

Lesson 15

The Deceased Prelates of the Syro-Malankara Catholic Church

Timeline

Introduction - From St. Thomas till reunion movement

Servant of God Mar Ivanios - Architect of Reunion Movement

Deceased Prelates of the Syro-Malankara Catholic Church

IN THIS CHAPTER

We learn about the deceased bishops of the Malankara Catholic Church. Through this chapter we hope

TO UNDERSTAND

The bishops who led our church in the past.

TO APPRECIATE

The leaders of the church gave their lives for the growth of the Kingdom of God and to remain faithful to the traditions of our church.

LESSON 15

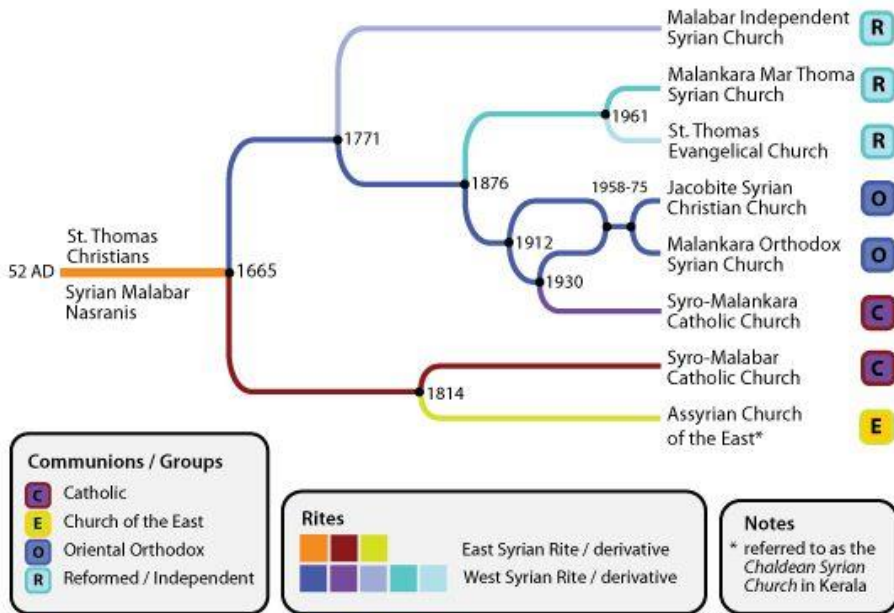
THE DECEASED PRELATES OF THE MALANKARA CATHOLIC CHURCH



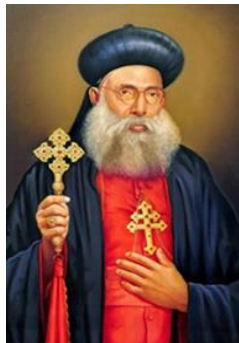
Remember your leaders, those who spoke to you the word of God; consider the outcome of their life and imitate their faith.

Hebrews 13: 7

Timeline of our church history



Jesus Christ is the founder and the foundation of the Church. It is the continuation of the mission of Jesus Christ. Before the Ascension of Jesus into heaven, he commanded to his disciples "go unto all the world and proclaim the Good News to the whole creation" (Mk. 16:15). Accordingly, St. Thomas, one of the Apostles of Jesus, came to India in 52 AD, and preached the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Hence, the beginning of the Church in India. This ancient Church is known as 'St. Thomas Christians' in India. This community used Syriac language in the Liturgy and therefore, are also known as Syrian Christians of India.



Servant of God Archbishop Geevarghese Mar Ivanios (1882 – 1953)

Servant of God Archbishop Mar Ivanios was born on September 21, 1882 and brought up in the Orthodox Church in India. The divisions and disputes of his Church motivated him to seek unity and fullness of truth.

He established the Bethany Ashram (Religious Congregation) and Bethany Convent for the renewal of the church. He was consecrated as Bishop of the Orthodox Church on May 1, 1925. As a solution to the problems of

Malankara is a synonym for ancient Kerala. This Church is known as the Apostolic Church because it was started by the Apostle Thomas. This community was one and undivided until the 16th century.

When the Portuguese missionaries came to India, due to misunderstandings, they tried to force Latinization process onto the community through the Synod of Diamper (Udayamperoor) in 1599 and brought the Syrian Christians under the jurisdiction of the Portuguese missionaries. This led to a division among the St. Thomas Christians in Kerala in 1653. Unfortunately, this community experienced conflicts and divisions in the course of time. In 1930, under the leadership of Servant of God Archbishop Geevarghese Mar Ivanios, there started a Reunion Movement to bring back all the separated Syrian Christians and enter Communion with the Church of Rome, under the leadership of the Pope, who is the successor of St. Peter, the Chief of the Apostles. Subsequently, in 1932, the Syro-Malankara Catholic hierarchy was established. This historic event marks the canonical formation of the Syro-Malankara Catholic Church.

his Church, he started the process for reunion with the Church of Rome in accordance with the instructions of the Synod of Bishops of the Orthodox Church. His efforts for reunion were fruitful and he along with four other members from the Orthodox Church reunited with the Catholic Church on September 20, 1930. He became the first Metropolitan Archbishop of the Archdiocese of Trivandrum on March 12, 1933 and passed away on July 15, 1953. His Grace is entombed in St. Mary's Cathedral, Trivandrum, India.



**Four others
reunited with
Mar Ivanios**

*Bp. Jacob Mar
Theophilos,
Fr. John OIC, Deacon
Alexander OIC and
Mr. Chacko Kilileth*

**Archbishop Mar Ivanios is known as the Architect
of Reunion Movement and The Newman of India.**

Do You Know?

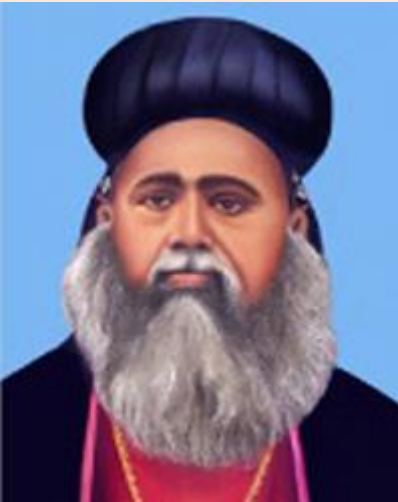
- **Archbishop Mar Ivanios was declared Servant of God on July 14, 2007**
- **The tomb of Servant of God Archbishop Mar Ivanios was exhumed for canonical recognition on Monday, June 23, 2014.**
- **The tomb chapel is recently renovated and renamed as “*Awsar Tubayn*” which means the “Treasury of our blessings”.**
- **Hundreds of people make their pilgrimage to his tomb to pray and receive the blessings.**



Bp. Jacob Mar Theophilos
(1892-1956)

- He was a teacher
- Became a member of the Bethany Ashram and was ordained a priest.
- Later became the Bishop in the Orthodox Church.
- Reunited with the Catholic Church along with Mar Ivanios.
- He is known as the co-architect of the reunion movement.

After reunion, he became the 1st Bishop of the Eparchy of Tiruvalla. He passed away on June 27, 1956 and his mortal remains is buried in St. John's Cathedral, Tiruvalla.



Bp. Thomas Mar Dioscoros
(1884 – 1943)

Thomas Mar Dioscoros was a Bishop of the Jacobite-Canaanite community in India, and reunited with the Catholic Church on November 22, 1939. He passed away on February 12, 1943. He is entombed at St. Mary's Church, Thirumoolampuram, Tiruvalla.

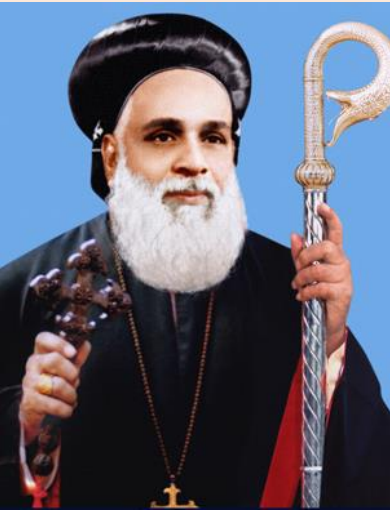


Bp. Joseph Mar Severios

(1894-1955)

- worked as a teacher and later ordained as a priest.
- Later, he became a Metropolitan in the Orthodox Church.

He reunited and became the 2nd Bishop of the Eparchy of Tiruvalla and passed away on January 18, 1955. He is entombed at St. John's Cathedral, Tiruvalla.



Bp. Zacharias Mar Athanasios

(1908 – 1977)

- He was a Bank Officer and a member of the Orthodox Church.
- He reunited with the Catholic Church at the age of thirty and was ordained a priest.
- He became the 3rd bishop of the Eparchy of Tiruvalla and passed away on September 28, 1977. He is entombed at St. John's Cathedral, Tiruvalla.



Bp. Isaac Mar Yoochanon

(1930-1987)

- He was a member of the Jacobite Church and reunited with the Catholic Church.
- He was the 4th Bishop of the Eparchy of Tiruvalla.
- He passed away on April 28, 1987 and is entombed at St. John's Cathedral, Tiruvalla.



Archbishop Benedict Mar Gregorios

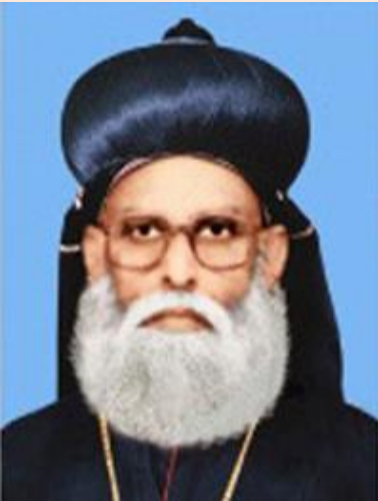
(1916-1994)

- He was a member of the Orthodox Church and reunited with the Catholic Church.
- He was a Religious Priest belonging to the Bethany Religious Order.
- He was appointed as the Auxiliary Bishop of Trivandrum and later, after the death of Archbishop Mar Ivanios, became the 2nd Metropolitan of the Archdiocese of Trivandrum
- He led the Church for 41 years.
- He passed away on October 10, 1984 and is entombed at St. Mary's Cathedral, Trivandrum.



Bp. Lawrence Mar Ephraem
(1928-1997)

- He was the auxiliary bishop of the Archdiocese of Trivandrum.
- Later he was appointed as the 1st Bishop of the Eparchy of Marthandom.
- He passed away on April 8, 1997 and is entombed at *Christuraja* Cathedral, Marthandom (Tamil Nadu)



Bp. Paulos Mar Philoxinos
(1928-1998)

- He was the Metropolitan of the Independent Syrian Church of Thozhiyoor.
- Later he reunited with the Catholic Church and was the titular Bishop of *Chayal*.
- He passed away on November 3, 1998 and is entombed at St. John's Cathedral, Tiruvalla.



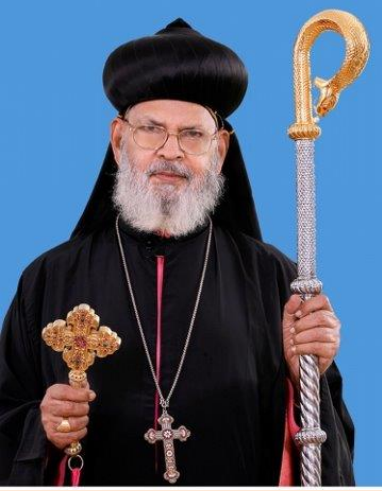
Archbishop-Catholicos Cyril Mar Baselios (1935-2007)

- He was a priest of the Bethany Religious Congregation and became the first Bishop of the Eparchy of Bathery.
- He was appointed as the 3rd Archbishop of the Archdiocese of Trivandrum.
- During his leadership, the Syro Malankara Catholic Church was elevated as a Major Archiepiscopal Church with Synodal system of governance.
- He became the first Major Archbishop – Catholicos of the Syro Malankara Catholic Church.
- He passed away on January 18, 2007 and is entombed at St. Mary’s Cathedral, Trivandrum.



Bp. Geevarghese Mar Divannasios (1935-2007)

- He was a priest of the Eparchy of Bathery.
- He was the second Metropolitan of the Eparchy of Bathery
- Later he was appointed as the first Bishop of the Eparchy of Puthur.
- He passed away on January 16, 2018 and is entombed at St. John’s Cathedral, Tiruvalla.



**Bishop Geevarghese Mar Timotheos
(1928-2019)**

- He was a priest in the Eparchy of Tiruvalla.
- He was the fifth Bishop of the Eparchy of Tiruvalla.
- He passed away on June 4, 2019 and is entombed at St. John's Cathedral, Tiruvalla.



**Bishop Jacob Mar Barnabas
(1960-2021)**

- He was a priest of the Bethany Religious Congregation and was the Apostolic Visitor for the Extra-Territorial Region in India
- He was the first Bishop of the Eparchy of Gurgaon, Delhi.
- He passed away on August 26, 2021 and is entombed at St. Mary's Cathedral, Neb Sarai, New Delhi.

According to our tradition, the Bishops are the successors of the apostles of our Lord. Hence, the faithful consider their closeness and heavenly intercession, a blessing. We are blessed by remembering them.

Let us sing together:

“That we become God’s children
Those who taught us during life
We shall recall to our minds
In your heavenly home O Lord
Give them eternal bliss with
your holy and blessed ones.
Morio rahem aalayn oo-adaryn.”
*Holy Qurbano Hymn before
Quqilion (ref. Heb. 13:7)*

The Inner Nature of the Church

*A Liturgical Hymn of the Church (Al
Semayoon)*

Holy Church tells her adversaries,

“I am built on the rock of Peter”

I have 12 Apostles as Pillars

Saints are my permanent beams

The Prophets are my builders

I am reinforced by the Disciples

Martyrs are my strong fortress

Like the ornately dressed Bride,

I am empowered by my Groom, Lord
Jesus

Activity

Find out and write the Quqilion for the
deceased priests and bishops.

Lesson Assessment

1. _____ is the founder and foundation of the Church.
2. The apostle of Jesus who came to India to preach gospel is _____.
3. Christianity is preached in India in _____ AD.
4. The Portuguese missionaries tried to impose Latinization process in the Kerala Church through the synod of _____.
5. The Kerala Christians remained one until _____.
6. Why are the Kerala Christians called Syrian Christians?
7. _____ is known as the architect of the Reunion movement.
8. Who is known as the Newman of India?
9. The Congregations established for the renewal of Church by Servant of God Mar Ivanios are _____ and _____.
10. How many members from Orthodox church reunited with the Catholic Church and when?
11. Archbishop Mar Ivanios was declared Servant of God on _____.
12. Which Archbishop led the Malankara Catholic Church for 41 years?
13. The Malankara Catholic Church was elevated to the status of Major Archiepiscopal Church during the reign of _____.