
3. What did Jesus say to Martha?
4. What did Martha say in order to confess her faith?
5. On which day does the Malankara Catholic Church commemorate the raising of Lazarus to life?
6. What does the raising of Lazarus to life teach?

THE DEATH AND RESURRECTION OF JESUS



Jesus went from Bethany to Jerusalem after having raised Lazarus to life. The feast of the Passover of the Jews drew near. A large crowd of people received Jesus into Jerusalem like a king, singing Hosanna.

When the feast of the Passover came, Jesus sat at table with the Apostles. When they were eating Jesus took bread, blessed and said, **“Take, eat; this is My body”**. Blessing the cup He said, **“Drink from this; this is My blood”**. This signifies the death, which Jesus was to fulfil on the following day on Calvary (Matthew 26:26-30).

When the supper was over, Jesus went to the place called Gethsemane to pray. There, the soldiers seized Him. Later on Pilate, the Roman governor, tried Him and sentenced to crucify Him.

The soldiers stripped off His garments and put on Him a scarlet robe instead. They also placed on His head a crown of thorns. They mocked Him saying, “Hail, king of the Jews”. Then they made Jesus carry the cross and led Him to Golgotha. They nailed His hands and legs to the cross. Hanging on the cross, Jesus prayed thus: **“Father, forgive them”**. Jesus cried out in a loud voice and died on the cross (Matthew 27: 32-56).

The body of Jesus was taken down from the cross and buried in a new tomb. The Jews stood as guards before the sealed sepulchre. The holy women, who went to the sepulchre on Sunday at dawn, saw that it was opened. An angel said to them, **“He has risen”**. When they looked carefully into the tomb, they found it empty. Immediately the risen Christ appeared to them and greeted them. They made known this good news to all (Matthew 28:1-10).

Jesus saved mankind through His death on the cross on Calvary. Jesus defeated death for ever through His resurrection.

We commemorate these events especially in the Holy Week. This is also known as the Passion Week. This week extends from Palm Sunday to Easter Sunday. Let us observe the Holy Week with devotion and respect. Let us glorify Jesus, who for our salvation suffered, died and rose.

Let us Pray

“By your death you trampled on our death; you are one of the Holy Trinity, worshipped and glorified equally with the Father and the Holy Spirit. Have mercy on us, O Lord”.
(Order of the Malankara Qurbono)

Let us Sing

(Mahimayoda kabarinnu...)
"O Saviour, we celebrate you
and your resurrection
Grant life to us your servants as you
have promised".
(Morning Prayers, Qyomto)

Let us Do

I shall observe devoutly the Holy Week,
which commemorates the Passion and
Crucifixion of Jesus.

Let us Memorise

“For since we believe that Jesus died
and rose again, even so, through
Jesus, God will bring with Him those
who have died”.
(1 Thessalonians 4:14)

Questions

1. Describe how Jesus observed the Passover.
2. Who passed judgment to crucify Jesus?
3. What did Jesus pray while He was hanging on the cross?
4. What did the women see who went to the tomb of Jesus?
5. How do we call the week commemorating the events from Palm Sunday to Easter?

Lesson 14

THE ASCENSION OF JESUS INTO HEAVEN



The Apostles were sad over the death of Jesus on the cross. The resurrection of Jesus gave them immense joy and hope. There was the special presence of Jesus with the Apostles

for forty days after His resurrection. During this period, He appeared to them several times.

On the 40th day of the resurrection of Jesus, He took the Apostles to Bethany. This place was quite close to the Mount of Olives in Jerusalem. Jesus said to them, **“You will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be My witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth”** (Acts of the Apostles 1: 8).

Jesus raised His hands and blessed them. After that, as they were looking on, He ascended into heaven. A cloud took Him out of their sight. Then, two angels in white robes appeared and said, **“Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into heaven? Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw Him go into heaven”** (Acts of the Apostles 1:6-11).

Jesus had spoken about His going to heaven during His public life. He had also promised the Apostles to send the Holy Spirit from heaven.

The Ascension is the going back of Jesus, the Son of God, into heaven, who came down on earth from heaven for the salvation of mankind. The salvific works of Jesus were completed with the Ascension.

The Church celebrates the event of the Ascension of Jesus on the feast of the Ascension. The Syrian equivalent of this feast is 'Suloko'. Let us praise Jesus, who ascended into heaven.

Let us Pray

“Our minds and our hearts and thoughts
are with the Lord our God”.
(Order of the Malankara Qurbono)

Let us Sing

(Velivu niranjoreeso...)
"Lord your birth, baptism, passion, crucifixion,
Death, resurrection and ascension into heaven
So also our first parents.
We recall in this sacrifice".
(Order of the Malankara Qurbono)

Let us Do

I shall devoutly celebrate the feast of the
Ascension of Jesus into heaven.

Let us Memorise

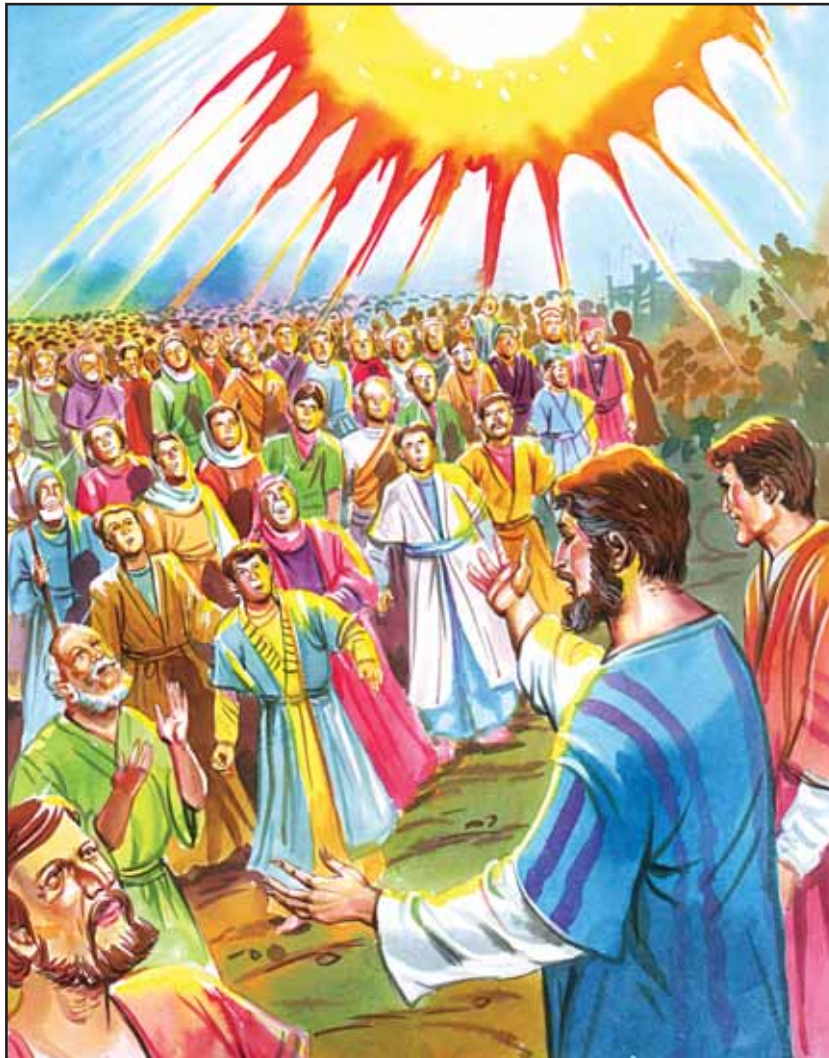
“Praise the Lord! Sing to the Lord a
new song, His praise in the assembly
of the faithful”.
(Psalm 149:1)

Questions

1. How many days after the resurrection was the Ascension of Jesus?
2. What did Jesus say to His Apostles at the time of the Ascension?
3. What is the name of the feast of Ascension in Syriac?

Lesson 15

THE DESCENT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT



The 'Pentecost' was one of the chief feasts of the Jews. This falls on the 50th day after the Passover. On the day of Pentecost, the Apostles and the Mother of God were praying in the upper

room of Zion. The Holy Spirit descended upon them like tongues of fire and filled them. With the gift of tongues, which the Holy Spirit gave them, they began to speak in different languages.

A lot of Jews came to Jerusalem for the feast of Pentecost. Having heard a loud sound, they all came together. They were bewildered to hear the Apostles speaking. For they, who came from different countries, heard in their own languages. They said, “Are not all these who speak, Galileans? And how is it that we hear each of us in our own native language?” When they saw the miracle, they were all amazed. Some mocked them and said that they were intoxicated, drinking wine.

Then Peter stood up and preached: **‘These men are not drunk as you suppose.... Jesus of Nazareth, whom you crucified and killed, is raised to life. The risen Christ has sent to us the Holy Spirit. It is the action of this Holy Spirit, you see and hear’** (Acts of the Apostles 2:1-36).

Those who heard the preaching of Peter asked the Apostles, “What shall we do?” Peter said, **“Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of sins. You shall receive the gifts of the Holy Spirit”**. On that very day 3000 people received baptism and joined them.

The Church came into existence with the coming of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is God, proceeding from the Father. It is the Holy Spirit, who continues the mission of Jesus through the Church.

This Holy Spirit will pour forth the divine grace on us; fill us continuously with the love of God. Let us always pray for the grace of the Holy Spirit.

Let us Pray

“Praise to you, God the Holy Spirit,
who sanctifies us and leads us”.
(Evening Prayer)

Let us Sing

(Yajamanan varumannerathu...)

"On that day of Pentecost, on the Apostles;
The Holy Spirit, blazing fire, had descended and dwelt.

Like tongues of fire
They received power,

In order to

Celebrate his gospel,

So that they shall win all men to Jesus, the Messiah;
Eternal bliss, together with the kingdom and life to win

Halleluiah – o – Halleluiah".

(Order of the Malankara Qurbono)

Let us Do

I shall pray daily for the grace of the
Holy Spirit.

Let us Memorise

“You will receive power when the Holy
Spirit has come upon you”.
(Acts of the Apostles 1:8)

Questions

1. How many days after Passover was Pentecost celebrated?
2. What were the changes effected in the Apostles after receiving the Holy Spirit?
3. What did Peter say to the people on Pentecost day?
4. Who continues the mission of Jesus Christ in the Church?

Lesson 16

THE HOLY BIBLE



The Bible is the sacred word of God. The Holy Book, the Holy Scripture, the Holy Writings are some other names of the Holy Bible. The meaning of the word 'Bible' is 'Book'.

There are 73 Books in the Bible. They are divided into two parts – the Old Testament and the New Testament. There are 46 books in the Old Testament and 27 books in the New Testament.

The New Testament is the completion of the Old Testament. Jesus Christ is the central figure of the Bible. The Old Testament looks forward to the coming of Jesus. The New Testament deals with the incarnate Christ. Both these Testaments together form the Bible.

The liturgy of the Malankara Catholic Church gives prime importance to the Bible. The Church teaches that when the priest reads the gospel at the Holy Qurbano, it is Jesus Himself who speaks to us. There is reading of the Holy Bible in the administration of all Sacraments. All our liturgical prayers are based on the Holy Bible.

The priest begins and ends the reading of the Bible after kissing it. There is the presence of God in the Bible. Therefore, when the Bible is read in the church, lighted candles and incense are used.

The Holy Bible has an important place in the life of a Christian. God speaks to us through the Bible. Hence we need to read the Bible to know the will of God. We should read the Bible in a prayerful spirit. It is a sign of our love towards God and an obligation on our part to read the Bible. We ought to honour and respect the Bible.

Let us Pray

“Our Lord Messiah, we praise you for the words of life you have given us, and your Father, who has sent you for our salvation and your Holy Spirit, who vivifies us”.
(Order of the Malankara Qurbono)

Let us Sing

(Stuthi yagangal...)
"Halleluiah - o -Halleluiah
Offer the sacrifice of praise
In the Lord's ramparts with chaste gifts;
Praise the Lord before his thronos -
Halleluiah".
(Order of the Malankara Qurbono)

Let us Do

I shall read the Holy Scripture daily.

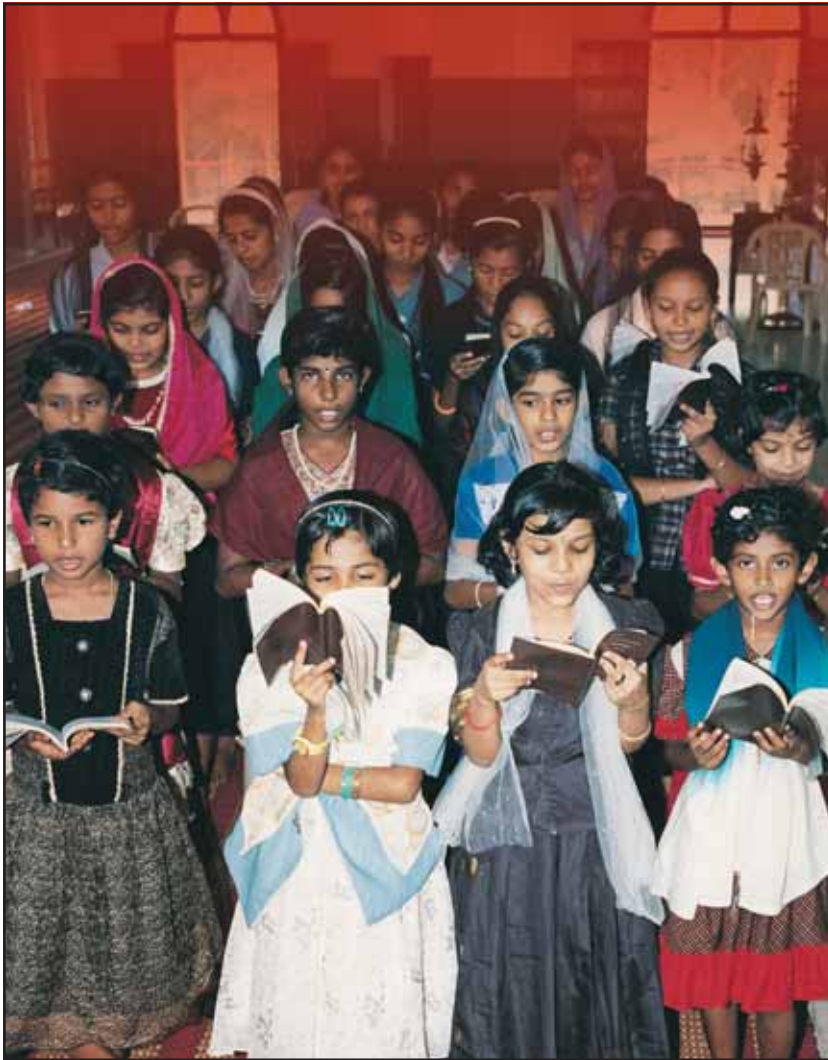
Let us Memorise

“But be doers of the word, and not merely hearers who deceive themselves”.
(James 1:22)

Questions

1. What are the other names of the Holy Bible?
2. What is the meaning of the word 'Bible'?
3. How many books are there in the Bible?
4. Into how many parts is the Bible divided? Which are they?
5. How many books are there in the Old Testament and in the New?
6. Who is the central figure of the Bible?
7. What is the place given to the Bible in the liturgy of the Malankara Church?
8. Why is it said that we need to read the Bible every day?

OUR FAITH



The 'Creed' contains the core of our faith. We recite this prayer in the Eucharistic Service and in all the official prayers and in the family prayer. It is the essence of our Christian faith.

It is the holy Church that teaches us faith without error. False teachings against the true faith, at times, happened to spread in the Church. This trend was prevalent in the early Church. The Church rejected these false doctrines. Synods of Bishops were convened in the Church to confirm the faithful in true faith. The Council of Nicea held in A.D. 325 is the first of its kind. The place Nicea is situated in modern Turkey. 318 Bishops assembled in this Council. The Creed beginning with ‘We believe in one God, the Father Almighty’ was codified in this Council. This is known as the ‘Nicene Creed’.

This Creed is based on the Trinity, God the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. The Father is the Creator of all. God the Son is born of the Father. This Son is born man from Blessed Virgin Mary. He is known by the name ‘Jesus’. Jesus suffered for man, died and on the third day rose again and ascended into heaven. Jesus is the Saviour of all. The Holy Spirit is the third Person of the Trinity. He is God, who protects everything and completes everything. These truths of faith are contained in the Creed.

The Holy Spirit leads the Church. We believe that the Church is one, holy, catholic and apostolic. We also have faith in Baptism, in the resurrection of the dead and in the new life in the world to come. This is the foundation of our faith. Let us bear witness to this faith.

THE NICENE CREED

We believe in one God, the Father of almighty, creator of heaven and earth and of all things visible and invisible.

And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, who was begotten of his Father before all worlds; light of light, true God of true God, begotten not made, being of one substance with the Father, through whom all things were made. Who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven + and took flesh by the Holy Spirit from the Holy Virgin Mary, Mother of God, and became man. + He was crucified + for us under Pontius Pilate and suffered and died and was buried. He rose again on the third day according to his will and ascended into heaven and sat down at the right hand of his Father, and he will come again in great glory to judge the living and the dead; whose kingdom shall have no end.

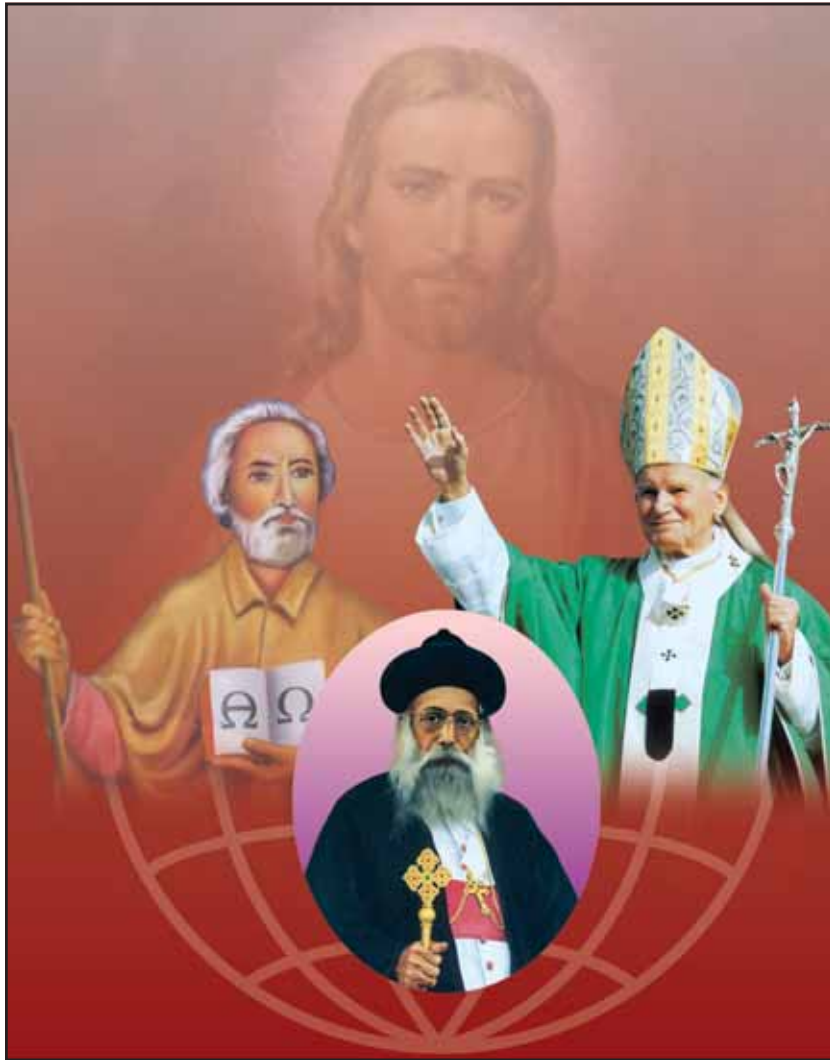
We believe in the one living Holy Spirit, who is Lord and giver of life to all, who proceeds from the Father and with the Father and the Son is worshipped and glorified, who spoke by the Prophets and Apostles; and in one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church.

We confess one baptism for the remission of sins and we look for the resurrection of the dead and the new life in the world to come. Amen.

Questions

1. What is the prayer containing the core of our belief, called?
2. When was the first Ecumenical Council held? Where?
3. Who teaches us faith without error?
4. What does the Creed say about the Church?

OUR CHURCH



St. Thomas the Apostle arrived at Kodungalloor, Kerala in A.D.52. He preached the gospel in different places in Kerala. A lot of people embraced the Christian religion. Thus,

the Christian religion took roots in India. Our forefathers are those who received the Christian faith from St. Thomas.

The Christians of India were, from the beginning, in communion with the Pope, the head of the Catholic Church. There arose a division in the Indian Church in A.D.1653 due to the foreign intervention of the Portuguese. Thus a group of the Indian Christians severed themselves from communion with the Catholic Church. A part of the severed group regained communion with the Catholic Church under the leadership of Most Rev. Mar Ivanios on 20th September 1930. This event is the 'Reunion'. Those who have regained communion with the Catholic Church are called the Malankara Catholics. We are the members of the Malankara Catholic Church.

The head of the Malankara Catholic Church is the Archbishop Metropolitan. He is the head of the Archdiocese of Trivandrum. We have at present five Eparchies (Dioceses) – Trivandrum, Tiruvalla, Bathery, Marthandom and Moovattupuzha. There are 22 Rites or modes of worship in the Catholic Church. The three Rites of India are – Latin, Syro- Malabar and Syro- Malankara.

The non-Catholic communities around us are separated from the Catholic Church for diverse reasons. We ought to love and honour these separated brethren.

There are about 1,100 million Catholics in the whole world. The Pope is the supreme head of the Catholic Church. St. Peter is the first Pope. John Paul II is the 264th Pope.

Let us Pray

“Praise to you Holy Trinity for having revealed yourself to the Catholic Church, and for having blessed us as its members”.

(Evening Prayer)

Let us Sing

(Sabhayam thirusabhayam...)

"Church O Holy Church, I am
The blessed spouse of the Most High One.

The Holy Church is saying thus:

“Who is my spouse? I am blessed.

He has come and married me

Behold! I do worship Him".

(Order of the Sacrament –Matrimony)

Let us Do

I shall pray daily for the Church.

Let us Memorise

“You are Peter, and on this rock I will
build my Church, and the gates of
Hades will not prevail against it”.

(Matthew 16:18)

Questions

1. Where did St.Thomas arrive in Kerala in A.D.52?
2. What is ‘Reunion’?
3. Who gave leadership to the Reunion?
4. How is the head of the Malankara Church called?
5. How many Eparchies are there in the Malankara Catholic Church? Which are they?
6. How many Rites are there in the Catholic Church?
7. What position does John Paul II has in the order of the Popes?

THE CONFESSORS OF THE CHURCH

We have learnt about St. Thomas, who first preached the gospel of Jesus in India, in the previous lesson. We shall acquaint ourselves with three more persons, who bore witness to the Christian faith in a special manner. They are, St. Stephen, the chief of the deacons, St. Francis Xavier, who preached the gospel in India and Mother Theresa, the mother of the poor.



St. Stephen

The early Christians grew in number. The obligations of the Apostles too increased. They chose Seven deacons, who were acceptable persons to all, and who were filled with the Holy Spirit and wisdom, and ordained them in order to help them in their work. St. Stephen was the first among them.

Stephen wrought many miracles amidst the people. But some of the Jews found fault with him and bound him. They brought him before the court of judgment. Stephen preached about Jesus in their presence.

Stephen bore witness to Jesus before them. He saw the glory of God. In a vision he saw Jesus standing on the right hand side of God. The Jews rushed against him. They took him outside the city and stoned him. He left his life praying, “Lord Jesus, receive my spirit. Lord, do not hold this sin against them”. St. Stephen is the first martyr of the Church. (Acts of the Apostles 7:1-60). In Syriac, a martyr is called ‘Sahda’.



St. Francis Xavier

St. Francis Xavier was the biggest missionary after St. Thomas, who came to India. He is known as the second apostle of India. Francis was born at Navara in Spain on 7th April 1506. He was a member of the Religious Order, the Society of Jesus. It was at the time when he was serving as professor in the University of Paris that he set out to India for apostolic work. He came to Kerala via Goa in 1542 and it is in the coastal area that he chiefly preached the gospel of Jesus. He converted a large number of people. He endured lot of sacrifices to confirm them in the faith. Francis Xavier played a very important part in the forming of a Christian community in Kerala. He died in 1552 on his way from Japan to China. The relics of his body are now preserved in Goa. The Church declared Francis Xavier, a Saint in 1662.

Bl. Mother Theresa

Mother Theresa is the best example for witnessing the faith in our age. She was born at Scobje, a small town in Yugoslavia on 26th August, 1910. She was called Agnes, in her infancy. She joined the convent of Loreto, attracted by the apostolic work of the missionaries of the Society of Jesus.

Mother understood that she had been entrusted with the mission of working among the poor, rejected people in the streets of Kolkotta. She founded a Religious Congregation for the purpose. That is the Missionaries of Charity. She gave to the destitute children love, affection and service of a mother. She gave protection and love especially to the lepers, the infants rejected on the streets, destitute and the helpless sick people. Hence, Mother Theresa is called, 'The Mother of the Destitute'. Irrespective of caste and creed, the whole world respected Mother Theresa. Even when she was alive she was known as a saint. Mother, who got the citizenship of India, was awarded the Nobel Prize for peace in 1979. The government of India honoured her with 'Bharata Ratna' in 1980. Mother, who passed away on 5th September in 1997, was buried with State honours. Pope John Paul II beatified her in 2003. Let us imitate the love and compassion, the Mother had for the poor.

Martyrs are those who have offered their lives witnessing to faith.

The witnessing to faith of St. Stephen and the solicitude for faith of St. Francis Xavier should be models for us. Bl. Mother Theresa, though not a martyr, is a noble person, who dedicated her whole life for her brethren and who bore witness to Christ. All these are our models.



Let us Pray

St. Stephen, St. Francis Xavier,
Bl. Mother Theresa
pray for us.

Let us Do

I shall also bear witness to the faith.

Questions

1. Who was the first martyr in the Church?
2. How is a martyr called in Syriac ?
3. Who is the second apostle of India?
4. To which Religious Order did Francis Xavier belong?
5. What was the name of Mother Theresa in her infancy?
6. What is the name of the Religious Congregation founded by Mother Theresa?

Let us Sing

(Nibyanmarum...)

"Prophets and the Apostles of Jesus Christ,
Who preached gospel to the gentiles,
The just, as well as all the saints,
Martyrs and the Confessors,
Also holy mother of God,
And the faithful departed
Are all being recalled now,
Let their prayers be always
A fortress to protect us".
(Order of the Malankara Qurbono)

Let us Memorise

"Lord Jesus, receive my spirit".
(Acts of the Apostles 7:59)

Lesson 20

LOVE THE NATURE



In the beginning God created heaven and earth. God ordered, “Let there be light”. God saw that light was good. Then He set apart the earth and the ocean. God brought forth all kinds of plants

and trees. They produced colourful and fragrant flowers and sweet fruits. He created all kinds of living beings. It is God who created the sun, moon and the planets in the sky. God found them all good. He created man at the end. God entrusted with him the supervision of the creatures. Man and the earth and all things in it and the other creatures together praise God (Genesis 1:1-31).

Jesus loved every thing in nature. He used to go to the hills and mountains to pray. On several occasions, He taught on the seashore and in the valleys of hills. He made use of parables, which He learnt from nature, in order to preach the gospel.

We also ought to love Nature, which God has given us gratis. We should never destroy plants and trees. We should preserve rivers, ponds, fields and estates. We should take care not to pollute the earth, water and air. All these are necessary for us to live. We should plant and nurse plants and trees. We should not throw around garbage and plastic materials carelessly. We should appreciate the beauty of Nature and should protect it. Nature is the creation of God. Let us praise God the creator.

Let us Pray

“Praise the Lord all creatures; praise him all tribes. Praise the Lord all inhabitants of heaven; exalt him forever, for his grace is great”.
(Order of Malankara Qurbono)

Let us Sing

(Prabha ninne vannikkunnu...)
"The splendour of light worships you;
Heavenly armies exalt you.
In your brilliant dawn of day
Creatures do glorify you".
(S'himo - Thursday-morning)

Let us Do

I shall preserve every thing in nature.

Let us Memorise

“Praise him, you highest heavens, and
you waters above the heavens”.
(Psalm 148:4)

Questions

1. Why should we love and protect nature?
2. What can we do to protect nature?

EVENING PRAYERS

(Begins with the sign of the cross)

In the name of the one true God, Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Holy, holy, holy, Lord Almighty. Heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is He, who has come and is to come in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

Holy are you O God.

Holy are you the strong. Holy are you the deathless, who were crucified (+) for us, have mercy on us (3 times).

Have mercy on us, O Lord.

Have pity and mercy on us, O Lord. Receive our services and prayers and have mercy on us, O Lord.

Glory to you, O God.

Glory to you Creator. Glory to you Christ the King, who has compassion on His sinful servants. Barekmor.

Our Father in heaven, holy be your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our sins as we have forgiven those who have sinned against us. And lead us not into temptation. But deliver us from the evil one. For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.

Peace to you Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with you. Blessed are you among women and blessed is the fruit of your womb our Lord Jesus Christ. Holy Mary, Virgin Mother of God, pray for us sinners now and always and at the hour of our death. Amen.

The Petition of Mar Balai

He who is full of blessings, renew your creature and make it favourable on the day of your benevolence.

Lord, console and make holy our departed ones, who passed away in your hope and wait for your second coming.

Enable them to abide in the bosom of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

Let the living and departed rightly exult that He who came and is to come again is blessed. Amen.

Prayer

Our Lord Messiah, do not shut the door of your blessings against our faces.

Lord, we confess that we are sinners, have mercy on us.

Lord, your love brought you down towards us from your abode, so that by your death, our death may be wiped out; have mercy on us. Amen.

Psalms 91, 120

He, who dwells in the shelter of the Most High, is glorified in the shadow of the Almighty.

You will say to the Lord, “My refuge and my fortress is my God in whom I trust”,

For, he will deliver you from the snare of the fowler, and from vain talks.

He will cover you with his pinions, and under his wings you will find refuge; his faithfulness is a shield around you.

You will not fear the terror of the night, nor the arrow that flies by day,

nor the word that stalks in the darkness, nor the wind that beats at noonday. Thousands may fall at your side and ten thousands at your right hand side. They will not come near you; but you will only look with your eyes; you will see the recompense of the wicked.

Because, you have made your refuge the Lord, who has made his habitation in the heights.

No evil shall befall you, no scourge come near your tent.

For, he will give his angels charge of you to guard you in all your ways. In their hands they will bear you up, lest you dash your foot against a stone.

You will tread on the poisonous serpent and the viper, the lion and the python you will trample under foot.

I will deliver him, because he sought me. Because he knows my name, I will strengthen him.

When he calls to me, I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble, I will rescue him and honour him.

With long life I will satisfy him, and show him my salvation.

I lift up my eyes to the mountain. From whence does my help come?

My help comes from the Lord, who made heaven and earth.

He will not let your foot slip; he who watches over you will not slumber.

Behold! He who keeps Israel will neither slumber, nor sleep.

The Lord is your keeper; the Lord will put you under the shade of his right hand.

The sun shall not smite you by day, or the moon by night.

The Lord will keep you from all evil; he will keep your soul.

The Lord will keep your going and coming in from this time forth and forever more.

Praise is befitting you O God. Barekmor.

Petition

Lord, protect us under the shade of your merciful wings and bless us. You who listen to every thing, hear the petition of your servants in your mercy. O glorious King, our Saviour, the Messiah, grant us a peaceful dusk and a holy night. Our eyes are gazing towards you. Expiate our sins and debts and have mercy on us in the worlds, terrestrial and celestial. Lord, let your mercy protect us and your grace assist us. Let your cross keep us from the evil one and his armies. Let your right hand rest on us as long as we live. Let your peace reign in our midst. Make refuge and salvation to those souls who entreat you. Through the prayers of Mary, who gave you birth and of all your Saints, O God, expiate our debts and have pity on us.

Praise of the Cherubs

Blessed is the honour of the Lord from His place forever (+)..

Blessed is the honour of the Lord from His place forever (+).

Blessed is the honour of the Lord from His place forever (+).

Holy and glorious Trinity, bless us

Holy and glorious Trinity, bless us.

Holy and glorious Trinity, graciously bless us.

You are holy and glorious forever.

You are holy and glorious forever.

You are holy and your sacred name is blessed forever.

Praise to you, our Lord.

Praise to you, our Lord.

Praise to you, our refuge forever. Barekmor.

Our Father....

Hail Mary...

The Nicene Creed (Page 58).