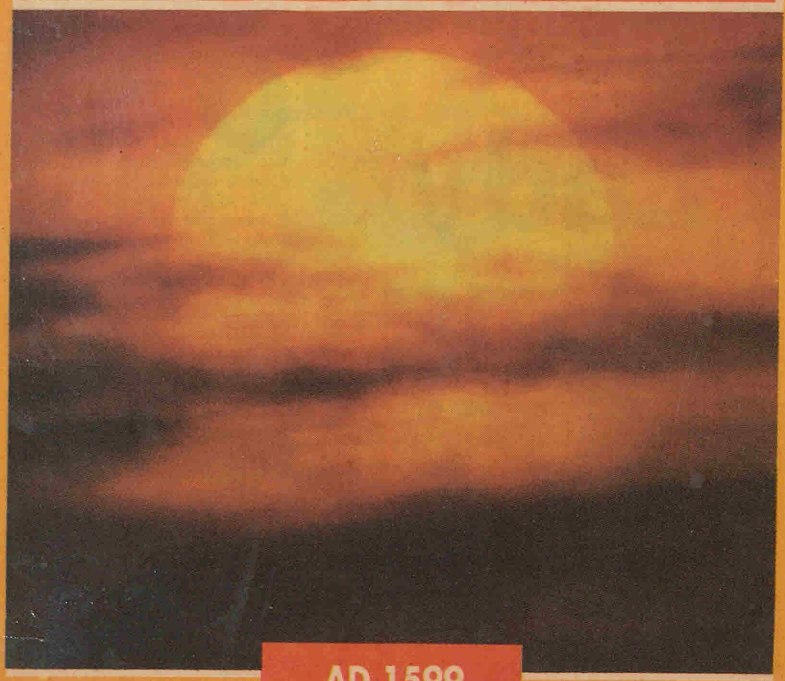
THE ACTS AND DECREES OF THE SYNOD OF DIAMPER



AD 1599

The Acts and Decrees of the Synod of Diamper 1599

Edited by
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1994

❐ **The Acts and Decrees of the Synod of Diamper** ❐ Edited with notes and a critical introduction by Dr Scaria Zacharia © Editor ❐ Published by Indian Institute of Christian Studies ❐ Price Rs. 150.00 ❐ Typesetting and Printing: dc offset Printers Kottayam ❐

Preface

The St Thomas Christians of India, otherwise known in history as the Nazranis of Kerala, trace their origin to St Thomas the apostle of Christ. Perhaps this Church in India is the only church planted by an apostle outside the Roman empire. Hence the ecclesial organisation of the church, developed in the Indian cultural milieu, without being influenced by either eastern or western churches.

The so-called synod of Diamper of 1599 was a watershed in the history of this ancient Christian community. Though this assembly is known in history as the synod, it was not a synod in the strict ecclesial sense of the term. It was an assembly of the representatives of the various churches in Kerala and only one bishop attended the assembly. Six hundred and forty representatives of the churches and a hundred and sixty-three priests attended the assembly. So the nomenclature synod cannot be applied to this assembly. The original text of the acts of the assembly was in Malayalam. The Canons were translated into English by Michael Geddess.

I am thankful to Dr Scaria Zacharia, a renowned scholar on Canons of Diamper, and church history for the indepth study of the Canons and the background of the synod. I am sure his introduction will help those who make a serious study of the history of the St Thomas Christians of India.

I also express our thanks to D.C. Printers for the excellent composing and printing of this book.

I pray that this may be a useful handbook on the history of the St Thomas Christians of India.

Joseph Pulikkunnel
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21st September 1994

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Abbreviations and Signs

ADSD	The Acts and Decrees of the Synod of Diamper—Western versions: Zacharia 1994 (English)
MDSD	Malayalam Decrees of the synod of Diamper: Zacharia 1994 (Malayalam)
EMMPTS	Early Missionary Malayalam Prose Texts—MDSD (1599) & Rozian Statutes (1606): Zacharia 1976 (Malayalam)
*	This asterisk sign marks out those decrees which have no parallel in the Malayalam original. Probably they were added in the Western versions after the Synod
<	Comes from

INTRODUCTION

SCARIA ZACHARIA

Relevance and Possibilities

The document selected for publication, *The Acts and Decrees of the Synod of Diamper,* reflects a crucial stage in the history of Kerala. The synod of Diamper (1599) was the first organised attempt to westernise Kerala society as part of colonisation.

The Portuguese colonialists shaped by their history and their socioreligious experience carried imperialistic notions about Christianity and christianisation. For them encountering St.Thomas Christians of Kerala who traced their lineage from apostle Thomas' evangelical work here, was a pleasant surprise. But this interest in the 'mysterious East' was accompanied by their zeal for 'the destruction of the heresies', 'the purging of books from the false doctrines', 'the perfect union of this church with the whole church, catholic and universal', 'the regulating of the administration of the holy sacraments', 'the reformation of the affairs of the church, the clergy' and 'the customs of these Christians.' In short the apostolic church of Kerala was compelled to piggyback western concepts of Christianity. The western idea of a Christian congregation bound by well defined dogmas and canons, ruled by powerful heirarchs, and disciplined through threats of excommunication or inquisition became a social reality in Kerala through *the synod of Diamper held at Udayamperoor (in Ernakulam district, Kerala) from 20th to26th June 1599* under the presidentship of Alexis Menezes, the then Archbishop of Goa.

In the West, especially in the catholic world, representations of Thomas Christians, ever since this synod and the publication of its proceedings (1606), had been crude and coarsely racialist. However this served as a cover up for western hegemony in Thomas Christian churches. Now, roughly four centuries later there came a sudden realisation in the western catholic church that the whole matter need to be reconsidered. The Portuguese had made a mistake four hundred years ago in westernising Thomas Christians. Now they should go back. Such a decision, it is pointed out, is to promote ecumenism. But many Thomas Christians are asking: How can we simply scratch off our experience of four centuries? How can we efface our

modern history? What is the absolute sanctity to a particular stage in the history of Thomas Christians in which they were under the spell of chaldeanisation?

Today, after the independence, as Kerala society in general is trying to reestablish its authenticity by getting rid of imperialist ideology and colonialist practice this document will be very useful. Of course, the study of history should not be a simple intellectual exercise, a luxury which we cannot afford. History should help us to understand the present and act decisively. Interference in religious affairs, that too with political clout is not a tendency of the past. Religious fundamentalism and militant interferences are noticed in various parts of the world. This global context enhances the value of this text.

For a student of Kerala studies, this document brings to light many historical truths, especially socio-cultural realities that made the traditional Kerala society work as a pluralistic society. A Christian theologian or historian may find here details of the encounter of a western militant missionary church with an apostolic church that had matured through symbiosis in a multicultural and multireligious society of the orient. Samples of colonial modernity are also available in this document.

This critical introduction limits its scope to the background information necessary for the understanding of the text—a note on the missionary interface, a general description of the synod, and a survey of the results of the decisions. The analysis and interpretation of the text could be better done by each reader according to his background information, point of view and *weltanschauung*.

Sources

The document that is published here is a faithful translation of the Portuguese version of the canons. The Portuguese version with official imprimatur was 'printed at coimbra, in the shop of Diogo Gomez Laureyro, Printer to the university, in the year of our Lord, 1606'. This was published by *Antonio Gouvea* at the end of his *Jornada* (i.e. History of the Journeys of Menezes in Malabar). The present English translation was prepared and published by *Michael Geddes,* the chaplain (1678—1688) to the English factory at Lisbon. The results of Michael Geddes' labours are available in his *History of the Church of Malabar* published in 1694 at London. *James Hough,* reproduced this English translation of decrees in his *History of Christianity in India* vol II, London, 1839. As Hough (1839:9-12) points out Geddes' capabilities for translating from Portuguese to English and his fidelity in the execution of the work, will not be questioned by any who shall take the pains to compare his performance, with the original Portuguese text. Geddes' translation will be found faithful and perfectly to agree with a Latin translation of the decrees given in *Raulin's Historia Eccelesiae Malabaricae.* It was translated into Italian and Spanish also. All the western versions of the canons of the Diamper synod had a common origin and as already explained this was the version officially propagated by the Portuguese authorities in the western world.

Malayalam Original (MDSD) and Western versions (ADSD)

The Portuguese version and its relation to the parallel text found in Malayalam the mother tongue of Thomas Christians deserve special attention. Many western scholars and blindly following them many western trained church historians of Kerala carry the impression that the authoritative document of the synod of Diamper is the Portuguese version. But the irrefutable truth is that the document read out in the synod and signed by the participants was in Malayalam. The Portuguese canons and Malyalam canons unanimously testify in more than one place that the canons were read out in Malayalam. Moreover, the synod commanded all vicars of churches 'not to fail to have all its decrees transcribed from the *original Malabar*, and to have a copy thereof in all their churches'. Further, it is stated that 'the original of the said synod being signed by the most reverend Metropolitan and all other members thereof, shall be put in the archives of the Jesuits' college of Vaipicotta in this diocese, from whence as many copies as shall be thought necessary, shall be transmitted to the churches'. All these prove conclusively that the original was in Malayalam and the Portuguese version was a special edition for western readers. If this is accepted, many differences that are found between the decrees in European languages and Malayalam can be explained satisfactorily.

In length and number of canons the western version is bigger than the Malayalam original. In many cases western decrees have become longer by adapting the text for the western audience: glosses or explanatory statements were introduced to contextualise the reforms introduced by the synod. Some background descriptions incorporated in the Portuguese canons were intended either to satisfy the western curiosity about Thomas Christians or to justify the western interference in the indigenous church.

The western version of the decrees when compared to the Malayalam original has *an addition of thirty-five decrees. All these decrees that are found only in the western versions are marked with asterisks in our edition.* In all probability they were added by Archbishop Menezes and his colleagues after the synod. This is attested by Francis Roz SJ in a letter addressed to his superior:'... *to tell you the entire truth, some of the canons of the above said synod the archbishop himself added after the synod was over*, ...'Letter dated 20th November 1603. For more details see Thaliath 1958: 129—138. Some of them were introduced to consolidate the western dominance over the Thomas Christians. The best example would be decree XXII in session III (ADSD) which subjected Thomas Christians to the inquisition at Goa. The confessional tone and the subordinate feeling prevailing in this decree would have made it unacceptable to Thomas Christians. So the Archbishop might have thought it convenient to add this to the Portuguese version addressed to the admirers in the West. Some of these newly added decrees might have been the results of his experience in and after the synod. A few additional decrees like the one which prohibits Christians' participation in *Onam celebration* (session IX decree IV) and another insisting that all

Christian children should be called only by Christian names (session IV decree XVII) were intended to ensure Christian exclusiveness. This idea also could not have won the unanimous support of the participants in the synod. In session III, decree IV one can identify the typical Portuguese point of view on relations with non-Christian religions. Such a radical and extreme interpretation of Christianity full of contempt and curse for all other religions was incompatible with the life experience and religious vision of Thomas Christians[1]. It may be noted that in the Malayalam original this idea of exclusiveness is introduced in a persuasive but short and gentle statement.

In short, the differences between the Malayalam original and the western versions have to be interpreted in the larger ideological and historical context.

II

On the What, Why and How of missionary interface in Kerala

The missionary interface in Kerala, as generally understood, begins with the Portuguese colonisation (1498) and ends with the British Raj (1947). In the true religious sense any Christian should be a missionary as he is commissioned to preach the good news. In that religious sense, according to Kerala tradition, *St.Thomas* one of the twelve apostles of Jesus Christ is the first Christian missionary to preach in Kerala. At the next stage, from 4th century A.D, as attested by the Kerala tradition, there were waves of Christian migration in Kerala from Persia. The arrival of *Thomas Cana* with seventy-two families and ecclesiastics including a bishop considerably influenced the native Christians. The contents of *Thomas Cana copper plates* (AD 345?) and *Tarisappally copper plates* (9th century) reveal socioeconomic implications of Persian Christian migration in Kerala. At the very outset it resulted in the division of traditional Kerala Christians (Syrian Christians/ St.Thomas Christians) into Northists and Southists (Vadakkumbhagar and Thekkumbhagar). There is difference of opinion about the identity and motives of Thomas Cana. According to one version he was a missionary, a zealous Christian, who helped the Kerala Christians to tide over a great crisis. Another version is that Thomas Cana, a leading business man and his colleagues belonging to the East-Syrian Community in the

1. 'What is really involved here is the understanding of the doctrine 'extra ecclesiam nulla salus' (outside the church there is no salvation) by the Portuguese and the St. Thomas Christians, respectively. The Portuguese came from the West where a rigid interpretation of the dictum had prevailed for a long time and had become acute in the 16th century in the context of the antiprotestant counter-Reformation spirit.' Mundadan 1989:493

Persian Empire (today's Iran and Iraq) came to India either to promote their business or to take refuge from the religious persecution in Persia by Sapor II (AD 310—379). This East-Syrian connection helped the nativeChristians to develop as a trading class. It may be recalled that many native Christian settlements developed as marketing centres which shows the evolution of this community as a trading class under the inspiration and guidance of Persian Christians who were good traders.

Dr. P.J.Thomas (1947:8) has dealt with this aspect of Thomas Christians' economic life: 'How did syrian christians come to occupy such a prominent place in trade?... The change must have come by the influx of Syrian colonists from Baghdad and Bazra in early days. One colony in 345 AD settled in Crangannore; another in 825 AD settled in Quilon. These colonists hailed from lands where the ancient Chaldean civilisation flourished. In the 4th century Edessa was a great seat of learning. In the 9th century Baghdad was at the height of its power under the caliphs who were great patrons of learning. This perhaps explains the proficiency of these colonists in trade, medicine (and perhaps in astrology too) and preference for town life. This also explains the high position secured by these colonists in Kerala and the privileges which they obtained from its ruling families. There were also powerful trading organisations formely in Kerala, like *Manigramam* and *Anjuvarnam* which were high in royal favour. The origin of these is obscure; but judging from various early documents, it is likely that these were connected with christian and Jewish colonists who settled down for trade on the Malabar coast.

Dr. Hermann Gundert (1844:125) who studied *'Ancient documents engraved on copper in possession of the Syrian Christians and Jews in Malabar'* offers the following remarks: 'The influence acquired under such a government by colonists from the west in spite of their different religions and of the standing threats of Brahmins that the country is destined to be once more overrun by Sacas, Mletchas and Boudhas can only be ascribed to its incapability of cultivating commerce and relations with other nations, except by encouraging the private, exertions of a more spirited community of foreigners.' Modern interpretations of these copper plates (Variar and Gurukkal 1991: 109—111) also lend much credit to the hypothesis that the entry of Persian Christians at Kodungallor and Kollam improved the socioeconomic status of Thomas Christians.

At this juncture it will be interesting to review the history of Thomas Christians from the point of view of a Persian bishop, *Mar Gabriel* who lived in Kerala (1705...). In a Syriac write-up on *'The antiquity of the Syrian Christians and historical events relating to them'*, he presents his version:

'Fifty-two years after the birth of the Messiah, the holy Apostle Thomas arrived at Mailapore on the coast of Coromandel, preaching the Gospel and founding Churches there. Passing from thence to Malabar, the holy man landed on the island of Maliankarre, (situated between Cranganore and Paroe), preached and taught and built churches in that island, and likewise at Cottacay, Repolym, Gokkomangalam,

Pernetta and Tiroeusngotta; and having finished his work in these parts and ordained two priests, returned to the land of the Pandies (as the natives of Coromandel are called) to teach the people there. But whilst he was thus occupied, the Apostle was pierced by the heathens with spears, and thus ended his life. In the course of a few years all the priests in Hindostan and Malabar, died; and many years afterwards, a *Tovenaar* called Mamukawasser, an enemy to the christian faith, arrived at Maliapore, performing many miracles to hinder its progress. And many of the principal Christians giving heed to him, forsook Christianity and followed this false teacher Mamukawasser. In those days certain persons came from Hindowy or Hindostan, who were not disposed to abandon the people of Malabar, and who allied themselves with the believers, that is the Christians, who had remained constant, in number about 160 families or tribes. These men taught for many years in Malabar, but there were few among them who had knowledge, because they were destitute of pastors; and therefore most of them ended in becoming heathens, and had all things in common with the other heathens. This caused a second apostacy; so that out of the 160 families, 96 adopted the heathen superstitions, 64 only adhering to the true faith. Now in those days there appeared a vision to an Archpriest, at Oerghai, in consequence whereof certain merchants were sent from Jerusalem by command of the Catholic authorities in the East, to see whether there were here any Nazarenes or Christians. These persons have arrived here with ships, joined all the Christians from Maliankarre, as far as Tierowangotta, treated them as brothers and strengthened them in the faith; and having taken leave of the 64 families, set sail and returned to Jerusalem, and related to the Catholics in the place their adventures in Malabar. After this, several priests, students, and Christian women and children came hither from Bagdad, Nineveh, and Jerusalem, by order of the Catholic Archpriest at Oerghai, arriving in the year of the Messiah 745, in company with the merchant Thomas: and having made acquaintance with the 64 families, they became united and lived in concord one with another. At this time the famous Emperor Cheram Peroumal was reigning over the whole of Malabar. To him the new comers went and when they informed him of the cause of their arrival, the King was well pleased, and gave them pieces of ground in the territory of Crangnore to build Churches and shops upon, that they might pursue their trades, at the same time he granted the Christians royal marks of honour, and permission to carry on their trade throughout the whole country so long as the sun and moon should shine, as may be seen to this day in their documents written upon copper plates. In consequence of this, the Christians possess in the territory of Crangonore East, West, North and South, several churches, besides 472 shops and dwelling houses built round them; and they lived in peace and unity for several years. In this period, by order of the Catholic Patriarch of the East, many great teachers arrived in Malabar, from Bagdad, Nineveh, Jerusalem and several other places, who assumed authority over the Christians of the country. This state of things lasted until a separation took place among the Christians of Cranganore, in the year of our Lord 823,

and then Mar Saboor, Mar Botoe, and Seboor Isso, came to Quilon as teachers. They went to visit the King Sjak Rawiosti, with presents, and built churches and shops at Quilon. In these and similar ways, the chief pastors came, teaching and instructing the people of Malabar. In the year 1500, when the Portuguese first appeared in Malabar, where they afterwards obtained a footing, there came, by order of the Catholic Patriarch, four teachers, by name Mar Mardina, Mar Jacob, Mar Thoma, and Jene Allay, who governed the christians and built many churches. After the death of these four teachers, another, called Mar Abraham came to Malabar, about the year 1550, where upon the Portuguese passed a decree that henceforth no Catholic teachers should come thither, and placed guards everywhere to seize and put to death all who should attempt it. Mar Abraham was captured, but escaped through God's mercy and continued to teach for many years, and built several churches; after which, he went the way of all flesh. After that time the road was closed to the Syrian priests, and the christians experienced a want of pastors; which the Portuguese perceiving, a Vicegerent and Bishop called Alexio, came to the city of Cochin in the name of, and with authority from the Pope of Rome. This Bishop took a great deal of trouble to bring the Syrian Christians into subjection, and seeing no chance of effecting his object, the Portuguese gave to the King of Cochin 30,000 ducats, and with the help of His Highness persecuted the Christians who dwelt in his dominions, for three whole years. The Christians then, unable to endure the persecution longer, submitted to the Bishop and thus became reconciled with the Portuguese. Shortly afterwards the Syrian manners and customs underwent a change; the priests were forbidden to marry; and for about 55 years the Syrians followed the same customs as the Portuguese' (Quoted in *Letters from Malabar* by JC Visscher, 1862: 105—107)

Chaldeanisation or Syriacisation

The East-Syrian (or Chaldean) connection paved the way for heirarchical and sacramental dependence of Kerala Christians on Chaldean church. Some would describe this as a harmonious blend of two Christian communities: 'Thus, when Christianity finally struck deep roots in Kerala, the characteristic form it took was the result of a protracted interaction between the Malabarian cultural milieu and the Chaldean ecclesiastical system. A harmonious blend of these two factors became a reality in the secular as well as in the ecclesiastical life of the Christian community. Hence, the Christians of St. Thomas could easily be integrated into the social and religious fabric of the country.' Kollaparambil 1981:3

There are many others who would review the East-Syrian colonization quite differently. They believe that native Indian church was once an autonomous church and continued to be so even after Syrian colonization. Under the missionary influence of Syrians the Kerala church went through a transformation and put up the ecclesiastical and liturgical vestiges of the East-Syrian church. The resulting East-Syrian elements in the Christian church made it a distinct community in Kerala. Moreover,

the East-Syrian missionaries, wherever they went, worked hard to extend their heirarchical jurisdiction and transplant their religious culture. The zealous East-Syrian missionaries would also have wanted to save the Kerala Christians from the mainstream of the society which had a tremendous power of assimilation! Many historians have dealt with this aspect of Chaldeanisation or Syriacisation: 'In course of time, the East-Syrian church began to keep a tight grip on the Indian Christians. The decrees of some East-Syrian Synods and of Patriarchs like Timothy I reveal this. The Christian community in India was prevented from developing its natural national identity and selfhood. The East-Syrian connection became a virtual obstacle rather than a help to the natural growth of the Indian Christian into an authentic Indian Church, with an Indian Christian pattern of thought, worship and life-style. How far our fathers were conscious of this fact we do not know; today we are quite conscious of it. It became a sort of dogma that only the Persian bishops should govern the Indian Church, and that the latter must borrow Persian theology, worship forms, laws, customs and practices. It meant that the Indian Christians were constrained to lead a life not in one world but in two worlds at the same time: the geographical, political and socio-cultural environment of India and the ecclesiastical world of the East-Syrian Church. This was a somewhat artificial and unnatural kind of life. The core elements of Christian life remained foreign in a country which possessed an ancient culture, a rich philosophy and a deep religious spirit comparable to or even surpassing the Greek culture, philosophy and religious thought. Only a few elements like the ecclesiastical institution of archdeacon, parish assembly (yogam) and general assembly (Pothuyogam) seem to have developed with some Indian features.' Mundadan 1993:8

Colonialism and Aggressive Christianisation

The most conspicuous phase of missionary enterprise started with the arrival of the Portuguese. They came with doctrines and practices completely shaped in militancy in the West. In the typical colonial fashion they were looking for the deficiencies of native Christianity. The Christianity they found in Kerala was lacking in well-defined dogmas and practices that ensured Christian exclusiveness. The absence of Western Christian aggressiveness was also noted as the weakness of native Christianity. 'For the Portuguese missionaries, both secular and regular raised and educated in the Latin rite, their own theology, liturgy, hierarchical structure, canonical discipline, and the like constituted the one and only way for everyone in the world to attain salvation. Non-Christians must be converted to follow the same way. Those Christians who differed from them in anything ecclesiastical, ritual, or theological were at best imperfect Christians and at worst schismatics and heretics. From the beginning the Portuguese noted that the St.Thomas Christians were different from them in rite, customs, and hierarchical allegiance. In their zeal for souls they wished they could bring the Indian church into complete uniformity with the Western church.

Besides, they formed the idea that the removal of all differences and a perfect union would better serve their temporal interests as well.' Kollaparambil 1981:12. So the Portuguese missionaries arranged for the Synod of Diamper (1599) and the Synod of Angamaly (1603) 'to purify the faith and customs of native Christians'. The acts and proceedings of these two assemblies are important documents in the history of Kerala. In the religious sphere, the traditional Christians irrespective of their denominational differences have never pardoned the Portuguese missionaries for the violence committed on their socio-religious life. They look down upon the Synod of Diamper as an encroachment by the Western colonialists on the religious and social life of native Christians.

Latins and Syrians

Meanwhile a nascent Church under the leadership of Western missionaries developed along the sea-coast of Kerala. This church was mainly the product of mass conversions along the sea-coast under the charismatic leadership of missionaries like St. Francis Xavier. Most of the new converts were from socio-economically backward classes of the society. This new church remained a separate community under the leadership of foreign missionaries. The traditional Christians because of their caste consciousness and class interests wanted to retain their social identity. But during this period of vigorous missionary activities both the sections of the Kerala Christians — traditional Christians who were hitherto called Marthomma Nazranikal, 'St. Thomas Christians' and the members of the newly established Christian communities who were called Latins came under the spell of westernisation. The western church under the Pope, on the basis of their liturgical language, was known as the Latin church. So many Christian historians would label this influence as Latinisation. Since Persian bishops of St. Thomas Christians were using Syriac as their liturgical language, the Dutch on the analogy of Latin: Latins introduced the nomenclature Syrians. It may be noted here that since the advent of the Portuguese all the Christian denominations were given foreign labels like the Romans, Anglicans, Antiochians, etc. The colonial masters were responsible for the spread of names like Syrians and Latins which indicate foreign connections.

Protestant Missionaries

The Portuguese Catholic missionary activities came to a halt when the Dutch expelled them from Cochin in 1663. During the Dutch period (1663—1795) the western missionary activities continued at a slower pace. The Dutch let in a few Protestant missionaries. The British Raj opened the gates for the inflow of more Protestant missionaries in Kerala. The activities of the *London Missionary Society* (LMS) in Southern Kerala, *Church Missionary Society* (CMS) in Central Kerala and the *Basel Mission* in North Malabar brought in fresh waves of Christianisation in Kerala during the nineteenth century and in the first half of the twentieth century.

Modernisation, Westernisation and Christianisation

Each missionary society or religious order had its own charisma and style of operation. For example the Catholic missionaries like the Jesuits and the Protestant missionaries like the CMS missionaries wanted to provide institutionalised service to the community. So they started seminaries, schools, colleges and hospitals as service institutions. The Basel mission along with schools started technical institutions which worked as training centres and production units . They introduced new industrial technology in northern Kerala which had important socioeconomic implications. The attitude towards casteism also varied among different missionary organisations. For example the Basel mission put up a relentless fight against the caste system and evolved a small community cutting across the caste barriers. Many other missionary organisations either tolerated casteism or used it as a weapon for the destruction of traditional social barriers of Kerala. But all these missionaries were committed to establish educational institutions, printing presses and open charitable institutions like orphanages. These aspects are already described and discussed in several books and dissertations. Missionaries like *John Ernestus Hanxleden* (1680—1732) *Benjamin Bailey* (1791—1871) and *Hermann Gundert* (1814—1893) are held in high esteem in Kerala as great savants of the Malayalam language. They provided the basic tools for language development. cf Eapen 1985, Frenz and Zacharia 1993, John 1981 and Thomas 1989. Ofcourse, these are signs of modernisation. They came to India through Christian missionaries during the colonial period. They consolidated the western presence on the socio-cultural plane. But it released ideological forces that distorted the self perception of the Keralites. All forms of Kerala lore that did not have parallels in the West were looked down upon with suspicion, and very often they were replaced with European elements. Arun Shourie's criticism (1994:176) of the British and the missionaries becomes relevant in this context: 'The vacuum having been created in our heads, everything which defined and unified us having been descredited and dissipated, the British put themselves to the task of forging a country out of us!' Instead of coming to terms with the diversities of the ways human beings construct their lives in the act of leading them, the Portuguese missionaries too educated Thomas Christians to their short comings and destroyed their self-confidence and self-respect. This is all the more true of Kerala Christians who were directly under the supervision of foreign missionaries. *The areas of modernisation, westernisation, christianisation and colonisation may be imagined as intersecting circles* in the socio-cultural map of Kerala. They had many things in common but different focal points.

Missionaries and Renaissance of Kerala

Should we describe missionary intervention as a major factor in the awakening or renaissance of Kerala? The objective truth is that Christian missionaries played a major role in Kerala in familiarising modern tools, weapons and ideologies of the

European society. This triggered an inner conflict in the society which prompted some social reform movements in Kerala. The best example would be the revolt of backward communities in Kerala especially in southern Travancore. However, in a minority even among Christians, there was the feeling that they were becoming victims of missionaries who were agents of foreign colonialists. They kept alive the resistance to total westernisation. Such resistance has been recorded in the history of Kerala Christians in the form of divisions at every juncture of foreign missionary intervention. *The oath of Coonen cross at Mattancherry* (1653) is just one example. The general truth is that 'whatever impact the West may make upon the East, there is nothing more certain than that those impacts will sooner or later find themselves oriented' (Cousins 1918:11). It is the weight of *antique modernity* that is the secret of Kerala's recuperative and assimilative power. The sense of absence and incompetence imposed on Keralites, especially Kerala Christians, by the missionaries, an explicit attempt to set up the West as a crucial vector within the Kerala mind, has been counteracted with the critique of the West by rebels. The best document would be *Varthamana Pustakam by Paremmakkal Thomma Kathanar*. Several leaflets, books and movements of non-Christians during the colonial period also contain severe criticism of the missionaries. In short the *colonial modernity* introduced in Kerala by the Christian missionaries was assimilated by the Kerala society but it carried its weight of history with it. Its past is still a dynamic force in all spheres of life including religion.

III

Background of the Text

The Acts and Decrees of the Synod of Diamper (1599) is the official document aimed at 'purifying and regulating' the life of Christians of St. Thomas in Kerala. The Christian Community in focus is named *Maarttommaa Nasraaṇikaḷ/Maarttomaa Nasraaṇikaḷ* (St. Thomas Christians) in the Malayalam original. This designation appears at the solemn beginning of the document.

As an abbreviated title, *Nasraaṇikaḷ* appears about a hundred times in the Malayalam text. Another name of St. Thomas Christians attested in the Malayalam text is *Nasraaṇi Maappiḷamaar. Maappiḷa* or its variants *Maappiḷaa*, and *Maappuḷa*, according to the definition of Arnos Paatiri's dictionary, is the 'name by which they call the Christians of St. Thomas, Moors and Jews'. This noun is used only in the plural: *Maappiḷamaaar*.

In the Malayalam original *Maarggakkaar* is used to denote a Christian community different from *Nasaraaṇikaḷ. Maarggakkaaran* is found in Arnos Paatiri's

dictionary with the meaning 'Christian...who is not of those of St. Thomas'. So it is evident that in many usages attested in Malayalam *Nasraaṇikaḷ* and *Marrggakkaar* are used as mutually exclusive designations. But there are exceptions where *Marrggakkaar* would denote all *Christians.* The word *Maarggam* has the literal meaning 'way' and it is used to denote various denominations: *Yuuta Maarggam* 'Jewish Sect' *Nasraaṇi Maarggam* 'Sect of St. Thomas Christians'.

The history of Christianity in Kerala may be reconstructed *in four parts.* Arapura (1989) has clearly stated this in a few words with special emphasis on cultural repercussions.

'Christianity came to India in four major waves. First, the advent attributed to *Jesus' disciple Thomas,* who is believed to have come to Kerala. Whether he actually did or not, or whether he even existed is immaterial. What is material is the legend, as it gives evidence to some deep-level contact between some early emissaries of an arresting new spiritual mode and some members of the Brahminic community of Kerala, who may have found it possible to incorporate into their practical religious beliefs a new symbol such as furnished by Jesus Christ, his character and teaching. I hardly think that such religious philosophical openness on their part entailed any rejection of either their own religion or philosophy. Rather, it was probably thought of as merely an addition to the devotional, and in a smaller way ritual, apparatus of their own religion. This in itself was far from being a cause of later inhibition. The tragedy is that it was never carried forward, which was probably as a result of the next *wave of immigrants* who came *from the Middle East* with more defined doctrines and orthopractic rites that distinguished themselves from the rest. To the extent they gradually became a separate community, probably intermarrying with the members of the older movement, made it necessary for them to concentrate on their identity and survival. As a consequence, the philosophical and deeper religious dimensions never entered their purview.

The third wave, the real wave, was *arrival of* the *Portuguese*, with doctrines completely shaped in militancy in the West. Early 'Christianity' in India, or whatever it was called then, probably had no doctrines. It may have gradually evolved some Orthopraxy. The Portuguese attitude which demanded *Christian exclusiveness* and generated *Christian aggressiveness* clearly was inhibiting. From then on Christianity in India came for the most to be very closely associated with the West, whether wittingly or unwittingly. That non-western group in Kerala, which backward vision calls Christian now, were further reduced to a struggle for survival that debilitated them of all creative capacities, their inability compounded by their separation and self-banishment from their abode in Indian philosphy and religion. The fourth wave, this time of *protestant missions* actually working under the equivocal patronage and protection of the British Raj did nothing whatsoever to encourage Indians who had become Christians to find their way back home from which they had banished themselves, although such desire must have existed in them.'

The document under analysis brings out the true nature of the *third wave of Christianisation* which resulted in *westernisation.*

The western Christian dignitaries like John of Monte Corvino (1306), Jordan Catalani (1329) and John Maringoli (1346) had contacts with the Christian community of Kerala long before the advent of the Portuguese. The work of western missionaries resulted in mass conversions along the sea-coast from Cochin to Rameswaram. This new community was nurtured in the discipline of the western church. This nascent church under the leadership of western missionaries developed its own identity independent of St. Thomas Christians. The new church was administered by the bishop of Cochin. St. Thomas Christians remained as a separate community under the leadership of an archdeacon and Persian bishops. The Portuguese ecclesiastical authorities could not tolerate this.

In 1599 *Alexis Menezes, Archbishop of Goa,* arrived at Cochin and he was received by the king of Cochin who offered him all possible help in the Archbishop's endeavour to 'purify the faith and customs of St. Thomas Christians.' The Archbishop was received as a guest in many churches but people refused to abide by his instructions. So he sought the help of local rulers and they compelled local Christians to obey the Archbishop. Meanwhile the Archbishop was able to win over a few families by ordaining a good number of new priests. This was in total *violation of the age-old practice* of ordaining priests only at the request of the parish assemblies called *yogam. Archdeacon Geevarghese* put up a stiff resistance against the encroachment of Archbishop Menezes. Though the Archdeacon had the support of the community, he had to yield to the pressures of the Protuguese and local rulers. As per the terms of the agreement reached between the Archdeacon and the Archbishop, the Archdeacon had to agree to convene a synod of St. Thomas Christians to consider the proposals for the purification of their religious life.

The synod started on Sunday, 20th June 1599, at Udayamperur (or in western literature at Diamper). Every day there were two sessions, one in the morning from 7 am to 11 am and the other in the evening from 2 pm to 6 pm. *At the end of the synod all the participants signed the decrees written in Malayalam. The total number of participants were eight hundred and thirteen including a hundred and sixty three priests.*

Proceedings of the Synod

Now let us have a close look at the Proceedings of the Synod as recorded by Gouvea (1606) the most faithful historian of Archbishop Menezes:

Prior consultation

When all the Casanars[2] were gathered at Diamper, as well as representatives of the people, four from each locality, authorised to give in the name of their electors

2. Priests of St. Thomas Christians

assent to the proceedings of the synod, the Archhishop, prior to its holding, chose eight Casanars of the greatest repute and credit in Serra, and, bringing them and the Archdeacon together, read to them privately all the decrees he had drafted for the Synod, and asked their opinion, as if he had not brought them ready made. His idea was that, if they were approved in this council, they would be undoubtedly passed. He answered all doubts raised by these eight counsellors giving his reasons and proving the truth of matters of faith by divine scriptures. As for the other customs which did not matter much and were not in themselves evil, if there were objections, the decrees, if thought fit, were amended, or differently drafted, or added to. When, therefore, these were published, there would be no doubts raised, if there were, the Casanars who had been consulted, might answer the objections to what they had done and agreed upon. When it was customs that were dealt with, he called four elders, the most dignified and noble of Serra for consultation. And they too would in public discussion show reason why a given custom was forbidden or amended. This was of great importance for the celebration of the Synod without disturbance, for these pacified the rest and persuaded them when objections were raised, as if they were the authors of these decrees.

Synod begins

All these decrees having been privately seen and approved by the consellors, on the third Sunday after Pentecost—20th June, 1599—the Synod was opened. The whole chapter of the See came from Cochin to celebrate it and to assist at the Pontifical of the Archbishop; and likewise the casper assistants, the choir, and many priests who came to see the proceedings. There came also Captain D. Antonia de Noronha, many hidalgos and noblemen, the city in a body, municipal councillors and officials and many others, to observe what they had desired for so many years. On this day the Archbishop bade all the priests say mass, and the ecclesiastics who were not priests, and the representatives of the people to confess and take communion. But if any one objected to confession, as one of the points to be treated in the Synod, he was not to take communion. All were asked to commend to God the cause of the Synod and pray for its successful termination. So long as it lasted, every day at sunset litanies should be sung, by the Syrians first in Chaldaean, and by the Latins afterwards with the same intention.

This was so done, and when the hour of mass arrived, the Archbishop with great solemnity said the mass for removal of schism, as laid down in the Roman missal, and Fr. Francisco Roza, S.J. preached in the vernacular about the purpose of the Synod and due obedience to the Roman church to the great profit of the audience. The mass over, the Archbishop, clad in the same pontifical dress, said the office of the opening of the Synod, as contained in the Roman Pontifical. At the end he sat on the pontifical chair and gave a long discourse on the intention why the Synod had been convened, and the obedience all owed to the Holy Roman Church, and proceeded to

say that he had convened the Synod by authority of a *Brief of the Holy Father Clement VIII,* in which he had entrusted this church to him on the death of Archbishop Mar Abrahams—Brief which was immediately read and explained in the vernacular. As over and above he was the Metropolitan Primate of the East, he had to attend to the spiritual needs of all its churches *sede vacante,* in case there was no governing chapter, as this one had not. He then asked them whether they were willing to hold that Synod to remove the errors and heresies, disseminated in this diocese by Nestorian heretics, to erase from the books the false doctrines set therein, to obey the Holy Roman Church and the Pope, successor of St. Peter and Vicar of Christ on Earth, to do away with public simonies employed by priests in the administration of sacraments, and to reform the clergy, the church, and the customs of the people. They all replied that they were willing to take part in the Synod and discuss all these things there. As he was afraid that outside the gathering prejudicial consultations might be held and disputes raised, he published an excommunication *latae sententiae,* saying that during the Synod no person, secular or ecclesiastical, should dare to hold meetings with other persons, secular or ecclesiastical, to treat of matters touching the Synod or Christianity without his leave. Whatever they wished to discuss, should be in public in congregation. Any proposal or objection would there be given a peaceful hearing and answer. No one without his permission should sign the decrees or make a profession of faith. All those who might doubt about articles of faith or the things placed before the Synod, would be free to bring it forward in the Synod, that it might be satisfactorily answered. Thus ended the celebration of the first day.

That evening and night the Archbishop was informed by the secret spies he had among the Christians, that in many places the Casanars held meetings of other Christians, and though the Synodal affairs were not expressly discussed, or *resistance* engineered, many of them were saying with much feeling: "Tomorrow we shall have done for ever with our *Patriarch of Babylon* who governed us all these years. We shall no more name at divine office or mass Mar Simon—such was the name of the Patriarch who then governed them. This Metriane of Europe—so was the Archbishop called—has grown so powerful that he has taken away all the customs in which we bave been brought up." Others were saying that, if what he did was right, it was no use speaking of the past. Each talked about the Synod and the Archbishop as his heart was disposed. They agreed that he had been more capable than all others, as he had succeeded in obtaining all he wished, and had put an end to things which no one had been able to end. Hence one could see how much attached they were to their false Patriarch, and how impossible it were to make them anathemise and declare him heretic, if God had not taken thought of these people and with His power had not made them yield and disown him.

Profession of faith

The next day the Archbishop said a low mass, and next putting on the full

Pontificals said the office of the 2nd day of the Synod, according to the Roman Pontifical. This over, a decree was read that all those present and the delegates of the people in the name of their constituents should make *a profession of faith* in the hands of the Archbishop in their own Malabar vernacular, in the form adopted by the Archbishop himself, with the addition of what is contained in the Bull of Pius IV, *anathematising all the Nestorian and other heresies current in the bishopric*, approving the first Holy Council of Ephesus of 200 priests, and expressly swearing *obedience to the Pope and the Holy Roman Church*, for ever renouncing obedience to the Patriarch of Babylon, receiving without opposition any prelate or bishop the Pope might send for the diocese, and no other, and executing this decree and to induce the rest to follow his example, the Archbishop, dressed in Pontificals, took of the mitre, knelt before the high altar, and, keeping the Holy Gospels before him and on that a large silver cross with holy wood, placed the hands on the missal and the cross and made the full profession of faith and oath as the others were to do. When this was gone through, he sat down and preached to them, explaining the points of the profession he had just made, the obligation all were under to do likewise and to swear obedience to the Holy Roman Church. *When the sermon was over, there were murmurs among Christians and Casanars, that they were Christians and believers.* How were they to profess the faith, which meant they had no faith before? The Archbishop heard this and told them that it was the duty of every Christian to make the profession once or oftener, whenever required or when there was suspicion of doubts about points of faith. He was their father and the Head of the Christians all over the East, and by their profession they confessed no more than that they heretofore were sundered from submission to the Holy Roman Church, and that the obedience they gave now should remain on record in a solemn act, subscribed to by them. These reasons satisfied and calmed them; they said it was all well, and that the Archbishop was right; since, great prelate as he was, he had done so, there was no reason why they should hesitate to follow suit.

Thereupon placing the missal and the cross on it, the *Archdeacon* knelt down, and with his hand on the missal and the cross made the same profession in a loud voice, which was heard of all, in the Malabar vernacular, saying previously to the people that he was doing it for himself and the whole diocese of Serra whose administrator he had so far been. After the Archdeacon had finished, there ascended the pulpit of the Church *Jacob, priest of the Church of Pallurte who served as the interpreter of the Synod,* and all the priests and laymen fell on their knees. He then read aloud with a clear and distinct voice the same profession, which all repeated in their own vernacular. After this the *Casanars* came up one by one, and approaching the Archbishop knelt down. He then asked each if he had perfectly understood the profession of faith just read, and meant to swear to every article of it; if he swore freely and of his own will, without any other compulsion than that of his own conscience and salvation of soul, and because he understood it to be the truth. They all replied, laying

the hand upon the missal and the cross, that by the Holy Gospels, the Cross of Christ, and the holy wood therein, on which they placed the hand, they confessed, believed, promised, and swore to all the contents of that profession, to live and die in that faith and the promise they made, and to give their blood and life, if necessary, for the truth of these things. Thereupon each of them with hands laid on the missal and the cross read a paper, containing the main *articles of the profession,* briefly set as follows:

"I believe and profess all that the Holy Mother, the Roman Church, believes and professes, and all that is contained in the profession of faith which has just been read, and which I wholly heard and distinctly understood. I condemn the perverse heretic Nestor and all his followers with all their heresies. I accept the first Ephesian council, over which in the name of the Holy Roman Pontiff presided the glorious St. Cyril, Patriarch of Alexandria, whom I confess to be a saint with God. Likewise I confess Christ Our Lord to be true God and true man, there being in Him two natures, divine and human, in only one, and that the Blessed Virgin Mary should be called and is really and truly the mother of God; and I acknowledge the Holy Roman Church as the mother, teacher, and head of all the churches of the world, and swear true obedience and submission to Holy Father the Pope, Roman Pontiff, successor of St. Peter, and Vicar of Christ on earth, without any dependence on the Patriarch of Babylon, with whom I swear not to hold any communication. And I promise not to accept in this diocese Bishop or Prelate other than the one in due time sent by the Holy Roman Pontiff. I further confess that there is not more than one Law of Christ our Lord, which was preached by the Holy Apostles, and that it is *heretical to say that there is one Law of St. Peter and another of St. Thomas* all which I profess, promise, and swear to God and this Holy Cross of Our Lord Jesus Christ and these Holy Gospels."

Uproar

While the Cassanars were taking this oath, each one separately in a loud voice which was heard of all, there rose up one who was very rich and powerful in Serra, and a favourite of the Rajah of Turubul, and with some seventy other men went out to the porch of the church, where he was joined by many, and there began to create such an uproar that the church seemed to be coming down with the noise and strife. On hearing this and suing that the church was being disturbed, the Archbishop thought that it was a rising against the profession of the faith which was being made, and called some Christians of the more respectable kind whom he had charged to pacify the rest, and told them to see what the row was about and to calm them. They brought back word that the trouble was that, as the Christians now obeyed the Pope and the Portuguese Bishops, the king of Portugal should take them under his protection and free them from the tribute of the pagan kings and the violence that was offered them, specially the one invented by the Rajah of Cochin and imitated by other Rajahs, whereby they claimed a share in the property of Christians on death of the

parents as the eldest sons, and in this guise robbed them of almost all the property that was left.

The intention of the Casanar who instigated this did not seem honest, but his aim was *to disturb the act of swearing obedience and the proceedings of the Synod.* So the Archbishop sent him word again that he should go back into the church and that he (the Archbishop) would soon satisfy their petition. All the Christians came up and got them in; and the Archbishop asked them to be quiet, for after the profession of faith he would attend to whatever they prayed for and, almost the whole of the congregation being of the same opinion, the ceremony was proceeded with. The Casanar saw now that his trick would not succeed and that all were now of one mind, and came to profess the faith along with others who had taken part in the disturbance. After the Casanars came the *Deacons present*, and next the *Subdeacons*, the *Minorists*, and the chosen representatives of the people, each for his own men. They were followed by the *elders* who were present and the *rest of the people,* both inhabitants of Diamper and those from other parts who had come to see the act of the Synod, all of whom made up a great crowd. In this act of swearing and other ceremonies the Archbishop spent seven and a half hours, dressed in Pontificals and with the missal and the cross on his knees. Apart from the people of Diamper and others who came voluntarily, and besides the deacons, subdeacons, and minorists, there were 813 who were invited to the Synod and swore obedience, viz. 163 Casanars and 650 chosen representatives of the people.

After the profession, a decree was read, ordering all the priests, deacons, and subdeacons of the diocese who were not present at the Synod to make the same profession of faith in the presence of the Archbishop when he should visit their churches, or of any persons by him deputed for the purpose, and where he did not go, they should sign the profession and send it on to him. Likewise that no one should henceforward be admitted to the holy orders or to the vicarate of any church without making that profession. After this decree they passed and sealed other important ones.

Special Protection to Catholics

Soon after, in order to satisfy the petition of the Christians, the *Archbishop summoned the Captain of Cochin, D. Antonio De Noronha* and the Municipal Council who were gathered in the court house, and seeing them all stand reverently before him, told them that he there and then was giving in their charge the Christians of St. Thomas who now were all submissive to the Holy Roman Church, having denounced all the heresies in which till then they had lived, and were obedient to the Pope, the Roman Pontiff and Vicar of Christ on Earth, and as such to take them under their *protection in the name of His Majesty the King of Portugal,* the protector and defender of all Catholics in India and the East, exception made of the subjection and vassalage they owed to their own kings and lords, whose subjects they were in matters not affecting the Law of Christ Our Lord and obedience to the church and its prelates as in duty

bound, as well as their ancient privileges always preserved by all the Malabar Rajahs- which the Archbishop added to *satisfy the Rajahs who distrusted this gathering and the Synod.* And many of them had spies and even their ministers in Diamper to gather what was going on there and specially the Rajah of Cochin who for this purpose had sent his Chief Minister with another man previously sent. They suspected that the Archbishop wanted to turn the Christians into vassals of the king of Portugal, and the confirmation given by the Archbishop in all the churches they called the stigma of Portuguese.

Thereupon D. Antonio de Noronha, Captain of Cochin fell on his knees before the Archbishop together with the council and other notables who had come from Cochin, and remaining in this posture all the time, said with tears that in the name of the king of Portugal his Lord he and other officials present took all the Christians of St. Thomas, all and each, with their *churches and bazaars under their protection* and safeguard in matters concerning the Law of Christ Our Lord and the benefits of Christianity, for all of them and the Portuguese were at one in the truth of the one Catholic faith, subject to the same prelate and sheep of the same shepherd, the Holy Roman Pontiff, Vicar of Christ on Earth, of which all *a document was made, signed by the Captain and the Council.* This was handed by the Archbishop to the Archdeacon and four leading Christians to be kept in the Archives of Angamale, the seat of the bishopric; and this satisfied them all. The Christians too were much impressed to see the venerable and grey haired figure of D. Antonio who had a great reputation in all those kingdoms of Malabar, there kneeling before the Archbishop with all the councillors and refusing to rise. They began to have a great idea of the person and dignity of the Archbishop, which impression served much for the execution of all that was ordered in that Synod.

At the end the Archbishop blessed the people with many tears of joy, both his and of the bystanders, Portuguese and native alike, for completing in peace and harmony what was hardly hoped for and long desired.

This was the end of the second session of the second day of the Synod, and all retired at three in the afternoon amidst much joy and a unity which seemed rather the work of providence. Many Christians even said that the Archbishop was very lucky, and whatever he set his hand to, would be realised, for he could do what none else could achieve, and change in one hour what for so many years was kept up by their ancestors.

Minister of Cochin Rajah Visits

The Archbishop had hardly retired when the *Chief Minister of the Rajah of Cochin* came under the pretence of paying a visit, but in reality to learn what had happened in the Synod and about the obedience yielded by Christians to the Pope. The Archbishop saw through this and told him to tell the Rajah not to be disturbed and suspicious, for in that assembly nothing was discussed against his dominion, but only

matters relating to Christian religion. Further he should know that he would never get better and more loyal subjects among the Christians of his kingdom than those who kept better the Law of Christ Our Lord, since this law itself bound them to all that was just and reasonable and to serve their kings in truth and loyalty in all that was not contrary to the faith, but that he should not trench on matters of faith for which they were bound to give up their blood and life, and not to own obedience to lord or king which was contrary to the commandments of a higher king or lord. But in all other matters of his service the Christians would not fail in any point.

The Minister expressed his great satisfaction at this and added that the same thing was told him by many subjects of the Rajah who were present at the assembly. He offered to remain there as long as the Archbishop wished for anything that might be necessary. But the latter declined with thanks, as there was no need, there being present the other official which the Rajah had there, and as he had no time to deal with other affairs than of Christians.

Disapproval of 'errors and heresies'

On the third day of the synod the agenda dealt with matters of faith and the declaration and disapproval of all the errors and heresies which were current in Serra. The Archbishop was to read out the decrees to the whole people, giving reasons for the same and the Portuguese were also to attend. The Casanars and the Christians, seeing that the Archbishop had chosen the third day for private consultation, after which the heresies were to be published before all, grew ashamed and begged him not to treat of these things on that day, but on St.John's day which happened to be two days later in the same week, for they knew that the Captain and all the Portuguese had arranged to celebrate the feast of St. John two miles away in a church dedicated to the saint by the Christians of St. Thomas at *Little Paru.* For they felt shame at the Portuguese learning of the heresies in which they had so far lived. The Archbishop agreed to this, saying it was to their credit that they felt shame for their past errors; hence they saw what reason had St. Paul to say when speaking of the errors in faith as well as in morals: "What fruit have ye gathered of the things of which ye are now ashamed, whose final end is death and confusion?"

So on the third day after mass and pontifical prayers, they treated of the *matter of the 6th session* in the programme, i.e the sacraments of Baptism and Confirmation, postponing the subject of the third day to St.John's day as prayed for. First of all the doctrines of each sacrament were propounded and then the decrees bearing on it. As there was much to be done and the people also in large numbers, the Archbishop decreed that they should meet in the mornings from seven to eleven o' clock, and in the afternoons from two to six. This order was kept till the end of the synod.

When the decrees were read, *there used to rise up some Casanars or popular delegates* and offer some objection or other, which the Archbishop answered, showing his satisfaction at these things being publicly dealt with so that an answer

could be given, instead of in corners where there was none to meet them. He was assisted by six leading and highly respected men, of great name in Serra, whom the Archbishop had privately charged to pacify the rest, having won their confidence and treating them as his councillors in all things, by which they felt bound to him. God gave them so much grace and inspired the rest with so much respect for these six that whenever they rose and gave reasons and confirmed what the Archbishop said, all calmed down and agreed to what was said.

Some *Casanars* who saw this, *resented* it and went to the Archbishop to say that *it was not fair that these laymen should take the lead and speak on all subjects, when there were so many priests more concerned in this matter,* and that he should bid them not to address the congregation.

He replied that it looked as if he had not charged the priests with the matter. The priests should rise first and speak out their mind, and he would meanwhile tell them to hold their peace. But to prevent them would be to withdraw the leave he had given to all to express their opinion in the congregation and the freedom of the delegates of the people, besides offending such honourable men, elders so highly esteemed and revered in Serra, and persons of great good sense. All would say, "*What is the use of being chosen delegates of the people if we are not free to move or speak out what we think*:?" With this *they ceased murmuring against the old men,* on whom the Archbishop later conferred great honours and many privileges, and graves of honour in their churches for themselves and their descendants, which they greatly appreciated, though their chief reward they would obtain in heaven for such holy work. This *third session ended with twenty decrees about the sacrament of Baptism* wherein there was much to amend, and of Confirmation which they knew not, besides the doctrines of the same sacraments.

Rebellion dies out

On this third day a notable event took place, which, when bruited abroad, went far to confirm all present in the truth of the faith taught in the synod, and in observance of the decrees passed therein. The fact was as follows: As there are always some who follow the devil and help him in his evil designs, so in the synod too there were men so adamant in their errors that, though seeing clearly the evidence of these errors and the truth preached by the Archbishop, which was accepted by all others, they were inspired by the same devil and resolved to disturb the synod and publicly cry out that all that was declared there was false, and that they declined to give up the *law of St.Thomas nor the old customs* in which they had been bred, nor to yield submission to other than the Patriarch of Babylon, to whom they and their forefathers had always obeyed. On this determined, they formed their plans, and decided to go to the congregation with this protest, and they bound themselves by placing hand upon hand not to fail with their help and support and to speak with freedom, one of them who was more daring being chosen to start the talk. Full of hellish fury, they rushed with

passion into the congregation and meant to face and address the Archbishop, who was dressed in the pontificals with mitre and crook in all the synodal rites to give them greater solemnity and dignity. But when they saw him thus clothed, and surrounded with the big congregation of priests and popular delegates, all with him united and listening to him with great reverence, they were struck by the Lord wih such fear, that they could not utter a word, but like dumb creatures came out again and vented their wrath upon one another for failing in what they had resolved upon. Then making a new effort and filled with new determination, they again entered the church, but when they wished to speak, were again as before panic-stricken, as if they saw there the fires lit in which for their heretical obstinacy they might be burnt. For two days they persisted in this defiance of God; but as no one can prevail against Him and it is hard, as the Lord hath said, to resist the goad that pricks, at last on the third day they were astonished at their own rebellion and at what they had seen for themselves, saw their error, gave up their hellish designs, embraced the truth of Catholicism, agreed to and approved of all the decrees of the synod, and publicly confessed their fault and all that had befallen them in those days. This even caused general wonder, and all were further confirmed in the Catholic faith which they had professed, and in obedience to the Roman church which they had given. The same thing often happened, with other rebellious men in the churches which the Archbishop visited, at the time of performing pontifical acts, as we shall see later all of which God did out of pity for these poor Christians to draw them from their errors and to lead them on to salvation.

On the fourth day the subject of sacraments was proceeded with, and in the *fifth session* according to the order of the synod, but in the fourth of actual celebration, they dealt with the *Sacrament of Holy Eucharist and the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.*They set right the custom of these Christians who took communion without confession, also the communion of the sick. The *Chaldaean Mass was cleared of many heresies and blasphemies* it was full of, and of many impious rites, instituted to introduce the heresies whith they observed in the divine sacrament, as in the synod can be seen, and *matters of the Holy Eucharist were set in nine decrees and of the sacrifice of the mass in fifteen.*

In the afternoon the sixth session was held, dealing with the *sacraments of Penance and Extreme Unction,* special attention being paid to that of the penance and the duty of the faithful in this regard, owing to the great necessity for these Christians to be instructed in the doctrine of this sacrament which they did not have recourse to and which they rater abhored. They dealt also with reserved cases and those which incur censure, and other important matters of this sacrament, which were summed up in *fifteen decrees,* while those of Extreme Unction which was also unknown were embodied in *three.*

On the *fifth day* which was that of glorious St.John the Baptist, they treated *matters of faith* which in the order of the Synod had fallen to the *third session.* As there was much to do therein, they all came very early to the assembly. As soon as the

Archbishop had said Mass and all were gathered together, he bade them close the gates and not to let any Portuguese remain, but only the Casanars and the Christians as requested. He then expounded the divine scriptures, the unanimous opinions of the Fathers, the decrees of general councils, and the falsehood of the errors which they held and in which they lived. These they confessed there and then, saying that so far they had been deceived by the devil and falsely taught by their bishops. *They determined the books which were to be burnt up* in the whole of Serra for containing these heresies, as well as those *which were only to be partly amended;* likewise all matters concerning faith; wherein they spent the whole day, morning, evening, and a good deal of the night, at the desire of the Casanars and Christians to finish in that session all the subject matter. There were no objections raised, except in the reform of the *breviary*, in which the Archbishop wished to elimintate the whole office of the advent and Christmas, as it was full of heresies and blasphemies against the incarnation of the son of God and his holy mother. The priests pointed out that in that case there would be nothing left for them to pray in those days. The Archbishop ended the discussion by asking them to insert in the breviaries new leaves where the order of the office was kept, after deleting all the blasphemies and heresies. Thus ended this session on Faith with *23 decrees and 14 chapters*, which later were drawn up in the form of Catechism to be read in the churches about the chief doctrines of Catholic faith, so long as the Archbishop did not send another which the Synod had asked him to prepare and he had promised in order to give the people more clear and definite information and doctrine in matters of faith.

Foreign contribution for the maintenance of priests

On the *sixth day* and in the *seventh session* they treated of the *sacraments of Holy Orders and Matrimony.* When the decrees were read about the Holy Sacrament of Orders, two points were settled of prime importance. Firstly they abolished the vice of simony, on which the priests lived till then, by publicly selling the sacraments as they had no other means of living. Whereupon it was ordained that, when the Archbishop should visit the churches, he should consult the people as to what they wished to give to support their priests. The delegates bound themselves to give as much as they could, and the Archbishop had a provision read in the congregation, wherein he bound himself to give, so long as he lived or His Majesty made no provision, 2000 *pardaus* a year payable every quarter out of his own revenues, towards the maintenance of the priests and vicars whom he had resolved to appoint. This he fulfilled and paid till the year 1601 when the *king* ordered that this sum should be given to the said churches *out of his treasury,* and not of the Archbishop's. On this they lived comfortably, making up deficits in the poorer parishes for it was ordained that *Vicars should have a remuneration and maintenance* to put an end to the plague of simony.

The second point was the *prohibition under pain of censure for clerics to be married,* as they used to. Those who were already married, being twice and thrice

bigamists or wedded to widows—as they were not aware of the irregularity of bigamy—were ordered under penalties and censures to leave their wives, for in no church and at no time was such a thing allowed. Others were married after Mar Abraham had come to the third council of Goa, where it was enjoined that those taking Holy Orders in that church should not marry, under pain of excommunication and annulment of marriage. This injunction was by Mar Abraham used as an addition to his simonies; for he used to excommunicate according to the Synod but later used to issue licenses on payment; and if they married without it, he used to declare them excommunicate, and made them pay for absolution and permission to live with wife. Now these married men also were bidden to leave their wives as they had taken them *malafide* against the decree of the Goan Council which their Archbishop had accepted and he decreed the like censure on their wives, compelling them to separate and give up the insignia of wives of priests, which was a cross worn round the neck, by which they were known and given deference, as has been said previously.

The others who had married in olden times, even before Mar Abraham had gone to Goa and still lived with the first wife without any impediment of bigamy, were allowed to keep their wives, but were bound on oath to abide by the Pope's decision after proper consultation. The reason for this was that he knew not if the Pope had accepted the submission of Mar Abraham when he had been to Rome, leaving the church with its ancient customs in matters which did not go against him, and had allowed their priests to marry, just as those of Armenia subject to the Roman Church. But he exhorted them to leave their wives of their own free will. This was done by many, as all of this class were old and their wives too, and, in case they did not do so, they were afraid they might not be able to celebrate or administer sacraments. For, even though their wives could not share in the perquisites of the church along with the priests as heretofore, yet they at least could come and pray in the church, and profit by the offerings, and occupy the same place as before till the receipt of reply from Rome. This was accordingly done, and God visited with exemplary punishment those who would not abide by this decree.

It was moreover ordained that *priests should not*, as before, *hold laymen's offices in the state.*

The *Matrimony was reduced to the form of the Holy Council of Trent.* It was cleared of many current abuses and faults. The prohibited degrees were declared, and things which nullified or impeded marriage, of which they knew nothing. By the papal authority which he held, the Archbishop dispensed those who were married within the forbidden degrees—there were many of them— and bade them receive the sacrament again but secretly to avoid scandal. And so this seventh session ended with *22 decrees on Holy Orders, and 25 on Matrimony.*

Parishes and Parish Priests

On the *seventh day* the *eighth session* was held about reform of things of the

church. In this one of the most important and necessary steps was taken, i.e *the division of the diocese into parishes and the appointment thereto of vicars and parish priests* to minister to the people. For previously there was no priest charged with care of the people, and the church obligations were discharged by Christians at any time or in any manner they pleased, and there was no one to attend to it. The whole diocese was divided into parishes, besides the churches which, being near to those wich were made parish churches were joined to them. To these the Archbishop afterwards added a few in places where the people suffered for want of ministration of sacraments on account of the distance to the churches within whose jurisdiction they lay.

It was further decreed that *every church should have four leading men in the guise of stewards,* to take care of the church things and look after their repairs and ornaments, which they badly required. These were to be chosen by the people at the time of the Archbishop's coming visit.

The days of fasting and abstinence were regulated, as there was great confusion, some being kept in one place and others in another. *It was decreed that the Christian doctrine should be taught in Malabar vernacular.* Before this it was taught in Syrian, so that few knew it, and the most they knew was the sign of the cross and a very few the Our Father.

Reformation of Customs

On the *8th day* they had the *ninth and last session* of the *reformation of customs.* In this they sought remedy to grievous abuses and disorders rampant in the bishopric, and specially to two which wrought great harm in Serra. The first was that daughters could inherit nothing of their *father's property,* which often went to secondary heir, being male. Hence many of them took to bad life or starved during life, if the parents did not give them in marriage during their lifetime. Though they (parents) were rich and well off, though they left a big fortune, the *daughters had no share.*

The other was that, in spite of having children of their own, they generally adopted other children who shared in the inheritance, thereby disorders and dissensions, besides that it was against right or reasons. Several pagan customs which they had adopted through their intercourse with the gentiles were abolished. It was decreed that *Christians should not pierce their ear lobes and wear ear-rings in order to distinguish them from the Nairs, who used exactly the same dress.* Several other barbaric customs which were useless or harmful were done away with; but, try as he may, *he could not reform the question of untouchability or intercourse with the lower classes,* which are all except the Nairs, the Christians of St.Thomas and the Portuguese. If they touch them, they become unclean and polluted, as they say, and cannot communicate with others without washing and going through certain ceremonies. Though the Christians see this to be folly and superstition, yet they keep the custom; for, if they break it, they might not be able to communicate with Nairs, or enter

into the houses of Rajahs, or buy and sell or have any trade or business, or live comfortably and be kept in the offices they hold. The conclusion of the matter would be that the low classes could not be won over to the Faith. Of these there are in Malabar seven who perform all the services both of agriculture and fisheries, and all mechanical arts. For the Nairs who are nobles are only busy with arms. But, though the Archbishop took a long time over this and the Christians were willing to do all they could, for the above reasons nothing could be amended, much as the Archbishop felt it. Thus ended the session wih 25 decrees.

Synod ends

After all the decrees had been read, the Archbishop ordered that the *vicars and parish priests* whom in consultation he had chosen for all the churches, should be named before the whole assembly, which was done; and those who were appointed if present, or, if absent, some friends of theirs, rose up and went to kiss the hand of the Archbishop. The latter gave each of them the provision of vicariate, in which the jurisdiction of his parish was defined. Each was bidden within a month of their arrival to his church to make a census of all the parishioners, falling within his jurisdiction, whether living in the bazaar or forest, and to make them confess within the two following months, and to excommunicate those who would not do so within that period. Hence forward they were to make confession in Lent, as all Christians and Catholics are wont to do, and were to acknowledge the priests as their parish priests and vicars. Thereupon the delegates in the name of the respective constituents accepted and acknowledged them as such, each drawing to himself his own vicar.

After this the Archbishop called the Vicars, and while they remained on their knees before him, he exhorted them in all the duties of their office, and ended by saying that he handed over to them his own conscience and the sheep of Christ, ransomed with his blood, in the presence of God, His saints, and all the people, whereof they would have to give strict account before the divine tribunal. He said this with so much unction and in words so serious and measured, that they were deeply moved and many shed abundant tears, and the words of the Archbishop remained graven in their mind.

After the homily and exhortation to the Vicars, he bade all of them sign under their hand the original of the profession of faith made by them, and of all the synodal decrees. If any priest or layman had yet any doubt in matters declared and ordained in the Synod, besides the objections already discussed and settled, he should set it forth before signing, for there should be no doubt or change later. He also told them to declare loudly before signing that they were doing so freely and without any compulsion, but for the salvation of their souls and out of an understanding that it was good for Christianity and that it was true. Some offered some objections which were treated and decided by common opinion and consent. As no further doubt arose, all

said they were glad to sign. Whereupon the Archdeacon produced the book of the profession of faith and the decrees of the Synod before the Archbishop, who was dressed in the pontificals, as usual in the Synodal acts to give more authority and respect to his words and commands. Seated in the same chair he signed them, after which a table was set in the main chapel, where one after another signed it, first the Archdeacon, then all the Casanars, then the deacons and subdeacons, then all the elected delegates of the people, *each making their sign in the presence of all the congregation*, the Captain and Council of Cochin, with a previous declaration that they did so of their own free will the Archbishop thus taking precautions against what might happen later.

While the decrees were being signed, *a great hubub* was raised by the same priest who had moved before, and a great uproar seemed likely, as many were gathering round him in the porch as before. The Archbishop seeing this, sent for them and on their coming, said that they had seen with their eyes that all the matters had been publicly treated in the Synod in the presence of all who had leave and liberty to move, discuss, and object as they thought best, and all the doubts raised had been settled by common consent. Without him (i.e. the priest) or privately nothing had been dicided. If he still had some doubt, he might speak it out.

These and other reasons given by the Archbishop proved so strong that they gave no reply, but *all in a body without any disturbance signed the book.* Later they confessed that when they entered the church, the same happened to them before the Archbishop and the assembly as to those others about whom we have related above that, when they set their eyes on him, their feet and hands seemed broken, and their tongue grew dumb, disabling them from doing or saying anything against what the Archbishop said. The news of this and of the former event spread throughout the Serra, and proved very salutary to this Christianity and won great reverence to the decrees of the Synod and the commands of the Archbishop. This was certainly the work of God and his mercy to these nations, for so obdurate were they in their errors and ancient customs that he would not gain his ends without inspiring fear and reverence for the prelate, so that they might see that, what he preached and said was true and what he desired of them was His own work.

After the decrees were signed, up rose the Archbishop and, removing the mitre, fell on his knees and began the hymn *Te Deum Laudamus.* Thereupon to the great joy of all a procession was formed, which with great solemnity wended its way roundabout the church by a convenient route. At the head came dancing parties, singing many religious songs in Malabar language. They were followed by the priests and other ecclesiastics singing hymns and psalms in Chaldaean as was their wont. After them came the Latin priests whom the Archbishop had brought with him, and those who had come from Cochin to see the Synod, who sang the same psalms and hymns in Latin. Thus they sang in three tongues, Latin, Chaldaean, and Malabaria without any confusion, all united in one faith and charity, praising the one true God,

Triune in persons and one in essence, author of all the good which for so many years was longed for.

This joy and agreement was increased by our Lord, by confirming the decisions of the Synod with a miracle and prodigy worked in the course of the procession. We give it this name, for it is held as a miracle and celebrated in all the places of Serra. At least its effect was miraculous and work of God, for it was this that above all implanted obedience to the Holy Roman Church, Purity of Catholic faith, and observance of the synodal decisions, in the hearts of all Christians, whether present there, or those absent who heard of it.

It so happened that at the time of the profession which was made at the height of Indian winter *a very heavy rain* was falling for two continuous days, and the weather was so stormy that the procession could not leave the church, and the cross stopped at the door of the church, and with it all the processionists. As the devil is never in want of ministers and partisans, some who in their heart of hearts were not yet quite convinced of the matters of faith and the Synod, profiting by the evil omens to which the Malabar people are much addicted, began to mock and say that, if it were the work of God, He would not have sent so much rain and storm to spoil their feast and thanksgiving for the union between the Christians of St. Thomas and the Portuguese (that is how the rebels spoke of the Union of this church with the Holy Roman Church); that St.Thomas stood for his honour and sent the rain to show his displeasure at the removal of the law which he had preached and taught and they had kept ever so long, and at the introduction of the law of St.Peter, kept by the Portuguese. All the other Christians who heard this, became sad and paralysed and looked at the Archbishop as if they were sorry at what was happening. When the latter saw what was going on, he grew angry and in a loud voice cried almost passionately: Let the cross be taken out; all were astonished at his order to bring out the cross in the midst of rain and storm which was such that even at his word they dared not come out, for the showers were now heavier than ever. The Archbishop noticing that they made no sign of moving, cried out twice again loudly and passionately: "Out with the cross; Out with the cross", as he thought it better for all to get wet and the insignia to be spoilt, than to give joy to the rebels to see the procession stopped, and a pretext to convince the ignorant folk.

Thereupon the cross bearer stepped out, and no sooner had he raised the cross out of the porch, than all of a sudden the rain ceased and the sky became clear as if there had been no rain whatever. To the wonder of all neither did the cross get wet, nor did a single drop of water fall anymore. This caused so much astonishment in the wicked and so much joy and satisfaction in the good, that no one could keep back the tears, and so they all went on crying and singing—a sight worth seeing and one of great impressiveness. The gentry who had come from Cochin and the other Portuguese also could not help crying to see the devotion of all those people and the miracle wrought by God for them. Those who saw it, truly say that they had seen many solemn and

grave processions with large crowds of people, but never seen one more joyous and more zealous, for the men seemed to be full of the Holy Ghost, as shown in their joy and devotion, and even the fields seemed to be glad and the very plants and trees to smile. The clear air without the sun to impede the festival or rain to present it, and other things lifeless even helped to celebrate the kindness providence had dispensed to these people. The rebellious, then, grew dumb and confused, and even regretful and penitant of their folly. They were confirmed in faith and truth of what has been treated in the Synod, and begged pardon for the foolish words they had uttered.

Amidst such joy the procession went through its determined route, going round and round the church. When it came back to the church, the Archbishop gave the blessing which was received with great devotion, and the Archdeacon, performing his function, dissolved the Synod according to the Roman pontifical. These Christian feasts, music in the church and the gatherings during the days of the Synod were noted by the Hindus with great displeasure, and in particular by the Brahmins of a pagodah which was near the Christian church. They took these feasts and hymns as an affront and contempt of their temple, and all the time the Synod lasted, they also celebrated great feasts, playing annoyingly on their instruments day and night without interruption by turns, and every evening they held processions around the pagodah with much feasting and large crowds, an old Brahmin carrying a small image of the pagodah in his hands and leaning on the chest. He sat on a large and well adorned elephant, while the rest went in front singing and dancing, to get better of the Christian feasts which were celebrated in the church, and to confound them, as they thought. Such is the veneration and zealous worship of the devil among the poor people which ought to confound the indifference of many Christians in divine worship and service of God and of the churches.

Before they had left who had taken part in the Synod, the Archbishop asked those who had been appointed vicars not to go; also twelve Christians of age, persons of great influence, whom he chose to decide many private questions which had been brought up before the synod, among these twelve being the eight men whom he had chosen before. All the others went away, but not before *bidding farewell to the Archbishop with much display of love*, kissing his hand and promising always to keep the decisions of the Synod, as not only of great service to our Lord, but as being passed with their vote and opinion. God had, moreover, shown how pleasing it was to Him, by the miracle of stopping the rain to allow the thanksgiving procession for the favour done to them.

The Archbishop with the help of the religious of the Soceity who were with him, examined those who had been appointed vicars for their fitness to hear confessions in the manner which was then possible in view of their little knowledge. He thoght it better to pass some whose knowledge was limited, rather than fail to use the sacrament of penance and to carry out the decisions of the Synod. To this intent he gave each of them instruction in the most necessary points about the administering

of this sacrament, which they translated and took with them. The other *priests were likewise examined, and those who were instructed, were granted permission to hear confessions* of all Christians. Each vicar was also given an altar stone which the Archbishop had consecrated for the purpose, also a little box with vessels and holy oils, and the necessary instructions in their use, which was taught to them all, and a surplice for use in administering the sacraments. The use of surplice was unknown to them, and they administed sacraments in the common dress, except the mass for which they had consecrated vestments. They were given two exercise books, one in Syrian and Chaldaean describing the form of ministering the holy sacraments according to the Roman usage, translated from the Baptisterium of the Roman sacramentals; the other, containing the Christian doctrine in the vernacular of Malabar to be taught in the churches to children and others, and a memo of reserved cases, fasting and holy days to be published to the congregations. *With these they were sent to their respective churches.*

After their departure, he went into the suits and quarrels which had been brought to the synod, which were settled with the help of the twelve Christians chosen for the purpose, in conformity with their customs so far as right and reason permitted. He gave dispensation to many to marry within the forbidden degrees of relationship, who applied for it according to the decision of the Synod. He absolved from excommunication many who had come to the Synod to beg for it, and some who for twenty years and more were under censure. Other private matters of importance he went into, among them the examination of *an old priest who threw out the devils with rites and ringing of a bell.* This he had taught a son of his, also a priest, and was found to be done by communion and pact with the devil; for the Serra and its priests were in such a state that most of them used the book *"Parisman"* of magic and witchcraft which the Synod had now forbidden. *Thus all things were attended to and remedied, and then all left,* and the Archbishop made ready to visit all the churches, and to execute therein the decrees of the Synod. *Jornada, Book I, chapters XX, XXI and last chapter.*

IV

Diametrically opposite Evaluations

Protestant point of view

So far readers had the advantage of learning about the synod from the typical western Catholic point of view. That is what Antonio Gouvea, an Augustinian monk, provides through *Jornada* a book with official imprimatur. Now let us have a quick review of the synod and its decisions from the typical protestant point of view as

represented by Michel Geddess, La Croze and James Hough. Hough (1839:11-22) offers the following comments:

'The acts and decrees of the synod of Diamper are of no inconsiderable value, as an historic record of the faith and practice both of the Roman and Syrian Churches, at the close of the sixteenth century. No romanist can dispute an exposition of his religious tenets which was drawn up with so much care by an Archbishop of his church, and that, too, for the express purpose of establishing his religion in India: an exposition which was also published to the world with the sanction of the highest papal authorities in Europe. And with respect to the Syrians, these decrees contain the best, indeed, it may be said, the only account extant of the doctrines and customs of their church at the time of their publication, The vicissitudes through which that injured people have since passed; the unsparing hand with which the Archbishop afterwards committed to the flames, every document he could find that contained a sentiment opposed to the pretensions and tenets of Rome; the numerous variations that have since been introduced into their creed and ritual: these, and other causes, have combined to render it very difficult, if not impossible, to ascertain the character of their church, at that early period of her history, Seeing that the only knowledge we have of their creed and practices at that time is derived from the history of this synod, Dr, Geddes has justly remarked, that Menezes, by composing the acts and decrees in question, was "instrumental in letting the world know more of the orthodoxy of that Apostolical Church, than its like they would ever have known of it otherwise:" and that, therefore, 'we have reason to bless Providence for bringing so good an end out of his evil design: but that we have no reason at all to thank him for it, who intended nothing less than the making of such a happy discovery."

The following are three leading doctrines of Christianity which appear always to have been held by the Syrian Church in India.

1st. Salvation by faith in the atonement of Jesus Christ for the sins of mankind.

2nd. The necessity of the *new birth,* or regeneration by the Holy Ghost, before any can believe and be saved.

3rd. The Trinity in Unity and Unity in Trinity, as defined in the Athanasian creed, but without its damnatory clauses.

As in these fundamental tenets she agreed with every orthodox church in christendom, it is unnecessary to dilate upon them. But it is of importance to show here, wherein she differed in other respects from the Church of Rome at this period of her history. For this purpose the summary now to be given is drawn up from the most authentic sources extant.

DOCTRINES and CUSTOMS of the Church of Malabar before the Synod of Diamper, whereby it will appear how far she agreed with the reformed Churches of England, Scotland, and other nations, and in what respects she differed from the Church of Rome.

1st. *She rejected the Pope's Supremacy.* — It has been sufficiently seen how devotedly the Syrians were attached to the Patriarch of Babylon, and with what difficulty they were brought to tolerate the bare mention of the Pope of Rome in their public services, Even Gouvea admits, that they abhorred the Pope and the Church of Rome as Antichristian, and that because they pretended to superoirity and jurisdiction over all other churches, This he, like the Archbishop, attributes to their apostasy from the Mother Church, without, however, attempting to prove that they had ever recognised the papal supremacy, or were in any way associated with that communion. This would have been a difficult task indeed, and none can wonder that they did not undertake it. In this history it has already been shown, that from the earliest period they were independent of Rome, and that they never heard of the Pope, much less of his arrogant claims, before the arrival of the Portuguese.

2nd. *She denied the doctrine of Transubstantiation.*— The Syrians maintained the *spiritual* presence of the body and blood of Christ in the Sacrament, and rejected as an absurdity the figment of the *actual* presence, when first brought to their notice. On this subject Gouvea has drawn a comparison between them and the reformed churches of Europe, in these characteristic terms— "Their books contained enormous errors against this holy sacrament, errors that show that the heretics of our own time, who have revived all the ancient heresies and forgotten errors, derived their doctrines from this source." Upon this La Croze exclaims, "An idea worthy of its author! What a chimera to imagine that the sentiments of the reformers upon the eucharist were drawn from Syrian books in India, of which at the time of the Reformation, they had not the slightest knowledge." This conformity between parties so unacquainted with each other, proves that they both derived their doctrines from the same source: and both appeal to the word of revealed truth as their authority for what they believe.

3rd. *They condemned the Adoration of images as idolatrous.*— At that time no idol was to be seen in their churches, except a few in the neighbourhood of the Portuguese stations, of whom some Syrians had learned how to make use of them. This remark does not apply to the figure of a cross, which they had long regarded with reverence, and placed in all their churches.

4th. *They maintained that the Church of Rome had corrupted the true faith.*— Besides the three fundamental tenets of that Church stated above, the Syrians accused the Romanists of setting up many human inventions, and making the word of God of none effect. This position they stoutly maintained, and indignantly rejected every novelty proposed to them, so long as they were free to think and act for themselves.

5th. *Their Church knew nothing of the intercession of Saints.*— Indeed, they denied that those who had departed in the faith of Christ were risen from the dead. They believed that their souls were in a state of happiness, but that they would not appear in the presence of God till after the general resurrection and the last judgment. We are not surprised that Gouvea treats this as one of their most pernicious errors,

because it strikes at the root of a doctrine that has proved so productive to the treasury of Rome. But their views on the subject were common to all other eastern churches, and in accordance with the word of God.

Here it should be noticed, as in the case of image-worship, that some of the Syrians who resided in the neighbourhood of the Portuguese, had by this time learned to pray to the Virgin Mary and other saints.

6th. *purgatory*— Of this state they had never heard, and were at a loss to understand what Menezes meant, when, at the opening of his campaign, he first brought it to their notice.

7th. *Of masses, and prayers for the dead,* they knew nothing.

8th. *They made no use of holy oil in the administration of Baptism.*— It was, however, customary after the service to rub the infant's body, either with cocoa-nut oil, or *gergelin,* a species of saffron. This practice, though not attended with prayer or benediction, they regarded as somewhat sacred; and we have seen that they appealed to it as superseding confirmation, when first desired to conform to that rite.

9th. They had no knowledge of *extreme unction.*

10th. *Of auricular confession* also they had never heard, and they shrunk from it with great horror when first proposed to them. And well they might, when they found how entirely it held them in bondage to a mercenary priesthood, who thereby carried their jurisdiction to the very thoughts and intentions of the heart, and to the domestic secrets of every family.

11th. *They never dreamed of the celibacy of the clergy,* who were allowed to marry with all the freedom that the laity enjoyed. Their wives were called cataniares (or cacaneires). They took precedence of the other women at church, and everywhere else, and were distinguished by a cross of gold, or some inferior metal, suspended from the neck.

12th. *They denied Matrimony to be a Sacrament.*

13th. *They appear to have held but two orders, Priesthood and Diaconate:* and though they have since been multiplied, after the example of Rome, yet all the inferior orders are included in the Diaconate, and conferred together.

14th. *They celebrated the Communion with cakes, mixing the meal with a little oil and salt.* M.Renaudot, in his History of the Patriarchs of Alexandria, says, that this was the usual practice of the Syrian Jacobites. He speaks of it as a great abuse; but as they were very sparing in the use of oil, it would not materially alter the bread from the state in which it was made for ordinary use. At all events, it was much more like bread than the wafer of the Roman Church, which was simple flour and water rubbed over with a white wax. Mar Joseph began to introduce the wafer and wine of Portugal at this sacrament.

15th. *They consecrated the elements with prayer,* believing that without the Holy Ghost, the mere words of the priest would be of no avail. It will be seen in the sequel, what pains Menezes took to impress upon them, that it was actually the *Priest*

that consecrated, by repeating the words of Christ, and not the Holy Ghost.

16th. *They administered in both kinds to all communicants,*—The present practice is, to dip the cake in the wine, and put it into the communicant's mouth; but it is uncertain whether this custom prevailed before the Synod of Diamper.

17th. *They admitted to communion the members of other churches.*—It has already appeared how dearly they paid for granting this indulgence to the Portuguese, until they were provoked to exclude them. They knew nothing of the papal doctrine that regrads as heretics all that are not members of their own church; for they believed that every faithful disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ would be saved, to whatever communion he belonged.

18th. In all questions of doctrine, they appealed to the authority of Sacred Scripture as decisive, and not, like Romanists, to any traditions of the fathers, or decisions of the church, or interpretations of their priests.

19th. They are said to have *held three Sacraments, Baptism, the Eucharist, and Holy Orders.*—It is doubtful, however, whether they admitted more than the first two. If they really added Orders to the number, they differed so far from the reformed churches: but the fact of their holding only three Sacraments, strikingly distinguishes them from the Roman Church. M.Asseman has laboured hard to show that they held originally seven sacraments, but without success.

By this account it will appear, that previous to the Reformation in Europe, we have no knowledge of any Church in the world, except that of the Cathari, or Vaudois, in the valleys of Piedmont, whose doctrines and practice were as free from error as those of the Church of Malabar. There is no reason to doubt the accuracy of the accounts which represent them at that period as Nestorians, though, as already remarked, it is very uncertian how far they adopted the heretical dogmas of that sect in Persia. We know, however, that they have long since denied the favourite Nestorian tenet of a duality of persons in Jesus Christ, and held it in utter abhorrence; and the catalogue of their tenets given above will show, that they deserve to be classed with a much more orthodox communion.'[3]

Nazrani point of view and problematization

At this point we may be painfully missing a Thomas Christian point of view of the synod. This is a problem which we cannot solve even after the critical study of the Malayalam original of the canons. However we have to bear in mind that the description of the problems and the compulsions for the enactment of each decree, as found in the proceedings of the synod, may be scrutinised carefully to discern the Nazrani point of view. A semiotic analysis of the history of Nazranis marked with

3. We have left out some long footnotes from the above quotation as we found them unnecessary for our limited purpose of introducing the protestant point of view.

important assemblies, mass protests, revolts, revolutions, and divisions will generate much wanted knowledge on this subject.

We hope the above review will help the problematization of the historical object and the spatialization of reason in the Foucaultian sense. 'The term problematization denotes the ensemble of discursive and non discursive practices that makes something enter into the play of the true and the false and constitutes it an object of thought (whether in the form of moral reflection, scientific knowledge, political analysis or the like)' Gary Guting 1994:37.

Rozian Statutes (1606)

The Synod of Diamper achieved the primary purpose of Portuguese intervention: On 25th November 1599 a letter was sent to the Pope by the Archdeacon with the specific request that either Menezes or Roz should be appointed as the Bishop of St.Thomas Christians. Soon the king of Portugal got his right to nominate the Bishop.

On 20th December 1599 Roz was declared Bishop of St. Thomas Christians. He knew the language and the people very well. He could gauge the mood of the Christians who felt offended at the decisions of the synod. In 1603 Bishop Roz decided to convoke a synod at Angamaly and this synod took many practical decisions and nullified certain decisions made at Diamper. On the basis of the recommendations of this synod, Roz compiled a *diocesan statute book.* This is labelled as *Rozian Statutes.*

Other evaluations

The canons of the Diamper synod and Rozian statutes mark a turning point in the history of St. Thomas Christians in Kerala. They mark the fulfilment of the desire of the western christian missionaries to make the Kerala Christians conform to the western manners and modes as practised in the Catholic church. The synod of Diamper and synod of Angamaly, though attended by the representatives of the local Christians did not express the genuine wishes of the Kerala Christians. There were many restrictions which prevented the participants from expressing their views on every subject. The haste with which decrees were passed and the mode of procedure were severely criticised by natives and foreigners. Roz, who assisted Menezes in the synod of Diamper in a letter (dated 27th December 1603) criticised the procedure adopted in the synod. John Campori, another eye-witness of the synod, wrote to Rome on the first of January 1604: ".... And much of what read, was done, in such a hurry and confusion that the Christians did not understand nor consequently accept it."

It is perfectly true that the majority of St. Thomas Christians, even those who belong to the Catholic church, look down upon the synod of Diamper as an encroachment by the western colonialists on the religious and social life of native Christians. At the same time it must be noted that the members of the Christian denominations which had their origin during the colonial era look down upon the

practices of Kerala Christians before the synod as paganism. They consider Menezes and Roz as great social reformers. So two diametrically opposite evaluations are available about the impact of the synod and Rozian statutes. Sabeena Raphy (John, 1981:101) is full of praise for Menezes: 'The decrees passed in the synod against caste system, untouchability, polygamy, bhara-devata worship, slavery, sorcery and the like were the first of its kind. Dom Menezes, convener and chairman of the synod, is to be rightly toplisted, among the social reformers of Kerala.' K.M. Panicker, an eminent authority on Indian History, notes in *Caritraavalookanam* (1957:224): 'The Catholic church has sent two great men to India: St. Francis Xavier and Dom Alexius Menezes.'

The impact of the synod can be assessed only in the light of background information provided by Antonio Gouvea(1606), Vincent Maria (1728) and decrees of the synod available in European languages and Malayalam.

Law of Thomas

One of the major concerns of the synod of Diamper was that the St. Thomas Christians should give up their belief that the Law of St. Thomas was unique and it was different from the Law of St. Peter. They described their religion as *Maarttom-maaṭe Maarggavum Valipaaṭum* 'the way and lineage of St. Thomas'.

The Portuguese could not appreciate the Indian understanding of religion as a way of life. Remember the western dictum 'Hinduism is not a religion but only a way of life'! So they translated this meaningful Malayalam expression in the typical western religious terminology as the Law of Thomas.

Hence the decree VII of Session III in ADSD

'The synod is with great sorrow sensible of that heresy and preverse error, sown by the schismatics in this diocese, to the great prejudice of souls; which is, that there was one law of St. Thomas, and another of St. Peter, which made two different and distinct churches, and both immediately from Christ: and that the one had nothing to do with the other; neither did the prelate of the one owe any obedience to the prelate of the other; and that they who had followed the Law of St. Peter, had endeavoured to destroy the Law of St. Thomas....' 'The profession and oath of the faith' in session II decree I also contain a statement to the same effect. A reasonable interpretation of the Law of Thomas can be found in current literature on this subject. For example Kidangaen (1993:27) explains:

'The St. Thomas Christians of India made use of a term *Law of Thomas* which adequately expresses the gist of their theological, liturgical, ecclesiastical, ascetical and socio-cultural life style. The Portuguese also used this term. Before the 'Synod' of Diamper, Don Menezes ordered the Archdeacon under pain of deposition to confess that the *Law of Thomas* is the same as the *Law of Peter*. It is the general opinion of the historians that the *Law of Thomas* was not a point of conflict or heresy for the missionaries at the beginning of their contact with St. Thomas Christians. But they

only labelled it a heresy later, when they found it an obstacle to their purpose of introducing Roman and Portuguese customs and ecclesiastical discipline into Malabar. The St. Thomas Christians treasured very much in heart the *Law of Thomas* because they believed that they inherited it from the Apostle St. Thomas. They considered the *Law of Thomas* a great patrimony and it was the warp and woof of their spiritual life. The remarkable feature of this *Law of Thomas* was that it was thoroughly Christian, Oriental and Malabarian at the same time, being well adapted to the socio-cultural life of Malabar.'

Epistemology, Historiography, Semiotics

Many western Christian scholars and their faithful native disciples refuse to imagine that Thomas Christians had evolved an Indian model of Christianity. They look at this apostolic church either through the framework of western church or East-Syrian church. Their knowledge of this church is mediated either through the 'Syriac patrimony' or 'Latin influence'. This takes us to the fundamental question of the relation between subject and object, between knower and the knowledge. Modern understanding of this *epistemological problem* calls for a new methodology in historiography. This new methodology should give primacy to the self-understanding of *Thomas* Christians as manifested in various types of discourses. The term discourse is used in a very large sense to include spoken language, documents, appellations, group activities like social organization, protests, revolts, divisions, reunion, rituals etc. In such an approach to understand Thomas Christians the term 'Law of Thomas' (which is to be properly understood as 'way and lineage of Thomas, as Malayalam expression shows) is of utmost importance. For them christianity was a way of life, not a set of well defined dogmas and curious rituals. The solid foundation of Thomas christian church was spirituality and the most visible superstructure was the social organisation or the ecclesial discipline. Other things, including heirarchical affiliations and liturgy were changeables. This prompts us to undertake further study of the Law of Thomas and attempt semiotic interpretation of Thomas Christian community.[4]

Unique ecclesial discipline

The synod of Diamper and Rozian statutes destroyed the *Christian Republic* that was a uniqe experiment of Indian christianity. St. Thomas Christians were not organised under the leadership of *Bishops*. The leader of the community was the *Archdeacon*. He had to act in consultaion with the *representatives of various churches*. Each church was governed by *yogam* 'assembly'. The priests were

4. I regret my inability to make use of such an innovative methodology in this introductory study which is to provide basic information only. A few illustrations to prove the potential of such an attempt are available at the beginning of my introduction to the Malayalam Canons (MDSD 1994).

ordained at the request of the community. So they were responsible to the people for whom they were ordained. Menezes and Roz under the cover of synods usurped these *powers of Archdeacon and yogam.* This structural change was most crucial as it *destroyed the uniqueness of St. Thomas Christians.*

Kuriedath (1989:126) offers the following comments about the conduct of the synod of Diamper.

'Menezes was a shrewd man who knew quite well how to win over the people and execute his decisions without creating hostile reaction. In order to win the people's support he travelled extensively all through Malabar and ordained many priests. The new priests and their families naturally sided with him. As the number of priests he ordained increased he began to get good support from the clergy. He visited many churches and performed religious functions with full solemnity and paraphernalia to impress upon the simple people the dignity and status of his office. This was a great success so much so that at Kaduthuruthy people sided with the Archbishop when some cathanars opposed the Archbishop's illegal visits and ordinations. It was with this newly enlarged support and power that Menezes confronted the archdeacon and asked him to co-operate in the synod. No doubt, Menezes was an autocrat. But his ways were more shrewd and cunning than straightforward and arrogant. The archdeacon too was a proud man; but he was also shrewd, learned and sensible. He understood the mood of the clergy and the people and agreed to the Archbishop's demands without much opposition. He realized that a bold stand against the Archbishop would divide the community, and the community's and his own position would be in jeopardy.'

Bishop, Archdeacon

In a palmleaf document of the sixteenth century the Archdeacon is described as *Jaatikku Karttavian* 'head of the community.' Though the office of the Archdeacon is available in many churches in the West and the East, this leading role is never assigned to him. In Rozian statutes this office is lowered to the level of a vicar general.

'The Bishop himself cannot decide all matters. Therefore, a person has been deputed to hear the presentations of all people. In this diocese it shall be the Archdeacon. If he cannot, the Bishop shall entrust it to sombody else' Saahaa XIV Zacharia 1976: 172. This statute, though it looks as a recognition of the role of the Archdeacon, would have been an insult to him. Because, before the westernisation, he was the head of the community and he was not an agent of the Bishop. So indirectly the office of the Bishop is elevated to such a level that he becomes the only source of power.

Before the synod, St. Thomas Christians used to invite Bishops from Persia. Very often there were five Bishops who were known as 'Archbishops and Metropolitans of all India.' They were treated with great respect as *spiritual leaders* but they had no great say in temporal affairs. Kuriedath (1989:86), in a sociological study of

the changes in the authority structure of the Thomas Christians, observes:

'To the question whether the Bishops were involved in the temporal administration of the community, historians almost unanimously say that the Bishops exercised no such powers except perhaps in rare and unusual situations, and that the actual administration of the socio-temporal matters of the community was normally in the hands of an Archdeacon and Yogam.'

The practice of *dividing the diocese territorially into definite parishes* was the innovation of the synod of Diamper. Each parish was assigned a vicar. In other words, the western concept of Bishop, diocese, parish and vicar was introduced among St. Thomas Christians by the synod of Diamper. This was further strengthened by Rozian statutes. The term *eṭavaka* in the Malayalam text refers to both *diocese and parish:* eṭavaka/iṭavaka 'parish' and vigaari/ vikaari 'parish priest' occur very often in the Malayalam text. *Rampan* 'monk', *kattanaar* 'native priest' and *paatiri* 'foreign priest' are found used as mutually exclusive forms. *'Kasiisa'* a Syriac word for 'priest' is also used to refer to native priests. Some would derive the word kattanaar (casanar) also from kasiisa. *Kattaṅṅal* 'priests' is very common in the Malayalam texts (EMMPTS).

In the decrees of the synod, it may be observed that there are no specific statements restricting the powers of *yogam* 'assembly' and Archdeacon. But most of the powers vested in them were indirectly transferred to the Bishop who became both the spiritual and temporal leader of the Christians. This may be marked as a major change.

Priests

The westerners brought about radical changes in the lifestyle of priests. They were forbidden to marry. Those who had families were asked to leave them and live independently. Gouvea (1606) provides graphic descriptions of emotional scenes in which Archbishop Menezes cursed and threatened the priests who refused to leave their wives and children. Before westernisation, true to the spirit of the ecclesial life of the local church, priests were trained in selected parishes under the supervision of an elder scholar priest called *Malpaan.* This *gurukula* type training ensured the constant contact between the *'semmassa'* 'priest trainee' and the community. His ordination was to be recommended by the *yogam* of the local community. The seminaries established by the westerners at Kodungallore and Vaipicotta changed the system and the priests were trained in seclusion. Of course, this gave the trainees more information and training. *The priests who were trained in the seminaries of missionaries became ambassadors of the new regime and agents of westernisation and to a certain extent agents of modernisation also.* Regarding the life of *kattanars/ casanars* 'priests' in the pre Portuguese period, it must be remembered that they were married and they lived in their houses. They were ordained for particular churches and not for the diocese. All priests hailing from the local community had equal rights in

the church but the seniormost among them presided over etavaka yogam 'parish assembly'. They received subsistence from the local community.

Initiating major changes in the ecclesial structure of Thomas Christiand, the synod placed priests in an ambivalent position. The new system of appointing priests nominated by the Bishop as vicars ensured the shifting of loyalty from the community to the Bishop. The incentives in the form of cash and wine were also offered from Portugal to make them subordinate and faithful to the colonizer and the Bishop. Through these changes, for the first time in the history of Thomas Christians, priests emerged as a special class gaining a position of dominance in the community. As Partha Chatterjee (1994:36) points out the constructions of hegemonic ideologies typically involves the cultural efforts of *classes simultaneously placed in a position of subordination in one relation and a position of dominance in another.* To map westernisation as a hegemonic movement among Kerala Christians we must look into this specific process of ideological construction and disentangle the web in which the experience of simultaneous subordiation and domination are apparently reconciled.

Pope and Patriarch of Babylon

The synod 'forbids the acknowledging of the *patriarch of Babylon*, or any supreme Pastor, but the Pope of Rome, upon pain of excommunication.'

'.....the present synod, does under the said precept of obedience and upon pain of excommunication to be *ipso facto* incurred, prohibit all priests and curates from henceforward to name the said patriarch of Babylon in the holy sacrifice of mass or in any other divine office, in the prayers of the church, even without the false title of universal pastor, but instead thereof, shall name our lord the Pope, who is our true pastor, as also of the whole church.'

Yogam

Yogam 'assembly' was the most important organ in the administration of Thomas Christian community. This institution is still functioning effectively among non-Catholic Thomas Christians. As there was no system of Yogam in the East Syrian church or in the western churches, this could be described as the most significant element of Thomas Christians' identity. As sociologists point-out when we organise ourselves in a certain way we commit ourselves to a view of the world and a set of meanings and values and exclude others. This semiotic aspect of social organization has to be stressed in the case of yogam.

There were three types of yogams—*Etavaka yogam 'parish assembly', Pradesika yogam 'regional assembly', Potuyogam or Sabhayogam, 'general assembly representing the whole community'.*

About this Podipara (*Varthamanapusthakam* 1971:41) writes:

"It was in these General-Church-Assemblies (the Malabar Church-Yogam) that the Archdeacon, the Jathikkukarthavian (the one responsible for the Commu-

nity), as he was popularly called, played his part in the most conspicuous way. The General-Church-Assemblies were practically supreme, and *de facto* no higher ecclesiastical authority questioned their decisions. The Thomas Christians, therefore, formed as it were, a Christian Republic with a head from among themselves. Their bishops who were foreigners were eclipsed by, or were under the shadow of, the Archdeacons. Such was the canonical set-up that had developed among the Thomas Christians of the past. Because of this "autonomous state" and "oneness" no foreign heresy or religious controversy had any impact on them, and they were quite content with their Archdeacons in preference to bishops from among themselves."

The synod of Diamper and the synod of Angamaly, as Pulikkunnel *(see preface)* points out, were typical general assemblies of Thomas Christians. These assemblies were effectively manipulated by the colonialists to bureaucratise the administration of the community. In the place of traditional practices and conventions written decrees and statutes were promulgated by these two synods. As Kuriedeth (1989:112) points out 'with the introductions of such systematized laws, the ecclesial organization became a full-fledged bureaucratic set-up.' Just like any other traditional society, Thomas Christians had designed their social theories with the group as the central focus and not the individual.The point of the community was to emphasise the personal, the intimate, the social commonality of the problems.

Western hegemony

The Western hegemony has distorted the self-perceptions of Thomas Christians. The word hegemony is used here to stress not only the political and social control exercised by western colonialists but their 'success in projecting their own particular way of seeing the world, human and social relationships, so that this is accepted as "Common Sense" and part of the nautral order by those who are in fact subordinated to them.' Not only the Portuguese but also the Dutch and the British enforced the western hegemony over Thomas Christians. So the following remarks of Koodapuzha (1985:84) are most pertinent:

'Unfortunately the Church in India from the 16th century inherited foreign tradition of religious authority with a juridical emphasis. The association with the Portuguese marked the beginning of this new tradition which was found in conflict with the 'Law of Thomas'. In a community where the spiritual authority is given priority, juridical claims of submission, rights and privileges will appear ridiculous. The authority is based on the spirit and the intensity of the religious and spiritual experience. The renunciation of worldly attachment is the sign of a spiritual leader. One can be a spiritual guide or leader only in proportion to his spiritual depth and openness to the Spirit. He should be able to speak like St. Paul. "I live now not with my own life but with the life of Christ who lives in me" (Gal 2,20) and with St. John the Baptist "He must increase and I must decrease". The religious authority becomes credible by the integrity of one's life and conduct. Pomp and dominion are alien to

the idea of an authentic guru. The Christians in the Indian set-up do not want to see their ecclesiastical leaders as administrators but want to see them as real spiritual men who can lead them to God.'

Spirituality

EMMPTS reflect a major *change in the spirituality of St. Thomas Christians.* Before the advent of the western missionaries the Kerala Christians had the risen Christ as the focus of their religious practices. In contrast to this the image of the crucified Christ was the focus of western Christianity.

'...there is a dangerous heresy, and very injurious to our Lord Jesus Christ, sown and preached through this diocese which is, that it is a grievous sin so much as to think or speak of our Saviour's holy passion.' So the synod recommended a new spirituality with the crucified Christ as the main subject of meditation. *See decree V, session III in ADSD.*

This change effected by the western church in Kerala was so crucial that it touched the basic mental disposition of Indian Christians. In *The Foundations of Indian Culture* [(1953) 1988:73-74] *Sri Aurobindo observes:*

'The note of ascetic pessimism often found in Christianity is a disctinctly western note; for it is absent in Christ's teaching. The mediaeval religion with its cross, its salvation by suffering, its devil-ridden and flesh-ridden world and the flames of eternal hell waiting for man beyond the grave has a character of pain and terror alien to the Indian mind, to which indeed religious terror is a stranger.'

Social customs: Untouchability, Festivals, Magic

Now we shall attempt a general survey of the social customs of the Kerala Christians at the beginning of westernisation in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The session IX of the synod of Diamper dealt with the manners and customs of St. Thomas Christians. According to the Portuguese version, 25 decrees were passed in that session. But in the Malayalam original (MDSD), there are only 18 canons.

Session IX Decree I (ADSD) describes and prohibits many social customs of St. Thomas Christians which they had in common with non-Christian communities in Kerala:

'...all superstitious *washings* which are by some most superstitiously practised as holy ceremonies be utterly abolished such as the washing of dead corpses the day after they have given a dole, reckoning it a sin to neglect such washings, the *making of circles with rice*, into which they put the parties that are to be married, having given rice before to children, as also the *taking a thread* out with great superstition when they cut a web of cloth, and the *taking two grains* of *nele* back again, after they have sold and measured it.'

According to Malayalam canons (AMDSD), Christians considered bathing

as an essential condition for religious fasting. Otherwise fasting would be invalid. Like upperclass Hindus of Kerala, St. Thomas Christians also practised *untouchability*, and *caste system* was prevalent among them. Gouvea (1606) explains this practice:

'Like the other people of Malabar, they avoid touching low caste men, and if they happen to touch them, they wash themselves, not owing to the superstitions of the pagans who believe they become polluted by touching low castes, that means outcastes, until they take a bath, but because they live among the Nairs, and, if they touch low castes, they themselves become untouchables and thereby lose ordinary intercourse and communication in buying and selling, and the honour from their kings, because it is only with the Christians and Brahmins that the Nairs may have intercourses, both being high caste man. All other castes are considered low, and their number is large. All these are looked upon as slaves and captives, who are so sensible of this fact that, in order not to touch or approach a Nair, they on meeting allow free passage to the Nair, or Christian and keep such a distance so that nothing of theirs may touch him. And it so happens one of these poor untouchables, walking in a narrow street with a burden on his back, has, however much he may have tramped, to go back and over again, not to meet a Nair, who from a distance shouts to him *'Poi'*, ie away with you. And if the low caste does not do so, the Nair can kill him on the spot with impunity: but if the Christians are in a place where the matter will not come to the knowledge of Nairs, they do not follow this barbarous untouchability.' cf Zacharia 1976:211

Decree II of session IX speaks of the *rules of purity and pollution* practisred by the Christians just like Hindus. The synod prohibited this practice and declared that before God all are equal. The caste feeling of St. Thomas Christians made them uninterested in proselytisation. The conversion of lower castes was taken up by them only after the synod of Diamper. When Roz became the bishop of St. Thomas Christians, conversions from lower castes started. Special arrangements were made for them in the churches, either by erecting separate buildings, or by reserving a particular part of the church for them. This casteism was equally strong among these Christians even in the nineteenth century when the western protestant missionaries fought against it. This is vividly depicted in Mrs Collins' Slayer Slain' and its translation *Ghaataka Vadham*. Decree IV prohibits *Onam celebrations* of those days:

'....in the feast of heathen, called Onam which is celebrated in August, in which they go out one against another with bows and arrows, and other arms, in which conflicts some are killed, and more wounded: and some Christians, unmindful of their obligations, living amomg them, and communicating much with them, do go forth with them, and armed as they are to do the said feasts, and are thereby liable to the same disasters.' This decree is found missing in the original Malayalam manuscripts (MDSD).

According to Decree V in ADSD St. Thomas Christians had a strict practice

of not allowing a woman to go to the church before forty days after the birth of a male child and eighty days after the birth of a female child for they held her too unclean to enter the church. The synod stopped this practice called *varatta.*

Decrees VI&VII speak of the habit of consulting witches and fortune-tellers and propitiating evil spirits. '...contrary to the faith namely, one which they call *'Tollicanum, Ollicanum, Bellicorum, Conum'* which they do often publicly to the great scandal of the Christianity, as if they were not Christians, and at other times permit the heathens to perform them in their houses.

Decree VIII is against diabolical charms:

'..... A great many ignorant Christians of this bishopric being unmindful of the purity of their Christian obligations, do carry notes about them which have been given them by witches for the cure of their distempers, hoping for relief from their virtue, hanging them likewise about the necks of their cattle to keep them well, and putting them in their orchards to increase the fruit, and communicating them to several other things for various effects.'

Marriage

From the decree XI of session VII it is clear that some Christians used to keep concubines and they did not maintain the sanctity of marriage.

The decree XI of Session IX States:

'there are great numbers of Christians who for want of having the fear of God and the church before their eyes, do cohabit publicly with concubines, to the great scandal of Christianity.

The Kerala Christians of the Pre-Diamper period were not concerned much about the obligatory monogamy. Marriage of one man with several women was common among them. Decree XIII of session VII Prohibits the Christians from practising polygamy and imposes obligatory monogamy.

The synod through decree X of session VII fixed a *minimum age for marriage*, which was definitely a progressive step.

'Whereas in this diocese there has hitherto been no respect had in the celebration of matrimony to the age of the parties that the law appoints, therefore the synod doth command, that no man shall be married hereafter, until he has attained the age of fourteen years at least, nor any woman before she is full twelve....'

Many social practices connected with marriage were banned through decrees XIV & XVI of session VII.

'whereas it is a thing unworthy of a Christian to observe the *superstitious ceremonies* of the heathens, from whence it is imagined good success may be derived, the Synod being informed that there are some ill Christians, that, in imitation of the heathens, do go to some of them, and others to some of their own superstitious priests, to learn which are the best days and hours to be married on, after the manner of the infidels and do further more on their wedding day make certain circles, into which

they put rice, and certain persons using several superstitious ceremonies, which are plainly heathen; and do moreover make certain *figures behind their doors* to make their marriage fortunate, and use several prayers with ceremonies, which thay call the *ring of Solomon*; all which being devilish, superstitious, and heathenish ceremonies, condemned by holy mother church.....'

'The Synod doth condemn the custom, or abuse that has obtained in this diocese of the new-married couple's not going to church till after the fourth day after their marriage, when they use to wash themselves, which is according to the Judaical ceremonies condemned by the law of Christ...'

Dowry system

Striidhanam 'dowry' was an essential part of the marriage deal. In this connection it is interesting to read the encouraging words in decree XIV of session IX in ADSD. This is one of the rare things on which the synod congratulates St. Thomas Christians.

'The Synod doth approve of the laudable custom of this diocese of *men's giving the tenth part of their wives' portion,* when they are married, to the church; as also of that making a repartition of the said alms betwixt the fabric of the church and the priest thereof; and whereas this custom does not obtain all over the diocese, and especially in the southern parts, the synod doth intreat and command all people to conform themselves to the same, and willeth that the people among whom this custom is not as yet introduced, may be obliged to it by their procurators, there being no reason, since it is observed in the greater part of this diocese, why it should not be established all over it.'

Decree XII of session IX recommended to all masters and parents to take *greater care of slaves,* especially black women. Decree XIII of the same session forbids the Christians' buying and selling of the children and keeping of them as slaves:

'Several poor wretched Christians following the custom of the heathen among whom they live, when they find themselves pinched with any want, do contrary to all right and reason, sell their children.' This decree is also missing in the Malayalam original (MDSD). Decree XVI of session XII in ADSD deals with the *ordeals and oaths used in Kerala* at that time:

'..... the Christians of this bishopric are subject to kings and lords that are infidels, by whom they are many times obliged to handle bars of hot iron, or to thrust their hand into boiling oil, or to swim through rivers that are full of snakes; reckoning, that if they are innocent, none of those things can hurt them, but will certainly, if guilty of what they are accused.'

Dress and Ornaments

Decree XVII of session IX speaks of the *dress and ornaments* of Kerala Christians:

'....there is no distinction either in their habits or in their hair or in anything else, betwixt the Christians of this diocese and the heathen Nairs.'

It would be useful to digress a little from the canons to learn a little more about the dress and ornaments of these Christians at that time. *Gouvea* (1606) describes the dress and habits of Christians:

'The dress is the same as of the Malabar people. They are bare from the waist upwards, and on the upper arms, they wear gold or silver armlets. From waist down to the knees they wear a cloth of silk ornamented; some cloths are very rich, and tied up with silk ribbons or chains of wrought gold and silver. All go about with swords and shields, and some with guns and lances, which they leave when going to church; but generally in the bazars they wear long robes, white or blue, a proper and decent dress, which is usual with men of age. Everywhere, even when they emigrate they let their hair grow like others of Malabar, and gather it on the crown or behind with a coloured silk ribbon, to which most Christians add rosaries or a gold or silver cross, and though in dress they are not distinguishable from Nairs, when they move among them, yet among thousands of Nairs, one Christian can be identified. Some older men and the widowers do not wish to remarry or have gone on a pilgrimage to St. Thomas, and those who consider themselves more religious minded, cut the hair and crop it close like ourselves. Their ears are pierced through and pendent as of Malabarians, and there they wear many jewels of gold and precious stones and many ear-rings together, whereby the ears are elongated, a sign among them of great dignity. As for the dress, this is the only thing forbidden in the synod by the Archhishop, to distinguish themselves somewhat from the pagans, for which reason they consented without difficulty.' Zacharia 1976:206-207.

Vincent Maria (1728) also writes at length about the dress of Christians of Post-Diamper period.

'Men go naked except from the navel to the knees which parts they cover with only one white piece of cloth. So the poor are hardly discernible from the rich since they follow the same way of dressing and observe the same cleanliness, the only difference that distinguishes the rich may be the better quality of the cloth. In church, before the Bishop or their princes they put on a kind of cloak, open in front, and adorned along the rims, on the sides and over the shoulders. They don't crop their hair, but as much as possible they let them grow long, with the exception of the old, those who for virtue's sake observe celibacy and those who have been on pilgrimage to the tomb of St. Thomas at Calamina. However they don't keep the hair loose, except when they wash themselves or take an oil-bath which happens once or twice a week. For the rest of time they gather the hair on the crest of their head in a bunch, to which they hang the crown. Some little cross of gold of silver, and the members of the confraternity of our Lady of Mt. Carmel their scapular, which only in church they put around their neck, holding up with their hands the front part as if to show it in sign of their sonship to the Most Holy Virgin. On the occasion of marriages, as a special

privilege of the Grandees, they hand on to their hair bunch gold or silver roses. They do not wear hats, but cover their heads by wrapping round a handkerchief folded diagonally and the two extremities of which falling loose over their left shoulder. Well-to-do people will have this handkerchief of silk or of many colours. They often shave their bodies out of love for cleanliness. For solemnities or visits they perfume themselves. From the loins around their bodies they tie a sash of coloured linen, mostly red, into the end of which they hide their coins, or betel leaves, a customary pastime of the Indians: the more well-to-do, however, carry them in little bags under the left arm. Above the navel they carry a knife in the shape of a dagger, very often of fine workmanship with a big-sized silver handle from which hang some little chains of the same metal, one of them carrying the tempered iron for grinding: another the container of lime obtained from sea-shells which is used as an ingredient spread on the betel-leaves before chewing them. On a third one the tweezers to pull out the hairs, and on the others little tools for cleaning the teeth and ears. On the right arm they wear very thick rings, of silver or gold, more often hollow, variously worked, in which they place some small stones which when the hand is moved produce a sound, which is held to be a sign of great nobility or bravery. They walk with their feet unshod, which is done also by the women, who adorn them with clumsy anklets at the lower end of their legs. The cloth which they use to cover themselves reaches midway down their legs, and their breast is covered with a bodice of linen. In church, however, and when paying a visit to the Bishop they wrap themselves in white cloths which falling from the head down to the ground, leave only the face uncovered'. The decisions of the Synod regarding dress and manners segregated Thomas Christians from their fellow communites.

Names

Before the synod of Diamper St. Thomas Christians had many Old Testament names like Abraham and Zacharia, names of popular saints like Geevarghese, and several 'names of the country'. The synod of Diamper discouraged this tendency and promoted the use of western names, names of western saints.

'.... and as for the common names of the country they may still retain them, if they are such as have been used only among Christians, but not among the heathens, for as those names which the heathens have in common with Christians, the synod will not have them to be given in baptism, charging the vicars and priests, that baptise, to take care thereof.' Session IV decree XVI: However Kerala Christians maintained many 'names of the country' as pet names. *Marykutty* (1986) provides an interesting study of Christian personal names. Today the Christian names in Malayalam bear testimony to the various cultural waves that have affected each community.

Food and Medicine

ADSD *do not provide a complete picture of the social life* of Kerala

Christians during the 16th century. Mostly, the decrees deal with undesirable social practices that were prohibited by the synod. Many other interesting social customs and features of social life are described by Gouvea (1606) and Vincent Maria (1728). There are some interesting observations about *food habits and medical treatment.*

'Their ordinay food is boiled rice with many kinds of decoctions put on it, which commonly in these parts are called curry, and some rice cakes prepared with honey or jaggery which is palm sugar, and many preparations of milk and butter which form their dainties. Meat they rarely eat, except when they come to Portuguese territory or when they entertain the latter in their houses, but not because they abhor it as heathen and Nairs, but because it disagrees with them, and the other food stuffs are more in use in their country. If they eat of it sometimes, they fall ill, while with the others they grow stout, strong, and stalvart, and the finest warriors in Malabar; and the main strength of the Rajah's armies at war consists in the Christians of St. Thomas they have. They are fine gunsmen, and so good shots that they rarely misfire, and from early age they are brought up gun in hand and thus turn out splendid hunters. At eight years old, they are sent to fencing schools to practise fencing till they are twenty-five. They go to the masters, called panicars, who try to make them swift in leaping turning and moving. All their lessons are for handling sword, shield, and lance. When children are of tender age, they are in the schools tied up with many ropes, and anointed with coconut oil, and the masters lay their feet on them, and pass their arms and legs along pressing hard, to give them exercise and make them slender, and owing to the coconut ointment and usual practice they suffer no harm therefrom. What certainly is to be wondered at is to see such young children in these schools, of which Malabar is full. If these masters or *panicars* are Christians, the Christian children do not go to pagan schools: but if there are not, they go to them, and the same is the case with the Hindu children and the schools of Christian panicars for this training is common to Nairs and Christians, and the panicars are highly considered throughout Malabar. *They have no physicians,* but treat themselves with herbs and simples, with which they get cured. On Saturday afternoons *all rub coconut or sesamum oil* on the body, and thus covered with oil they remain two or three hours on a bed, after which they bath either in the house or at public tanks, which are very common in Malabar. Then they put on clean clothes or robes, and come out at sunset, when they begin the Sunday celebration. Till this time, after their dinner, they transact no business nor speak to anyone out of the house, devoting all the time to this oil friction and bath. They also wash the head and hair with some herbs which make lather, like the black soap of Europe, and serve the same purpose. The bathing places are well kept, and as they are brought up in them all their life, when they miss them, they fall ill. The same is done to nursing babies'. *Zacharia 1976: 207-208.* St. Thomas Christians were *good soldiers.* Mar Jacob a persian bishop has reported that there were 25,000 Christian soldiers in the sixteenth century. At that time there were only 30,000 families of St. Thomas Christians. So it is evident that most families had at least one soldier from it. But we do not meet with

any reference to Christian soldiers in the local records. One explanation is that Christian soldiers were also called Nayars. In many documents Nayar is used as an equivalent of soldier. cf Mundadan 1984: 154.

Amouchi

Vincent Maria makes the following curious observation:

'Every tribe, every church keeps its own *Amouchi*. These, as will be said in the next book, are people who undertake in virtue of an oath to defend against injury, persons or places entrusted to them even with their own life. This profession is inherited from father to son, and hence sometimes they become very numerous. Some of them descend from those who were given to the Christians by the Emperor *Cheraman Perumal*. They are most faithful, very affectionate and vigilant. They never salute the very princes, but only the Christians to whose service they are bound. Neither will they forgive the princes should they be wronged by them. At the first resentment it is forbidden to the farmhands to cultivate the lands, and to the craftsmen their trade, and if the prince at fault does not desist, they place themselves before his very door calling down on him a thousand curses and maledictions on the part of Cheraman Perumal, they cut their bodies, shedding their blood, which is greatly feared, in detestation of the injustice done to them. And if even this is of no avail to change wrong-doer they kill whomsoever they meet in the place with their knife, sparing not even the king himself until they themselves fall victim of someone else. These Amouchi do not sit down before the Christians unless asked to do so, nor will they speak unless given permission. They obey in everything that they are commanded with the exception perhaps in matters of their religion.'

Men and Women

Vincent Maria has described the *general features of St.Thomas Christians:*

'Among the Malayalees the Christians of St. Thomas are those endowed with the best qualities, common sense and conditions. It looks as if their faith improve in them their nature, their intellect and their customs. They are on the whole high in stature, good-looking and well proportioned and so without further indications they may be distinguished from the pagans. They are not quite black of complexion, but some shades clearer as compared with the Infidels. They are divided into two factions, the one called *bareumpagam* or of the North, and very numerous, the other *tegumpagam,* or of the South, with few churches, namely Diamper, Cotette, Turguli, Carturte. Among them too there is the difference that the former are darker as compared with the latter. They are rather opposed to one another and do not intermarry. They have no common houses, and the parish priests must be from their own faction. But in what concerns Christianity as a whole they are one in heart and soul. Without much study they show great capacities. They are sagacious, sharp, fluent in speech, of ceremonious diplomacy, though somewhat longwinded. If they

wish to obtain anything they precede the petition with many preambles, similitudes, some nice little stories, fables, tales, with which they manage not only to dispose favourably those who hear them but even oblige them almost to concede them what they wish. They do not sit down unless commanded to do so when they are together with their parents, elder brothers, teachers, clergy or superiors, and they do not get up from their conversation before being dismissed. When there are many together only the elder speak or those foremost in dignity, no one interrupt the discourse unless questioned. When the teacher speaks the pupils hold their left hand to their mouth as a sign of reverence, and the same is observed also by sons before their father. When out walking the lower one in the dignity extends his arm and offers with some obeisance his open hand to his superior in dignity, and yet on this account no rivalry or dispute is heard of among them; age decides the merit of each one, and if that is equal the pre-eminence goes to the one with a higher office. They are very curious, and derive great pleasure in hearing news, and much more in seeing things, and in so doing they will become like statues rapt in admiration'.

Gouvea compliments *Christian women* for their modesty:

'The women are exceedingly modest both in life and dress. They wear white cloaks, or cloaks dyed in indigo which makes them blue; these cloaks cover their whole body, and are wound round the face, and fall from the head to the feet which is a mark of great modesty. They are as a rule good looking and fairer than many Eastern peoples. If the Bishop enters the church they all go one by one to kiss his hand with great propriety, first of all kneeling down and bowing the head to the ground, and then rising they receive the blessing with much reverence, so that they all look like well behaved religious sisters. The same they do to children, even those that are carried in arms, whom they lay at the feet of the prelate. On days when they have their usual flow, they do not rise or make any courtesy, however important the occasion which looks like an allusion to the story of Rachel and her father'. 'When the babies are weaned, they are carried to the church, where the priest opens their mouth with his ring whilst reciting some orations and then offers them the first grains of blessed rice, for which a small present is made to the priest'. Zacharia 1976:211

Churches

In the Malayalam canons of the Diamper synod (MDSD) and in Rozian Statutes *palḷi,* a Pali word is used to denote a *'Christian church'*. There are references to *mokaṇṭaḷam* 'porch' *haikla* 'hall' *kanukkaa* 'railings' *madupahaa* 'holyest part of the church', *tronosa* 'throne' and *pulpam* 'pulpit' of the church.

Vincent Maria notes:

'The *churches are commodious*, some magnificant almost all richly endowed. The one of Corolangati, where there is a miraculous image of Santa Maria Maggiore, is the most gifted of all, endowed with most beautiful sacred vestments of brocade and fine silver vessels. As flooring of all the churches serves the bare ground,

which is covered with dilute cow-dung, a custom they have adopted from the pagans. It is often renewed, so that many take a vow to do it. Others undertake the work merely out of devotion. When this work is carried on the church has a bad smell for sometime. Some of the churches have good revenues from palm-groves, they the greater part subsist on alms, contributions and fines. The ordinary alms are dropped in a box which is placed in front of the altar; they rarely go to church without offering something; the least offering being a half a fanor, which in value is about one of the fourth of a Julius. I was present when the alms-box was opened in Santa Maria Maggiore and they counted fifteen thousand fanors, which had been collected in a few months. I was told that at other times there were many more. To these alms they add many other offerings in pepper in proportion to the quality of the harvest. Should a need arise for some special alms then the senior-most sends his son ringing a hand-bell through the village calling all the men to the church. There the foremost in dignity explains the need, the advantage accruing them by alms-giving, as well as their obligation. Standing near a table, placed in the centre, he at the sight of all gives first his own offering followed by the others in order of age, each one putting it separately from those preceding him, so that, should piety alone not move them, they are urged on by their reputation, so that each one is almost compelled to offer with the greatest possible liberality.'

'Many of these churches have been favoured by God with *miracles*. The *oil from the lamp* is given gratis to the Christians and even to the pagans as a remedy for their ailments, and they in their turn offer gifts to the church. For the missionaries and travelling clergy the church serves as a kind of guesthouse. A carpet or mat spread out on the floor suffices for their bed. The food is provided by those in charge of the church or some charitable person. What remains over from the food supplied is distributed to the poor in the church itself. A good number of poor people stay in the church for nine days at a stretch, eating and sleeping there, spending the rest of their time in exercises of devotion or some labour in benefit of the church. The church and its precincts enjoy the *privilege of immunity*, anyone taking refuge there is safe and sure from thes secular power. The pagan princes even do not dare to alter this privilege. In like manner are goods stored there quite safe; no one will touch them even though they may have been obtained in illegal or criminal ways. For this reason houses are built by the wealthier merchants within the church precincts, where they store the pepper. For this concession much for their advantage they pay a good sum to the chruch.'

Economic life

Regarding *occupations and economic life of St. Thomas Christians,* indirect references are available in ADSD. But to get a complete picture they have to be complemented by documents or foreign notices. St. Thomas Christians were engaged in pepper cultivation. There are many references to Christians living in faraway places called *kuṭikaḷ* 'heaths'. But many of them were living in *aṅṅaati* 'market'. The synod

advised St.Thomas Christians in decree XXIII of session IX to flock together in villages instead of living in isolated houses. But the agrarian interests might have prevented these Christians from flocking together in villages. Those who lived in *aṅṅaati* were engaged in trade.

Gouvea adds: 'This (Coconut) is, therefore, the best property in which some of these Christians are very rich, but very few of them. The others live on local trade, and many of the most substantial on trade with pepper which they handle. They are merchants from whom the Portuguese buy their consignments, which are sent to the mother country. In this they are men of great cleverness, honesty, and credit, and they deal with aall the Malabar pepper by weight from Quilon to Cochin.' Zacharia 1976: 209-210

Decrees IX and X of session IX deal with admissible *interest rates.*

'.... being verymuch troubled to find the greatest part of the Christians of this diocese entangled therein, through their ignorance of what gains are lawful, and what are not.... for money they have lent out... the Synod doth furthermore declare, that according to the best information it has received, the interest of money in Malabar is ten per cent and whatever is taken more, if the principal runs no risk is onzena, or usury...'

The involvement of these Christians in money-lending might have been one of the reasons for their steady economic advancement.

The *system of inheritance* among St.Thomas Christians invited the criticism of the synod of Diamper. Decree XX of session IX makes clear reference to the system. Gouvea (1606) explains:

'Among the Christians no daughter can inherit, and it often happened the father dying, leaving many daughters, but the inheritance passing to a male relative in third, fourth, or remoter degree, even of collateral line, while other daughters perished of hunger, and therefore took to bad life. Some of them, even though they had sons, used to adopt others who were not theirs; whom they loved and who after their death shared the inheritance with legitimate sons: and as a rule they did so with the children of their women slaves whom they reared up.' Zacharia 1976:206

Decree XXI (ADSD) records a peculiar type of adoption:

'... they do commonly adopt the children of their slaves born in their houses, or of other people, disinheriting their lawfully begotten children, sometimes on account of some differences they have had with them, and sometimes only for the affection they have to strangers'.

The above survey of decrees with special reference to socioeconomic systems and transitions in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in Kerala society, especially among St.Thomas Christians, may help the reader to assess the value of the text that follows. To complement the subject content of these decrees references also had to be made to valuable works of Gouvea and Vincent Maria. No attempt has been made to evaluate various customs, as it is beyond the purview of this introduction.

Moreover, if that is to be done it must be attempted on the sound principles of cultural relativism. 'Cultural relativism means that the values expressed in any culture are to be both understood and themselves valued only according to the way the people who carry that culture see things.' Redfield 1953:144

Conclusion

There are some scholars who believe that it was the Portuguese missionaries who exaggerated the Chaldean elements in the religious life of Thomas Christians. To glorify their service to the Catholic church, the Protuguese unnecessarily attributed Nestorianism of the East Syrians to Thomas Christians who were unaware of such theological disputations. The presence of Syriac language for the very limited purpose of church use and Persian bishops for spiritual guidance provided credence to the western propaganda. Even the appellation Syrian Christians was invented by the Dutch and popularised by the British. Thomas christians who called themselves *Marthomma Nazranikal* 'St.Thomas Christians' accepted the new appellation only during the British Raj. Even today there are several scholars in the West who identify Thomas Christians only as a segment of Syriac Christianity. For example Dr. Sebastian Brock, Professor at the Oriental Institute of the University of Oxford states (1988:11): 'The Syriac orient represents truly Asian Christianity. The history of Christianity in Kerala illustrates this point very well. Before the arrival of the Protuguese, Christianity was represented here solely by Syriac orient, the native Asian Christianity'. It is interesting to note that the Indian identity of St. Thomas Christians goes unnoticed by all hegemonic discourses in the western historiography. The implicit ideology of this colonial discourse, practised not only by the foreigners but also by many natives, is that Indian Christians were and are deficient; they are to be nurtured either by East Syrians or by the Westerners. Always something goes from East Syrian church or Western church to Thomas Christians. So they are destined for dependence or subordination. There is no scope for mutually beneficial relationship. But if one were to critically examine the unique ecclesial discipline of St. Thomas Christians characterised by its republican features like *Yogam* 'church assembly' he would be atuned to the mode of mutual experience. Then the encounter with Thomas Christians would open doors for dialogue and communication. This suggstion is not born out of the romantic thought that the identity of Thomas Christians is primordial and unchanging and is to be identified in its purest form in the most distant history of them. But in standing up to challenge the colonial mode of discourse, one should be armed with the knowledge of culture and history. I hope the critical and comparative study of *The Acts and Decrees of the Synod of Diamper* both in English (<Portuguese) and in Malayalam will help genuine scholars to go deep into the Indianness of Thomas Christians.

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THE
ACTS AND DECREES
OF THE
SYNOD OF DIAMPER

SESSION 1

THE OPENING ADDRESS EXPLANATORY OF THE OBJECT OF THE SYNOD

In the name of the most Holy and undivided Trinity, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, in the year of our Lord 1599, on the 20th of June, being the third Sunday after Whitsuntide, in the seventh year of the pontificate of our most holy Lord, Clement VIII. the supreme Roman Bishop, and in the first year of the reign of the Catholic King Philip, the second King of Portugal, and Algarves, and of Malucco; the illustrious Lord Dom Francisco de Gama Conde de Vidigeyra, admiral and viceroy of the Indies, being in the town of Diamper, subject to the King of Cochim, an infidel and heathen, in the church of All Saints, in the bishopric of Angamale of the Christians of St. Thomas in the Serra of Malabar, the see being vacant by the death of the Archbishop Mar Abraham, there assembled in a Diocesan Synod according to the holy canons, the most illustrious and most reverend Lord Dom Frey Aleixo de Menezes, Archbishop Metropolitan of Goa, Primate of the Indies, and the oriental parts, together with all the priests and curates of the said bishopric; and the procurators of all the towns and corporations in the same, with great numbers of other persons belonging to the said church, and called to the said Synod by the most reverend Metropolitan: where, after having given thanks to God for his having extinguished and composed all the alterations and commotions by which Satan, the enemy to all that is good, had endeavoured to hinder the assembling of this Synod; and being all filled with joy, to see themselves met together to treat of things pertaining to the service of God, the purity of the faith, and the good of Christianity and their own souls; the most

illustrious Metropolitan did celebrate the solemn mass for the removing of schism, as it is in the Roman Missal; and having preached[1] to the people to the same purpose, the mass being ended, he re-invested himself in his pontifical robes, and read the office for the beginning of a Synod, as it is in the Roman pontifical; which being over, and the Metropolitan seated in his chair, with all the ecclesiastics and secular procurators about him in their order, he told them, That he celebrated this holy Synod by virtue of two Briefs of the holy father our lord, Pope Clement VIII., in which his holiness had recommended to him the government of that church, after the death of the Archbishop, Mar Abraham, until such time as it should be provided of a pastor and prelate; besides, that the same belonged to him as the Metropolitan thereof, and Primate of the Indies, and all the oriental parts, by the canons, the see thereof being vacant, and it having no chapter to take care of it during the vacancy; which Briefs being faithfully translated into the Malabar tongue, were immediately read, and received with that reverence and obedience that was due to them: after which the lord Metropolitan told them, That seeing he had but little knowledge of the Malabar tongue, it was necessary for him to have some faithful person, and that was well versed in ecclesiastical affairs, to relate truly in the congregations what he should say, or what should be spoke to him: whereupon Jacob, a priest, and curate of the church of Pallurte in the said bishopric, a person well skilled both in the Portuguese and Malabar languages, was presently pitched upon by common consent; who being called by the lord Metropolitan, was charged by him with the office of interpreter to himself and the holy Synod, giving him an oath at the same time upon the Holy Gospels, well and faithfully to discharge the said office, and truly and exactly to relate all that should be said by his lordship, or any other person in the Synod, without any addition or diminution; as also to read in the congregations all the Decrees and determinations of the Synod, which were to be in the Malabar tongue: and whereas truth itself has testified, That in the mouth of two or three there is all truth; therefore for the greater security, there were given to the said interpreter, by the most reverend Metropolitan, as assistants, the reverend fathers, Francisco Roz,[2] and Antonio Toscano of the Society of Jesus in the College of Vaipicotta in this diocese, who being well skilled in the Malabar tongue, were to observe all that was related by the interpreter, and in case he was at any time faulty, to correct him; there were besides several others present, natives as well as Portuguese, that were well versed in both languages.

DECREE 1

EXPLAINS THE OBJECTS OF THE SYNOD

The congregation being met, and all placed according to their order,

1. Francisco Roz preached on this occasion upon the obedience that all Christians owe to Rome 2. He was afterwards made Bishop of the Christians of St. Thomas.

the Metropolitan seated in his chair, said, In the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, three persons and one only True God, Amen.

My beloved brethren, you the venerable priests, and my most dear sons in Christ, you the representatives and procurators of the people, does it please you, that for the Praise and Glory of the holy and undivided Trinity, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and for the increase and exaltation of the catholic faith, and the Christian religion, of the inhabitants of this bishopric, and for the destruction of the heresies and errors which have been sown therein by several heretics and schismatics, and for the purging of books from the false doctrines contained in them, and for the perfect union of this church with the whole church catholic and universal, and for the yielding of obedience to the supreme Bishop of Rome, the universal Pastor of the church, and successor in the chair of St. Peter, and vicar of Christ upon Earth, from whom you have for some time departed, and for the extirpation of simony, which has been much practised in this bishopric, and for the regulating of the administration of the holy sacraments of the church, and the necessary use of them, and for the reformation of the affairs of the church and the clergy, and the customs of all the Christian people of this diocese; we should begin a diocesan Synod of this bishopric of the Serra? They answered, It pleaseth us. Then the most reverend Metropolitan asked them again; Venerable Brethren, and most beloved sons in Christ, since you are pleased to begin a Synod after having offered pryers to God, from whom all good proceedeth, it will be convenient, that the matters to be treated of appertaining to our holy faith, the church, the divine offices, the administration of the holy sacraments, and the customs of the whole people, be entertained by you with benignity and charity, and afterwards by God's assistance complied with, with much reverence; and that every one of you should faithfully procure the reformation of such things in this Synod as you know to be amiss and if any that are present should happen to be dissatisfied with any thing that shall be said or done therein, let them without any scruple declare their opinion publicly, that so by God's grace it may be examined and all things may be truly stated as is desired; but let not strife or contention find any room among you to the perverting of justice and reason; neither be ye afraid of searching after and embracing the truth.

DECREE II

PROHIBITS THE DEPARTURE OF ANY FROM DIAMPER BEFORE THE SYNOD IS CLOSED

The synod by virtue of holy obedience, and upon pain of excommunication to be incurred *ipso facto*, does command all persons whatsoever ecclesiastical and secular, that have been called to, and are present at this Synod, not to depart the town of Diamper, where the said Synod is celebrated without express leave from the most illustrious Metropolitan, before the

Synod is ended, and they have signed the decrees thereof with their own hand, or till all the rest are dismissed: the Synod does likewise request and command all that have any matter that is fitting to be offered to it for the advancement of God's honour, and the good of the Christians of this bishopric, to acquaint the Metropolitan therewith, either by word or writing, or some third person, that so what is convenient may be determined therein.

DECREE III

ALL DIFFERENCES ABOUT PRE-EMINENCE IN THE CHURCH TO BE DECIDED BY THE METROPOLITAN

Be it known and declared to all present and absent, That no prejudice shall be done, or follow to any town, corporation, or village, as to any pre-eminence they may pretend to; by the celebration of this Synod in the town of Diamper; as also that no Church or Person shall suffer by reason of the places they sit in, in this Synod, but shall have their rights and privileges, in the same state and vigour that they were in before; and if any doubts should happen to arise about this or any such matter, let them be brought before the illustrious Metropolitan; where both parties being heard, they shall have justice done them.

DECREE IV

CONFESSION, MASS, AND THE SACRAMENT TO BE CELEBRATED FOR THE SUCCESS OF THE SYNOD

This Synod knowing that all that is good is from God, and that every perfect gift cometh down from the Father of Light, who giveth perfect wisdom to those that with an humble heart pray for it; and being withal sensible that the beginning of true wisdom is the fear of the Lord; we do admonish and command all Christians, as well ecclesiastics as seculars gathered together in this place, to confess their sins with a true contrition for them, and all priests to say mass, and others to receive the most holy sacrament of the altar, beseeching our Lord with humble and devout prayers for good success to all that shall be treated of in this Synod; to which intent, there shall be two solemn masses said in the church every day during the session of the Synod, one of the Latins to the Holy Spirit, an the other of the Syrians to our lady the Blessed Virgin Mary, whose praise and honour is to be particularly treated of; which masses shall be said at such hours as to be no hindrance to the congregations, which henceforward shall meet every day in the church at seven in the morning. They shall likewise, Latins as well as Syrians, every day after sun-set sing the solemn Litanies of the church, with a commemoration of our lady for the good intention of the Synod.

DECREE V

SECRET ASSEMBLIES PROHIBITED DURING THE SYNOD

The Synod, for the preventing of some inconveniences that may otherwise happen, and to leave no room for unnecessary and hurtful debates, does command by virtue of obedience, and upon pain of excommunication to be *ipso facto* incurred, that while the congregations last, no person whatsoever, ecclesiastic or secular, presume to meet together in any junctoes with any persons, ecclesiastics or seculars, to treat of any matters appertaining to the Synod, or this church, without express licence from the most illustrious Metropolitan; that so all that is desired, may be handled publicly, and in the congregation, those meetings only excepted which are kept by the people in order to their proposing of matters to be consulted about, according to ancient custom, and the order of the said Metropolitan.

SESSION II

THE ARCHBISHOP'S ADDRESS

On the second day after the singing of the antiphony, psalm, prayers, and Hymn, as they are in the Roman pontifical, the most reverend Metropolitan being seated in his chair, said, Venerable and beloved brethren, the priests, and you my dearest sons in Christ, the procurators, and representatives of the people, we having done little more yesterday than celebrate the divine offices, and preach to the people, it is fit we should begin to-day to treat of matters appertaining to the synod. In the first place, of those that belong to the integrity and truth of our Holy Catholic Faith, and the profession of the same; which before we go about, I do again admonish you in our Lord Jesus Christ, that all such things as you shall judge to stand in need of reformation in this bishopric, or any part thereof, may be signified to us, or to the congregation, that so with the divine favour and assistance, all things by your diligence and charity, may be brought into so good estate as is desired, for the praise of the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

DECREE 1

PROFESSION OF FAITH, TO BE MADE ACCORDING TO THE COUNCIL OF TRENT

That this Synod may in all things govern itself according to the directions of the holy canons, and tread in the footsteps of the holy general councils, and particularly of the holy council of Trent, upon the knowledge it has of the necessities of this church, and of the diversity of opinions that have been hitherto therein concerning matters of our holy catholic faith, and of the errors contrary thereunto, which have been sowed in this diocese by

heretics and schismatics: it doth command all persons ecclesiastics and seculars, called hither, either in their own name, or in the name of others, ecclesiastics or laicks, of this bishopric, to make profession and oath of the following faith, in the hands of the most illustrious Metropolitan, president of this Synod: and for the more effectual execution of this decree, and to provoke others by his own example, the most illustrious Metropolitan having robed himself in his pontificals, but without his mitre, kneeling down before the altar, and having laid his hands upon a cross that was upon a book of the Gospels, did in his own name, as the present Prelate and Metropolitan of the diocese, and in the name of all the Christians belonging to the same, and every person thereof, secular and ecclesiastic, make profession and oath of the faith following, which was immediately declared to all that were present.

The profession and oath of the faith made publicly by the Archbishop

In the name of the most holy and undivided Trinity, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, one only true God, in the year of our Lord, 1599, in the seventh year of the pontificate of our most holy lord Clement VIII, Bishop of Rome, in the town of Diamper, in the kingdom of Malabar, in the East Indies, in the church of All-Saints, on the 21st of June, in a diocesan Synod of the bishopric of Serra, assembled by the most illustrious and reverend lord Dom Frey Aleixo de Menezes, Archbishop Metropolitan of Goa, and the oriental parts, and the see being vacant of the said bishopric;

I, *N.* do of my own free will, without any manner of force and constranit, for the salvation of my soul, believing it in my heart, protest, that with a firm faith I do believe, and confess, all and every one of the articles contained in the symbol of faith which is used in holy mother Roman Church.

I believe in one God the Father Almighty, maker of Heaven and Earth, and of all things visible and invisible:

An in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God, begotten of his Father before all worlds; God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father, by whom all things were made: who for us men, and for our salvation, came down from Heaven, and was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary, and was made man, and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate; He suffered and was buried, and the third day he rose again according to the Scriptures, and ascended into Heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of the Father, and he shall come again with glory to judge both the quick and the dead: whose kingdom shall have no end.

And I believe in the Holy Ghost, the Lord and giver of life, who proceedeth from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified, who spake by the prophets. And I believe one Catholic and Apostolic Church; I acknowledge one baptism for the remission of sins; and I look for the resurrection of the dead; and the life of the world to come.

I do firmly receive and embrace all apostolical and ecclesiastical traditions, and all the observances and constitutions of the said church; I admit the Holy Scriptures in that sense wherein it has ever been, and is still held by mother church, to whom it belongeth to judge of the true sense and interpretation of the Holy Scriptures; neither will I either receive or interpret it but according to the unanimous consent of the Fathers.

I do confess likewise, that there are seven true and proper Sacraments of the New Testament, instituted by Christ our Lord, which are all necessary to the health of mankind,though not to every particular person; they are, baptism, confirmation, the eucharist, order, penance, matrimony, and extreme unction, which do all confer grace on those that receive them worthily; and of these seven sacraments, that baptism, confirmation, and orders, are to be received but once, neither can they be repeated without great sacrilege.

I admit and receive all the customs, rites, and ceremonies, received and approved of in the Roman Church, in the solemn administration of the said seven sacraments, and do also receive and embrace all in general, and every thing in particular, that has been defined and declared concerning original sin, and justification, in the holy council of Trent.

I do likewise confess, that in the mass there is offered to God a true and proper sacrifice of pardon both for the quick and the dead; and that in the most holy sacrament of the eucharist, there is the true, real, and substantial body and blood, together with the soul and divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ; and that the whole substance of the bread is by consecration turned into the body of Christ, and the whole substance of the wine into his blood; which conversion the catholic church calls transubstantiation: moreover, I do confess, that under each species Christ is entire, and the true sacrament is received.

I do constantly hold and confess, that there is a purgatory, and that the souls which are cleansing from their sins, do receive benefit from the prayers and devotions of the faithful.

I do likewise affirm, that the souls of the just and faithful, which at their departure out of this life, have entirely satisfied for the punishment due to the sins that they have committed; as also those in purgatory which have made an end of satisfying for their sins according to the divine pleasure and ordination; as also those who after baptism have committed no sin, do at the moment of their death go immediately into heaven, where they behold God as he is: and I do condemn, and anathematize the heresy of those, who think that the souls of the just are in a terrestrial paradise till the day of judgment; and that the damned are not tormented any otherwise than by the certainty they have of the torments they are to enter into after the day of judgment.

And I do confess, and affirm, that the saints now reigning with Christ in heaven, are to be reverenced and invoked, and that they offer prayers to God for us, whose relics are likewise to be reverenced on earth: and moreover, that the images of our Lord Christ, and of our lady the glorious

Virgin Mary, and of all the other saints, are to be kept, used, and reverenced, with due honour and veneration.

I do also believe, that our lady, the most holy Virgin Mary is the proper and true mother of God, and ought to be so called by the faithful, for having brought forth according to the flesh, without any pain or passion, the true Son of God, and that she always continued a Virgin, in, and after her deliverance, having never been defiled by any actual sin.

I do confess, that the power of granting indulgences was left to the Church by our Lord Jesus Christ; the use whereof I do affirm to be healthful and profitable to all christian people.

I do acknowledge the holy, catholic, and apostolic Roman Church to be the head, mother and mistress of all other churches in the world; and do hold all that are not subject and obedient to her, to be heretical, schismatical, and disobedient to our Lord Jesus Christ, and his commands, and to the order that he left in the Church, and to be aliens from eternal salvation.

I do promise and swear true obedience to the Pope, the Roman Bishop, the successor of the blessed prince of the Apostles, St.Peter, and vicar of our Lord Jesus Christ on earth, the head of the whole Church on earth, and doctor and master of the same, and the father, prelate, and pastor of all Christains; and do confess, that all who deny obedience to the said Roman Bishop, the vicar of Christ, are transgressors of the Divine commands, and cannot attain to eternal life.

I do without any scruple receive, approve, and confess all other matters, defined and declared in the sacred canons, and general councils, and chiefly in the Holy Council of Trent; and do in the same manner condemn, reject, and anathematize everything that is contrary to the same; together with all heresies condemned, rejected and anathematized by the said Church; namely, the diabolical and perverse heresy of Nestorius, together with its perverse author Nestorius, and its false teachers, Theodorus and Diodorus, and all that have and do follow it, who being persuaded and seduced by the devil, do impiously maintain, that our Lord and Saviour Christ consists of two persons, affirming the Divine Word not to have taken the flesh into a unity of person with itself, but only to have dwelt therein as in a temple, and so will not say, that God was incarnate, or that our lady, the most blessed Virgin Mary, was the mother of God, but only the mother of Christ; all which I reject, condemn and anathematize as diabolical heresies; and do believe, and embrace, and approve of all that was determined about this matter, in the Council of Ephesus, consisting of two hundred Fathers, in which by order of Celestine First, Bishop of Rome, the blessed St.Cyril, Patriarch of Alexandria, was president, whom I acknowledge to be a saint now enjoying God, and that all that blaspheme him are in a state of damnation.

Moreover, I do condemn all that say, that the passion of our Saviour ought not to be mentioned, and that it is an injury to him to do it... on the contrary, I do believe and confess, that the consideration and discourses thereof are holy, and of benefit to souls.

I do likewise confess and believe, that in pure Christianity there is only one law of our Lord Jesus Christ, true God, and true man; in like manner as there is no more than one only true God, one only faith, and one only baptism; which one only law was preached by all the holy Apostles, and their disciples and successors after the same manner. I do therefore condemn and reject all those who ignorantly teach, that there was one law of St.Thomas, and another law of St.Peter, and that they are so different as not to have anything to do with one another; as also all other heresies and errors condemned by holy mother church. This true and catholic faith, out of which there is no salvation, and which at present I do of my own free will, profess and truly hold and believe, I shall with the help of God endeavour to keep entire, and undefiled to my last breath; and constantly to hold and profess, and to procure its being held, professed, preached, and taught by all that are subject to me, or that shall be anyways under my care. I,*N.* do promise and vow to God, and swear to this holy cross of our Lord Christ: so help me God, and the contents of this Gospel.

I do also promise, vow and swear to God, this cross, and these holy Gospels, never to receive into this church and bishopric of the Serra, any bishop, archbishop, prelate, pastor or governor whatsoever, but what shall be immediately appointed by the holy apostolical See, and the Bishop of Rome, and that whomsoever he shall appoint, I will receive and obey as my true pastor, without expecting any message, or having any further dependence upon the Patriarch of Babylon, whom I condemn, reject and anathematize, as being a Nestorian heretic and schismatic, and out of the obedience of the holy Roman Church, and for that reason out of a state of salvation: and I do swear and promise, never to obey him any more, nor to communicate with him in any matter: all this that I have professed and declared, I do promise, vow and swear to almighty God, and this holy cross of Christ: so help me God, and the contents of these Gospels. Amen.

The most reverend Metropolitan, after having made this protestation and confession of faith, rose up, and seating himself in his chair, with his mitre on his head, and the holy Gospels, with a cross upon them in his hands; the Reverend George, Archdeacon of the said bishopric of the Serra, kneeling down before him, made the same profession of faith, with a loud and intelligible voice, in the Malabar tongue, taking an oath in the hands of the Lord Metropolitan, and after him all the priests, deacons, subdeacons, and other ecclesiastics that were present, being upon their knees, Jacob, curate of Pallatry, and interpreter to the Synod, read the said profession in Malabar, all of them saying it along with him; which being ended, they all took the oath in the hands of the Lord Metropolitan, who asked them one by one in particular, Whether they did firmly believe all that was contained in the profession; as also whether they did believe and confess all that is believed and professed by the holy mother Church of Rome, and did reject all that she rejects, and if they did anathematize the cursed heresy of the Nestorians, with

all its falsities, and all the authors and cherishers of the same; namely, the perverse Nestorius, Theodorus, and Diodorus, together with all their followers; and whether they did acknowledge the holy Roman Church to be the mother, and mistress, and head of all the churches in the world, and confess that all that were not obedient to her, were out of a state of salvation; and if they did promise and swear true obedience and subjection to the most holy father the Pope and Bishop of Rome, as universal pastor of the church, and successor of St.Peter, the prince of the Apostles, and vicar of Christ upon earth, without any manner of dependence upon the schismatical Patriarch of Babylon, to whom though contrary to justice, they had hitherto been subject; and if they did promise never to receive any other bishop into this diocese, but what shall be sent by the holy Roman Church, by the appointment of our lord the Pope, and that Whomsoever he shall ordain, they will acknowledge and obey for their prelate, as becomes true catholics, and sons of the Church, anathematizing the Patriarch of Babylon, as a Nestorian heretic, out of the obedience of the holy Roman Church, and promising and swearing never to obey him more in any matter, nor to have any further commerce or communion with him in things appertaining to the Church.

To all which, and every particular, they did all, and every one of them for themselves with their hands upon the cross and the Gospel, swear and protest to God by the holy Gospel, and the cross of Christ. After the ecclesiastics had made this profession on oath, the procurators and representatives of the people, by virtue of the powers they had, made the same in their own name, and in the name of the people of the bishopric, as did also all the other Christians that were present.

*DECREE II

COMMANDS THAT ALL SYRIAN ECCLESIASTICS NOT PRESENT BE REQUIRED TO TAKE THE OATH

The Synod doth command all priests, deacons, and subdeacons, of this bishopric, that were not present at this solemnity, to make the aforesaid oath and profession of faith in the hands of the most illustrious Metropolitan, at the visitation of their churches, which he intends to make speedily, or in the hands of such as he shall depute for those that shall be absent at the time of the visitation; that so there may be none in holy orders in this bishopric but what has made this profession in the manner aforesaid. The Synod doth likewise declare, That hereafter none shall be capable of undertaking any vicarage, or cure of a church, until they have made the said profession, in the hands of their prelate, or of some commissioned by him for that purpose; as also, that all that take holy orders, do first make the said profession in the same manner; and if any of the forementioned, which God forbid, shall refuse to do it, that they shall thereupon be declared excommunicate, until they

comply, and withal be vehemently suspected of heresy, and be punished according to the sacred canons.

SESSION III

Because without faith it is impossible to please God; and the holy catholic faith, without which none can be saved, is the beginning of true life, and the foundation of all our good; the purity thereof being that, which distinguishes Christians and Catholics from all other people; wherefore the Synod being sensible, that by means of some heretical persons, and books scattered all over this bishopric, many errors and falsities have been sown therein, with which many are poisoned, and more may be, doth judge it necessay, besides the profession of faith that has been made, further to declare to the people in some chapters, the chief articles of our holy catholic faith, and to point at, and observe the errors contained in their books, and to have them preached against in this bishopric, that so knowing the mischief and falsehood of them, they may avoid them.

DECREE I

DOCTRINES OF THE CATHOLIC FAITH IN FOURTEEN CHAPTERS

CHAP. I.—*The Trinity in unity and unity in Trinity*

Our holy faith, that is believed with one unanimous consent by the catholic church spread all over the world, is, That we believe in one only true, Almighty, Immutable, Incomprehensible, and Ineffable God, the eternal Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, one in essence, and three in persons; the Father not begotten, the Son begotten of the Father, and of the same substance with him, and equal to him, and the Holy Ghost proceeding eternally from the Father and the Son; not as from two principals, or two inspirations, but from both as from one only principal, and one only inspiration; the Father is not the Son, nor the Holy Spirit; the Holy Spirit is not the Father, nor the Son; but the Father is only the Father, the Son is only the Son, and the Holy Spirit is only the Holy Spirit, none of them being before another in eternity, nor superior to another in majesty, nor inferior to another in power, but were all without beginning or end; the Father is he who begot, the Son is he who was born, and the Holy Ghost he who proceedeth, consubstantial, equal, alike Almighty, and alike Eternal. These three persons are one only God, and not three Gods, one only essence and substance, one nature, one immensity, one principal, one Creator of all things visible and invisible, corporal and spiritual, who when he pleased, created all things with his goodness, and would that they should be all very good.

CHAP. II. —*The incarnation of Christ*

Furthermore; That the only-begotten Son of God, who is always with the Father, and the Holy Spirit, consubstantial to the Father, at the time appointed by the profound wisdom of Divine Mercy, for the redeeming of men from the sin of Adam, and from all other sins, was truly incarnate by the operation of the Holy Spirit, in the pure womb of our lady the most blessed Virgin Mary, and in her took our true and entire nature of man, that is, a body and rational soul, into the unity of the Divine Person; which unity was such, that our Lord Jesus Christ is God and man, and the Son of God, and the Son of man, inasmuch as he was the Son of Blessed Virgin; so that the one nature is not confounded with the other, neither did the one pass into, nor mix itself with the other, neither did either of them vanish, or cease to be; but in one only person, or in one divine suppositum, there are two perfect natures, a divine and human, but so that the properties of both natures are still preserved, their being two wills, the divine and human, and two operations, Christ still continuing one, for as the form of God does not destroy the form of a servant, so the form of a servant does not diminish the form of God; because he who is true God, is also true man: God, because "in the beginning he was the Word, and the Word was with God, and God was the Word:" man, because "the Word was made flesh," and died among us: God, because by his own power he satisfied five thousand men with five loaves, and promised the water of eternal life to the Samaritan Woman, and raised Lazarus from the grave, when he had been dead four days, and gave sight to the blind, cured the sick, and commanded the winds and the seas: man, because he suffered hunger and thirst, was weary in the way, was fastened with nails to the cross, and died thereon: equal to the eternal Father as to the Divinity, and inferior to the Father as to the humanity, and mortal, and passible.

CHAP. III. —*Born of the Virgin Mary, who is therefore to be called, Mother of God*

Furthermore; That the same Son of God that was incarnate, was truly born of the Virgin Mary, and had his sacred body formed of the pure blood of the same most blessed Virgin, and is truly her Son: for which reason we confess her to be truly the Mother of God, and that she ought to be so called and invocated by the whole catholic Church; for that she really and truly brought forth according to the flesh, though without any pain or passion, the true Son of God, made man; and that the said Son of God incarnate, truly suffered for us, and was truly dead and buried, and in his soul truly descended into hell, or limbo, to redeem the souls of the holy fathers, which were therein, and did truly rise again from the dead the third day, and afterwards for forty days taught his disciples, speaking with them of the kingdom of heaven, and immediately by his own power ascended into the heavens, where he sits at the right hand of the majesty, glory, and power of the Father, from whence he

shall come to judge the quick and the dead, and to give to every one according to their works.

CHAP. IV. —*Salvation only by Faith in Christ, whether before or after His Incarnation*

Furthermore; That none that are descended from Adam, ever were or can be saved by any other means, than by faith in the Mediator betwixt God and man, our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God; who by his blood and death reconciled us to the Eternal Father, by having satisfied him for our debts; the faith before our Saviour appeared in the world, being to believe in him who was to come; as after his appearance, to believe in him who is come, and by his blood and death has saved us.

CHAP. V. —*Original sin universal, but pardoned by Baptism*

Furthermore; That all we who are born of Adam by the way of natural generation, are born children of wrath, with the guilt of original sin, incurred by the disobedience of Adam, in whom we all sinned, and which we all committed in him; for which sin, Adam lost for himself, and us, holiness and righteousness, and so that guilt of sin is derived to all of us by generation, we having all sinned in him, as the Apostl St.Paul tells us, that "by one man sin entered into the world, and by sin death, and so death passed upon all men, all having sinned in him," but notwithstanding this guilt is derived to us by generation; nevertheless our souls are not derived by generation as our bodies are, but are created by God of nothing, and by the Divine ordination infused into our bodies, at the time when they are perfectly formed and organized, and in the instant in which they are infused into our bodies, they contract the guilt of original sin, which we committed in Adam, and for which we were all expelled from the kingdom of heaven, and deprived of God for ever; but which is now pardoned by holy baptism, by which our souls are cleansed from the guilt of that sin, and of children of wrath, and aliens from glory, we are made the blessed sons of God, and heirs of heaven; wherein likewise all our other sins and actual transgressions, where there are any, together with all the punishments due to the same, are forgiven.

CHAP. VI. —*Those free from sin after Baptism, and those who have done penance for actual sins go to heven. The rest go to hell.*

Furthermore; That the souls of all those that have comitted no sin after baptism, and of those who having committed sins, have done condign penance, and have made an entire and equal satisfaction for them, are carried immediately into heaven, where they behold God, Three and One as he is; and do partake of the Divine vision, in proportion to the diversity of their merits, some more perfectly than others, and in the same manner they who die in any

actual mortal sin, without having done condign punishment for it; or only in original sin, do go straightway down into hell,there to be tormented with eternal punishments, though unequal, according to the measure of their guilt.

CHAP. VII. — *Purgatory*

Furthermore; That all Christians departing this life in charity, and having truly repented of the sins they have committed, before they have made full satisfaction to the Divine Justice for the same, are at their death carried into purgatory, where their guilt is pruged away by fire, and other punishments in such a space of time as by the Divine ordination is suitable to their quality, or until they have entirely satisfied for them, after which they are carried up into glory, there to enjoy God; and that in purgatory the prayers, alms, and other works of piety that are performed by the faithful that are alive, for the faithful that are dead, are profitable to them; but above all, the holy sacrifice of the mass, for their being relaxed from the punishments that they suffer, and for the shortening of their banishment from heaven.

CHAP. VIII. —*The Resurrection of the Dead and issue of the last Judgement*

Furthermore, That at the day of judgement, our bodies, though crumbled into dust and ashes, shall be raised up the same that they were in this life, and be reunited to their souls, those of the righteous to be clothed with glory, and to reign with Christ for ever in the heavens; and those of the wicked, to be together with their souls tormented for ever in the company of devils in the eternal and real fire of hell.

CHAP. IX. —*The confirmation and bliss of the faithful Angels; the fall, punishment and malice of the Unfaithful*

Furthermore, That in the beginning, and in time God created all things visible and invisible, corporeal and spiritual, and the empyrean heavens full of angels, of whom, those that continued subject to God were confirmed in grace, enjoying God with all the perfections and gifts wherewith they were created, as those who disobeyed him fell into hell, which God so soon as they sinned made for them, where they are tormented for ever with the rigour of justice; not only with punishments of loss, in being eternally deprived of the Divine vision, which they were created to have enjoyed, but with real fire, and other eternal torments also; and do tempt men, endeavouring to do them all the mischief they are able, out of envy, for the blessings that are reserved for the just, and which they have forfeited by their sins, and out of hatred they have for God and his works, and that intrinsical malice they are hardened in.

CHAP. X. — *The intercession of Angels to be invoked. Bodies and relics of Saints to be preserved, kissed and adored*

Furthermore, That the blessed angels and saints that reign with Christ in the heavens are to be venerated, and invoked by the faithful, desiring of God a remedy for our wants through their intercession; and of them that they would intercede for us, which they do daily by offering up our prayers and petitions to God; That the bodies and relics of saints ought to be had in veneration, in being carefully kept, kissed and adored by the faithful, and placed under the holy altars, and other consecrated places, upon the account of their having been lively members of Christ, and the temple of the Holy Spirit, and because they are to be raised again at the day of judgement, and clothed with eternal glory in heaven, and God vouchsafes many blessings upon earth by them.

CHAP. XI. — *Christ, the Virgin Mary, Angels and Saints to be worshipped, reverenced and adored through their Images*

Furthermore, That the images of our Lord Christ, and of our lady the glorious Virgin Mary, and of the holy angels that are painted after our manner, and of other saints which the Church believes to be in heaven, ought to be kept and used in all decent places; not only in the houses of the faithful, but chiefly in churches and altars, and to be reverenced and adored with due veneration, and with the same that is due to the persons they represent; not that we believe that there is anything of divinity or virtue in them for which they ought to be honoured, or that we put our hope and confidence in them, as the heathens did in their idols; but because the honour which we pay to them, refers to what they represent, so that in prostrating ourselves before their images, we adore Christ, and reverence the saints, whose images they are; in like manner we adore the sign of the cross, with the worship of Latria, which is due only to God, because it is a sign representing the Son of God our Lord Jesus Christ upon the cross, and which he himself hath told us will be the sign of the Son of Man in the day of judgment, and with the same worship of Latria we adore the images of our Lord Jesus Christ, because they represent him.

*CHAP. XII. —*A guardian Angel watches over every Individual*

Furthermore, the Church professeth that every person as soon as he is born, hath a guardian angel given him, whose business it is to excite people to what is good, and to deliver them from many evils which they would otherwise have fallen into, which angel protects and accompanies people through their whole lives, doing all it can to keep them from sin, and all other evils, that so it may bring them to eternal life, and is always suggesting good things to their free will, from which we receive many blessings as well

spiritual as temporal, notwithstanding we neither see them, nor understand how they do it; and these we call our guardian angels.

CHAP. XIII. — *The Pope's supremacy, as St.Peter's successor*

Furthermore, That the catholic church is one and the same all over the world, having for its pastor the chief Bishop of Rome, successor in the chair of the blessed prince of the Apostles, St.Peter, to whom, and by him to his successors, our Lord Jesus Christ delivered the full power of ruling and governing his whole Church; from whence it is, that the Roman Church is the head of the whole Church, and the father, master and doctor of all Christians; and the prelate of all in common, and of all priests, bishops, archbishops, primates and patriarchs, of whatsoever church they are; as also the pastor of all emperors, kings, princes and lords: in a word, of all that are Christians, and of all the faithful people. Hence it is, that all that are not under the obedience of the said Roman Bishop, the vicar of Christ upon earth, are out of a state of salvation, and shall be condemned to hell as heretics and schismatics, for their disobedience to the commands of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the order that he left in his Church.

CHAP. XIV. —*Divine inspiration of Holy Scripture. Canonical Books, including those of the Apocrypha*

Furthermore, that one and the same God is the author of the New and Old Testament, of the Prophets and the Gospels, the saints of both those Testaments being inspired in the writing of them with the same Holy Spirit; and so the catholic church receives all the canonical books of both Testaments, which contain in them nothing but what is infallibly true, and was dictated by the Holy Spirit: To wit, of the Old Testament, the five Books of Moses, Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy; as also Joshua, the two Books of Judges, Ruth, the four Books of Kings, the two Books of Chronicles, the first Book of Esdras, the second which is called Nehemias, Tobit, Judith, Esther, Job, the Psalms of David, being 150; the Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, the Song of Songs, the Book of Wisdom, Ecclesiasticus, the four greater Prophets, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel; the twelve lesser, viz. Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi and the first and second of Maccabees; and of the New Testament, St.Mathew, St.Mark, St.Luke and St.John, the Acts of the Apostles writ by St. Luke, the fourteen Epistles of St.Paul, viz, one to the Romans, two to the Corinthians, one to the Galatians, one to the Ephesians, one to the Philippians, one to the Colossians, two to the Thessalonians, two to Timothy, one to Titus, one to Philemon, and to the Hebrews; two of the Apostle St.Peter, three of the Apostle St.John, one of the Apostle St.James, one of the Apostle St.Jude, and the Revelation of the Apostle

St.John, all which Books, with all their parts are canonical and contain in them nothing but what is infallibly true.

DECREE II

ERRORS IN THE SYRIAC SCRIPTURES TO BE CORRECTED AND OMISSIONS TO BE SUPPLIED

The Synod declareth, that in the Books of the New Testament used in this Church, and writ in the Syrian or Syriac tongue, there is wanting in the Gospel of St.John, the beginning of the 8th chapter, the history of the adulteress that was carried before our Lord Christ; as also in the 10th of St.Luke, where it is said, that "Christ sent seventy-two disciples", it is said, he "sent seventy disciples;" and in the 6th of St.Mathew, the words, "For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory for ever," is added to the end of the Lord's Prayer; there is also wanting in the said Books the second Epistle of St.Peter, the second and third Epistles of St.John, and that of Jude, and the Revelationof St.John, and in the 4th chapter of the first Epistle of St.John, this verse is wanting, having been impiously left out, *Qui solvit Jesum, non est ex Deo*; and in the 5th chapter of the same Epistle, these words are wanting, "There are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one; and in the Old Testament there are wanting the Books of Esther, Tobit, and Wisdom, all which the Synod commandeth to be translated, and the passages that are wanting to be restored to their purity, according to the Chaldee copies, which are amended, and the Vulgar Latin edition made use of by holy Mother Church, that so this Church may have the holy Scriptures entire, and may use it with al its parts, as it was written, and as it is to be used in the universal church; to which end the Synod desireth the Reverend Father Francisco Roz, of the Society of Jesus, and professor of the Syrian tongue in the college of Vaipicotta in this bishopric, that he would be pleased to take the trouble thereof upon him, for which he is so well qualified by reason of his great skill both in the Syrian language, and in the Scripture.

DECREE III

TO THE SAME PURPOSE

Whereas the holy Scriptures are the pillars that support our holy faith, and as it were the foundations whereon it stands, and wherein the truth and purity thereof is to be met with, which has made all heretics in their endeavours to destroy the said faith, constantly and industriously to corrupt the text of the Divine Scriptures, partly by taking away such passages as did manifestly contradict their errors, and by perverting other places so as to make them seem to favour them; which hath also happened in this bishopric, through its having been governed by bishops who were Nestorian heretics,

and that used the same practices upon the Holy Scriptures, that were in their hands in favour of their heresies; as in the 20th of the Acts of the Apostles, where St.Paul saith, "Take heed to yourselves, and the whole Church, over which the Holy Spirit hath made you Bishops to rule the church of God, which he purchased with his blood; the word God is impiously changed for that of Christ, and it is said "that Christ hath made them to govern his Church, which he purchased with his own blood;" because the Nestorians, being instigated by the devil, will not acknowledge according to the catholic truth, that God suffered and shed his blood for us; and in the fourth chapter of the first Epistle of St.John, this verse is left out, *Qui solvit Jesum non est ex Deo*; because it contradicts the Nestorians, who do impiously divide Christ, by making him to have two persons; and in the third chapter of the same Epistle, where it is said, "In this we know the love of God, because he laid down his life for us," the word God is maliciously left out, and that of Christ put in its stead, saying, "That in this we know the love of Christ", &c. and so it favours the Nestorian heresy, which denies God to have died for us; and in the second chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews, where the apostle saith, "We have seen Jesus for the passion of his death crowned with glory and honour, that he by the grace of God should taste death for all men;" the Syrian, the better to make a difference of persons in Christ, which was what Nestorius taught, has impiously added, "We have seen Jesus for passion of his death crowned with honour and glory, that the grace of God, (*praeter Deum*, or besides God) might taste death for all;" and in the sixth of St.Luke, were our Lord Christ saith, "Lend, hoping for nothing again;" to favour and justify their usury, they have made it "Lend, and from thence hope for something:" all which places being depraved and corrupted by heretics, the Synod commandeth to be corrected in all their books, and to be restored according to the purity and truth of the Vulgar Edition used by holy mother Church, intreating the most illustrious Metropolitian forthwith to visit the churches of this diocese, either in person, or by some well skilled in the Syrian tongue, whom he shall be pleased to depute.

DECREE IV

CONDEMNS THREE HEATHEN ERRORS SAID TO BE HELD BY THE SYRIANS

The Synod being informed that the Christians of this diocese, by reason of the communication they have with infidels, and by living among them, have imbibed, several of their errors and ignorances, namely, three that are the common errors of all the infidels of these parts; the first is, That there is a transmigration of souls, which after death go either into the bodies of beasts, or of some other men; which besides that it is a great ignorance, is also an error contrary to the catholic faith, which teacheth, That our souls after death are carried to heaven or hell, or purgatory, or Limbus, according to every one's merits, and that there is no such fabulous and false transmigration.

The second is, That all things come necessarily to pass, either through fate or fortune, which they call the nativity of men, who, they say, are compelled to be what they are, and that there is no help for it; which is a manifest error, and condemned by holy mother church, forasmuch as it destroys that liberty of will, with which God created us, leaving us in the power of our own will, to do good or evil, to obey his holy inspirations and internal motions, by which he excites to good, or to resist evil; so that as it depends on his Divine mercy and goodness to move us to good, so it depends on our free will, whether by his assistance we will obey those inspirations, and will profit ourselves of his internal motions, or of our own free will refuse to do it; or in a word, do well, or ill; so that if we perish for doing any thing that is ill, it is the fault of our own free will; as the catholic faith teaches us; and not from the fate of our nativity, as the ignorant heathens will have it.

The third is, That everyone may be saved in his own law; all which are good, and lead men to heaven. Now this is a manifest heresy; there being no other law upon earth in which salvation is to be found, besides that of our Saviour Christ, for that he only teacheth the truth; sō that all that live in any other sect, are out of a state of salvation, and shall be condemned to hell; there being no other name given to men, by which we can be saved, but only the name of our Lord Jesus Christ the Son of God, who was crucified for us: all which errors, the Synod commandeth the vicars and preachers often to preach against in the hearing of the ignorant people; and all confessors to examine their penitents concerning them, and to teach them the catholic truth.

DECREE V

CONDEMNS THE PROHIBITION TO THINK OR SPEAK OF THE LORD'S PASSION, AND COMMANDS THE USE OF THE ROSARY, CRUCIFIX, & C. TO PROMOTE MEDITATION THEREON

This Synod being informed, that there is a dangerous heresy, and very injurious to our Lord Jesus Christ, sown and preached through this diocese; which is, That it is a grievous sin so much as to think or speak of our Saviour's holy passion: and as there are a great many of this opinion, so the doing of it has formerly been prohibited by impious censures; all which is a manifest error, and extremely prejudicial to the souls of all faithful Christians; and the fruit and profit of souls, arising from such considerations, and discourses, which is very great, as well for that love and affection which they beget in us, for our Saviour, who suffered for our salvation, as for the Example of those virtues which were so illustrious in his holy passion, and the hatred of sin, for which he suffered so much and the fear of the Divine justice which he so rigorously satisfied, and the confidence of our salvation by such a plenteous redemption and the use of the sacraments, to which he applied the virtue of his holy passion, and other infinite benefits whcih are derived from thence to our souls, which error included another no less prejudicial, and which is also common among the Nestorians; the condemning of holy Images; for that if

it were an impiety to think of the passion of our Lord Christ, it must follow that all those things are unlawful, that move or contribute thereunto; as the sign of the holy cross; and all images of the holy passion; all which is a gross and manifest heresy: wherefore the Synod doth recommend it to all preachers, confessors, and rectors of churches, frequently to persuade their people to the consideration of those divine mysteries; and to that end, they shall advise them to the devotion of the rosary of our lady the most blessed Virgin Mary; wherein are contained all the principal mysteries of the life of our Lord Christ, with profitable meditations upon them.

DECREE VI

CONDEMNS THE NESTORIAN ERRORS AGAINST THE VIRGIN MARY; SETS FORTH HER IMMACULATE NATURE AND INNOCENT LIFE; AND ASSERTS HER RESURRECTION AND ASCENSION

Among the many errors sown in this diocese, and left in the Books thereof, by the perfidious Nestorian heretics, there being several against our lady, the most blessed Virgin Mary, the mother of God, the only remedy of Christians, the mother of mercy, and the advocate of sinners, the queen of angels. The Synod doth therefore declare, That it is the doctrine of the catholic faith, that the holy virgin was never at any time stained with the guilt of any actual sin; and that it is pious to believe, that she was also conceived without original sin; it seeming to be most agreeable to the dignity of the mother of God, that it should be so; though it is true, that holy mother church has not as yet determined any thing about that matter. Furthermore, the catholic faith teacheth, that she was always, before, in, and after child-birth, a most pure virgin, and that she brought forth the Son of God, made man, without any pain, or passion; having none of those things which are common to other women after child-birth, nor no need of any created assistance to help her to bring forth, or afterwards, there being nothing in her but what was pure, the eternal word, made flesh, springing out of her womb, the claustrum of her pure virginity being shut, when the time, determined in the consistory of the Holy Trinity was come, to the great spiritual joy and satisfaction of the said blessed virgin; for which reason she ought truly to be styled the mother of God, and not only the mother of Christ; and that when she departed this life, she was immediately carried up into heaven, where by a particular privilege due to her merits, she enjoys God both in body and soul, without waiting for the general resurrection; there being no reason why that body, out of which there was most holy flesh formed, for the Son of God made man, should as other bodies be dissolved into dust and ashes, but that it should be immediately exalted and glorified, and placed high above all the quires of angels, as holy mother church sings and confesseth; concerning the whole of which matter, the impious Nestorian heretics have spoke, and writ, even in the breviaries used in this bishopric, a great many blasphemies and heresies.

DECREE VII

CONDEMNS THE ERROR, THAT ST. THOMAS AND ST. PETER PUBLISHED TWO DIFFERENT LAWS; AND MAINTAINS THAT THERE IS BUT ONE LAW FOR THE UNIVERSAL CHURCH OF CHRIST

The Synod is with great sorrow sensible of that heresy, and perverse error, sown by the schismatics in this diocese, to the great prejudice of souls; which is, That there was one law of St. Thomas, and another of St. Peter, which made two different and distinct churches, and both immediately from Christ; and that the one had nothing to do with the other; neither did the prelate of the one owe any obedience to the prelate of the other; and that they who had followed the law of St. Peter, had endeavoured to destroy the law of St. Thomas, for which they had been punished by him; all which is a manifest error, schism, and heresy, there being but one law to all Christians, which is that which was given and declared by Jesus Christ the Son of God, and preached by the Holy Apostles all over the world, as one faith, one baptism, there being but one Lord of all, and one catholic and apostolic church, of which our Lord Christ, God and man, who founded it, is the only spouse; and one only universal pastor, to whom all other prelates owe obedience, the Pope and Bishop of Rome, successor in the chair of St. Peter, the prince of the Apostles; to whom our Lord Jesus Christ bequeathed that supreme authority, and by him to his successors; which catholic doctrine is necessary to eternal life: wherefore the Synod doth command all parish priests, and preachers, to treat often of this matter, by reason of the great need there is of having this bishopric well instructed therein..

DECREE VIII

FORBIDS THE ACKNOWLEDGING OF THE PATRIARCH OF BABYLON, OR ANY SUPREME PASTOR, BUT THE POPE OF ROME, UPON PAIN OF EXCOMMUNICATION

For that, till the very time of the most illustrious Metropolitan entering into this diocese, there was a certain heresy twice repeated in the holy sacrifice of the mass, and twice more in the divine office, in calling the Patriarch of Babylon, the universal pastor, and head of the catholic church, in all places, and as often as they happen to name him; a title that is due only to the most holy father, the Bishop of Rome, successor of the prince of the Apostles, St. Peter, and vicar of Christ on earth: the Synod doth therefore command in virtue of obedience, and upon pain of excommunication to be *ipso facto* incurred, that no person of this bishopric, secular or ecclesiastical, shall from henceforward presume, by word or writing, either in the holy sacrifice of the mass, or in the divine office, or in any other occasion, to bestow that title on the said Patriarch of Babylon, or on any other prelate, besides our lord, the Bishop of Rome; and whosoever shall dare to contravene

this order, shall be declared excommunicate, and held for a schismatic and heretic, and shall be punished as such, according to the holy canons; and whereas the Patriarchs of Babylon, to whom this church was subject, are Nestorians, the heads of that cursed sect, and schismatics out of the obedience of the holy Roman Church, and aliens from our holy catholic faith, and are for that reason excommunicate and accursed; and it not being lawful to join with such in the church in public as stand excommunicate: wherefore this bishopric, upon its having now yielded a perfect obedience to the most holy father, the Pope, Christ's vicar upon earth, to which it was obliged by Divine authority, and upon pain of damnation, shall not from henceforward have any manner of dependence upon the said Patriarch of Babylon; and the present Synod, does under the said precept of obedience, and upon pain of excommunication to be ipso facto incurred, prohibit all priests, and curates, from henceforward to name the said Patriarch of Babylon in the holy sacrifice of the mass, or in any other divine office, in the prayers of the church, even without the false title of universal pastor; but instead thereof, shall name our lord the Pope, who is our true pastor, as also of the whole church, and after him, the lord Bishop of the diocese, for the time being; and whosoever shall maliciously and knowingly act the contrary, shall be declared excommunicate, and otherwise punished at the pleasure of his prelate, according to his contumacy.

DECREE IX

ABOLISHES THE NESTORIAN SAINTS' DAYS, &c., AND SUBSTITUTES THOSE OF ROME

Whereas all the breviaries used in this church are Nestorian, and by the commands of the prelates of the same sect, on a certain day the impious and false heretic Nestorius is commemorated in this bishopric, and a day is kept to his honour, and at other times, Theodorus, Diodorus, Abbaratho, Abraham, Narsai, Barchauma, Johanan, Hormisda, and Michael, who are also Nestorian heretics, were likewise commemorated; Nestorius, Theodorus, and Diodorus, being commemorated on the Friday after the nativity; and, on the seventh Friday after that, Abraham and Narsai, and all the above-named; and all of them on every Thursday in the year, in the said Nestorian office, and every day in the holy sacrifice of the mass, and the divine office; and notwithstanding in some places they have not of late named Nestorius, Theodorus, and Diodorus, but do still continue to name Abraham Narsai, abba Barchauma, Johanan, Hormisda, and Michael, in the blessing that the priest gives to the people at the end of the mass; wherein they desire Hormisda to deliver them from evil, being his disciples: as also on all Fridays in the year they commemorate as saints, the said Hormisda, Joseph, Michael, Johanan, Barchauma, Barianda, Rabba Hedsa, Machai, Hixoiau, Caurixo Avahixo, Lixo, Xaulixo, Barmun Lixo, Metidor, Cohada, Israel, Ezekiola Lixo, David

Lixo, Barai Israel, Julianus Haudixo, &c. who were all Nestorian heretics, and, as is evident from the said masses, and from their lives, commemorations, and praises, bestowed upon them, the heads of the said sect. Therefore the Synod in virtue of holy obedience, and upon pain of excommunication to be ipso facto incurred, doth prohibit all priests and curates, and all other persons, as well secular, as ecclesiastics, in this diocese at any time, either in common, or in particular, to commemorate any of the foresaid heretics, or to keep a day to them, or to celebrate their festivities, with any solemnity, or to make any mention of them in the divine offices, or in the mass or anywhere else, or to direct any prayers to them, either in common, or particular, or to make any vows, promises, offerings, or any Nerchas to them; or to have their images either in the churches, or in their houses; and in no wise to give them that worship, and veneration, which is due to saints; and that they raze their names out of their books, calendars, and offices; and that their masses be cut out of their breviaries, and missals, and burnt, and their commemorations extinguished, that so their memory may perish among the faithful, all of them having been cursed and excommunicate heretics, and condemned by holy mother church, and are at this time burning in the torments of hell, for their crimes and heresies, and for their having been the followers of such a cursed sect; the Synod doth furthermore command, that instead of them on the Friday next after the nativity, St. Athanasius, St. Gregory Nazianzen, St. Basil, St. John Chrysostom, and St. Cyril of Alexandria, shall be commemorated; and on the seventh Friday following, St. Austin, St. Ambrose, St. Gregory, and St. Ephrem, who was mentioned by them among the heretics; and on Wednesdays, All-saints and confessors together; and in the commemorations of the divine offices, and mass, they shall commemorate all the fore-named saints, in the place of the above-mentioned heretics; neither shall any one that shall presume to do the contrary, be absolved from the censures he has incurred, until he hath undergone a condign penance, or such a one as his prelate shall think fit to impose upon him, and shall thereupon be obliged to curse all the said heretics, and their damnable sect, and to make oath of the faith publicly, and to submit to all other punishments that his rebellion shall deserve, and if he is an ecclesiastic, he shall moreover be suspended from his orders and benefices, and punished according to the holy canons.

*DECREE X

ORDERS THE CHURCH OF ANGAMALE TO BE DEDICATED TO A NEW SAINT, HORMISDA

Whereas the church of Angamale, called the Archbishop's, was built by Mar Abraham, and dedicated to Hormisda the abbot, commonly called St. Hormusio, who was a Nestorian heretic, and a great ringleader of that sect, and for that reason was abhorred by all catholics, who are called Romans, as is reported in his life writ in the Syrian tongue, and which was ordained to be

burnt by the most illustrious metropolitan, upon the account of the manifold heresies and blasphemies contained therein, and the many false miracles said to be wrought by him, in confirmation of the Nestorian sect: therefore the Synod does in virtue of obedience, and upon pain of excommunication, to be ipso facto incurred prohibit the observation of the two festivities that have been dedicated to his memory, the one upon the first of September, the other sixteen days after Easter; and the dedicating of any church to him, commanding the above-named church to be dedicated to St. Hormisda the martyr, who was also a Persian, and whose festivity is celebrated upon the 8th of August, upon which day the feast of the said church shall be observed; and on the Retablo they are to make the picture, wherein the martyrdom of the said saint shall be drawn to the best advantage, that so the people may learn to what saint the said church is dedicated, and all the prayers and devotion that used to be performed upon the festivities of the heretic Hormusio, may be directed to this glorious saint, Hormisda.

DECREE XI

THE APOSTLES' CREED ORDERED TO BE CORRECTED AS USED IN THE CHURCH OF ROME

Seeing in the creed, or holy symbol of faith, ordained by the sacred Apostles, and declared by the holy councils, which is sung in the mass, all the principal mysteries and articles of our faith are contained, it is not fit that any thing should be added to it, or taken from it, but that it should be sung in this bishopric as it is all over the universal church; wherefore the Synod doth order, that the words which are wanting in the creed that is said in the mass be added to it; where speaking of Christ, it is said, that he was born of the Father before all times, there is wanting, God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, that so it may in all things be conformable to what is sung in the universal church, using also the word consubstantial to the Father, and not what is said instead thereof in the Syrian, Son of the essence of the Father.

DECREE XII

PERMITS CHILDREN TO BE TAUGHT BY A HEATHEN SCHOOL MASTER, IF NOT REQUIRED TO CONFORM TO HIS IDOLATRIES.— THIS IS POSITIVELY FORBIDDEN

Notwithstanding it is contrary to the sacred canons, that the children of Christians should go to school to heathern masters: nevertheless, seeing this church is under so many heathen kings, who many times will not suffer any but infidels to be schoolmasters; wherefore the Synod doth command and declare, that in all schools, whether for reading or writing, wherein the masters have pagods, to which they oblige their children at their coming into the school to pay their reverence, as the custom is; that it shall not be lawful

for Christian parents or guardians to send Christian children to such schools, upon pain of being proceeded against as idolaters; but if there should be any such schools, wherein the heathen masters will consent that Christian children shall pay no reverence, nor be obliged to any heathen ceremony, in case there is no Christian master near, they may be sent to such schools, their parents instructing them that they must pay no reverence but only to the master, and that they must use none of the ceremonies of the heathen children, that so they may not suck in idolatry as mother's milk. Furthermore, the Synod doth earnestly recommend it to all towns and villages, to do all that is in their power to have their children educated by Christian masters, and as for reading and writing, to have the parish priests to teach them to do that in their houses but as to those masters who do oblige Christian children to do reverence to their pagods; the Synod in virtue of holy obedience, and upon pain of excommunication to be ipso facto incurred, doth command all fathers of families, and others that have charge of children, not to consent to their going to such schools; and doing the contrary, let them be declared excommunieate, and be rigorously punished by the prelate, neither shall such children be suffered to enter the church; as to which matter the vicars and priests ought to be extremely vigilant, to prevent children being educated in idolatry; and wherever there is a Christian schoolmaster in any town, or near it, the children of Christians are not to go to school to infidels.

DECREE XIII

CHRISTIAN SCHOOLMASTERS FORBIDDEN TO SET UP IDOLS IN THEIR SCHOOLS FOR THEIR HEATHEN SCHOLARS

The Synod being certainly informed, that there are some Christian schoolmasters, who to conform themselves to others, and to have the more scholars, do set up pagods and idols in their schools, to which the heathen children pay reverence, doth command all the said schoolmasters, so soon as it shall be intimated to them upon pain of excommunication, to remove the said pagods, idols, and reverence out of their schools, and not to give way to heathern children, paying any such adoration; and whosoever shall be found guilty thereof, shall be declared excommunicate, and denied the communion of the church, and of all Christians, and dying, shall not be buried in holy ground, nor have Christian burial, nor have any prayers said for them, and let this decree be published by the vicars of the churches to which such do belong.

DECREE XIV

CONDEMNS MANY SYRIAN BOOKS, FORBIDS ALL CHRISTIANS TO READ THEM, AND COMMANDS THAT THEY BE DESTROYED

The purity of the faith being preserved by nothing more than by books of sound and holy doctrine; and on the contrary, there being nothing whereby the minds of people are more corrupted, than by books of suspicious and heretical doctrines; errors being by their means easily insinuated into the hearts of the ignorant, that read or hear them: wherefore the Synod knowing that this bishopric is full of books writ in the Syrian tongue by Nestorian heretics, and persons of other devilish sects, which abound with heresies, blasphemies and false doctirnes, doth command in virtue of obedience, and upon pain of excommunication to be ipso facto incurred, that no person, of what quality and condition soever, shall from henceforward presume to keep, translate, read or hear read to others, any of the following books.

The book entitled, 'The Infancy of our Saviour', or, 'The History of our Lady'; condemned formerly by the ancient saints, for being full of blasphemies, heresies, and fabulous stories, where among others it is said, that the annunciation of the angel was made in the Temple of Jerusalem, where our Lady was, which contradicts the Gospel of St. Luke, which saith, it was made in Nazareth; as also that Joseph had actually another wife and children, when he was betrothed to the holy virgin; and that he often reproved the child Jesus for his naughty tricks; that the child Jesus went to school to the rabbins, and learned of them with a thousand other fables and blasphemies of the same nature, and things unworthy of our Lord Christ, whereas the Gospel saith, that the Jews were astonished at his wisdom, asking how he came by so much learning, having never been taught; that the devil tempted Christ before his fast of forty days, which is contrary to the Gospel; that St. Joseph, to be satisfied whether the virgin had committed adultery, carried her before the priests, who according to the law gave her the water of jealousy to drink; that our Lady brought forth with pain, and parting from her company, not being able to go farther, she retired to a stable at Bethlehem; that neither our lady, nor any other saint is in heaven enjoying God, but are all in a terrestrial paradise, where they are to remain till the day of judgment, with other errors, too many to be related: but it is the Synod's pleasure to instance in some of the chief errors contained in the books that it condemns, that so all may be satisfied of the reason why they are prohibited to be read, or kept upon pain of excommunication, and that all may avoid and burn them with the greater horror, and for other just and necessary respects.

Also the book of John Barialdan, wherein it is said in divers places, That there were two persons, a divine and human, in Christ, which is contrary to the catholic faith, which confesses one only divine person: it is also said, That the names of Christ and Emanuel are the names of the human person only, and for that reason that the most sweet name Jesus is not to be adored;

that the union of the incarnation is common to all the three divine persons, who were all incarnated; that our Lord Christ is the adopted, and not the natural Son of God; that the union of the incarnation is accidental, and is only that of love betwixt the divine and human persons.

Also the book entitled, 'The Procession of the Holy Spirit;' wherein it is endeavoured to be proved at large, that the Holy Spirit proceedeth only from the Father, and not from the Son, which is contrary to the catholic truth, which teaches, that he proceeds from the Father and the Son.

Also the book entitled 'Margarita Fidei'[4] or 'The Jewel of Faith'; wherein it is pretended to be proved at large, That our lady, the most holy virgin, neither is, nor ought to be stiled the mother of God, but the mother of Christ; that in Christ there are two persons, the one of the Word, and the other of Jesus; that the union of the incarnation is only an accidental union of love and power, and not a substantial union; that there are three distinct faiths, which is divided into three professions, the Nestorian, Jacobite, and Roman; that the Nestorian is the true faith that was taught by the Apostle, and that the Roman is false and heretical, and was introduced by force of arms, and the authority of heretical emperors, into the greatest part of the world; that to excommunicate Nestorius, is to excommunicate the Apostles and Prophets, and the whole Scripture; that they that do not believe his doctrine, shall not inherit eternal life; that they that follow Nestorius, received their faith from the Apostles, which has been preserved to this day in the church of Babylon of the Syrians, that matrimony neither is, nor can be a sacrament; that the sign of the cross is one of the sacraments of the church instituted by Christ; that the fire of hell is metaphorical, not real; that the Roman Church is fallen from the faith, condemning it likewise for not celebrating in leavened bread, according to what the Church has received from the Apostles, for which it is said the Romans are heretics.

Also the book of the 'Fathers,' wherein it is said, That our lady neither is, nor ought to be called the mother of God; that the Patriarch of Babylon of the Nestorians, is the universal head of the Church immediately under Christ; that the fire of hell is not real, but spiritual; that it is heresy to say, that God was born, or died; that there are two persons in Christ.

Also a book of the Life of Abbot Isaias, commented by a Nestorian, wherein it is said, That the union is common to all the three persons; that St. Cyril of Alexandria, who condemned Nestorius, was an impious heretic, and is now in hell, for having taught, that there is but one person in Christ; whereas, as often as Nestorius, Theodorus and Diodorus are named, they are stiled saints, and blessed; by whose authority it is there proved, that the saints,

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4 The Syrian title of this book is, Chtobo d' Margonitho: *The book of the pearl of great price.* The author of it was Ebed Jesu, a Nestorinan prelate, who died about the beginning of the 14th century, and is therefore to be distinguishe from the author of Catalogue of Syrian Authors.

shall not enjoy God before the day of judgment; and that till then they shall be in an obscure place, which they call Eden, near to the terrestrial paradise; and that by so much the worse as any one has been, he is tormented the less for it in hell, by reason of his greater conformity and friendship with the devils; that the Word was not made Man, and that it is blasphemy to affirm it; that Christ conquered all the passions of sin by a power derived from God, and not by his own strength; that St. Cyril was a heretic in teaching, that there was but one person in Christ; that the divine and human nature were united in Christ accidentally by love; that the whole Trinity was incarnated; that God dwelt in Christ as in a rational temple, giving him power to do all the good things he did; that the souls of the just will be in a terrestrial paradise till the day of judgment; that the wicked when they die in mortal sin, are carried to a place called Eden, where they suffer only by the sense of the punishments they know they are to undergo after the day of judgment.

Also the book of Synods, wherein there is a forged letter of Pope Caius, with false subscriptions of a great many other Western Bishops, directed to those of Babylon, wherein it is acknowledged, that the Church of Rome ought to be subject to that of Babylon, which with all that are subject to her, are immediately under Christ, without owing any reverence to the Roman Bishop; they say likewise, That the Roman Church is fallen from the faith, having perverted the canons of the Apostles, by the force of heretical emperors' arms; and that the Romans are heretics, for not celebrating in leavened bread, which has been the inviolable custom of the church derived from our Saviour, and his holy Apostles; that all the Bishops that followed Nestorius, ought to be much esteemed, and when named, to be stiled saints; and to have their relics reverenced: That matrimony is not a sacrament, that it may be dissolved for the bad conditions of the parties: That usury is lawful and there is no sin in it.

Also the book of 'Timothy the Patriarch,' where, in three chapters, The most holy sacrament of the altar is blasphemed; it being impiously asserted in them, That the true body of our Lord Christ is not there, but only the Figure thereof.

Also the letter which they pretend came down from heaven, called the 'Letter of the Lord's-day,' wherein the Roman Church is accused of having fallen from the faith, and having violated the Domingo, or Lord's-day letter.

Also the book called 'Maclamatas;' wherein the distinction of two persons in Christ, and the accidental union of the incarnation are pretended to be proved at large, and are confirmed with several false and blasphemous similitudes.

Also the book entitled 'Uguarda,' or 'the Rose'; wherein it is said, That there are two persons in Christ; that the union of the incarnation was accidental; that our lady brought forth with pain; and the sons of Joseph, which he had by his other wife, being in company, went for a midwife to her, with other blasphemies.

Also the book entitled ' Camiz'; wherein it is said, That the Divine Word, and the Son of the virgin are not the same; and that our lady brought forth with pain.

Also the book entitled ' Menra,' wherein it is said, that our Lord Christ is only the image of the Word; that the substance of God dwelt in Christ as in a temple; that Christ is next to the divinity; that Christ was made the companion of God.

Also the book of Orders; wherein it is said, that the form, and not the matter, is necessary to orders; and the forms therein are likewise erroneous; that there are only two orders, Diaconate and priesthood; that altars of wood, and not of stone, are to be consecrated; there are also prayers in it for those that are converted from any other sect to Nestorianism, in form of an absolution from the excommunication they had incurred for not having followed Nestorius, and of a reconciliation to the Church.

Also the book of Homilies; wherein it is said, that the holy eucharist is only the image of Christ, and is distinguished from him, as an image is from a true man; and that the body of our Lord Jesus Christ is not there, nor anywhere else but in heaven; that the whole Trinity was incarnate; that Christ is only the temple of the Divinity, and God only by representation; that the soul of Christ descended not into hell, but was carried to the paradise of Eden; that whosoever affirms the contrary, errs, and that we therefore err in our creed: there are therein likewise some letters of some heretical synods, in which it is said, that the Patriarch of Babylon is not subject to the Roman Bishop; with an oath to be taken to the said patriarch, as the head of the church, wherein people swear to obey him, and him only, and not the Bishop of Rome.

Also a book entitled, 'An Exposition of the Gospels'; wherein it is everywhere pretended to be proved, that there are two persons in Christ, and that Christ as a pure creature, was obliged to adore God, and stood in need of prayer; that he was the temple of the most holy Trinity; that Christ's soul when he died, descended not into hell, but was carried to the paradise of Eden; which was the place he promised to the thief on the cross; that our lady, the Virgin, deserved to be reproved for having vainly imagined, that she was mother to one that was to be a great King; looking upon Christ as no other than a pure man; and presuming that he was to have a temporal empire, as well as the rest of the Jews: that the evangelists did not record all Christ's actions in truth as they were, they not having been present at several of them; which was the reason why they differed from one another so much: that the wise men that came from the East, received no favour from God, for the journey they took; neither did they believe in Christ; that Christ was the adopted Son of God, it being as impossible that he should be God's natural Son, as it is that just men should be so; that he received new grace in baptism, which he had not before; that he is only the image of the word, and the pure temple of the Holy Spirit; that the holy Eucharist is only the image of the body of Christ, which is only in heaven at the right hand of the Father, and not here on earth: that

Christ, as pure man, did not know when the day of judgment was to be: that when St. Thomas put his hand into Christ's side, and said, "My Lord and my God !" he did not speak to Christ; for that he that was raised was not God; but it was only an exclamation made to God upon his beholding such a miracle; that the authority that Christ gave to St. Peter over the church, was the same that he gave to other priests; so that his successors have no more power or jurisdiction than other bishops: that our lady, the Virgin, is not the mother of God: that the first Epistle of St.John, and that of St. James, are not the writings of those holy Apostles, but of some other persons of the same name, and therefore are not canonical.

Also the book of Hormisda Raban, who is styled a saint, wherein it is said, that Nestorius was a saint, and martyr, and suffered for the truth; and that St. Cyril, who persecuted him, was the priest and minister of the devil, and is now in hell: that images are filthy and abominable idols, and ought not to be adored; and that St. Cyril, as a heretic invented and introduced them: there are also many false miracles recorded in this book, which are said to have been wrought by Hormisda in confirmation of the Nestorian doctrine, with an account of what he suffered from the catholics, for being obstinate in his heresy.

Also the book of Lots, into which they put that they call the ring of Solomon, with a great many more superstitions,for the choice of good days to marry upon, and for several other uses; wherein are contained many blasphemies, and heathenish observances; as also all other books of Lots, and for choosing of days, the Synod prohibits under the same censure.

Also the book written after the manner of Flos Sanctorum, wherein are contained the lives of a great many Nestorian heretics, who are there called saints; and not only that entire book, but also any of the lives contained therein, which may be current separately; namely, those of Abraham, styled the Great, of George Abbot Cardeg, whom they call a martyr; Jacob, Abban, Saurixo, Johanan, Gauri, Raban, Sabacat, Ocama, Daniel, Barcaula, Raban Nuna, Jacob, Rabai the Great, Dadixo, Jomarusia, Schalita, Ihab, Abimelech the expositor, Abraham, another Abraham Natpraya, Jobcarder, John, Ircasca, Nestorius, Jaunam, Barcurra, Raban Gabarona, Schabibi, Barcima, Titus, Raban Sapor, Gregory the Metropolitan, George, Monach, Xahucalmaran, Joseph, Nathanael, simon Abbot Chabita, Zinai Abbot, Audixo, John Crascaya, Barcahade, Italaah, John Sahadui, Aha, Xalita, Joanacoreta, Xari, another John, Elias, Joadarmah, Ananixo, another John, Barhetta, Rabai Simeon, Narsai Naban, Raban Theodorus, Rabai Doctor, Abda, Abolaminer, Rabantarsaha of Cadarvi, Xuuelmaran, Sergiududa, Xuuealmaran, Dadixo, another Abraham, Ezekieldasa, Rabai Perca, David Barnutar, Hormisda, Pition, Salomon Abbot, Raban Machixo, another George, Muchiqua, another Abraham, Apuimacan, Xaurixo, Ixosauran, Josedec, Raban Camixo, Bardirta Abbot, Abraham Barmaharail, George Raban, Zliva abbot, Guiriaco Rabanbaut, Joseph Abbot, Zaca, Nasbian,Jesus Abbot, Aaron Bucatixo, Ascan, another Abraham, Xonxa Abbot, Amanixo Gasraya, Sahedona

Bishop, Joseph, Azaya, Isahaha Bishop, Jacob, whom they call a prophet, Ixaiahu, Eunuco Ramain, Jobar Malchi: who were all Nestorian heretics, and the chief followers of that cursed sect, as is evident from their lives, which are full of heresies, blasphemies, and false and fabulous miracles, with which they pretend to authorize their sect.

Also the book called *Parisman*, or the Persian Medicine, which is full of sorceries, teaching certain methods whereby one may do mischief to their enemies, and may gain women, and for a great many other lewd and prohibited purposes; there are likewise in it strange names of devils, of whom they affirm, that whosoever shall carry the names of seven of them about him writ in a paper, shall be in no danger of any evil: it contains also many superstitious exorcisms for the casting out of devils; mixing some godly words with others that are not intelligible; and with the invocation of the most Holy Trinity, oftentimes desiring the doing of lewd things, and enormous sins, joining the merits of Nestorius and his followers, many times, in the same prayer with those of the blessed Virgin, and those of their devils, with those of the holy angels; all which is very common in this diocese; most curates having this book, and making use of it to this very day; all which sort of books the Synod prohibits in this diocese under the fore-mentioned censures; and whosoever from henceforwards shall be found to have any of them, besides the censure they have incurred thereby, shall be severely punished by their prelate.

DECREE XV

ERRORS AND HERESIES IN THE BREVIARIES AND COMMON PRAYER TO BE CORRECTED

But the forementioned heresies are not only to be met with in these books, but are likewise in the common prayer, and breviaries that they use in their churches, which having been composed by Nestorian heretics, are full of blasphemies, heresies, fables, and apocryphal stories, whereby instead of praising God, they are continually blaspheming him in their divine offices.

In the book called the Great Breviary, it is said, that the Divine Word did not assume flesh, ignorantly pretending to prove it thus; because if the word had assumed flesh, to what purpose was the Holy Spirit's overshadowing the Virgin? In the same breviary the whole office of Advent is heretical, it being everywhere affirmed therein, that Christ had two persons, and calling him continually only the Temple of God; and in the feast of the Nativity, there is a proposition in one of the solemn Antiphona's, that directly contradicts St. John, in which it is said, that "The Word was not made flesh," and that all that believe the contrary, are disobedient to the Church, and are obstinate rebels against the faith; so that the whole offices of the Advent and Nativity are little else than pure blasphemy.

In the book of Prayers for the great fast, it is frequently said, that there were two persons, a divine and human in Christ. It contains also several

commemorations of Nestorius, and other heretics his followers, affirming Marndeay, Theodorus and Diodorus, and other Nestorian heretics, to have been the followers of St. Ephrem.

In the greater Breviary, which they call Hudre and Gaza, or 'The Treasure of Prayers,' it is everywhere said, that there are two persons in Christ, and one representation of the Son of God; that he is the image of the Word, and the temple of the same; that the Divine Person did enlighten the human, and that Christ advanced in grace and knowledge by degrees; that our lady never carried God in her womb, as heretics affirm, Christ being a man like to others, and that she ought not to be called the mother of God, but only the mother of the second Adam; that the whole Trinity assumed humanity, and that St.Matthew taught the Hebrews so; that God did not make himself flesh, which he only took as a dwelling to cover his glory; that God accompanied Christ on the cross, but had not taken the humanity, neither was it God that suffered; that the Word of the Father changed itself into humanity, and by the Son of Mary redeemed mankind; that the Father Eternal took flesh in the same manner as the Son; that the angel delivered his message to the Virgin in the temple, and not at Nazareth; that the pains of travail opened the womb of the Virgin, who brought forth with labour after the manner of other women; that 'in the most holy sacrament of the eucharist, there is not the true body of Christ;' with a thousand more blasphemies about it; that Nestorius was a preacher of truth; and in several places God is praised for having declared the truth to Theodorus and Diodorus, who was master to Nestorius; and in several prayers they beseech God to chastise those that believe otherwise than Nestorius and his followers, whose faith they say is founded on St. Peter's and the rest of the Apostles; moreover it is said, that the holy Virgin, and her spouse Joseph, appeared before the priests, who could not tell how she had conceived; and 'that images are idols, and ought not to be adored, nor so much as kept in churches or in houses of Christians; there are likewise offices of Nestorius and his followers, and commemorations of several heretics.

In the office for priests departed, it is sung, that in the most holy sacrament of the altar, there is only the virtue of Christ, but not his true body and blood; all which books and breviaries,though they do well deserve to be burnt, for these and other errors that they contain, yet there being no other at present in this diocese, for the keeping up of divine service, and the celebration of religious offices, until such time as they shall be furnished with new breviaries, which the Synod desires they may speedily, and that some may be printed for them at St.Peter's in Rome; the Synod doth order them to be corrected and purged from all their errors, and commemorations of heretics, and the entire offices for all such; and the offices of advent and the nativity to be entirely torn out of their breviaries and burnt, entreating the most illustrious Metropolitan to see it done at his next visitation in all the churches of the diocese, commanding all curates in virtue of obedience, and upon pain of excommunication to be ipso facto incurred , to produce the said

books, and all the other books that they have, as well of public as of private use, and of prayers, as well as of the mass, before the said lord Metropolitan at his visitation, in order to their being corrected by persons appointed for that work, in conformity to what is here ordained.

DECREE XVI

ALL PERSONS ARE COMMANDED TO DELIVER UP THEIR SYRIAC BOOKS TO BE CORRECTED OR DESTROYED

For the preservation of the purity of the faith, the Synod does command all priests, curates, and all other persons, of whatsoever condition or quality, within this bishopric, in virtue of obedience, and upon pain of excommunication within two months after the publication thereof shall come to their knowledge, to deliver all the books they have written in the Syrian tongue, either with their own hands, or by some other person, to the most illustrious Metropolitan, which they may do at the visitation that he intends to hold speedily, or to Father Francisco Roz, of the Society of Jesus, professor of the Syrian tongue in the college of Vaipicotta, or to the said college, in order to their being perused and corrected, or destroyed, as shall be thought most convenient, the books of common prayer being excepted, which are to be amended in the form above said ; and under the same precept of obedience, and pain of excommunication, the Synod does command, That no person, of what condition or quality soever within this bishopric, shall presume to translate any book into the Syrian tongue, without express licence from the prelate, with a declaration of the book to which it is granted, the books of Holy Scripture and Psalms only excepted; and until such time as this church shall be provided with a bishop, the most illustrious Metropolitan doth commit the power of granting all such licences to the reverend Father Francisco Roz, of the Society of Jesus, by reason of his great skill in those books, and in the Chaldee and Syrian languages.

DECREE XVII

NONE ARE TO PREACH TO THE PEOPLE WITHOUT LICENCE FROM THE BISHOP OR THE RECTOR OF VAIPICOTTA, AND WITHOUT HAVING SUBSCRIBED TO THE DOCTRINES OF TRENT

Seeing the purity of faith and good manners doth very much depend on the doctrine that is preached to the people; wherefore the Synod, being informed that there are several ignorant curates who do take upon them to preach, and make discourses in public, wherein they teach several errors and heresies that they meet with in books that they do not understand, and several fabulous and apocryphal things, those especially which they take out of the book of the 'Infancy of our Saviour,' and other apocryphal and heretical writings, doth command that none presume to preach, or make any set

discourse to the people, but who are licensed by the prelate in writing, who shall first examine them diligently, as to their sufficiency and doctrine, according to the holy council of Trent; and when there shall happen to be no prelate during the vacancy of the see, the most illustrious Metropolitan doth commit the care thereof to the rector of the Jesuits' college of Vaipicotta in this diocese, that so he, and such of the Fathers as he shall name, may make the said examinations, of which they shall give a certificate sealed by the rector; and at the next visitation the lord Metropolitan shall name such as shall appear to him to be most for the benefit of the people of this bishopric, in order to their being rightly instructed; and whosoever shall, without having undergone such an examination, and without having obtained a licence thereupon, in writing, under the hand of the bishop or prelate, presume to preach, or make any discourses to the people, shall be suspended from their office and benefice for a year; nevertheless, all vicars may in their own churches make such discourses to their people, as they shall judge necessary, out of the Holy Scriptures, and other approved books; to which end the Synod doth earnestly desire, that there may be a catechism made in the Malabar tongue, out of which there may be every Sunday something read to the people: and whereas the Synod is informed that the most illustrious Metropolitan is already about such a work, and has reason to hope that it may be done by the end of the visitation, it doth command, so soon as it is finished and published, that all vicars do every Sunday at the time of offering, or before, or after mass, read a chapter of the same to the people in conformity to the orders they shall receive.

*DECREE XVIII

PRIESTS ARE PUBLICLY TO RECANT ANY ERRORS OR FABULOUS STORIES THEY MAY HAVE PREACHED

Whereas, through the ignorance and bad doctrines of the priests of this diocese, occasioned by their having been accustomed to read heretical and apocryphal books, they do many times deliver errors, and fabulous stories, in their sermons and admonitions to the people, without knowing what they say themselves: therefore, to prevent the peoples' being mistaught, the Synod doth command, that whensoever it should be proved to the prelate, that any such thing has been delivered in public, or in any congregation, that the prelate having drawn up a form of recantation in writing, shall send to the said curates or the persons that have delivered such things, commanding them to retract and unsay the same in public, either by reading the said recantation, or by declaring the contents of it to the people, and teaching them the truth; which if any shall refuse to do, which God forbid, they shall be declared excommunicate, and shall be punished according to the holy canons, and the quality of the matter they delivered; which shall be executed with great rigour, if it shall appear to have been spoke with knowledge and malice: but

where it shall be found to have flowed from ignorance, and an innocent mind, it shall suffice that a ready obedience be paid to the said satisfaction and recantation.

DECREE XIX

RENDERS NULL AND VOID ALL OATHS TAKEN NOT TO SUBMIT TO THE CHURCH OF ROME

The Synod having been informed of several meetings that were in this diocese, upon the death of bishop Mar Abraham, in which both public and private oaths were taken against yielding obedience to the holy Roman Church, several curates and others obliging themselves never to consent to any change either in the government of the bishopric, or in matters of faith, nor to receive any bishop that should be sent to them by the holy apostolical see, or by any other way, than by the order of the schismatical, heretical, Nestorian patriarch of Babylon, with several other particulars, contrary to the sacred canons, and the obedience that is due to the most holy Roman pontificate; doth declare all such oaths, or any other taken, or that shall be taken in the same manner, to be void and of no force; and that they do not only not oblige the consciences of those that have taken them, but that as they were rashly and maliciously taken, so it is an impiety and schism to keep them; denouncing the sentence of the greater excommunication upon all those that made them or took them; this synod having above all other things promised and sworn to yield obedience to the commands of the Pope, and the holy apostolical see, according to the holy canons, and never to receive any bishop or prelate, but what shall be sent by the holy Roman church, to which it of right belongs to provide prelates and bishops to all the churches in the world, and to receive those that he shall send, without any doubt or scruple, acknowledging them for the true prelates and pastors of their souls, without waiting for any other order besides that of the bishop of Rome, notwithstanding any impious oaths that may have been made at any time to the contrary.

DECREE XX

THE SYNOD REJECTS THE ERRORS OF NESTORIUS AND SUBSCRIBES TO THE DOCTRINES OF ROME

This present Synod, together with all the priests and faithful people of this diocese, doth embrace all the holy general councils received by holy mother church, believing and confessing all that was determined in them, anathematizing, rejecting, and condemning all that they have rejected and condemned; but especially it doth with great veneration receive and embrace the first holy council of Ephesus, consisting of 200 fathers, firmly believing all that was therein determined, and rejecting and condemning whatsoever it condemned; but above all, the diabolical heresy of the Nestorians, which has

been for many years preached and believed in this diocese; which together with its author Nestorius and all his followers, the said council did reject and anathematize; who being taught by the devil, held that there were two persons in our Lord Christ; affirming also, that the Divine Word did not take flesh into the unity of its person, but only for an habitation, or holy dwelling, as a temple; and that it ought not to be said, that God was incarnate, or that he died, nor that our lady, the glorious Virgin, was the mother of God, but only the mother of Christ, with other diabolical heresies, all which this Synod does condemn, reject, and anathematize, embracing the holy catholic faith, in the purity and integrity, that it is believed and professed in by the holy mother Roman church, the misterss of all churches, to which in all things it submits itself according to the profession it has made. Furthermore, this Synod does acknowledge the glorious Cyril, Archbishop and patriarch of Alexandria, who by order of the bishop of Rome, presided in the holy Ephesian council, to be a blessed saint, at this time enjoying God in heaven; and that his doctrine in the said council against the Nestorians, is holy, and universally received in the catholic church, professing all that reject it to be excommunicated heretics.

DECREE XXI

RESOLVES TO BE GOVERNED IN ALL THINGS BY THE LAST COUNCIL OF TRENT

Furthermore, this present Synod, with all the priests and faithful people of this diocese, doth embrace the last holy and sacred council of Trent, and does not only believe and confess all that was determined and approved of therein, and reject and anathematize all that council rejected and condemned; but doth moreover receive and embrace the said council as to all matters therein determined, relating to the reformation of the church, and all Christian people, promising and swearing to govern itself according to the rules thereof, and to observe the same forms that are observed in the catholic church, and as are observed in this province of the Indies, and in all the other provinces and suffragans to the metropolis of Goa; in order to the removing of all abuses and customs that are contrary to the decrees of the said council of Trent; by which only it is resolved to govern itself as to all matters relating to the government of the church, and the reformation of the manners of this faithful and catholic people, any customs, though immemorial, in this bishopric, to the contrary notwithstanding.

*DECREE XXII

SUBJECTS THE SYRIANS TO THE INQUISITION AT GOA

This present Synod, together with all the priests and faithful people of this diocese, doth with great submission and reverence, submit itself to the

holy, upright, just, and necessary court of the holy office of the inquisition, in these parts established; and being sensible how much the integrity of the faith depends upon that tribunal, it does promise and swear to be obedient to all its commands in all things thereunto pertaining: being, after the example of all other bishoprics in this province, willing that all matters of faith should be judged of by the same court, or by such persons as it shall depute: and notwithstanding the said holy office has not hitherto, by reason of this church's having been separated, and had little or no correspondence with the apostolical see, or with any of the churches that are suject to it, meddled with any person belonging to this bishopric, yet now for the benefit of their souls, as to absolutions in cases of faith, which are known to be reserved to that court; this present synod doth beseech the lords inquisitors to authorize some learned men whithin this bishopric, or the Jesuits of the college of Vaipicotta, and of other residences of the same religion in the said diocese, to absolve all such as shall stand in need thereof, and that with such limitations as they shall think fit; considering how difficult it is for the people inhabiting the Serra, to have recourse to the tribunal at Goa; neither can it be otherwise, considering that they live in the midst of infidels, but that such necessary cases will sometimes happen, and especially to rude and ignorant people.

DECREE XXIII

PERSONS SPEAKING, ACTING, OR WRITING AGAINST THE CHURCH OF ROME TO BE REPORTED TO THE BISHOP AND PUNISHED

The preservation of the purity of the faith, and the prevention of people being corrupted with false and strange doctrines, being a thing of the greatest importance; this Synod doth therefore command all persons, of what quality or condition soever in this bishopric, that whensoever they shall happen to know of any Christians doing, speaking, or writing anything that is contrary to the holy catholic faith, or of any that shall give assistance or countenance thereunto, to dilate them with all possible expedition and secrecy to the prelate, or to the vicars of the church, or to some other faithful person, who will immediately give an account thereof, that so such a course may be forthwith taken, as the necessity of the matter shall require; the Synod in virtue of obedience commanding the said vicars, and persons to whom such things shall be denounced, to intimate them with all possible speed.

SESSION IV

OF THE SEVEN SACRAMENTS

The holy sacraments of the gospel, instituted by our Saviour and Redeemer Jesus Christ the Son of God, for the remedy and salvation of men,

1 The ancient form of Baptizing was by Prayer.

and to which he hath applied the virtue of his holy passion and infinite merits, and by which all true holiness begins in us, and being begun, is increase, and being lost, is recovered, are seven, to wit, baptism, confirmation, the eucharist, penitence, extreme unction, order, and matrimony: all which do differ much from the sacraments of the old law, which did not cause, but did only signify the grace that was to be given by the passion of Christ, whereas our sacraments do contain grace, and give it to all those that receive them worthily; the first five were ordained for the spiritual perfecting of every man only with relation to himself, the two last were appointed for the good government and increase of the church; by baptism we are spiritually born again to God; by confirmation we are advanced in grace, fortified in the faith, and being regenerated and strengthened, we are supported by the divine food of the eucharist, and sacrament of the altar; and when we chance by sin to fall into any distemper of soul, we are spiritually restored by penitence, and both spiritually and corporally by extreme unction; by the sacrament of order, the church is governed, and spiritually multiplied; and by matrimony, corporally: all these sacraments are perfected by three causes; that is, things as their matter, words as their form, and the person that is to administer them with an intention of doing what the church doth; and where any of these three causes are wanting, they are not perfect, neither indeed is any sacrament administered; all the ceremonies and rites approved and made use of by holy mother church, in the administration of the sacraments are holy, and cannot be despised, neglected, or changed for others without a great sin, notwithstanding they do not appertain to the integrity or essence of the sacraments; there are three that imprint a spiritual sign on the soul, that can never be blotted out; it is called a character, which is the reason why those sacraments are never to be repeated; they are baptism, confirmation, and orders: the other four, that is, penitence, the eucharist, extreme unction, and matrimony, imprint no spiritual sign in the soul, and so may be repeated with due order; but though these seven sacraments are all divine, and do contain grace, and dispense it to their worthy receivers, deserving our most profound reverence and adoration, on the account of the majesty of their Institutor, who was our Lord Jesus Christ the Son of God, as also for the assistance of the Holy Spirit, who operates in conjunction with them; and for the virtue that is in them for the curing of souls, the treasure of the passion of our Lord Jesus Christ being deposited in them, and dispensed to us by their means; nevertheless this does not hinder, but that in some respects, some of them may be more worthy than others, and may deserve a greater reverence and veneration. These sacraments were all instituted by our Lord Jesus Christ before his ascension into heaven, that so by their means he might communicate grace and other spiritual benefits, he had merited for us by his death on the cross, confirming them to the faithful by his word and promises, that so by using them lawfully, and with due dispositions, we might be ascertained of his communicating himself and all the fruits of his passion to us, in every one of them, in such a manner as he represents himself in them.

The Doctrine of the holy Sacrament of Baptism

The first of all the sacraments is that of Baptism, which is the gate of the spiritual life, and that whereby we are made capable of the other sacraments, of which without it we are no ways capable; for as a man must first be born, before he can enjoy the good things of the natural life, so men before they are born again in baptism, are not capable of enjoying the heavenly advantages of a spiritual life, it being by baptism that we are made members of Christ, and are incorporated into the christian commonwealth, and the mystical body of the church; for as by the first man death came upon all, for the sin of disobedience committed by him and us, for which sin we were excluded the kingdom of heaven, and were born children of wrath, and separated from God, so that without being born again of water and the Spirit, we cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven, as Christ himself has taught us; so that as we were born children of wrath, by baptism we return to be children of grace, and as we were born in sin the sons of men, in baptism we are born the sons of God; all that are baptized in Christ, as St Paul hath it, having put on Christ: the matter of this sacrament, is true, natural, and common water, as of the sea, rivers, fountains, lakes, or rain, and no other, though never so pure and clean; all others being liquors, and not natural water: the form is, "I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." The minister of this sacrament is a priest, to whom it belongs by virtue of his office; but in case of necessity, not only a priest or deacon, but a layman, or woman, nay an infidel, a Mahometan, a heretic, or Jew: in a word, any person that can baptize, using the form of the Church, and intending to do what she does, may administer this sacrament: for seeing none can be saved without being baptized, therefore as our Lord ordained water, than which nothing is more ready at hand, to be the matter of this sacrament, so he would exclude no man from being the minister thereof; the effects and virtue of this sacrament are, the pardon and remission of all sins original and actual, and of all punishments due to them; for which reason there is no penance to be enjoined those that are baptized, for any sin they committed before baptism, all that die after baptism, before they have committed any sin, going directly to heaven, where they enjoy the divine vision for ever.

*DECREE I

NEW FORM OF BAPTISM APPOINTED, AND THE OLD FORMS ABROGATED

Whereas in the examination of the forms of the administration of the sacraments of the Church in the diocese, made by the most Reverend Metropolitan in his last visitation, he found that in divers churches there were different forms used, and written in the baptisteries, some curates using the form following: "*N.* is baptized and perfected, in the name of the Father,

amen; in the name of the Son, amen; in the name of the Holy Ghost, amen:" others using the Greek form, saying, "Baptizetur servus Christi, in nomine Patris, amen; in nomine Filii, amen; in nomine Spiritus Sancti, amen." The Synod in virtue of obedience, and upon pain of excommunication to be ipso facto incurred, doth command, that no person shall presume hereafter to use either these, or any other forms, but that which is used in the holy Roman Church, "I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost;" and that all other forms be blotted out of their baptisteries and books, and this be put in their place.

*DECREE II

ALL BAPTIZED ACCORDING TO THE OLD FORM TO SUBMIT THEMSELVES TO THE ARCHBISHOP FOR DIRECTION

This Synod being informed, that at divers times they have used different forms of baptism in this diocese, which were introduced by schismatical and ignorant prelates, some of which were not legitimate, neither was the sacrament administered by them, as was declared by the most illustrious Metropolitan, and others after a strict examination; and others were very doubtful, doth therefore, in the name of the Holy Ghost, desire and command all the faithful Christians of this diocese to declare to the said Metropolitan, at the visitation he intends to make of the churches of this diocese, or to persons deputed by him, the time when they were baptized, that so according to the form that was then used, a saving remedy may be provided, in conformity to what shall be ordained therein, and that all submit themselves to whatsoever he shall be pleased to order.

*DECREE III

THOSE WHOSE BAPTISM HAD BEEN NEGLECTED ORDERED TO BE BAPTIZED WITHOUT FEE

Forasmuch as the Synod is informed, that there are many persons in this diocese, and especially among those that live in the heaths, and are far from any church, who though they are not baptized, yet being of a christian race, do profess themselves Christians, and when they come where there is a church, do go to it and receive the holy sacraments with others, and out of mere shame of letting it be known that they are not christened, do die without baptism; and others because they will not pay the fees, which are simoniacally demanded of them: it doth therefore command all vicars of churches to make diligent inquiry through their whole parishes and heaths, to see if there are any that are not christened, besides the search that the most illustrious Metropolitan does intend at his next visitation, as he did at his former; and that the said vicars on the high festivals, upon which those that live in the

heaths do usually come to church, shall admonish them all in general, that in case there are any among them that have never been baptized, or that have some reason to doubt whether they have or not, that they go to them and acquaint them therewith in private, that so they may be secretly christened, and without paying any fee, letting them know that they are not Christians, not capable of inheriting enternal life, nor of receiving the holy sacraments without being baptized; and all preachers shall frequently give the same admonition, and all confessors must be careful to ask all rude Christians that live in the heaths, whether they have been baptized, and in case it appear doubtful, they shall then baptize them privately. The Synod grants the same licence to all priests within or without this diocese, to baptize all such secretly, in what place soever they shall think fit.

*DECREE IV

TO THE SAME EFFECT

The Synod being informed that there are some small villages in this diocese, which, by reason of the great distance they are at from any church, and through the negligence of their prelates and priests, though they call themselves Christians of St.Thomas, because descendend of such, yet are not baptized having nothing of Christians but the bare name, doth command a diligent inquiry to be made into this matter, recommending the same to the most reverend Metropolitan, and commanding all vicars of churches to search all places bordering upon their parishes, and to oblige all such to be baptized: the Synod doth likewise command chapels to be built in or near to all such villages, and to be provided with such curates as may instruct them in all matters of faith, that so there may be none in all these parts that call themselves Christians of St.Thomas, but what are baptized; and of some parish where they may receive the sacraments.

DECREE V

GIVES DIRECTIONS FOR THE BAPTISM OF CHILDREN

By reason of the great negligence that is so visible in the Christians of this bishopric, in bringing their children to be baptized within eight days after they are born, according to the custom of the churh, but chiefly among those that live at a considerable distance from any church, whose children are many times some months or years old before they are christened; the Synod doth strictly command, that all children be baptized on the eighth day after they are born, according to the custom of the universal church, without there should be some danger of their dying before, in which case they ought to be christened immediately, or that it should so happen, that if they are not baptized sooner, they cannot be in a long time, in which case also they ought to be presently christened; and for those that live in heaths, and far from any

church, if they should not be able to bring their children to be baptized on the eighth day, they must not fail to bring them betwixt the fifteenth and the twentieth; and all that are found to be negligent herein, let them be punished severely; and whosoever shall neglect to bring their own children, or others that they have the charge of, though their slaves, to baptism for above a month, let them be thrown out of the church, neither shall it be lawful for any priest to go to their houses, or to give them the *casturi*, or a visit, no not in order to persuade them to bring their children to baptism: but if it should be probable that the length of the way might endanger the child's life, then let the father or guardian signify so much to the vicar of the church to which they belong, that a fit remedy may be taken therein, that the baptism of the infant be no longer deferred; and in such cases the Synod doth command all vicars either in person, or by some other priest, to hasten to go; the doing thereof with diligence being one of the highest duties of their function.

DECREE VI

ORDERS THE CHILDREN OF EXCOMMUNICATED PARENTS TO BE BAPTIZED

The present Synod doth condemn the custom or abuse which has hitherto obtained in this diocese, of not baptizing the infants of parents that are excommunicated, for fear of having some communion with them, by which means it often happens, that children continue unbaptized for many years, thereby running a great hazard of dying without baptism; and ordaining the contrary, commands the children of excommunicated parents to be christened as well as others, and to that intent declares, That they that go into such families to fetch such children, or shall carry or accompany them to church, shall incur no censure or punishment whatsoever for so doing; nevertheless, the persons that are excommunicated shall not be suffered to go along with them, nor shall others go to any feast or banquet at their houses which they may have made on that occasion.

DECREE VII

AUTHORIZES AND EXHORTS ANY PERSON, MALE OR FEMALE, TO BAPTIZE A NEW BORN INFANT IN CASE OF DANGER

The Synod doth exhort and admonish all fathers and mothers, and all other persons that are present at women's labour, to be careful not to suffer any infant to die without baptism; wherefore if they shall perceive the child when it is born, to be weak, or in danger of dying presently, they shall then, if it can be done, call the vicar, or in his absence any other priest, to come immediately to baptize the infant; but if the danger shall be such as not to admit of any delay, in that case any person that is present shall baptize it in the church; throwing water upon its face, and saying, 'I baptize thee in the

name of the Father, and of the Son, and the Holy Ghost, Amen': which shall be done by ecclesiastics, if any are present, rather than laics, and by men, rather than women, if they know the form; but if they do not, then any one that knows it may perform it; and when infants are in danger of dying in the birth, in case the head or any other principal member doth appear, though the whole body should not, they shall sprinkle the member that appears with water, using the Form. And as for those that have been baptized in this manner, if they shall happen to live, and it shall be proved that they were baptized on the head, or the greater part of the body, they shall not then be christened again, but shall only be carried to the church to be anointed with the holy oils; but if the baptism was performed on any other part, they shall then be baptized again, but with a condition, saying, 'If thou art not baptized, I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, Amen.' And after the same manner priests, and others shall behave themselves, as to such persons of whose baptism they have any reason to doubt; provided, if there are any other present, it shall not be lawful for the parents of such infants to baptize them, that they may not contract the spiritual relation of godfather, or godmother; but in case there should be nobody else present, and the child should be in apparent danger of death, in such a case of necessity, the father or mother must baptize it.

DECREE VIII

CHRISTAN MIDWIVES TO BE RECOMMENDED, AND INSTRUCTED IN THE FORM OF BAPTISM

The Synod doth earnestly recommend to all people, to procure Christian Daias or midwives in all their towns, and such as know the form of baptism, and are able to succour the necessities of infants when born in danger: and whereas infidel daias do use a great many ceremonies and superstitions with infants, which are foreign to the purity and integrity of the Gospel, and especially such of them as are Mahomedans; the vicars shall therefore take care frequently to instruct all their people, but especially the daias, in the form of baptism, that so every body may know how to succour the necessities of infants when they are born; and the confessors of the daias must be sure to examine them as to the said form, and having instructed them therein, shall acquaint them how much it is their duty to be perfect in it.

DECREE IX

CHILDREN OF INFIDEL SLAVES TO BE BAPTIZED; AND THE SLAVES TO BE INSTRUCTED AND EXHORTED TO RECEIVE BAPTISM

The Synod doth command, That no person presume to keep an infidel slave without baptizing him; whom, if they are infants, they shall baptize presently; and if come to years of discretion, they shall take care to instruct

in the faith, in order to make them Christians, but without any manner of compulsion, besides that of continual persuasion; and whosoever should be found to have an infidel child that is not baptized, or one that is of age and does desire to be, shall be severely punished by the prelate, and the parties shall be christened: in this the vicars ought to be extremely vigilant, and especially when they make the roll of confessions, and inquire what persons are in every family, and who are not Christians, and why they are not.

*DECREE X

BAPTIZED SLAVES NOT TO BE SOLD TO INFIDELS

There being some Christians so unmindful of their Christian obligations, as to sell Christians to infidels, contrary to the holy canons, who by that means are certainly constrained to apostatize from the faith; wherefore the Synod in virtue of obedience, and upon pain of excommunication to be ipso facto incurred, doth command, That no Christian presume to sell any of the faithful to infidels; and that whosoever shall be found to have done it, shall be forthwith declared excommunicate, and shall not be absolved, until he hath redeemed the said Christian, though he should cost him more than what he sold him for; or until it shall be manifest to the vicar of the church, and to other curates, and the whole people, that it cannot be done; in which case he shall not be absolved until by way of penance he has refunded the money that he received, with which the vicar and church-wardens shall buy an infidel, whom they shall christen, great numbers of such being sold daily in Malabar; and the person so bought shall have his liberty, and shall be committed to the care of some devout substantial Christian that will educate him for God's sake. Moreover, the Synod in virtue of obedience, doth prohibit all Christians to sell any boys or girls, though they are not baptized, to any Mahomedan, Jew, or Heathen; it being certain, that such when sold to infidels, will never come to the knowledge of the faith; though when it is necessary, and they are their lawful slaves, they may sell them to other Christians: whosoever shall transgress herein, shall be severely punished, except the person that was sold was twenty years of age; and it is manifest to the Vicar, to whom he shall be carried before he is sold, that he refused to be baptized.

DECREE XI

COMMANDS CHRISTIANS TO RESCUE AND CHERISH THE CHILDREN OF HEATHEN EXPOSED BY THEIR PARENTS

The heathens of these parts being so strangely addicted to auguries, and superstitions, as sometimes to kill their children which are born on those days which they reckon to be unlucky, imagining they must be miserable if they live, the mothers, that they may not murder them with their own hands, leaving them in heaths, or at the bottom of some tree, or in a ditch, there to

perish; wherefore the Synod doth command all the faithhful Christians of this bishopric, That whereas living among such heathens, and being their neighbours, they cannot for the most part but know what passes in their houses, to be very watchful in this case; and whensoever they shall know of any infants being thus exposed, or shall find them at any time in the heaths, to carry them home to their houses, and cherish them with Christian charity, either baptizing them themselves, or procuring it to be done; and if when they find them, they shall apprehend them to be near dying, notwithstanding they may know that their parents will take it ill of them, who by thus exposing them have lost their dominion over them, they shalll baptize them immediately, whereby the church will acquire a right in them, and as a holy mother, is glad to receive them; and if it should so happen that those by whom they are found, are not in a condition to breed them up, they shall then carry them to the vicar, and the other curates of the church, whom we command in the name of Christ, to call together the chief men of the parish, to take some course about the bringing up of the child; and if there is no well-disposed person that will for the love of God, take the charge thereof upon him, they shall then procure a nurse, and whatsoever else is necessary, if there can be no other way found, out of the alms and fabric of the church.

*DECREE XII

FOUNDLINGS TO BE TREATED IN LIKE MANNER

The Synod commands, That the infants that are left at the gates of the churches, or in any other place, if it does not manifestly appear that they are already christened, shall be baptized, and shall be brought up in the same manner as is prescribed for the children of infidels that are found exposed in the heaths, the vicars doing all they can to prevail with some to undertake the charge of their education for God's sake.

DECREE XIII

CONVERTS TO BE INSTRUCTED AND BAPTIZED

All that shall be converted from heathenism to Christianity, being of age, shall be well instructed in the matters of faith, before they shall be admitted to baptism, and shall know at least how to cross themselves, and be able to say the Pater Noster, Ave Mary, the Creed, and the commandments, as well as they can be taught; in which matter there has been hitherto a great neglect, commanding the vicars to examine all such in the faith before they christen them, without they should happen to be in danger of death before they have learned those things; in which case their making a profession of faith, and the necessary mysteries thereof, and signifying a desire to be baptized, shall be sufficient: and whereas the Synod is informed, that great numbers of infidels living among Christians, have long desired baptism of

them, but through the coldness of priests and others, have had none that would be at the pains to instruct them, it doth therefore charge the consciences of the vicars therewith, speedily to set about instrucing such, according to the fervour of those that desire it, that so they may be brought to the sacred font of baptism, desiring all other Christians likewise to be diligent and zealous in that matter.

DECREE XIV

HOLY OILS COMMANDED TO BE USED

The holy oils having hitherto not been used in this bishopric in any of the sacraments, and if any have been used, it having been without any distinction, and without being blessed by the bishop; wherefore for remedy thereof, the most illustrious Metropolitan, in his reformation of the affairs of this church, having on the Thursday of the last holy week blessed the oils, and furnished all the churches therewith, instructing them in their holy uses and distinctions; the Synod doth therefore command all vicars in virtue of holy obedience, to use the said oils in baptism, anointing all that are baptized therewith on the breast and the sides, and after they are baptized, anointing them with the holy chrism on the head, and making the sign of the cross thereon with their thumb dipt in the holy oils, or with a feather kept in the vessel for that use, wiping the oil off afterwards with a cloth or towel, which shall likewise be kept in the same place: the Synod doth also command under the same precept, that all curates and vicars do celebrate this sacrament, with the rites and ceremonies, exorcisms and prayers, that are contained in the Roman ceremonial; which the most illustrious Metropolitan has ordered to be translated into Syrian for the administration of all the sacraments, and is to be kept in all churches; and that the priests when they administer baptism solemnly in the church, shall have on a surplice, and a stole about their necks, for the more decent administration of that sacrament, and shall not perform it in their ordinary wearing habit, as they have done hitherto.

DECREE XV

SPONSORS APPOINTED TO BE USED

Whereas hitherto the ancient custom of the church of having godfathers and godmothers, has not been in use in this bishopric, by which means there has been no knowledge therein, of the spiritual affinity that is contracted betwixt the party baptized, and the parents thereof, and the godfathers and godmothers; therefore the Synod does command, that all that are baptized, shall have one or two godfathers and godmothers, to present them in the church, and to touch them on the head before bapitsm, and to receive them from the holy font: the men must be fourteen years of age at least, and the women twelve; neither shall any be admitted under those ages. The Synod

doth likewise declare, that there is such a close spiritual affinity betwixt the godfathers and godmothers, and their godchildren, and the parents of the children, that they can never marry with one another, without a dispensation from the pope, or from one empowered by him, and which is seldom granted, and never but when there is a very urgent cause for it; and that such marriages celebrated without a dispensation, are void and of no effect. The Synod furthermore declares, that this spiritual affinity reacheth no further than to the one or two godfathers, and one godmother, but not to those that shall stand for them, though they touch the heads of the children, neither shall the priest admit above two.

DECREE XVI

OLD TESTAMENT NAMES TO BE DISCONTINUED, AND THOSE OF THE THE NEW TESTAMENT GIVEN

Seeing that by our Lord Jesus Christ and his death, we are passed from the old law to the new law of grace, it is therefore reasonable, that we should in all things be ingrafted into the same: and whereas in this bishopric Christians do take several of the names of the saints of the Old Testament, as also several of the names of the country, insomuch that there are but very few called by any of the names of the law of grace; wherefore the Synod doth command the priests to do all they can to have the names of the law of grace given in baptism, but chiefly those of the holy apostles, and of the saints that are most celebrated in the church, not intending hereby to take them from any devotion that several among them may have for some of the saints of the Old Testament, whose names have been hitherto very common in the diocese, such as Abraham, Jacob, Zacharias, and others; nevertheless from henceforward they shall not presume to take the name of Hijo, which has been very common among them, neither shall the priests ever give it to any, it being the most sweet name of Jesus, to which that respect and reverence is due, that none ought to take it upon them; for that in the naming thereof, "all knees both in heaven and earth, and under the earth, ought to bow themselves, and every tongue ought to confess, that it is from that Divine name that we desire all the good things that we enjoy on earth;" commanding all that are called by that name, to change it for another when they come to be confirmed; and as for the common names of the country, they may still retain them, if they are such as have been used only among Christians, but not among the heathens, for as to those names which the heathens have in common with Christians, the Synod will not have them to be given in baptism, charging the vicars and priests that baptize, to take care thereof.

*DECREE XVII

CHILDREN TO BE CALLED ONLY BY THE NAME RECEIVED AT BAPTISM

The Synod being informed, that there are some Christians so far unmindful of their duties in this matter, as to give other names to their children, than the Christian names they received in baptism, and sometimes such as are not used among Christians; it doth therefore strictly command, that no Christian shall presume to give their children, or to call them by any other names, than those that were given them when they were christened; or when there shall happen to be any just cause for the changing of their baptismal names, it shall be done only at their confirmation, and whosoever shall transgress herein, shall be severely punished by the prelate; and the priests must not be wanting frequently to admonish their people thereof.

DECREE XVIII

CHIDREN TO BE BAPTIZED IN ORDER, WITHOUT RESPECT OF PERSONS

The Synod being informed, that when many children are brought together to be baptized, there are great heats, which shall be first christened; and that after having laid wagers, they give money to the curates for the preference, all which are intolerable disorders, and such scandalous abominations as the church ought not by any means to give way to, and which might be easily prevented, if people could but be persuaded to bring their children to be christened upon the eighth day, it being their deferring of their baptism so long, that is the cause of so many coming together; wherefore for the removing of these disorders in the church, the Synod doth command that the children be baptized as they come, without any distinction of first or last, and that the priests do accustom themselves, either to baptize the poorest first, or all indifferently; and the vicar or priest that shall be found to have taken money or any fee, before or after baptism, though it should be voluntarily offered, and of never so small value, or only what is to be eat, shall be condemned of simony, and punished according to the canons.

DECREE XIX

INSTRUCTIONS CONCERNING THE FONTS AND WATER OF BAPTISM

In all parochial churches there shall with all possible expedition be fonts provided for baptism, which may be built with the fabric money, or with the alms-money of the church, or by a collection among the parishioners; it must be erected in a decent place, in a corner of the church, and shall have a hole in the bottom, through which the water may be conveyed away, that so it may not be thrown out where it may be trod upon, or treated with any

irreverence, it shall also be close covered at top, and locked up, and until such time as a font shall be provided, they shall have a vessel of some metal or other, which shall be put to no other use, and shall be always kept in some decent place in the church, or sacristy; neither shall they hereafter make use of any common vessel, as has been the custom hitherto; and the water they have baptized with, shall be thrown in some place of the church, where it will not be trod upon, and all the water that shall be made use of in baptism, whether it be in a font or a vessel, shall be blessed with the holy chrism, according to the Roman ceremonial, which they are to make use of.

DECREE XX

BAPTISMAL REGISTERS

This Synod, conforming itself to the decrees of the holy Council of Trent, and the universal usages of the church, doth command every parish church to provide a book, wherein the vicar shall register the names of all that are baptized, together with the names of the parents, and of the place where they live, and of the godfathers and godmothers, naming the place also where they were christened, the day of the month, and the year, in this form: on such a day of the month, in the year *N.*I, *N.* vicar of the church of *N.* baptized there or in such a place, N.the son of *N.*and of N.naming the father and mother natives of such a place, and the godfathers and godmothers were *N.* and *N.* the vicar signing his name to it at the bottom; and when any priest that is not the vicar shall christen a child, which shall never be done without the vicar's leave he shall register it thus: I, *N.* curate with leave from the vicar of such a church, naming both the vicar and the church, did baptize *N.* and so on as above, signing his name at the bottom; which book shall be always kept in the church, and the vicars shall be obliged to give an account thereof, and at every visitation to show it to the prelate, out of which the curates are to give certificates of the age of such as are to be married, or to receive holy orders, that so their age may be certainly known; and that such matters may not be so in the dark, as they have been formerly, when there was no certain way of coming to the knowledge of people's age, which must needs create great scruples in the minds of such as were to be married or ordained.

The Doctrine of the Sacrament of Confirmation

The second sacrament is Confirmation, which our Lord Christ instituted, in order to the confirming and establishing of Christians in the Faith, so that nothing might be able to separate them from it through the power of the Holy Ghost which is given therein, particularly to that effect besides the sanctifying grace which it gives in common with the other divine sacraments; the matter of this sacrament is the holy oil of chrism, made of the oil of the olive-tree, signifying the light and purity of the conscience; and of balsam,

which signifies the sweet smell of a good name, both mixed together, and blessed by the hand of the bishop; the form are the words spoken by the bishop when he dips his thumb into the said chrism, making therewith the sign of the cross on the forehead of the person that is confirmed, saying, 'I sign thee with the sign of the cross, and do confirm thee with the chrism of health, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost;' to which the bishop subjoins three holy and wholesome prayers, wherein he beseeches God to fill those that are confirmed with his Divine Spirit. The ordinary minister of confirmation is the bishop, for though simple priests may perform several other unctions, this can be done only by a bishop, the bishops being the successors of the Apostles, by the imposition of whose hands the Holy Ghost was given; in the place of which imposition of hands the church gives confirmation, Christ having so ordained it, wherein the Holy Ghost is given likewise; nevertheless, by a dispensation from the holy see, and by no other way, when there is any very urgent occasion, or when it happens to be necessary for the good of the faithful, simple priests may confirm with chrism, that has been consecrated by a bishop in the forementioned form; the effect of this sacrament is, that therein the Holy Ghost is given, to the strengthening and fortifying of the soul, as it was given to the Apostles on the day of Pentecost, that Christians may with boldness confess the name of Christ and his catholic faith, for which reason the person confirmed is anointed on the forehead with the sign of the cross, that being the most open place of the body, and the seat of shame and confusion, which is very different from what is done to people when they are baptized, who are anointed on the head; people are confirmed on the forehead, that they may not be ashamed to confess the name of Jesus Christ and his cross, which as the Apostle saith, is "to the Jews an offence, and to the heathens foolishness;" this sacrament differs much from that of baptism, for as by baptism we are born into the faith, so by this we are confirmed therein; for as in the natural life, to be born is different from growing, so in the spiritual life it is one thing to be born to grace and faith, which is done in baptism and another to increase and grow stronger therein, which is done in confirmation, and so in baptism we are born to a spiritual life, and are afterwards prepared and confirmed for our warfare, and do receive so much strength, that no dangers or terrors of punishments, or losses, or torments, or deaths are able to separate us from the confession of the name of Christ, and of the true faith we profess.

DECREE I

ALL PEOPLE COMMANDED TO BE CONFIRMED

For as much as hitherto there has been no use, nor so much as knowledge of the holy sacrament of Confirmation among the Christians of this bishopric, the heretical prelates that governed it, having neglected to feed the people in a great many cases with wholesome catholic food; therefore the Synod doth declare, that all persons who are come to the use of reason, ought

to receive this holy sacrament, having the opportunity of receiving it at the hands of a bishop, and that all masters of families, and others having the charge of children, are in duty bound to command their children and slaves to receive the said sacrament, and that all who out of contumacy or contempt shall refuse to receive it, or to order such as belong to them to go to it, are guilty of a mortal sin, and if they neglect it out of a conceit of its not being a sacrament, they are heretics and aliens from the true catholic faith; wherefore the Synod doth command, that in the visitation that is to be made speedily by the most illustrious Metropolitan in the churches of this bishopric, all men and women that are above seven years old do come to be christened or confirmed, those only excepted who were confirmed by the said lord in his former visitation, or at some other, or on some other occasion, by some other bishop; this sacrament as well as that of baptism being never to be repeated, insomuch, that all that receive it a second time wittingly, are guilty of a great piece of sacrilege, besides, that they receive no sacrament thereby: but in case any are doubtful whether they have ever been confirmed or not, or should not remember that they were ever, they shall declare so much to the said lord, or to the bishop that is to confirm them, that they may order the matter according to the merit of their doubts: but if any, which God forbid, should sacrilegiously and obstinately despise the said sacrament, it being proved upon them, they shall be declared excommunicate until such time as they have done condign penance, and shall be punished at the pleasure of the prelate.

DECREE II

ALL THAT TREAT CONFIRMATION WITH CONTEMPT TO BE EXCOMMUNICATED

The Synod, to its great sorrow, having been informed, that some ignorant persons in sacred matters and the doctrine of the holy sacraments of the church, being instigated by the devil to persist in their cursed schism, did in several places resist the most illustrious Metropolitan in his former visitation of these churches, so far as not only to refuse to receive the holy sacrament of Confirmation from him, but did also oppose him publicly in the churches, and that many did absent themselves, some whereof excused themselves by pretending, that it was an unnecessary thing, and that they had never seen nor heard of it before, and others that they should be affronted by the holy ceremony of the prelates touching their cheek, scurrilously upbraiding those that had received it, with base provoking words, telling them that they had suffered themselves to be affronted and buffeted, with other such sacrilegious expressions, full of infidelity and heresy, arising from the schism wherein they have been brought up: whole towns conspiring together so far in this mutiny, that the despising or receiving this holy sacrament, became the test of their obedience or disobedience to the said Metropolitan,

doth therefor (notwithstanding it knows they have all in common, and every one in particular repented of this, and being sensible of the greatness of the error they committed therein, have begged pardon for it, and upon their having confessed their ignorance, have been graciously received by the said lord Metropolitan, and having submitted themselves to the obedience of the holy Roman Church, are ready to do all that shall be enjoined them, to prevent the like however, that none for the time coming may commit the like faults or sacrileges) command, That if any (which God forbid) shall dare to do or say any such thing against this sacrament or the holy ceremonies and rites wherewith it is administered to the faithful, that they be declared excommunicate, and be separated from the church and the communion of the faithful, until such time as they have undergone condign penance at the pleasure of the prelate, and shall demonstrate their due subjection to the obedience of the holy church, and have taken the oath of the faith contained in this Synod, and declared that all that reject and despise the rites and ceremonies approved of, and received in the church, in the solemn administration of this and the other sacraments, are heretics and apostates from our holy catholic faith, as was determined in the holy council of Trent, and ought to be proceeded against and punished as such, according to the sacred canons.

DECREE III

SPONSORS APPOINTED IN CONFIRMATION

The Synod doth declare, That in the sacrament of Confirmation of Chrism, there must be a godfather and godmother as well as in baptism, to present such as are to be confirmed according to the ancient custom of holy mother church, but there shall be but only one godfather and godmother, who must themselves have been confirmed; it being very indecent, that any person should present one to have that done to him, which they have not had done to themselves; and that the man shall be above fourteen, and the woman above twelve years old, or one of them at least shall be of that age; and in this case the godfathers and godmothers do contract the same spiritual affinities and the same impediments that the others do in baptism, the said spiritual affinity being equally contracted in both these sacraments.

SESSION V

OF THE HOLY SACRAMENT OF THE EUCHARIST, AND OF THE HOLY SACRIFICE OF THE MASS

The Doctrine of the Holy Sacrament of the Eucharist

The third sacrament in the order of the spiritual life, is the holy Eucharist, though in veneration, sanctity and dignity, it is the first and most

excellent, for containing in it the true, real and substantial body and blood, together with the soul and divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, true God, and true Man, our Saviour and Redeemer; which was instituted by him the day before he suffered for us, as the most sweet remate, or conclusion of all his works, and a memorial of his passion, the fulfilling of all the ancient figures, the greatest of all the miracles that ever he wrought, and for the singular consolation of the faithful in his absence. The matter of this sacrament is bread of wheat, and wine of the grape only; so that all that consecrate in bread made of rice, or of anything else but the flour of wheat, or of wine that was not pressed out of the ripe grape of the vine do not make the sacrament; there must also be water mixed with the wine before it is consecrated, but in a much smaller quantity than the wine, that so it may easily turn itself into wine before the consecration: which mixture is therefore made, because from the testimony of holy fathers, holy mother church believes that our Lord Christ himself did so, whose having mixed water with the wine that he consecrated, makes it a great sin to omit to do it. It is also agreeable to the representation of the mystery of what passed on the cross, and of our Lord Christ, out of whose precious side flowed water and blood; as also to signify the effect of this sacrament, which is the union of the faithful with Christ, the water signifying the faithful, and the wine our Lord Christ, and the conversion of the water into the wine, the union of our souls with Christ by means of this divine sacrament, according to what our Lord said; "He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him." The form of this sacrament is the words of our Saviour, by which the sacrament is made; for though the priest pronounceth many and divers words in the mass, and makes many prayers and petitions to God, yet when he comes to consecrate, he useth only the words of Christ, none others belonging to the substance of consecration; so the priest speaking in the person of Christ makes this divine sacrament, because by virtue of those words, he turneth the substance of bread into the substance of the body of Christ, and the whole substance of the wine into his blood, there remaining nothing of bread and wine after that, but only the accidents or species of them; and that after such a manner, that the whole of Christ's body and soul, and divinity, are contained under every particle of both, though never so small when separated; so that in every crumb of the host, though never so small, there is Christ entire, and in every drop of the species of wine that is separated there is Christ entire, so that in each of the species whole Christ, God and man is received, as also the true sacrament; for which reason holy mother church does not use to communicate the faithful but under one species, because in that they receive Christ entire. To this Divine sacrament the worship, veneration and adoration of Latria is due, or the same that is due to God who is contained therein, and is really present there. The effect that this sacrament worked on the souls of those that receive it worthily, is the union of the man with Christ, and by it, through grace, the man is incorporated into Christ, and joined to his members: moreover by this sacrament, grace is increased in all such as

receive it worthily, so that whatever effects carnal eating and drinking work upon a man as to his corporal life, the same are wrought upon man by this divine sacrament as to a spiritual life.

DECREE 1

WHEN THE EUCHARIST IS TO BE SPECIALLY CELEBRATED

There being nothing so necessary for the faithful, as the acknowledgment of, and thankfulness for so profound a blessing, and so excellent a mercy as that which our Lord Christ did for us, in living himself under the sacramental species, to be the true food of our souls, and for the consolation, support, and remedy of the spiritual life of believers; we ought therefore wholly to occupy ourselves in the veneration of that divine mystery: in order whereunto, holy mother church, besides the continual thanks and veneration which she always gives and shows, hath ordained a particular day in the year for the celebration of the memory of so great a blessing: which not being observed in this diocese, the Synod desiring that in all things this church may conform herself to the customs of the holy mother, the universal Church of Rome doth command the festivity of the most holy sacrament to be celebrated in all the churches of this diocese, on the Thursday after Trinity Sunday, according to the stile of these parts, and the said day to be kept by all sorts of people; and that thereon, either before or after mass, they make a procession through the town, or in some convenient place with all possible solemnity, in the same manner as they do upon Easter-day.

DECREE II

ALL ABOVE THE AGE OF FOURTEEN TO TAKE THE SACRAMENT AT LEAST ONCE A YEAR

The Synod doth declare, That every faithful Christian so soon as he attains to the years of perfect discretion, that is to say, men at the age of fourteen, more or less, according as their confessors shall think fit, and women having a capacity to know what they do at the age of twelve, are obliged to receive the most holy sacrament of the Eucharist, once a year in Lent, or at Easter, from the hands of their own vicar or curate of their church, and that whosoever does not receive it, being capable, betwixt the beginning of Lent, and the second Sunday after Easter, shall be declared excommunicate on the third Sunday, and be held as such until they have confessed themselves and communicated. Nevertheless the Synod gives licence to such vicars as know their parishes to be of that nature, that it is not possible for the people to comply with this obligation in so short a time, to wait till Whitsuntide, and then to declare them; provided that before they declare those that live on the heaths, they shall first take care to admonish them, either by themselves, or by others of known fidelity, that so they may do their duty

herein, letting them know if they fail, that they must be declared excommunicate. The curates must also be sure to observe who have complied with this obligation, putting their names in a roll as is ordered in confession. But notwithstanding the sacred canons do oblige the faithful only to confess and communicate once a year at the time aforesaid, nevertheless the vicars shall advise their parishioners to do it oftener, namely at Christmas and Whitsuntide, and the assumption of our lady, giving warning thereof on the Sunday before.

DECREE III

NONE TO RECEIVE BEFORE CONFESSION

The Synod doth declare and teach, That no Christian, how contrite soever for his sins, may lawfully come to receive the divine sacrament of the altar, being guilty of any mortal sin, without having first confessed all his sins entirely, to some approved priest that has authority to receive his confession, that being the trial and examination that the Apostle speaks of, and saith a man ought to make of himself, and being so approved and confessed, let him eat of the divine bread, and drink of the divine cup; " For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily," and with a conscience of sin, "eateth and drinketh judgment" and condemnation " to himself: for which reason this divine sacrament must not be given to public sinners, without they have left their sins, as public witches, and common women, and such as keep concubines publicly, and such as are in open malice, before they are reconciled and all other open sinners whatsoever. In which matter the vicars must be extremely careful, being sensible, that as it is a grievous sin in such to receive the divine sacrament, before they have forsaken their sins; so it is likewise a grievous offence in them to give the sacrament to such public sinners, and who are known by all to live in such sins, and not to have forsaken them, notwithstanding they should have been confessed by others and should bring a note of their being absolved. This matter ought to be laid home to the consciences of the vicars by reason of the great dissoluteness that there is in this bishopric in giving the communion to public sinners, and especially to those that keep concubines, and are married, but will not live with their wives, and to others who live in open malice without anybody to hinder them of all which the vicars must give a strict account to God; but at the point of death they may give the divine sacrament even to such as have been public sinners, if they are not finally impenitent.

DECREE IV

TO BE RECEIVED FASTING

The Synod teacheth, That this divine sacrament ought to be received fasting, as holy mother church commands, and that upon the day on

which people are to communicate, they are neither to eat nor drink any thing from midnight until after they have received the communion, not to do so being a most grievous sacrilege, such only excepted as are under any great infirmity, or much spent with sickness, who may take electuaries, and other light things to strengthen them, of which the confessor must be judge.

DECREE V

SACRAMENT TO BE ADMINISTERED AS A VIATICUM WHEN IN DANGER OF DEATH

Christians are not only bound to receive the most holy sacrament of the altar once a year, at Easter, but as often as they are in probable danger of death, and especially in any great sickness, for which reason this divine sacrament is called the viaticum, that is to say the support in the way from a mortal to an eternal life, wherefore the Synod doth command all sick people, whose distempers are any thing dangerous, to receive it with much devotion; and as they that look after the sick ought to give the vicars timely notice, so the vicars themselves must be diligent to enquire what persons are sick in their parishes, that so before they come to be too weak at a time when it will do them no prejudice, they may be brought in a palanquin, or in something else that covers them to the church, there to receive the holy sacrament; for which use there shall be a palanquin, or net,made commodious with carpets, in every church, in which the sick shall be carried with due care, which shall be bought within a month after the publication hereof out of the fabric money of the church, all which the Synod doth recommend earnestly to the vicars, this being truly the chief duty of their office; and if it shall any time happen that a parishioner shall die without having received the communion, through the vicars default, the said vicar shall be suspended for six months from his office and benefice, and if it happens through the vicars not having been advised thereof, then those that attended the sick person, shall be severely punished by the prelate.

DECREE VI

WOMEN BEFORE CHILDBIRTH, AND TRAVELLERS BEFORE A VOYAGE, TO TAKE THE SACRAMENT

Whereas women are many times in danger of death in child-bed, a great many dying therein, the Synod doth therefore declare, That all women with child ought about the time when they reckon they are to be delivered, to confess themselves and receive the holy sacrament, but especially before the birth of their first child, in which the danger is greatest, recommending it to them to be careful to it in time, that they may not be prevented by their labour from going to church. Such also as design to undertake any long and

dangerous voyage, ought to do the same, to whom the Synod recommends it much, and requires it of them.

DECREE VII

PRIESTS TO COMMUNICATE AT LEAST ONCE A MONTH

Forasmuch as there are several priests and cattanars of this diocese that do never celebrate, some by reason of their having been ordained when they were but boys, and so do wait till they come to be of a due age, and others through other impediments, therefore the Synod doth command all such to receive the holy sacrament upon all the solemn festivities, and at least once a month, wishing they would do it every Sunday with a due preparation and reverence; and as often as any priest doth communicate, he shall be in a surplice and stole, with a cross on his breast to distinguish him from other people, by reason of the reverence and respect that is due to the sacerdotal office which he bears.

DECREEVIII

PRIESTS NOT TO COMMUNICATE WITHOUT CONFESSION IF THEY HAVE ANY SCRUPLE OF MORTAL SIN

Seeing as is aforesaid, it is not lawful for any person to come to the most holy sacrament of the altar, having the least scruple of any mortal sin about him, without having been sacramentally confessed, the Synod doth declare, That even to priests it is not lawful, and that none finding in themselves the least scruple of mortal sin, and having an opportunity of a confessor, shall say mass, though under an obligation to do it. without having first confessed themselves: but besides, that such when under any scruple are obliged to confess, for the greater purity of their souls, though under no scruple the Synod commands all priests to confess at least once a week.

DECREE IX

WHEN DEACONS AND SUBDEACONS ARE TO COMMUNICATE

The Synod doth furthermore command all deacons and subdeacons, that minister solemnly in the solemn masses on Sundays and saints-days, to receive the most holy sacrament at those times, and on the festivity of our Lord Christ, our Lady and the Holy Apostles, all the *Chamazes*, or clergy that are in the church; of which the vicars ought to take special care, and the prelate in his visitations is to make diligent inquiry, how these things are observed.

The Doctrine of the Sacrifice of the Mass

The great love of God to mankind, does not only appear in the institution of the holy sacrament of the eucharist, and in the putting of his divine body and blood under the sacramental species, to be the heavenly food of our souls, by which the spiritual life is maintained and preserved, but in his having likewise so instituted it, that the catholic church militant might have a perpetual and visible sacrifice for the purging away of our sins, and for turning the wrath of our heavenly Father, who is many times offended with our wickedness, into mercy, and the rigour of his just punishment into clemency: so in the mass there is offered unto God a true and proper sacrifice, for the pardon both of the living and of the dead, by the offering of the which sacrifice the Lord is so far appeased as to give grace, and the gift of repentance to sinners, and by means thereof does forgive men their sins and offences, though never so enormous; the host that is offered by the ministry of the priest on the altar of the church, being one and the same that was offered for us on the cross, with no other difference besides that of the reason of their being offered: and so it is not only offered for the sins, punishments, satisfactions, and other necessities of the faithful that are living, but also for the dead, departed in Christ, and that are in the torments of purgatory, being not as yet fully purged by reason of their not having made a complete satisfaction for the punishments due to their sins, it being but just and reasonable, that all should be benefited by a sacrifice, which was instituted for the remedy and health of all mankind; which oblation is of that purity, that no indignity or wickedness in the offerers is able to defile it: so that as to the substance, value, and acceptation, it is the same when offered by a wicked and unclean sinner, as when by a pure and holy priest, because it does not derive its dignity from the offerer, but from the majesty and excellency of what is offered, neither does the eternal Father accept thereof for the merits and virtue of the priest that offers it, but for the value of the sacrifice itself, and the infinite merits of Christ, who is offered therein; so that our Saviour being about to offer himself to God the Father on the altar of the cross, could not possibly have given us a greater expression of his immense love for us, than by leaving us this visible sacrifice in his church, in which the blood which was presently to be once offered upon the altar of the cross, was to be renewed every day upon the altar of the church, and the memory thereof to our great profit, was to be adored everywhere in the church until the end of the world; which divine sacrifice is offered to God only, notwithstanding it is sometimes celebrated in memory and honour of the martyrs and other saints in bliss; it not being offered to them but to God only, who has been pleased to crown them with immortal honour, rendering him thereby our bounden thanks for the notable victory of the martyrs, and the public mercies and blessings, he has vouchsafed to other saints, and for the victories which by these means they obtained over the world, the flesh, and the devil; beseeching the said saints to be pleased to intercede for us in Heaven, whose memories we celebrate on earth: and

though the divine eucharist does still continue to be a sacrament, yet it is never a sacrifice, but as it is offered in the mass.

DECREE I

DIRECTIONS FOR SAYING MASS: AND THE SYRIAN MISSALS TO BE ALTERED IN CONFORMITY TO THE DOCTRINES OF ROME

Forasmuch as it is of great moment, that all things belonging to the sacrifice of the mass, should be preserved pure and undefiled, and whereas this church has been for 1200 years from under the obedience of the holy Roman Church, the mistress of all the other churches, and from whence all good government and true doctrines do come, all the bishops that came hither from Babylon having been schismatics and Nestorian heretics, who have added to, and taken from the mass at their pleasure without any order; from whence it has come to pass, that several things are foisted into the Syrian mass which is said in this diocese, without any consideration, and such things too as may give occasion to many impious and heretical errors: for which, if due order were observed, all the missals of this bishopric ought to be burned, as also for their having been of Nestorian use, and compiled by Nestorian heretics; but being there are no other at present, they are tolerated, until such time as our lord the Pope shall take some order therein, and there shall be missals sent by him printed in the Chaldee tongue, which is what this Synod humbly and earnestly desires may be done: and in the mean time it doth command, that the missals now in use be purged and reformed as to all the following matters, and that till such time as they are so purged, which the most illustrious metropolitan, with the assistance of some persons well versed in the Chaldee tongue will see done the next visitation, no priest shall presume to make use of them any more.

Whereas from the above declared doctrine of this sacrament it is evident, that the priest does not consecrate with his own words, but with those of our Lord Christ, the author add institutor of the said divine sacrament; it is not therefore lawful to and any clause, how good soever in itself to the form of consecration, or to what out Lord Chirst said therein; in which we do not comprehend the word Enim, which the church of Rome adds to the consecration of the body and blood; for besides that, there is the tradition of the holy Apostles, for our Lord Christ having used it in the consecration of the body; and that St. Matthew also relates it in the consecration to a sentence of the words of Christ which immediately follow. As also the word *aeterni* in the consecration of the cup; and the words *'mysterium fidei'*; which though not mentioned by the evangelists, yet as it is proved by apostolical tradition, were used by our Lord Christ in the consecration of the cup, and for that reason the holy church continues to use them in the same; but as for the words added to the consecration of the cup in the Syrian missal, ' *et hoc erit vobis pignus in saecula saeculorum*,' they being nowhere in any of the four evangelists, nor

in any book of the New Testament; and it not appearing to the church by apostolical tradition, that Christ used them in that consecration, the Synod doth prohibit them to be used therein any more; but the words in themselves being good and holy, and agreeable to what holy church singeth of this divine sacrament, that it is the pledge of the glory that we expect, that we may keep to the old missal so far as the sincerity of the faith, and the purity of this divine sacrifice will permit, the priest shall say them after the elevation of the cup, where making a profound reverence, he shall begin the following prayers with them, only changing the word *vobis*, which was used as spoke by Christ, for *nobis*, as spoke by himself, saying, '*Hoc erit nobis pignus*:' and for the words, in '*saecula saeculorum*,' which follow, they being commonly said in the church of such matters only as are to last for ever, or are wished to be eternal, seeing the use of this divine sacrament as well as of the rest, is to continue but to the end of the world, (they having been instituted only as a remedy for our spiritual necessities in this life, for in the other we are to see our Lord no more under sacramental species, but clearly as he is, neither shall we in heaven eat this divine bread of angels sacramentally, but shall eat as the angels do in the vision of the divine word.) The words '*in saecula saeculorum*' shall be therefore left out, and instead thereof shall be put '*usque ad consummationem saeculi*,' saying '*hoc erit nobis pignus usque ad consummationem saeculi*' the sacrament being a pledge only for so long as we do not see the glory that we hope for, but is and ever will be such a pledge in this life, Christ having promised to his church, 'that he will be with her to the end of the world;' so that the divine sacraments, which were instituted for our benefit, can never fail till then; after these words the priest shall go on with what immediately follows in the mass, '*Gloria tibi, Domine, gloria tibi*,' and so on.

Furthermore, in the consecration of the cup, there is added to the words of Christ, '*novi testamenti qui pro vobis, &c. novi et aeterni testamenti mysterium fidei, qui pro vobis et pro multis*,' &c. Therefore the Synod doth command, That the words of consecration of the body and blood be reformed, and put in all their missals, according to the canon of the Roman missal used in the universal church without the least addition or diminution, and with the same adorations, inclinations, and ceremonies as are in the Roman missal.

Furthermore , where the priest saith '*Dominus Deus noster quando spirabit in nobis odor suavissimus*,' it is said in the same prayer, '*et cum animae nostrae veritatis tuae scientia fuerint illustratae, tunc occurremus dilecto filio tuo*,' &c., speaking of the day of judgment, it shall be said, '*Cum corpora nostra vertatis tuae splendore fuerint illustrata, tunc occurremus dilecto filio tuo*,' the souls of the just being illuminated and glorified in Heaven before the day of judgment, which is the time when the bodies receive their glory; this passage seeming to allude to the Nestorian heresy, which teacheth that the souls of the just do not see God, nor are glorified, nor are in bliss, before the day of judgment.

Furthermore, where the deacon saith, '*Orando pro sanctis patribus nostris patrearcha nostro pastoreuniversalis totius ecclesiae catholicae,*' meaning the schismatic of Babylon, et episcopo hujus metropolis;' it shall be said, '*pro sanctis patribus nostris, beatissimo papa nostro totius ecclesiae catholicae pastore,*' naming him by his name, '*et episcopo hujus metropolis,*' naming him also, '*et ministris ipsorum* ;' and a little lower where the deacon praying, saith, '*praecipue nos oportet orare pro incolumitate patrum nostrorum sanctorum, domini patriarchae totius ecclesiae catholicae pastoris,*' naming the patriarch of Babylon by name, instead thereof he shall say, '*Praecipue oportet nos orare pro incolumitate patrum nostrorum Domini Papae,*' naming him also, '*et episcopi hujus metropolis,*' naming him also.

Furthermore, when the deacon a little before saith, '*commemoramus autem beatissimam Mariam, virginem matrem Christi et salvatoris,*' it shall be said, '*Sanctam matrem Dei vivi, et salvatoris, et redemptoris nostri,*' &c, because the perverse Nestorians do impiously deny the Blessed Virgin to be the mother of God, as has been observed.

Furthermore, when the deacon a little lower saith, '*Commemoramus quoque patres nostros sanctos et veritatis doctores Dominum et sanctum Nestorium,*' &c. all which is heretical, it being an impious thing sacrilegiously to pray to God to preserve the doctrine of Nestorius, and of other heretics his followers in the church, all the fore-mentioned having been such except St.Ephraim; wherefore instead of them he shall say, '*Commemoramus quoque patres nostros sanctos veritatis doctores S. Cyrillum.*' &c. And though in some missals the names of Nestorius, Theodorus, and Diodorus are already left out, yet they do still remain in some, and the names of Abraham and Narcissus, two of the ringleaders of that cursed sect are in all of them. Wherefore there must be care taken to have them also left out.

Furthermore, in the beginning of the prayer wherein the deacon saith, '*Oportet nos orare et exaltare unum deum patrem Dominum omnium adoratione dignissimum, qui per Christum fecit nobis bonam spem,*' it shall be said, ' *Qui per Jesum Christum filium suum Dominum nostrum fecit nobis bonam spem.*

Furthermore, where the priest pouring the wine into the cup, saith, '*Misceatur pretiosus sanguis in calice domini nostri Jesu Christi,*' it shall be said, ' *Misceatur vinum in calice Domini nostri,*' that no occasion may be given to the error of calling the wine before it is consecrated, the precious blood of Christ, alluding to the condemned custom of the Greeks, who as they offer the bread and wine before they are consecrated, so they adore them too, saying they do it for what they are to be; and presently after where the priest saith, '*Expectans expectavi Dominum, Corpus Christi et sanguinem ejus pretiosum super sanctum altare offeramus,*' it shall be said for the same reason, 'Panem sanctum et calicem pretiosum offeramus; and immediately after where the deacon saith, '*Edent pauperes et saturabuntur, Corpus Christi et sanguinem ejus pretiosum super sanctum altare offeramus,*' he

shall say for the same reason, '*Edent pauperes et saturabuntur, panem sanctum, et calicem pretiosum*,' &c.

Furthermore, where the priest with a low voice in the prayer, which begins, '*Offeratur et gloriae immoletur*,' saith, '*et Christus qui oblatus est pro salute nostra*,' he shall say, ' *Jesus Christus Dominus noster Dei filius qui oblatus est*,' &c. And where the priest raising his voice, saith, '*Gloria Patri, &c. Fiat commemoratio Virginis Mariae Matris Christi*', he shall say, '*Fiat commemoratio virginis matris ipsius Dei et Domini nostri Jesu Christi;*' and a little lower, where the deacon saith, '*In saecula usque in saecula, Amen, Amen, Apostoli ipsius filii et amici unigenti*;' he shall say, '*Apostoli ipsius filii dei et amici*.' And where the priest begins, '*Pusilli cum majoribus*,' and saith, '*Resurrectione tua supergloriosa resuscitabis eos ad gloriam tuam*,' he shall say, '*Per resurrectionem tuam supergloriosam suscitabis eos*.'

Furthermore, where the deacon saith, '*Effundite coram illo corda vestra, jejunio, oratione, et paenitentia, placaverunt Christum, patrem quoque et spiritum ejus sanctum*,' where in saying, '*Spiritum sanctum ejus*' they seem to allude to the error of the Greeks, that the Holy Spirit proceedeth only from the Father, and not from the Father and the Son, as from one principal, as the catholic Faith confesseth, and because the Nestorians by reason of the great communication they have had with the Greeks, have imbibed some of their errors, that there may be therefore no countenance given to such an error, it shall be reformed thus, '*Placaverunt patrem, filium, et spiritum sanctum*.'

Furthermore, in the prayer where the priest saith, '*Dominus Deus fortis, tua est ecclesia sancta catholica quae admirabili Christi tui passione empta est*;' it shall be said, '*Quae admirabili Christi filii tui*,' &c.

Furthermore, near the end of the Gospel taken out of that chapter of St. John, which, as has been observed, is corrupted in the Syrian translation, where it is read, '*quoniam venit hora in qua omnes qui im monumentis sunt audient vocem ipsius*,' it shall be read '*audient vocem filii Dei*,' as it is in the Gospel.

Furthermore, in the creed that is sung in the mass there are wanting several substantial words, where speaking of our Lord Christ, and saying, that 'he was born of the Father before all worlds,' there is wanting 'God of God, light of light, very God of very God,' all which shall be added to it: as also the word, consubstantial to the Father, leaving out the words that are in its place, in the '*Syriac, filius essentiae Patris*,' and the whole shall be reformed and translated into the same words, as it is sung in the catholic church in the Roman missal.

Furthermore, presently after the creed, where the deacon praying for, and making a commemoration of the Holy Apostles, martyrs, and confessors, desires of God that he would raise them up that they may be crowned with glory at the resurrection of the dead, saying, '*Oremus, in quam, ut resurrectione quae est ex mortuis a Deo corona donentur*,' which besides that it is not the custom of the church to pray for the Holy Apostles, Martyrs, and

confessors, nor to desire any good thing for them, whom we believe to be in possession of bliss, but much rather to pray to them, to intercede for us, and to obtain for us of God, whose familiar friends they are, all that we stand in need of, and is of importance, both as to all our spiritual and just temporal concerns; it seems to allude to the Nestorian opinion, That the souls of the saints are not to see God, until after their bodies are raised at the day of judgment, and that till then they are in a terrestrial paradise, which is impious and heretical; wherefore the Synod doth command, That since there are no such prayers used in the church, nor any such petitions made to God in behalf of the saints, notwithstanding they are said in the Revelation to make them for themselves, that those words be blotted out, and what follows be joined with what went before, saying, '*et confessores hujus loci et omnium Regionum, oremus, inquam, ut det nobis ut efficiamur socii eorum*,' &c. leaving out the fore-mentioned words; and at the end of the prayer where it is said, '*per gratiam Christi*,' it shall be said '*Per gratiam Dei, et Domini nostri Jesu Christi.*'

Furthermore where the priest begins, '*Confitemur et laudamus, Domine Deus noster*,' where he saith below, '*Dignos nos fecisti dispensatione sacramentorum sanctorum corporis et sanguinis Christi tui*,' it shall be said, '*Christi filii tui*;' as also before where the priest speaketh to those on the right side of the altar, and they answer with the deacon, '*Christus exaudiat orationes tuas, hoc sacrificium quod tu offers pro te, pro nobis, et pro toto orbe a minimo usque ad maximum*,' the last words, '*et pro toto orbe a minimo usque ad miximum*', must be left out, for the mass being a public prayer of the church, infidels, schismatics and heretics are not to be prayed for therein, but only catholics, and such as are united to the church; wherefore instead thereof it shall be said, '*quod tu offers pro te, pro nobis, et pro universa Ecclesia Catholica, et omnibus orthodoxis, atque Apostolicae et Catholicae fidei cultoribus.*'

Furthermore, where the priest begins, '*Etiam Domine Deus Exercituum*,' where he saith, '*et pro Sacerdotibus, Regibus, et Principibus*,' it shall be said, '*et pro Regibus et Principibus Catholicis*,' the Christians of this church being subject to infidel princes; and a little lower, where the priest begins '*Tu Domine cui propter*,' &c. where he saith, '*recordatione corporis et sanguinis*,' it shall be said, '*Christi filii tui*;' and a little lower in the same prayer, near the end, it shall be said, '*sanguine Christi filii tui redempta.*'

Furthermore, where the deacon and clergy praying, do say, ' Et pro omnibus Patriarchis, Episcopis, et Presbyteris,' &c. it shall be said, 'et pro beatissimo Papa nostro,' naming him, ' et pro omnibus Patriarchis et Episcopis.'

Furthermore, in the hymn said by the clergy and the deacon *alternatim* after the elevation of the most holy sacrament, in the verse where the priest saith, '*Quando ad sanctum altare ingreditur, manus suas pure protendit in coelum, et invitat spiritum qui de superis descendit et consecrat corpus et sanguinem Christi,*' in which words the priest seems to call upon the Holy

Ghost, to come down from heaven to consecrate the body of Christ, as if it were not the priest that consecrated it; whereas in truth it is the priest that does it, though not in his own words, but the words of Christ; wherefore that no colour may be given to such an error, it shall be said, '*manus suas pure protendit in coelum et consecrat corpus et sanguinem Christi,*' leaving out the words of '*et invitat spiritum qui de superis descendit,*' &c. and the following words '*a saeculo usque in saeculum.*'

Furthermore, in the prayer said by the deacon, which begins '*Omnes timore pariter et amore accedamus,*' where it is said, '*unigenitus Dei mortale corpus et spiritualem, rationalem, immortalemque animam ex filiis hominum suscepit,*' that there may be no countenance given to an error held by some, and followed by several Nestorians, that the soul as well as the body, is *ex traduce*, or derived from the parents; whereas in truth it is created by God out of nothing, and infused into the body when it is perfectly formed; it shall therefore be said, '*unigenitus Dei mortale corpus ex filiis hominum, et spiritualem, rationalem, immortalemque animam suscepit.*' As also where the deacon after the communion of the priest, inviting the people to communicate, saith, '*fratres mei suscipite corpus ipsius filii,*' he shall say,' *ipsius filii Dei.*'

Furthermore, in the first word of the benediction of the people, where he saith, '*Ille qui benedicit nos in coelis, per filium Humanitatis,*' he shall say, '*Per filium suum;*' and in the first blessing which the priest gives to the people, at the end of the mass, where he saith, '*Cathedra gloriosa Catholicorum orientalium,*' meaning schismatical Babylon, he shall say, '*benedicatur Cathedra gloriosa Romana,*' and in the following verse of the same blessing, where speaking of the Bishop of the diocese, he saith, '*Dominus totius gregis episcopus plenus sobrietate custodiatur a malo,*' &c. he shall name our lord the Pope, saying, '*Dominus totius gregis catholici Papa N. plenus sobrietate custodiatur a 'malo, una cum bono Doctore, et Episcopo nostro N.*' naming him by his name: and a little after in the same blessing, where he saith, '*Illustris in congregatione Sanctorum religiosus Hormisda, sanctitas sanctitatum,*' &c. the name of Hormisda, who as has been observed, was a Nestorian heretic, shall be left out, and instead thereof he shall say, '*Illustris in congregatione Sanctorum S. Apostolus Thomas,*' &c. all that follows agreeing very well with that glorious Apostle, who first taught the faith in these parts, and not to that false heretic.

Furthermore, in the first verse of the blessing of the solemn days, where it is said of the Divine Word, '*Qui factus est homo, et operuit speciem suam in filio hominis,*' for fear of the Nestorian doctrine it shall be said, '*Qui factus est homo, et operuit Divinitatem suam humilitate nostra;*' and a little lower where it is said, '*Benedic Ecclesiam tuam quae patitur, et in ovili pessimi Daemonis ecce comprehenditur,*' it shall be said, '*Quae patitur infestationes a pessimo Daemone, libera illam,*' &c. for the catholic church though it be infested and persecuted by the Devil, is not held nor overcome by him, our Saviour having promised, that 'all the powers of hell shall never

prevail against her.' And afterwards where it is said, '*Bendic dextra tua, Jesu Christe*,' &c. and in the same blessing, where it is said, '*Salva Reges nostros et Duces nostros*', it shall be said, '*Salva Reges nostros et Duces nostros Catholicos*' all the king's and princes of this church being Infidels, and so ought not to be prayed for in the public prayers of the mass; and a little after, where it is said, '*Sicut decet coram ipso Jesu Salvatore*,' it shall be said, '*Coram ipso Jesu Deo Salvatore*,' because of the Nestorian error; and in the last verse but one of that blessing, where it is said, '*Qui comedit corpus meum et bibit ex sanguine meo sanctificante liberabitur ab inferno per me*,' the words of Christ, '*Habet vitam aeternam*,' shall be used instead of '*Liberabitur ab inferno*;' and in the end of the third blessing, where it is said, '*Gloria illi ex omni ore Jesu Domino*' it shall be said '*Jesu Domino Deo*,' because the Nestorians do impiously affirm, That the name of Jesus is the name of a human person, and does not agree to God.

All the above-mentioned particular the Synod doth command to be corrected, as is here ordered, with such caution as is necessary in these matters, wherein the cursed Nestorian heretics have sown so many errors.

DECREE II

THE MISSALS OF NESTORIUS, THEODORUS AND DIODORUS TO BE BURNED

Whereas in the Missals of this diocese there are some masses that were made by Nestorius, others by Theodorus, and others by Diodorus, their master, which are appointed to be said on some certain days, and which, carrying those names in their titles, are full of errors and heresies; the Synod doth command all such masses, entire as they are, to be taken out, and burnt, and in virtue of obedience, and upon pain of excommunication *Latae Sententiae*, doth prohibit all priests from henceforward to presume to use them, ordering them to be forthwith cut out of their books, and at the next visitation to be delivered by them to the most illustrious Metropolitan, or to such as he shall appoint to correct their books, that so these masses may be burnt.

DECREE III

A NESTORIAN CEREMONY IN THE MASS CONDEMNED

Whereas in the masses of this bishopric, there is an impious sacrilegious ceremony, which is the priest, after having dipped that part of the host, after his having divided it, which he holds in his right hand, and has made the sign of the cross upon the other part that is upon the patin, opening this latter part that was upon the patin with the nail of his right thumb, to the end, according to their opinion, that the blood may penetrate the body, that so the blood and body may be joined together, which is ignorantly done in allusion

to the heresy of Nestorius, or of his followers, who do impiously affirm, That under the element of bread is only the body of Christ without blood, and under the element of wine the blood without the body: wherefore the Synod doth command in virtue of holy obedience, and upon pain of excommunication to be ipso facto incurred, that no priest presume to use any such ceremony, and that they throw it out of their masses, for that besides it alludes to the forementioned heresy, it contains a great ignorance in supposing that the species can penetrate the body and blood of Christ.

DECREE IV

THE ROMAN MASS TO BE TRANSLATED INTO SYRIAC

Forasmuch as the Syrian Mass is too long for priests that have a mind to celebrate daily, the Synod doth grant licence for the translating of the Roman Mass into Syriac, desiring the reverend father, Francisco Roz, of the Society of Jesus, to undertake the work, which mass together with all the Roman ceremonies the priest may say on particular occasions, but the solemn and sung masses of the day shall be always the Syrian, as they shall be amended by the most reverend Metropolitan: and such priests as are able to say masses both in Latin and Syriac in the churches of other dioceses, may say it Latin, but not in this bishopric, in which to avoid confusion, it shall be said only in Syriac. Wherefore the Synod desires the bishops of those parts to give licence, that the priests of this diocese, having letters dimissory from their prelate, that do not know how to say mass in Latin, may be permitted to say the Syrian mass in their churches, or at least the Roman translated with all its ceremonies into Syriac; the schism which this church has been in, being now through the goodness of God removed, entreating the most illustrious Metropolitan, the president of this Synod, that he would be pleased to present this petition in behalf of the priests of this diocese to the first provincial council that shall be celebrated in the province, that so if the fathers shall think fit, it may pass into a decree.

DECREE V

SUBDEACONS ONLY TO HANDLE THE HOLY VESSELS

Where as the power of handling the holy vessels is given particularly to the order of the Subdeacon, this Synod doth command that from henceforward if the minister that assists at the mass be not a subdeacon, that the priest shall not put the patin into his hand, when he is ordered by the Syrian mass to do it, such a one having no authority to touch it; but he may lay his hand only on the stone or wood of the altar, so as not to touch the patin, which is according to the rubric of the missal, which supposes the person that assists at the mass to be a deacon, ordering expressly that the priest shall put the patin into the hand of the deacon.

DECREE VI

THE STOLE TO BE WORN ONLY BY DEACONS

Whereas the Stole that is thrown over the shoulders is the particular Badge of the order of deacon, it is not lawful therefore for any person that has not taken the said order, to use the stole in the church with any public ceremony; and whereas hitherto all of the clergy that have assisted at mass, though but in inferior orders, or without them, have worn the said stole over their shoulders, no less than the deacons, contrary to the *ceremoniale,* which supposeth him that assists at the mass to be a deacon; the Synod doth therefore ordain and command, that from henceforward the *chamazes*, who do assist at the mass, and are not deacons, be not permitted to wear the stole; it would also be decent for the deacons when they wear the stole, to be in a surplice, and to have a towel, and not to have it over their ordinary wearing clothes, as has been hitherto the custom.

*DECREE VII

STAMPS TO BE MADE FOR THE WAFER, OR HOST, USED AT MASS

The Synod doth command, that in all churches there be stamps of hosts (or instruments wherewith to print the wafers that are to be consecrated) which shall be bought forthwith out of the fabric-money, or the alms of the church; and that the vicars take care to be always provided of the flour of wheat, for the making of them, which they must be sure not to mix with any thing else, as is done commonly in other bread, for fear there should be no consecration therein; wherefore they must either make themselves, or employ such as are of known skill and fidelity to do it, and the same care shall be taken of the wine that it be no other than that of Portugal, and that it be not mixed with the juice of raisins, or with any other wines of the country for the same danger.

*DECREE VIII

WHAT WINE IS TO BE USED IN THE EUCHARIST

The Synod doth earnestly recommend it to the priests of this diocese to take heed in what wine they celebrate, having been informed, that as some churches, by reason of their poverty, are without Portugal wine, so where it is that the priests keep it in glass bottles, where being in a small quantity, and kept a long time, it must necessarily decay and turn to vinegar, with which they celebrate notwithstanding, not considering the danger there is of there being no consecration; for remedy whereof the Synod in the strictest manner that it can, doth command, that in every church there shall be in the vicar's keeping a sweet pipe, or small runlet of wood, or a flask, in which the wine for the masses shall be kept, and that the vicars be extremely careful, that the

wine do not decay or turn to vinegar; which if it should happen so as to have lost the essence of wine in the opinion of those that have good palates, they shall not then celebrate therewith, it being a great sacrilege to do it, seeing there can be no consecration.

*DECREE IX

THE KING OF PORTUGAL TO BE ENTREATED TO SEND SUFFICIENT WINE ANNUALLY FOR THE PURPOSE

Whereas for want of Portugal wine, it many times falls out that there are no masses celebrated in this diocese, to the great prejudice of the faithful Christians, who for that reason are several months without hearing mass, and without an opportunity of receiving the most holy sacrament, and the sick of receiving the holy Viaticum; wherefore the Synod for remedy hereof, doth entreat his majesty the King of Portugal, out of his great piety, and as he is protector of the Christians of these parts, once a year to send us an alms, a pipe and half, or two pipes of Muscatel wine of Portugal, to be distributed among the Christian churches of this bishopric, and of the whole Indies; and till such time as an answer shall be returned to this petition, the most illustrious Lord Archbishop of Goa, Dom Frey Aleixo de Menezes, Metropolitan of this church, primate of India, and president of this Synod, is pleased to give the said quantity of wine to be distributed among the churches of this bishopric, the distribution whereof shall be made by the prelate according to the information he shall receive of the necessities of every parish, and whereas all the successes of this life are uncertain, if this should happen to fail at any time, the prelate shall then at his visitation take so much out of the stock of every church as shall suffice to purchase what wine is necessary, and the wine shall be committed to the vicar, who shall make use of it only in the masses that are said in the church, and order shall be taken that the mass of the day, which belongs to the whole parish, and is the chief obligation of the church, shall be celebrated without fail.

*DECREE X

STONES OF THE ALTAR TO BE CONSECRATED AND CUPS PROVIDED

This Synod being very doubtful whether the stones of the altar, on which the masses are said in the churches of this diocese, be consecrated with holy oil, or truly blessed, by reason of the small care and knowledge which the former prelates coming from Babylon had of such matters, doth command, that all such as are not well known to have been lawfully consecrated, shall be brought to the most reverend Metropolitan that they may be consecrated by him, whom the Synod doth intreat to provide such churches with stones as want them: commanding likewise, all cups that are not of gold, silver, copper or tin, to be broken, and no cups to be used but what are made

of one of these metals, and that mass be never said in any of these after they are broken; and seeing there are many churches that for want of cups have no masses, the lord Metropolitan is desired to give order, that all churches be furnished with cups.

*DECREE XI

ECCLESIASTICAL VESTMENTS TO BE PROVIDED

Whereas there are many poor churches in this bishopric, and especially in the heaths that have no consecrated vestments for the saying of mass, and for that reason have but few said in them, to the great prejudice of the faithful parishioners; therefore the Synod doth command, that out of the alms of the parish the most reverend Metropolitan may provide all churches with holy vestments, so that none may be without them, and for that reason be without having masses every Sunday; and in those parishes where the alms shall not be found to be sufficient to do it, the said lord Metropolitan is desired to take such order therein, that they may be some way or other provided, and have so great a want supplied.

DECREE XII

ALL PERSONS COMMANDED TO ATTEND MASS CONSTANTLY IF NOT IMPRACTICABLE

Whereas the Christians of this diocese have not hitherto heard mass as upon obligation, having never imagined that the not hearing thereof upon some particular days was a mortal sin; for which reason, some have without any scruple neglected going to hear it, and others have not staid to hear it out; therefore the Synod doth declare, that it is the precept of the universal church, and that upon penalty of a mortal sin, that all Christians, men and women, having no lawful impediment, do hear an entire mass upon every Sunday and holiday that is commanded to be kept, if they have the opportunity of a priest to say it to them. As also, that all masters of families are obliged by the said precept, to make their children, and such of their servants and slaves as are Christians, and all other persons living in their families, to go every Sunday and holyday to hear mass, which every one shall endeavour to hear at his own parish chruch, or at the place where he then happens to be; and as for those who with just reason are afraid to leave their houses alone without anybody in them, and especially such as live in heaths, and are a great way from any church, they shall so order the matter, that all in their families shall take their turns of going to mass and staying at home on Sundays; and the vicars of the churches must be careful to mark all such as are negligent herein, and reprove, admonish, and punish them, so as they shall judge necessary: and where there is any number of clergy, they shall sing the mass on Sundays and holydays: and when there is not a competent number, there the mass shall be

said at a convenient hour, the whole parish being present, and he shall at the same time preach, publish their admonitions, the banns of matrimony, and whatsoever else is necesssary in the church.

DECREE XIII

REGULATIONS FOR PERSONS HERETOFORE NEGLIGENT OF HEARING MASS

The Synod being informed that most of all the Christians that live out of towns and villages in the heaths, being a great way from chruch, do go to church but once a year, on the three days before Lent, which they call Monorbo, and then rather to fill their bellies with what is given by Christians at that time, than to hear mass; and that there are others who content themselves with going to hear mass twice or thrice in the year, and so have no opportunity of being instructed in matters of faith and religion as they ought to be, nor of complying with their obligations, doth command all Christians living within two leagues of the church to go to mass at least once a month and on the principal festivities of our Lord and lady, commanding the vicars also to constrain them to do it; and all such as are but one league, to hear mass once a fortnight, and such as are less than a league, to hear it every Sunday and holyday; commanding all that shall transgress herein, being obstinate, after the third admonition, to be thrown out of the church when they come thither; neither shall the priest go to their houses, or give them the casture, or blessing, until they shall come to hear mass, more or less, in the form aforesaid; and besides, they shall be punished by the prelate as he shall think good.

*DECREE XIV

FORBIDS HEATHEN MUSICIANS AND OTHER PAGANS TO REMAIN IN CHURCH WHEN THE SACRAMENT IS ADMINISTERED

Whereas upon several festivals of the church there are musicians called to the celebration thereof, according to the custom of the country, who are all heathens, small care being taken in what part of the church they are placed, or to hinder them from playing during the time of the holy sacrifice, at which no excommunicate person or infidel ought to be present, therefore the Synod doth command, that great care be taken not to suffer them to remain in the church after the creed is said, or the sermon, if there be one, is ended, that so they may not behold the holy sacrament; the vicar shall also be careful to drive all heathens who may come upon such occasion, from the doors and windows of the church.

DECREE XV

MASSES TO BE SAID FOR THE DEAD

Whereas there is nothing that is so great a help to the souls of the faithful that are in the fire of purgatory as the holy sacrifice of the mass, of which there is no memory remaining in this diocese; that holy sacrifice having been instituted for the health and remedy of the living and of the dead: wherefore the Synod doth exhort all the faithful of this bishopric to accustom themselves to procure masses to be said for the souls of their deceased friends, and to leave something by will that they may have masses said for their own souls, which will be much more profitable for them than the feasts that they used to make for their kindred and others invited to their funerals; which custom shall be left off, and instead thereof, they shall give a dole to the poor, which is also very profitable to the souls of the departed. And that the decree relating to such masses may have its due effect, the Synod dothe command, that all that shall be found to have died worth two thousand fanams, and have left nothing for a certain number of masses to be said for their souls, shall have so much taken out of their estates before they shall be divided among the heirs, as shall procure the saying of five masses for their souls, which shall be deposited by the executors in the hands of the churchwardens, by them to be distributed among five priests, that they may be the sooner said; and where there are more than five priests, the alms shall be given to the five eldest, there not being sufficient to divide among them all; and where there is only the vicar of the church, the whole shall be given to him: which custom of procuring masses to be said for the souls of the faithful departed this life, as it is used in the universal church, so it is what this Synod is extremely desirous to introduce into this bishopric, wherein it has been totally disused, recommending this matter earnestly to the preachers and confessors, to persuade all Christians to it in their sermons and confessions, and to the vicars to do the same in their admonitions.

SESSION VI

OF THE SACRAMENT OF PENANCE AND EXTREME UNCTION

The fourth sacrament is that of penance, in which the acts of the penitent are, as it were, the matter, and are distinguished into these three parts, contrition of heart, confession of the mouth, and satisfaction for sins, according to the direction of the confessor. It belongs to the contrition of the heart, that the penitent be sorry at his soul for the sins that he has committed, and detesting them, is firmly resolved not to commit them any more: which contrition, thought it sometimes happen to be perfect through charity, so as to reconcile one to God even before he has actually received the sacrament

of confession, yet it can never be perfect, nor a means of reconciliation with God, if not attended with a readiness and purpose of mind to confess those very sins which it is conversant about; such sins being no less subject than others, to the keys and the engagements to confession. It belongs to the confession of the mouth, that the penitent confess himself entirely to his own priest, as to all the sins that he remembers, using all due diligence according to the length of the time, since he last confessed himself; and this confession is not to be only of sins in general, nor only of the species of them, but of every sin in particular, and as far as the penitent is able to remember of their number; declaring withal, all the aggravating circumstances, and all such as change the species; in a word, all mortal sins, how secret soever, though only in thoughts and wicked desires; as also all faults committed against the two last commandments; "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife: thou shalt not covet any thing that is another's;" such sins being at some times more dangerous for the soul, than others that are open; all which we are commanded to do by the Divine law; our Saviour when he ascended into heaven, leaving the priests for his vicars upon earth, and constituting them judges, before whom all mortal sins committed by Christians were to be brought, that by the power of the keys which he committed to them to forgive or retain sins, they may pronounce sentence, which cannot be just and righteous, neither can the punishments they impose be equal or proportionate to the nature of the faults, without their having a full knowledge of the same, as of the matter that they pass sentence upon; which knowledge cannot be had but by the penitents confessing all and every mortal sin, whereon judgment is to pass, not only in general, but in specie and number, making mention of every such sin in particular, with all its necessary circumstances, that so a just sentence of absolution or retention may be pronounced upon them. And as to venial sins which we frequently fall into, and for which we are not excluded from the grace of God, though the confessing of, and being absolved from them, is very profitable to the soul, yet we are not under any such precise obligation of confessing them, there being other ways by which they may be pardoned, so that it is no sin not to discover them. The third part of penitence, is, satisfaction for sins according to the judgment of the confessor; which satisfaction is chiefly performed by prayer, fasting and alms, the penitent being obliged to comply with the penance imposed upon him by the priest, who being as a judge in the place of God, ought to impose what he thinks to be necessary, not only with respect to the amendment of sin for the future, but chiefly with respect to the satisfaction and penance of past sins. The form of this sacrament is, 'I absolve thee;' to which necessary words the church has thought fit to add the words following, 'from all thy sins, in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.' There are also some prayers which the priest saith immediately after over the penitent, which, though they are not essential to the form, yet are very profitable and healthful for the penitent. Now by pronouncing the form, not only all the sins that are confessed, but all those likewise which after a due diligence and examination of the conscience

do not occur to the memory, so as to be discovered; all such being included in the said confession, are all pardoned; though with an obligation of confessing them, if they should ever after come to be remembered, sins being as it were chains to the soul, from which it is delivered by the absolution of the priest, which is applicable to such, as by virtue of contrition joined with a desire of confessing, have obtained pardon of God for their sins, which they were under an obligation to have confessed: as also to those sins which were never confessed, because not remembered after a due diligence, and to those likewise which having been once lawfully confessed and truly pardoned, are by the penitent of his own accord, and for the greater penance confessed and submitted to the keys several times. The minister of this sacrament is a priest, who hath authority to absolve, and is either the ordinary, as the prelates, or such as are commissioned and approved of by them. The effect of this sacrament is, the absolution and pardon of sins, and for that reason it is by the doctors properly called 'the table after shipwreck,' because the grace which was given to us in baptism, being lost by the commission of mortal sin, by which we make shipwreck thereof, and of all the other virtues and gifts, which together therewith were poured down upon us, there remains no other remedy or means whereby we can be saved, but only by the plank of penance, or the sacrament of confession; for that without this either actually received, or firmly purposed according to the command of holy mother church with contrition, wherein such a purpose is always included, we cannot be saved nor enter into the kingdom of heaven; for which reason this sacrament ought to be much reverenced and frequented, as the only remedy that sinners have for all their evils.

DECREE 1

THE SACRAMENT OF CONFESSION, THE NEGLECT OF WHICH DECLARED A MORTAL SIN

Whereas an entire sacramental confession is of Divine right, and necessary to all those who after baptism fall into any mortal sin, and holy mother church doth command all faithful Christians who are come to the use of reason, upon pain of mortal sin, to confess at least once a year in the time of Lent, or at Easter, when all that are capable are bound likewise to receive the most holy sacrament of the altar, declaring all that neglect to do it, to be excommunicate; and notwithstanding, this precept has not hitherto been in use in this bishopric, in which no Christian has ever confessed upon obligation, and a great many not at all, which was occasioned through their ignorance of this healthful precept, and of the necessity of this Divine sacrament, this church having been governed by schismatical Chaldaens and Nestorian heretics, the particular enemies of this sacrament, being the cause of their being totally unacquainted with the virtue, efficacy, and necessity thereof. Some not using it all, others being persuaded by the devil into a vain

and superstitious opinion, that if they should confess themselves, they should die immediately, all which having been made known to the most illustrious Metropolitan in his first visitation of these churches, he at that time persuaded a great many that had never done it before to confess themselves, having undeceived them as to the unreasonable and pernicious mistakes which they lay under, therefore the Synod the more to further this, doth declare that it is the duty of every faithful Christian, upon penalty of mortal sin, to observe the precept of the church concerning confession, at the time by her determined and founded on the Divine precept of confession, for all such as are fallen from grace, by the commission of any mortal sin, and doth command all faithful Christians, men and women, that are arrived at the years of discretion, to confess themselves to their own vicar, or to such priests as are licensed by the prelate to hear confessions, at the time of Lent, or against Easter, and that whosoever shall not have complied with this precept, or is not confessed sometime betwixt the beginning of Lent, and the second Sunday after Easter, shall be in the church declared excommunicate by the vicar without waiting for any order from the prelate to do it, until he has effectually confessed himself, and has undergone the punishment due to his rebellion; and if the vicar shall for some just reason think fit to wait any longer, for some that have been negligent, and who being busy have desired to be dispensed with till Whitsuntide, it shall be in their power ot bear with them, according to what is determined in the second Decree of the fifth Session, of the sacrament of the eucharist, having first admonished those that live in the heaths, or are at sea, or engaged in business in such places where there are no churches to confess in, that when they return home, they are bound to do it within a month.

And that the whole of this may be executed, with the more ease, and be performed as is reasonable, the vicars, of the churches shall be obliged a month or more before Lent, if it be necessary, to go to all the houses of their parishes belonging to Christians, however remote in the heaths, either in person, or by some other clergyman, whom in conscience they can trust with such a business, and taking the names of all the Christians even to the very slaves in every family that are nine years old and upward, and of those too that are abroad, observing whether they do return home after the time of the obligation, and having made a roll of parchment of all that are of age to confess themselves, they shall afterwards make a mark at their names as they come to confession, that so they may know certainly who have, and who have not complied, that the disobedient may be excommunicated, which we declare to be the precise obligation of their office, the pastor being bound to know his sheep, that he may give them food, and so far as he is able, supply all their necessities, temporal as well as spiritual, and to have their number, that he may know when any are lost; and for the perfecting of such a roll the vicars may take the advantage of the Monoibo, at which time all Christians do flock to the churches, at which time likewise they may hear of many that live in the heaths. And as to those that have confessed themselves to some

other approved confessors, they shall bring a note signed by them of their having been confessed, which they shall deliver to their vicar, who shall thereupon mark them in his roll; but though it is lawful for them to confess themselves to confessors that are strangers, yet they cannot receive the most holy sacrament, nor the communion upon obligation in Lent anywhere, but in their own parish churches, and the prelates in their visitations shall call for those rolls, in order to inform themselves how this Decree is observed.

DECREE II

ALL PERSONS TO CONFESS WHO ARE OLD ENOUGH TO COMMIT MORTAL SIN

Whereas the precept of confession obligeth all that have the use of reason, and conscience of mortal sin, which happens sooner to some than others, the Synod therefore taking the most safe and probable way, according to the knowledge it hath of the people of Malabar, doth ordain, that at eight years old and upward, all people shall confess themselves, and that without prohibiting such as are younger and capable to do it sooner, on the contrary, the vicars, if they shall understand that there are any under eight, of so much judgment and discretion, as to be capable of committing a mortal sin, they shall immediately constrain them to come to confession, as being obliged to it, which must be left to the discretion of the parish priests.

DECREE III

MASTERS TO CAUSE ALL IN THEIR FAMILIES TO CONFESS

The Synod doth admonish all masters of families, and all that have the charge of others, to be careful to make all the persons in their families to confess themselves at the time of obligation, and particularly their servants and slaves, both men and women, who if they do never come to confession, their masters and none else must be certainly in the fault, in having neglected to put them in mind of it, and to order them to do it, it being their duty, and that upon penalty of mortal sin, to call upon them to do it, of which they must give a strict account to God, the apostle St. Paul affirming, that "he who does not take care of his servants, has denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel;" which words are chiefly to be understood of the spiritual necessities of those of his family, and of matters appertaining to their salvation; about which matters the vicars ought to be very careful, and must observe whether the slaves, whose names as well as others, they must have down in their rolls, do come to confession, declaring such of them as have not complied with their obligation at the time appointed, excommunicate, having first admonished their masters to command them to come, and acquainted them with the declaration that will be made if they do not: and the vicars that shall be found negligent herein, shall be punished at the discretion of the prelate.

DECREE IV

CONFESSION TO BE MADE IN SICKNESS OR ANY PROBABLE DANGER OF DEATH

All faithful Christians are not only obliged to confess themselves once a year, under penalty of mortal sin, but also as often as they are in any probable danger of death, or are very sick, they are under the same obligation; wherefore the sick persons or those that attend them so soon as ever they shall apprehend any danger, wherever they live, though in the heaths, shall send to call a confessor, and shall advise the vicar of the church thereof, who shall either go himself, or send another to hear their confessions. The vicars are also to understand, that it is their indispensable duty to inquire after the sick, and either to go to confess them themselves, or to send another to do it, whensoever they shall be sent for, that so none may die without the holy sacrament of confession, they being guilty of the condemnation of such of their sheep as go to hell for not having confessed their sins before they died, if it was through their fault or negligence it was not done. And the vicar, through whose fault or negligence any of the parish shall die without confession, shall be suspended from his office and benefice for a whole year without any dispensation, and another shall be appointed to supply his cure, and the persons that attend the sick, that shall neglect to send for the parish priest, shall be severely punished at the discretion of the prelate; and such as die in hamlets or in heaths without confession, if they did not send to call a confessor, if their death was not so sudden as to prevent them, shall not be buried in holy ground, neither shall the clergy go to their houses, or say the office of the dead for them, nor so much as the *Chata*.

DECREE V

WOMEN TO CONFESS BEFORE CHILDBIRTH

Not only such as are dangerously sick, but all that are any ways in danger of death, are obliged to confess themselves; wherefore since all women in childbirth are in danger thereof, they shall before they are in labour, confess themselves, but especially before the birth of their first child, at which time the danger is known to be the greatest; and shall likewise, if capable, receive the most holy sacrament; and if any such, not being surprised by their labour, shall die without confession or being in visible danger, did not desire it, their negligence being proved, and especially if they lived in towns, they shall be proceeded against in the same manner, as those are who through their own fault die without confession as is above decreed.

DECREE VI

HOW PERSONS WITH THE SMALLPOX ARE TO BE CONFESSED

The Synod being informed that the greatest part of those that die of the smallpox, though tbey lived in towns and desired confession, do die without it, that distemper being so very dangerous and infectious, that the priests are afraid of coming near those that have it; doth command all vicars to be careful, that none such do die without confession, and either to go themselves in person, or to send one to confess them; a due regard being still to be had to their own health, either by confessing them at some distance, or so that the wind shall blow the steams from them, and by having taken preservatives against the distemper; that so none may die without confession, which is what the Synod doth very earnestly recommend to them in the Lord.

*DECREE VII

EXHORTS TO FREQUENT CONFESSION

The Synod doth earnestly recommend to all the faithful Christian inhabitants of this bishopric, not to satisfy themselves with having confessed their sins once a year at Easter, when they are bound to it upon the penalty of mortal sin; but that they do frequently make use of this sacrament, in proportion to the sins they fall into daily, and not to fail to confess themselves on the festivities of the nativity of the Holy Ghost, and the assumption of our Lady, and at the wake of their parish, and the vicars must not fail to admonish their people thereof on the Sunday before those festivities.

DECREE VIII

NONE TO HEAR CONFESSIONS BUT PRIESTS LICENSED FOR THE PURPOSE, UNLESS IN APPEARANCE OF DANGER

The Synod doth declare, That notwithstanding the power of pardoning sins is annexed to the sacerdotal order, nevertheless that all priests cannot hear Confessions, but only such as are licensed by the prelate; for the act of absolution being an act of jurisdiction, and judicature, cannot be without subjects, which the prelate only can give when he appoints confessors with such limitations as he thinks necessary; so that a priest having no licence, or transgressing the bounds that were set to him by his prelate, if he shall presume to hear confessions and absolve, his confessions and absolutions are void and of no force; neither are the sins of the penitents pardoned, who are therefore bound to confess themselves again to a confessor that has power to absolve, as if they had not confessed before; but when any one is in probable danger of death, and cannot have a priest that is licensed, any priest, though he is not licensed, may confess and absolve him in that case.

DECREE IX

HOW ABSOLUTION UPON CONFESSION IS TO BE ADMINISTERED, AND BY WHOM

Whereas it belongs to the good government of the church and the faithful, that crimes of a heinous nature should be judged not by every priest, but by prelates or bishops, because for that reason Christians will be the more fearful to commit them; besides that, it has always been the custom of the church, to reserve to the prelates, and even to the pope as the universal head of the church, some crimes from which they and none else can absolve, or not do it without their leave: therefore the Synod doth declare, That notwithstanding this doctrine has not hitherto been understood or practised in this bishopric, by reason of the great ignorance of the church and sacred canons that has reigned therein: nevertheless, that the ordinary confessors have no power to absolve in cases reserved to the prelate, and least of all in those that are reserved to the pope, namely, those contained in the *Bulla Coenoe Domini*; which all confessors ought to be acquainted with; neither can they absolve in the crime of heresy, or in any cases wherein the faith is concerned; all which do belong to the court of the Holy Office of Inquisition, or to such as are commissioned by them, or to the bishop who by himself may absolve in the form of the holy council of Trent; and according to the ordinations of the holy fathers: neither can ordinary confessors dispense with or change the vows of penitents, because that belongs to the prelate, or such as are deputed by him, or that have obtained apostolical privileges to that effect. Only at the point of death, not only approved confessros, but also all simple priests, there being no other to be had, are obliged to hear confessions, to whomsoever reserved. Though as to the censures and may also absolve in all cases and from all censures with this obligation, that if the sick person shall recover, they shall return to the persons again to whom they were before reserved, from whom they shall receive such healthful Penance as shall be thought meet.

DECREE X

THAT CONFESSORS MAY NOT GIVE ABSOLUTION IN ALL CASES HERE ENUMERATED

That confessors may the better know in what cases they may, and in what cases they may not absolve their penitents, having no authority to do it, the Synod doth command the *Bulla Cana Domini*, and all the cases reserved in this bishopric to be pasted on a board, and set up in all sacristies, and where there are no sacristies, in the chief chapel in every church, in the Malabar tongue, for the direction of the confessors, and doth furthermore in its regulation of the reserved cases in this diocese, declare, That wilful murder, publicly committed with violence on the person of an ecclesiastic,

the voluntary firing of houses, or of any goods belonging to Christians, formal simony both in the givers and receivers, marrying without the vicar and two witnesses, schism and disobedience against the prelate, in all that are guilty thereof, or that favour such as are, the having of any of the books condemned by this Synod in their houses, or the reading of any of them, the performing of the public ceremonies called *Taliconum Coliconu*, the having of pagods or idols in their houses, and the giving them any veneration, have all the censure of excommunication annexed to them, of which though some are reserved by law, yet that they might be the better known, it was thought fit to have them expressed here.

DECREE XI

REGULATES THE SENTENCE OF EXCOMMUNICATION

The Sentence of Excommunication being the last and most rigorous punishment of the church, and which for that reason ought not to be inflicted but with great caution and consideration, the Synod doth therefore condemn the facility wherewith it has been used in this diocese upon very slight and impertinent occasions, commanding it not to be inflicted hereafter, but for weighty causes, and with great consideration, and never by word of mouth, but always in writing. The Synod doth likewise condemn what has been formerly commanded in this *bishopric*, which was, that in certain cases penitents were not to be absolved, but at the hour of death, and in some not then either, which is contrary to Christian charity, and the rules of the church, who as a pious mother at all times receives true penitents, and never shuts the gates of salvation against any of her children: so that let their crimes be never so enormous, yet upon their doing penance, and expressing a deep sorrow for their sins, and yielding the satisfaction that is imposed upon them, they are graciously received, and made free at least in the internal or sacramental court: but being there is no other punishment in this church, by reason of its being under kings that are infidels, beyond that of excommunication or exclusion from the church, some who are absolved in the internal court may still continue excommunicate in the external, so as not to be permitted to enter the church; and though the priests may go to their houses, they shall not give them the *casture*, until such time as the prelate shall order it to be done, having a regard to the heinousness of their crimes, and the length of time from the commission of them, that by this means the facility wherewith the Christians of this diocese commit several crimes, namely murder, and the ceremonies of the *Taliconum* may be removed.

DECREE XII

NO PRIEST TO HEAR CONFESSION WITHOUT HAVING A WRITTEN LICENCE

Forasmuch as the ignorance of confessors is the destruction of penitents, and through the error of the key, there is nothing done, and it being known to the Synod that in this diocese there are many confessors that are such idiots, as not to know what they do in confession, all the priests exercising themselves therein without ever having been examined as to their sufficiency; it doth therefore command, that from henceforward no priest shall presume to hear Confessions without being licensed thereunto in writing by the prelate, which licence shall not be granted to any, but what have been first examined by learned persons, as to their sufficiency for such employment, and until such time as this church is provided of prelates to regulate all such matters to the best of their understanding, the Synod doth commit the examination and approbation to the fathers of the Society of Jesus, of the college of Vaipicotta, upon whose examination and approbation, and a licence granted by the governor whom the most illustrious Metropolitan will leave in this bishopric, the priests may hear confessions with the limitations expressed in the said licences, and all such as are at present confessors, shall be examined by order of the lord Metropolitan at his next visitation, and such of the clergy as shall be made parish priests, or vicars, shall be first examined, and approved of in the same form to be confessors, that so such as are not qualified to be confessors, may not be admitted vicars, whose precise obligation it is to confess their sheep: and all confessors that are not approved of by the said lord Metropolitan in the form aforesaid, this Synod doth suspend from the office of confessor till such time as they shall be effectually examined and allowed of, and if any priest, which God forbid, shall be found hearing confessions without such a licence, except in the case of danger of death, and where no confessor is to be had, he shall be suspended from his office and benefice for a year, and be further punished according to the degree of his contumacy, and the penitents shall be admonished to confess themselves again to some approved confessor.

DECREE XIII

CONFESSORS SPEAKING MALABAR TO BE EMPLOYED

By reason of the great want there is of knowing and able confessors in this bishopric, the Synod for the sake of the sheep thereof doth approve of all such confessors as understand the Malabar[5] tongue, and are licensed confessors in any other diocese, of whom also the prelate may make use for

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1 Malayalam

the assistance of the parish priests in Lent, where it shall be judged necessary, and especially of the priests of this diocese residing at Cochin.

*DECREE XIV

THOSE ONLY WHO TOOK THE CONFESSION CAN GIVE ABSOLUTION IN THE SACRAMENTAL COURT

The Synod doth grievously condemn the sacrilegious ignorance of those priests, who when they have confessed any at the command of the prelate, or of any other by whom they are authorized, after having heard the sins of their penitents, do carry them to the said prelate, to be absolved by him in the Sacramental Court; which was what happened to the most illustrious Metropolitan in these parts; the Synod doth therefore teach and declare, That none can absolve the penitent in the sacramental court, but the priest only that heard his sins; for whereas he is the Judge, it is he that ought to pass sentence and absolve, in conformity to what he has heard confessed, the contrary being a gross and manifest error.

DECREE XV

THE SACRAMENTAL FORM OF ABSOLUTION TO BE USED ONLY IN ITS PROPER PLACE

Forasmuch as there are some ignorant clergymen, who being desired by Christians to read the Gospels and prayers to them, or to give them the blessing on their heads, do ignorantly use the form of sacramental absolution, saying, 'I absolve thee from thy sins in the name of the Father', & c. wherefore the Synod doth advertise and admonish them not to commit such an error, it being a most grievous sacrilege to apply the sacramental form, where it ought not to be, wherefore they shall only read the Gospels and prayers allowed, ending with the blessing, 'In the name of the Father,' &c.

The Doctrine of the Sacrament of Extreme Unction

The fifth sacrament of Extreme Unction has for its matter, the oil of olive blessed by a bishop, it is called extreme unction, because it is the last of all the holy unctions, instituted by our Lord Christ in his church, and the last that is received by a Christian; this sacrament is to be administered to an adult person that is sick, when apprehended to be in probable danger of death, who is to be anointed by the priest, the only minister of this sacrament, on those parts wherewith he hath offended God chiefly; that is to say, on the eyes, because of sins committed by the sight; on both the ears, because of sins committed by hearing; on the mouth, because of sins committed by tasting and speaking; on both the hands, for the sins committed in feeling and touching; on both the feet, for the sins committed in walking; on the loins and

reins, for being the chief seat of carnal pleasure; every one of which parts must be anointed by the priest, making the sign of the cross upon them with his thumb dipped in holy oil, and at the same time repeating the words of the form, which are, 'By this Holy Unction, and his most tender mercy may our Lord forgive thee all the sins thou hast committed by thy sight;' and so on, naming every part or sense as it is anointed: the effect of this sacrament, is the health of the soul, and of the body also, so far as it is convenient and necessary to the soul, which is the chief; moreover, it washeth away the relics of sin, if there are any remaining in the soul, comforting the soul of the sick withal, and confirming and exciting in it a great confidence in the Divine mercy, by virtue of which consolation it suffers the troubles of sickness with the more patience, and with the greater ease resists the temptations of Satan, whose custom it is to assault the soul with extraordinary violence in its last hour: it likewise cherishes and succours the body, so far as it is convenient for the salvation of the soul, as St. James teacheth us in his canonical Epistle, saying, "Is any one sick, let him call for the priests of the church, and they shall pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord, and the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall give him ease, and if he be in sins, they shall be forgiven him:" the Apostle in saying 'they shall be pardoned,' demonstrates it to be a sacrament, whose virtue and nature is to confer grace, that pardoneth sins; and in saying, 'If any are sick among you,' he declares the time when this sacrament is to be received, that is in time of dangerous sickness; and in saying, 'they shall call the priests of the church,' he showeth that the priests are the only ministers of this sacrament; and in saying, 'they shall be anointed with oil in the name of the Lord,' he showeth, that holy oil is the matter of this sacrament; and in saying, 'they shall pray over the sick, anointing,' he showeth, that the form of this sacrament is to be pronounced by way of deprecation, or prayer; and in saying, 'the Lord shall give him ease,' he showeth also, that the effect of this sacrament is to give health to the body, so far as it is convenient and necessary to the health of the soul. And whereas this sacrament was instituted for the use of the sick, none but what are dangerously so must take it, and a person who shall recover after having received it, may when dangerously sick receive it again, it having been instituted by our Lord for that end; and to prepare, defend and fortify us at the time of our departure out of this life, whensoever it is.

DECREE I

THE USE OF EXTREME UNCTION, WITH DIRECTIONS HOW TO ADMINISTER IT

Whereas in this bishopric there has not been hitherto any use of the sacrament of Extreme Unction, in which for want of catholic instruction, there has been no knowledge of the institution, effects, or efficacy thereof; therefore the Synod does most earnestly recommend the use of this sacra-

ment, commanding the vicars to be vigilant over the sick of their parishes, wherever they live, whether in the villages or in the heaths; and whenever they shall hear of any in danger of death, to carry the most holy sacrament of unction, and administer it to them according to the Roman ceremonial, which is to be translated into Syriac, and kept in all churches, anointing them with oil, and making the sign of the cross with holy oil on both their eyes shut; doing the right first, and then the left, upon the eye-lashes, and upon both the ears, the nostrils, and the mouth, being shut, on both the lips; but if the distemper should be such, that the sick person's mouth cannot be shut, or not without danger, then the upper lip shall be anointed, making the sign of the cross upon it; as also both the palms of the hands, the balls of the feet and the loins, ordering the sick person to be moved gently; neither is it necessary that any more of these parts should be anointed than what is convenient for making the sign of the cross with the holy oil; and the priest must be sure to remember in this, as in all other sacraments, to join the form with the matter, repeating the words of the form as he anoints the parts: if the sick person shall happen to expire while the priest is anointing, the priest being satisfied that he is dead, shall proceed no further with the office; and the vicar through whose negligence any parishioner shall die without having received this sacrament, shall be suspended from his office and benefice for six months.

DECREE II

CONFESSORS TO INSTRUCT THE SICK IN THE NATURE OF THIS SACRAMENT

Forasmuch as the troubles the sick are in, together with the want of good instruction in matters appertaining to their salvation, do but too often make them unmindful of the holy sacraments; wherefore the Synod doth command and earnestly recommend it to all confessors that are called upon to confess any sick person to instruct them in the doctrine and efficacy of this sacrament of Unction, admonishing, persuading and intreating them when they shall come to stand in need of it, to have it administered to them; and they shall also admonish the people, and particularly those who attend the sick person, not to fail to call the vicar when it is necessary, that is, when they apprehend the sick person to be in any danger, and before he has lost his senses, to give him the holy unction; and such as shall be negligent therein, besides the offence they do to God and the sick person, shall be punished severely at the pleasure of the prelate.

DECREE III

PARTICULAR DIRECTIONS FOR THE ADMINISTRATION OF THIS SACRAMENT

The Synod doth command the priests that go to anoint the sick, though it should be to the hamlets, to go in their surplice and stole, carrying the vessel

the holy oil is in, in their hands, covered with a piece of silk, with great reverence, having the chamus or parish clerk before them with the cross of the church, in his arms, who, or some other person, shall also carry a pot of holy water, and if it is in the night, a lanthorn or some other light before him, that so all people may know what he is going about; and if the sick person is in a condition, he shall persuade him to confess himself again, and be reconciled, notwithstanding he should have confessed himself the day before; letting the sick person know that it is necessary in order to his receiving the holy sacrament of unction with the greater purity; and when the priest shall be to carry this sacrament a long way to those that live in heaths, he shall go in the best form he can, and shall carry the surplice and stole along with him, that so when he comes to administer the sacrament, he may do it with all due reverence; he shall likewise if the sick person has not a crucifix of his own, leave one upon his pillow, exhorting him to fix both his eyes and confidence thereon at his last minute, begging by it the pardon of his sins of our Lord, who for our sake died thereon.

SESSION VII

OF THE SACRAMENTS OF ORDERS AND MATRIMONY

The Doctrine of the Sacrament of Orders

The sixth Sacrament is that of Order, which was instituted by our Lord Jesus Christ the day before he suffered for us, after that he had made an end of instituting the sacrament of the eucharist, that so he might institute the sacrifice and the priests that were to offer it together; at which time he created the Apostles priests, giving them withal power to consecrate others, that so the sacrifice and the priesthood might be continued in the church till the end of the world. The matter of this sacrament is that which is delivered to the person that is ordained, for the exercise of that order he has received; to the priests, a cup with wine in it, and a patten with bread; to a deacon, the book of the Gospels; and to a subdeacon, an empty cup and patten, and so as to the other inferior orders: the form of the priesthood and other orders, are the words spoke by the bishop when he delivers to every one that which belongs to his ministry and the exercise of his order. The minister of this sacrament is only a bishop, to whom only Christ committed the power of consecrating priests; the effect of it is the increase of grace, to the end that the person ordained may be a fit minister. This sacrament was instituted by Christ as highly necessary in his church; for a sacrifice and priesthood are so joined, that the one cannot be without the other; wherefore since under the New Testament the visible sacrifice of the holy eucharist was to be instituted, it became therefore necessary, that there should be a new, visible and eternal

priesthood in the same church, whereby the ancient priesthood of the Old Law was translated: and there were priests provided accordingly for the offering of the Divine sacrifice; which priests being lawfully ordained, our Lord Jesus Christ has given them power over his true and real body, to consecrate, offer, and administer it, as also over his mystical body the church; giving them power to pardon and retain sins; to which power it likewise belongs to rule and govern all Christian people, and to lead them in the way to eternal life. Now the priesthood being so high an office, that it may be exercised with the more decency and veneration, it was convenient that there should be different orders or ministers, who are bound by their function to serve the priesthood, and to be divided in such a manner, that after having received the clerical tonsure, they are to ascend through the lower to the higher orders. The lower are the ostiary, reader, exorcist, acolythus. The higher, those which are called holy, and are, the subdeacon, deacon, and priest, to which degrees there is joined that of bishops, who succeeded in the place of the Apostles, and as St. Paul saith, are ordained to "govern the Church of God; so that they are in a higher degree than the priests, and to them only it belongs, by virtue of their office, to administer the sacrament of confirmation, to consecrate the holy oil of chrism, and to consecrate altars and churches, and ordain priests and other bishops. The church enjoins continency and chastity to all that take holy orders, that so being disengaged from all other business they may employ themselves wholly in the ministry of the altar, and be intent only on matters appertaining to our Lord, and divine worship. The church does not admit slaves to be priests, because it is necessary to the Divine worship, that the ministers thereof should be free and not subject to others, and that they should not have been guilty of murder or blood, neither must they have been born out of lawful wedlock, nor have any blemish or maim, nor have been twice married, nor have married a widow, nor be boys that are not come to perfect age; all which is ordered for just reasons and considerations, and out of respect to the high mystery wherein they are exercised.

DECREE I

DESCRIBES THE AGE AND THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF PERSONS TO BE ORDAINED

Whereas it has been hitherto the custom of this diocese to ordain boys even priests, and that without examining their lives and manners, having for money and not for any extraordinary sufficiency, all the orders inferior, as well as holy, conferred upon them in one day, contrary to the holy canons and the laws of the church: therefore the Synod doth command, that from henceforward, none be ordained but what have first been examined as to their sufficiency, lives, and manners, which shall be done by the prelate, or by some appointed by him, fearing God, and who are observers of the holy

canons, and the forms of the holy Council of Trent. And whereas in the said council it is commanded, that none be ordained subdeacon under two and twenty, nor deacon under three and twenty, nor priest till they are five and twenty, this Synod doth command the same to be inviolably observed; declaring, that no prelate can dispense therewith without being particularly empowered and authorised thereunto by the apostolical see. And forasmuch as there are great numbers in this diocese that have been ordained before they were at that age, the Synod suspends all such, whether priests, deacons, or subdeacons, from the exercise of their several functions, until such time as they have perfectly attained to it, they shall nevertheless hold their places, and reap the benefits thereof, in the same manner as if they were in the exercise of their functions: and as to their sufficiency, the Synod doth declare, that as the Council of Trent requires, that all that are ordained do understand Latin, so in this diocese it is required, that all that are ordained if they do not understand Latin, should understand Syriac: neither shall any Syrian that does not understand it so well, as to be able to read and sing it, so as to understand what they say in the offices, be admitted into orders, or at least not into those that are holy.

DECREE II

THOSE SIMONAICALLY ORDAINED ARE ABSOLVED

All that are in orders in this diocese having been simonaically ordained in having paid a certain price, upon a formal bargain for their orders, have thereby incurred the grievous punishments of the law. Nevertheless in consideration of their ignorance, and the false doctrine wherein they have been educated by their former prelates, the most reverend Metropolitan, both by his ordinary authority, this see being vacant, and the apostolical authority committed to him over this church, doth absolve all that have been so ordained, from all penalties and censures which by the law they have incurred, by having been simonaically ordained, commanding them to have no further scruples about that matter, and dispensing with them all as to the exercise of their orders, so that they may lawfully officiate, as in right they may and ought to do.

DECREE III

NO LEPROUS PRIEST TO OFFICIATE

The Synod being informed that there are several priests, who though infected with the leprosy, and miserably deformed thereby, do presume to celebrate, to the great loathing of the people, and to handle the holy vessels and vestments, to the endangering of the health of others, doth command, that none that are notoriously leprous, do presume to celebrate, all such being irregular according to the law of corporeal defects, on the account of the

disgust they give to people when they see them celebrate in such a condition, and receive the most holy sacrament of the altar at their hands.

DECREE IV

PRIESTS FORBIDDEN TO BLESS WHO ARE NOT IN CHARITY WITH THEIR NEIGHBOUR

Whereas it is the custom to receive the *casture* or blessing from the hands of the oldest clergyman that officiates in the quire, and for all that are present to return it to him; which according to the usage of this diocese, contains in it a symbol of charity, communion, and brotherly love; the Synod being informed that there are those, who not being in charity with their neighbours, do not speak to them, nor take them by the hand, and do neither give nor take the *casture* from them, thereby discovering that they live in malice with their neighbours, denying them the ordinary ecclesiastical salutation used in the church of this diocese; doth command, that all that shall refuse to give or receive the same, be punished by the prelate as persons living in hatred or out of charity with their neighbours; and that until such time as they shall give the said casture, they shall not be suffered to come to the altar, according to the command of our Lord Jesus Christ: neither shall they be permitted to officiate or minister in the church; neither shall the blessing be given them until they have effectually reconciled themselves to their brother.

DECREE V

DIRECTIONS FOR RECITING THE OFFICES IN THE CHURCH

Whereas it is the precept of the universal church, that all that are in holy orders do recite the whole divine office, and the usage of this diocese is, to recite it only when they go to church, and there, though it happen to be near ended before they come, having heard a little to go away immediately, reckoning they have complied with their obligation, though they do not say over what they were not present at, there being very few that recite the divine office in their houses, some imagining that they are not bound to do it anywhere but in the church, and others excusing themselves for want of books, there being but very few, and those that are, are in manuscript in this bishopric; therefore the Synod doth declare, that all that are in holy orders, are obliged upon pain of mortal sin, to recite the whole divine office as it is recited in the church; and that all such as shall come late, shall be obliged to recite what they have missed; and if they do not recite it in the church, they shall do it at home in their houses, having the conveniency of a book, which being what a great many do want, the Synod obligeth all such to recite the said divine office by beads, that so there may be none but what perform this duty either by book or beads: and though the divine office consists of seven distinct canonical hours, yet in this church, in conformity to the breviary

thereof, they shall only recite one part at two times in the morning, and the other part in the evening, without making any other difference in the divine office, besides that of repeating one part thereof in the morning and the other in the evening; and whereas they who have no books are to recite with beads, such beginning in the morning as the divine office is begun in the church, shall say thirty-three paternosters, and as many Ave Maries, with the Gloria Patri, &c. in the morning; and when they are ended, they shall moreover say twelve paternosters, and twelve Ave Maries, for the souls of the faithful departed, and one paternoster and one Ave Mary for the pope, and the same for the bishop, instead of the prayers that are said for them in the church: and instead of the prayers that are to be recited by them in the evening, they shall say thirty-three paternosters, and as many Ave Maries, with the Gloria Patri, &c. as in the morning; and when they are ended, they shall say nine Ave Maries to our lady, and one paternoster and one Ave Mary for the pope, and another for the bishop as in the morning, provided that such as have books shall recite by them, and not by beads, and such as recite by beads, if they have said any of the prayers either in the morning or evening at church, shall not be obliged to recite them again, but shall only recite those which they may have omitted there.

*DECREE VI

THE ATHANASIAN CREED TO BE USED

The Synod doth command the creed of St. Athanasius, '*Quicunque vult*', to be translated into Syriac, and to be put into all the breviaries, and books of prayer of this diocese, and to be read every Sunday in the church immediately after morning service, desiring the Reverend Father Francisco Roz, of the Society of Jesus to translate it, and all the curates and clergy to learn the said creed by heart, which is what the holy canons recommend to them, forasmuch as that creed contains in it summarily the chief mysteries of our faith, and is used and sung in the universal church.

*DECREE VII

THE CLERGY TO BE PUNCTUAL IN THEIR ATTENDANCE AND DEVOUT IN THEIR DEPORTMENT AT CHURCH

The Synod doth earnestly recommend it to all the clergymen and curates, not to be absent from church at the time of Divine service, morning nor evening, and that none offer to talk or divert themselves there any other way, as has been the custom, or to dispose themselves to sleep whilst others are reciting, who are also to take notice, that in reciting they ought not to begin a new verse before the congregation has done with the former, and that though it has hitherto been the custom for the oldest clergyman that was present at divine service to give the *casture*, that from henceforward the true

vicar of the church being present, shall in everything be preferred to all others, as he is the particular pastor of the church.

DECREE VIII

TO BE FINED FOR ABSENCE UNLESS FOR SUFFICIENT REASON

There being no reason why they that do not minister in the church, should be equally rewarded with those that do; it seems just to the Synod that the curates and other clergymen, that are absent either from morning or evening service, or from the mass of the day on Sundays and holydays, be marked by the vicar, or the oldest clergyman in his absence, that when the dividend comes to be made, for every time they have been absent so much may be deducted from their share, as they that make the distribution shall think fit, in proportion to the quantity of the dividend, which shall be done only when they are not hindered by some lawful impediment, as sickness, or are not otherwise employed in the service of the church, or by the prelate, in all which cases they are to be excused: and the sconces shall be equally divided among the rest.

DECREE IX

FORBIDS ALL FORMS OF EXORCISM BUT THOSE OF ROME

The Synod being informed, that great numbers of clergymen do use superstitious and heathen exorcisms, taking words out of an impious and prohibited book called '*Parisman*,' for the casting out of devils, doth command in virtue of holy obedience, that none presume to use any other exorcisms to that effect, but such as the Roman church makes use of, and have been approved of by the holy fathers, which are to be bound up with the offices of the administration of the sacraments, and all clergymen, that shall be found to use any other, or to use any unknown superstitious words or ceremonies with such as are possessed, shall be suspended from their office and benefice for a year, and be subject to what other penalties the prelate shall be pleased to lay upon them, according to the quality of the superstitions they have made use of; and in case they shall after they have been admonished and censured, persist therein, they shall then be excommunicated; and when it shall appear that any have acted thus upon any compact or contract with the devil, which God forbid, as it is said some do, they shall be declared excommunicate, until they have done the condign penance, which the prelate shall have imposed upon them, and shall be moreover suspended from their office and benefice during their lives, without any hopes of a dispensation, and shall be yet further punished, as the law requires they should be, who are guilty of such crimes, and are convicted of having had a compact with the devil.

DECREE X

FORBIDTS HEATHEN SUPERSTITIONS RELATING TO PROPITIOUS AND UNPROPITIOUS DAYS FOR MARRIAGES

Whereas there are several clergymen, who according to the superstitious custom of the heathens, do give good days for marriages, and do several other things, at the request of Christians for the heathens, and for that end keep an account of the lucky and unlucky days of the Gentiles in their books, and do use some of their prayers, and do make schemes after the manner of astrologers, as appears from several even of their church-books, the Synod doth command in virtue of holy obedience, and upon pain of the greater excommunication, that no ecclesiastical or secular, or *cattanar*, shall dare to give good or bad days for marriages, or on any other occasion, or to draw anything out of a book of lots, and namely out of that which is generally bound up with the book called '*Parisman*,' or out of any other place, or by whomsoever invented; and whosoever shall transgress herein shall be declared excommunicate, and shall be suspended from their office for a year, and six months from their benefice; it being the duty of the priests rather to admonish the people to avoid all heathen superstitions, and to choose the solemn days of the church, or the saints' days, who may intreat God for them, for the celebration of their marriages, or any other days they please, all days being good to those that do good upon them, being all equally the work of God's hands. Those only which are spent in the greatest works and the higher celebration of the divine mysteries, being the days that are to be most reverenced.

DECREE XI

PRIESTS ARE TO BE TEMPERATE AND SOBER; AND NOT TO EAT WITH ANY BUT CHRISTIANS, NOR IN A PUBLIC HOUSE

Whereas it is decent that priests, being the masters from whom the people are to learn good manners, should themselves give good example, the Synod is therefore much concerned for the scandal some give by their being disorderly in their eating and drinking, to the great disgrace of the sacerdotal office among so many infidels, and does recommend moderation to them ordering, such as shall be found at any time overtaken with drink to be sharply reproved by the prelate, and if it appear that they are frequently so drunk, as to lose their judgment, they shall be suspended from the exercise of their orders for ever, though not from reading prayers with others in the church, nor from the profits they may receive from thence. The Synod doth likewise command, that no priest shall dare to eat or drink in a tavern or public eating-house, it being very unbecoming the gravity of the sacerdotal office so to do, and is therefore forbidden the priests by law: it doth likewise prohibit all priests to eat with infidels, whether heathens, Mahometans, or Jews, upon pain of being suspended for four months, from their office and benefice.

DECREE XII

REGULATES THE DRESS AND MANNERS OF THE CLERGY

It being convenient that clergymen should always go in a habit different from that of the laity, and in such a one as becomes their function, wherefore the Synod doth command, that no clergymen presume to go abroad in doublets with their skirts flanting out, as has been too customary, or with any open linen: but when they shall go into town, or to the church, or when they travel upon the road, they shall wear a white and black, or blue vestment according to custom and a hat or bonnet on their heads; neither shall they at any time go disguised, no not at nights, nor when they go ahunting, or fishing: and all that shall transgress herein shall be severely punished; neither shall they wash themselves, or if they do, it shall not be in the company of women, according to the custom of the country, it being a thing very unbecoming the gravity of the ministers of the church: and as for their beards, they shall be left to their liberty to do what they shall think fit, only such as are young shall not suffer their beards to grow, but shall still keep them shaved, and they that wear them very long, shall take care to cut off the hair, that grows near their lips, that so they may not be a hindrance to their receiving the blood of the cup in the mass, by being so long as to touch it.

DECREE XIII

THE CLERGY NOT TO ENGAGE IN SECULAR BUSINESS

Whereas the apostle St. Paul saith, that the persons that are particularly dedicated to the service of God and the divine worship, ought not to entangle themselves in secular affairs; for which reason all clerks are by the sacred canons prohibited to merchandise, a thing very little observed in this diocese, therefore the Synod doth prohibit all the clerks thereof to go upon the public exchange, or to farm any of the revenues, or to be factors or agents, or to farm any contracts singly, or in company: or to sell any sorts of merchant goods publicly in their houses, or any sort of victuals, or to bear any secular office, all that shall transgress herein, shall be most rigorously punished by the prelate, and if they do not reform, shall be suspended from their orders; and such as are *Taregas*, if they shall not renounce that office within a month, shall not be suffered to enter the church, and shall be suspended from their office and benefice, until such time as they have effectually abandoned it.

*DECREE XIV

THE CLERGY ALWAYS TO APPEAR IN THEIR CLERICAL HABITS

Whereas several priests in this diocese not having the fear of God or of the church, or of their prelates, before their eyes, and without having a due regard

to the high station and dignity they are in, do occupy themselves in secular business and in public merchandise, and that they may do it the more securely, do neither wear the sacerdotal habit, nor the tonsure, nor any manner of crown, but do wear their hair long like the laity: therefore the Synod doth command in virtue of obedience, and upon pain of excommunication, that all clerks in holy orders, do wear the habit, tonsure and shaved crown, and not long hair after the fashion of the laity; and that whosoever shall transgress herein, shall be declared excommunicate, until they have put on the said habit and tonsure, and shall have their crown shaved as other ecclesiastics.

*DECREE XV

NO ECCLESIASTIC TO RECEIVE PAY FOR MILITARY SERVICE

Whereas there are several ecclesiastics, as well *cattanars* as *chamazes*, who being unmindful of their obligations, to free themselves from some vexations of infidel kings; or, which is yet more scandalous, to be favoured and protected by such princes against their prelates, that they may not punish them for their faults, do receive pay from the said kings as the natives do, whereby they are obliged to take the field as soldiers, and fight when commanded, which is expressly contrary to the holy canons and ecclesiastical laws: therefore the Synod doth command in virtue of obedience, and upon pain of excommunication to be *ipso facto* incurred, that no *cattanar* nor *chamaz* do from henceforward presume to receive pay from any king as a soldier; and that whosoever shall transgress herein, shall be immediately declared excommunicate, and shall not be absolved before they have renounced the said pay, and all the obligations thereof, and have undergone condign punishment for their fault.

DECREE XVI

ECCLESIASTICS FORBIDDEN TO MARRY

It having been the universal custom from the beginning of the church, for all that are in holy orders, and especially priests, to keep chastity and continency, as is evident from all the ancient councils, Eastern and Western; and though in the beginning of the Church, as well for the want of priests, as for the making use of several learned men who were married when they turned Christians, but not having been twice married, several who were married were not only consecrated priests, but bishops also; which custom still remains both in the Greek church, and in some that are subject to the apostolical see, by which it is tolerated for just reasons: nevertheless, the church catholic did never consent that priests should marry after they are in orders, but was much rather for having such as were married to leave their wives, that they might serve the better in the holy ministry: and whereas in

this diocese (which the Synod has taken notice of with great sorrow) through their vile ignorance of the law, and the abounding iniquity of the times, and their having been governed by schismatical prelates, priests have married after they were in orders, nay have taken orders on purpose that they might marry the better, and have frequently married widows, and some have married three or four times, making no account of the impediment of bigamy, so strictly observed in the church from the beginning, but did, notwithstanding that, go on still exercising their function, some few excepted, who after they had been twice married, gave over celebrating and performing all other exercises and ministries of priests; all which they thought they might do lawfully by virtue of a licence granted by their prelates, who notwithstanding they prohibited them to marry upon pain of excommunication, and had declared them excommunicate, did nevertheless absolve them for a sum of money, or upon some Simonaical contract; so that notwithstanding that excommunication, they did all marry and continued in wedlock, reckoning themselves safe in conscience upon their having obtained a licence after such a manner: all which being detested by the Synod as the inventions of the devil, and devised by the covetousness of schismatics, and desiring to restore this church to its due purity, and the usage of the Roman Church, doth command, in virtue of obedience and upon pain of excommunication *latae Sentantae*, that henceforward no clerk in holy orders presume to marry, nor shall any *cattanar* marry any such, nor shall any presume to be present at any such marriage, nor give council, favour, or assistance thereunto: and whoever shall offend in any of these particulars, must know that they are excommunicate and cursed, and are to be declared as such by the church; and as to those who are already married, the Synod suspends them all, whether married once or oftener, from the ministry of their orders, and all sacerdotal acts, until such time as they have put away their wives effectually, which is what the Synod intreats them in the Lord to do: and to those who have been twice married, or have married widows, or women that were publicly dishonest, the Synod doth command all such as being bigamists, and having married contrary to their consciences, as it appears several of them have done, by their giving over thereupon to celebrate, notwithstanding their having obtained a licence from their bishop, in virtue of obedience and upon pain of being declared excommunicate, so soon as this decree shall come to their knowledge, to turn off the said women, not only as to bed and board, but so as not to dwell in the same house with them; declaring, that until they have done it they are in mortal sin, and do live in concubinage, such marriages having never been true or valid; but on the contrary, void and of no force: neither can any prelate or bishop grant licences in such cases, having no authority to do it, by reason of its being contrary to the rules of the church, that have been always punctually observed, and contrary to the holy general councils received all over the world; and as to those who have been but once married, the Synod will consult the most holy pope and bishop of Rome, that he as prelate and head of the whole Church of God, and master and doctor of the same, may teach

and command what ought to be done therein, and whatsoever his holiness shall ordain, shall be punctually observed.

DECREE XVII

THOSE WHO PUT AWAY THEIR WIVES ARE TO BE RESTORED TO THEIR OFFICE

The Synod doth declare, That those priests who as obedient sons shall follow the advice of the Synod in turning away their wives, may, after they have so done, continue in the exercise of their functions; and if not otherwise hindered, may celebrate, notwithstanding they have been twice married, or may have married widows, since by such weddings not being true marriages, they did not incur the irregularity of bigamy: all which the Synod grants out of pure grace, being extremely desirous to have them turn away such women, and out of respect to their ignorance, and the cheat that was put upon them by their prelates, who instead of instructing them better, granted them licences: and whereas all priests that marry are irregular, according to the holy canons, the most illustrious Metropolitan by the ordinary, as well as the apostolical authority, that he has in this church by reason of the see's being vacant, doth dispense with the priests and all the other clergymen in holy orders that shall yield obedience to the Synod, in turning away their wives, and shall desire to continue to officiate, as to the said irregularity which they have incurred, granting them licence as to this freely and without scruple, to exercise their orders.

*DECREE XVIII

WIVES WHO REFUSE TO LEAVE THEIR HUSBANDS TO BE DEGRADED IN THE CHURCH

Whereas the wives of priests who are called *catatiaras* or *cattaneiras*, have not only the most honorable place in the church for their being such, and are the more reverenced, but do moreover partake of the profits of the churches wherein their husbands ministered equally with the surviving priests, and have sometimes a greater share of them than any of the priests, by reason of the seniority and preeminence that their husbands had in the church; therefore the Synod doth ordain, That such of them as do not from henceforward depart from their husbands, shall receive no such benefit: but if obeying the admonition of the Synod they shall leave their husbands, they shall then immediately receive their proportion as an alms to help to sustain them and their families, and shall enjoy the same place and honour in the church, and everywhere else which they did before.

*DECREE XIX

THAT SONS OF ECCLESIASTICS BORN BEFORE THIS SYNOD, BE ELIGIBLE TO THE SACRED OFFICE; BUT NOT THOSE BORN AFTER

The Synod doth declare, That notwithstanding it has received the holy Council of Trent, with all its decrees, relating both to the good government of the church and manners, nevertheless that what was declared therein relating to priests' bastards, not being permitted to minister in the same church, wherein the fathers have ministered before, is not to be extended to the sons of the married priests in this diocese that are now born, by reason of the great numbers there are of such at present in all churches, and of other great inconveniences that would follow thereupon; it is therefore permitted to such to minister, nay to be vicars of the churches wherein their fathers have officiated; but this is to be understood of such only as were born of marriages, that were reputed true, the provision of the forementioned holy council being to take place, as to all that shall be born hereafter.

DECREE XX

FORBIDS SIMONY UNDER EVERY PRETENCE

Whereas the sin of Simony is one of the greatest offences in the church, and a pernicious plague therein, which God has always punished with great rigour, it being the selling of spiritual things for money; and this bishopric, which the Synod takes notice of with great regret, having hitherto abounded with it, money having been publicly taken for the administration of the holy sacraments, and after such a manner that none of them were given, before the money was either put into the priest's hands, or into the church box, to be divided among them, no not so much as the holy sacrament of the eucharist, at which all pious ears do tremble, nor any other sacraments or dispensations for marriages, nor absolutions from excommunication, nor the consecrations of stones, nor any of the lesser orders, nor licences, nor *reverendas*, to go to receive those orders in another place, nor letters dimissory for clerks, to go to other dioceses; all which was done at a rated price, or by a public agreement: all which the Synod detesting as a most execrable and horrid abomination, doth therefore in virtue of holy obedience, and upon pain of excommunication to be *ipso facto* incurred, command, That no money, nor nothing else, be taken for any of the foresaid things; and that no priests shall dare to take anything for the administration of any of the sacraments, nor to give them upon any such consideration to any person whatsoever, but shall give the holy sacrament gratis to the faithful, according to the precept of our Lord Christ, who said, "Freely you have received, freely you shall give"; neither shall they so much as receive alms that the faithful would give voluntarily, though not given with any respect to the sacrament, if offered at the same time when the sacrament is administered: and the priest

that shall be found to transgress herein, besides being excommunicated, shall be suspended from his office and benefice for three years, and the vicars must take care to advertise the people thereof. The Synod being moreover informed, That a great many poor people who live in the heaths, do not bring their children to be baptized, because they have not so much money as is demanded, doth order the priest to be satisfied with the profits arising from the dead, the alms they receive for their masses, in which the Synod declares there is nothing of simony; but only a congruous maintenance for the priest that celebrates, given by the person that he recommends, and with the other alms which the faithful are accustomed to give; which being just and holy, shall be divided after the same manner as they have been formerly: and the Synod doth declare further, That such as are absolved from excommunication, if it was for any great crime that they were under that censure, though there can be nothing taken for their absolution, yet for the fault that they have committed, they may, by way of punishment, be condemned in a pecuniary mulct, if authorised by the prelate, which money must be put to some pious use, or employed in the building of a church; and the offender being poor, he may be employed in person to do some work about a church, for so long as shall be thought fit, and in that case no money shall be required of him.

DECREE XXI

RECOMMENDS MEANS FOR THE SUPPORT OF THE CLERGY IN LIEU OF FEES

The Synod desiring by all means possible to destroy and root out of this diocese the pernicious vice of Simony, which it understands to have been increased in part by the want the ministers of the church are in of a necessary maintenance, doth therefore most earnestly entreat the people of this bishopric to apply a certain yearly sum to be raised by the way of alms, collection, or assessment, or by the way of titles, according to peoples' abilities; for the support of the vicar and curate of their souls, and the other ministers that are necessary to the divine service in the church, which the most reverend Metropolitan may treat about in every parish; for they must know, that Christians are bound both by divine and human laws to maintain the priests which pray to God for them, and give spiritual food to their souls, of which they are to render an account to God and their prelates.

DECREE XXII

KING OF PORTUGAL TO BE PETITIONED TO CONTRIBUTE TOWARD THEIR SUPPORT

That this Synod may by all ways possible supply the necessities of the ministers of the church, and by that means extirpate Simony; besides what it desires the people to contribute towards their maintenance, understanding

their poverty to be such, that they are not able to supply them with so much as is necessary, it doth further beseech his catholic majesty, the King of Portugal, that as protector of the Christians of these parts, and the only Christian king and lord in the Indies, he would be graciously pleased to provide the vicars of this church with a sufficient maintenance, as he does in all the other churches of the Indies, allowing them at least fifteen thousand cruzado's to be divided among them all, besides what shall be gathered for them in their respective parishes; which as the Synod is informed, is the sum that was formerly desired of his majesty in the third provincial council of Goa, in order to the reducing of this church to the obedience of the Church of Rome, and the extirpating of simony. The Synod doth moreover entreat the most illustrious Metropolitan to present this their petition to his majesty, in the name of this church, representing therewith the great necessities of the ministers thereof, and that until such time as they shall have his majesty's answer, the said Lord Archbishop, Metropolitan of this church, and president of the Synod, Dom Frey Aleixo de Menezes, understanding how effectual a course this will be for the rooting the pestilential sin of simony out of this diocese, and for the tying of vicars to their churches, there to govern the faithful, and administer the holy sacraments to them, would be pleased to give the said sum of fifteen thousand cruzado's yearly out of his own revenues, and to pay it quarterly at Goa, to be divided among the said vicars, the distribution whereof the Synod orders to be made in all churches according to the allotments, in the instrument passed, and signed and sealed by the said lord Archbishop, under the great seal of his chancery, every church being to receive so much, as was now read in the presence of the whole Synod.

DECREE XXIII

NO MORE TO BE ORDAINED DURING THE VACANCY OF THE SEE

Whereas this diocese is not only provided with a sufficient number of clergy, but has a great many more than are necessary, and the holy Council of Trent having prohibited that any more should be ordained than what are necessary for the churches, the synod doth therefore command, that during the vacancy of this see, none shall be put into holy orders, neither shall any reverenda's, or licences be granted for that purpose, such only as are in holy orders may go ascending therein, as the governor, who is to be left in this diocese by the most illustrious Metropolitan shall judge convenient: the Synod doth also put such as do aspire to priests holy orders in mind of not failing to learn the doctrine of the sacraments, and the form of sacramental absolution, so as to be ready to use them on all occasions, and in all cases of necessity, as also the absolution from censures, or at least the conditional one, which always goes before the sacramental absolution from sins in confession.

The Doctrine of the Sacrament of Matrimony

The seventh sacrament is that of Matrimony, which according to the Apostle is the signification of that union which is betwixt Christ and his Church. The efficient cause of matrimony regularly, is the consent of both parties declared by words or signs *de praesenti.* This sacrament our Lord Jesus Christ founded on the matrimonial contract, which has always been in the world, and in all religions, from whence it is that matrimony is to be considered in two respects; either as a natural contract, or as a sacrament instituted by our Lord Jesus Christ: the bond of matrimony God hath made to be perpetual, insomuch that it cannot be dissolved by anything but death, according to what Christ said, "Whom God hath joined let no Man put asunder;" which is also in itself very convenient. As it is a sacrament, there is grace received therein, as in other sacraments, our Lord Christ, who was the author and institutor of the divine sacraments, having by his passion merited grace for us, whereby the natural love which is betwixt the married couple is perfected, and the conjunction that is betwixt them is confirmed, and made perpetual, and the husband and wife are sanctified. There are two reasons or ends for which matrimony was ordained and instituted; the first and principal is the procreation or generation of children, for the conservation of the world, and the multiplication of the faithful, and servants of God. The second is for a remedy for uncleanness; and that such as are inclined to that vice, might have a remedy given them by God, so that living with their wives, they might not fall into that sin, from whence it is that people may not only marry once, but as often as one of the parties dies, because this end of matrimony may not only be compassed in the first, but equally in the subsequent marriages; wherefore the church detests those as heretics, who condemn second marriages, holding them to be unlawful, as some heretics did anciently, and as some of the most superstitious heathens do at this day in these parts; from whence it may also be collected, that this sacrament may not only be lawfully celebrated betwixt persons capable of having children, but also betwixt those, who according to the ordinary course of nature, cannot have any, because the second end may be answered in such marriages; but where neither the one nor the other end can be answered, as in children, for whom the church has set a certain time, and in such as are under a natural impotency that will last as long as they live, as to matrimonial acts, matrimony is not to be celebrated: and though both under the law of nature and of Moses, there were dispensations whereby matrimony was made to deviate from its first original, some of the patriarchs having had several wives at once by a divine dispensation, and the law of Moses having permitted divorces, or the repudiating of wives, yet under the evangelical law, by which matrimony was perfected and restored again to its first estate and purity, it is prohibited for a man to have more than one wife at a time, and to turn away his wife and take another so long as she lives. The benefits of marriage are

three principally; the first is the generation and education of children for the worship and service of the true God; the second is the fidelity which the married couple ought to keep to one another; and the third is the perpetuity of matrimony, which, in that it cannot be dissolved, signifies that inseparable conjunction and union that is betwixt Christ and his church: and notwithstanding for the cause of fornication or adultery, it is lawful for the married couple to part as to cohabitation, yet it is not lawful to marry with any other, because the bond of matrimony, being once lawfully tied, is perpetual, and cannot be dissolved by anything but the death of one of the parties.

DECREE I

MARRIAGES TO BE CELEBRATED IN CHURCH AND BEFORE WITNESSES

Holy mother church has always so ordered the celebration of Matrimony, as to make it to be understood to be a holy thing, and that as holy, it ought to be holily treated; wherefore for the removing of several inconveniences, and those especially that attend clandestine marriages, she has ordained and commanded, that Matrimony be celebrated in the face of the church by the vicar, or parish priest, or some other priest, licensed by him or the prelate, and in the presence of two or three witnesses at least; and that all marriages that are not celebrated with this solemnity by the parish priest before two witnesses, are void and null: and that the priest, who without leave from the parish priest, and the parish priest who without two witnesses shall presume to marry any couple, shall be severely punished. Now the Synod understanding that this rule is not observed in this diocese, but that the persons who are to be married do employ any priest, and are married where they please, from which great inconveniences and disorders do many times follow, different rites and ceremonies being also used in divers places in the celebration thereof, doth command, that all that is above related be punctually observed according to the decrees of the holy Council of Trent, which has been received by this church in this synod; declaring all marriages not celebrated in this form, or not by the parish priest before two witnesses, to be null, and the parties not to be married, neither are they to be permitted to live together as man and wife: and the priests who shall presume to marry without leave from the parish priest or ordinary, shall be suspended from their orders and benefices for one year without indulgence, and the marriage shall be declared void, and the parties shall be obliged to marry again in the foresaid form. The Synod doth furthermore declare, That the contracted may be married by the parish priest of either of the parties, though the ordinary custom is to be married by the parish priest where the woman lives.

DECREE II

THE FORM OF SOLEMNIZATION OF MATRIMONY

Whereas matrimony ought to be celebrated with words signifying a present consent, and in many places of this diocese, it is commonly celebrated with words signifying only a consent for the time to come: therefore the Synod doth command, that when the persons that are to be married, come to the door of the church, the parish priest, or some other priest, having his or the prelate's licence, being in his surplice, with his stole, and at least two witnesses present, shall ask them, if they are pleased to marry; and if they say they are, or express their consent by some other evident signs, the priest then shall take one end of his stole, and laying it on the palm of his left hand, shall take the right hand of the bride and lay it on the stole, and lay the palm of the right hand of the bridegroom on the palm of the right hand of the bride, in form of a cross, and covering both their hands with the other end of the stole, and laying his own right hand upon all, so that the hands of both parties, and both the ends of the stole are betwixt the priest's hands; after having blessed them with the sign of the cross, he shall say, 'In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, Amen;' and shall make the bride say first, 'I, *N.* receive thee *N.* for my lawful husband, so as the holy mother Church of Rome doth command;' and shall afterwards make the bridegroom say the same words; 'I, *N.* receive thee *N.* for my lawful wife, so as the holy mother Church of Rome doth command;' and after they have both said these words, the priest shall say, 'I, by the authority I have, do join you in matrimony in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, Amen;' after which he shall sprinkle them both with holy water, saying, 'By this sprinkling of holy water, the Lord give you health and blessing, Amen.' And if neither of the parties was ever married before, they shall then be carried before the high altar, where being upon their knees, the priest shall give them the blessings, as they are in the Roman ceremonial of the administration of the sacraments, which is to be translated into Syriac, and to be used in all churches; but if either of the parties have been married before, he shall not then give them the said blessings, but dismiss them, after having said a prayer in the church.

DECREE III

THAT BANNS OF MARRIAGE BE PUBLISHED

That there may be no frauds in matrimony, and that the impediments, which, if they were known, would hinder the same, may be discovered; and that in all things we may conform ourselves to the decrees of the holy Council of Trent, the Synod doth command, that what is ordained by the said holy council, be punctually observed; to wit, that the parties to be married, shall have their banns published by the vicar, or by one appointed by him, on three Sundays or holydays in the churches where the bridegroom and bride live,

when the people are assembled at mass, in this form; '*N.* born in such a place, does purpose to marry *N.* the daughter of *N.* and *N.* born in such a place; wherefore if there be any that know any impediment, they must declare it upon pain of excommunication:' and the vicar, in case he has any lawful impediment declared unto him, shall not marry the parties before he has made the prelate acquainted therewith, that so he may determine what is just to be done therein; which publications cannot be dispensed with by any but by the prelate, or one representing him: and in case it is probable that if such publications are made, there are those that will maliciously endeavour to hinder the marriage, though in such a case the parties may be received without them, yet for the better discovery of other impediments that may happen tobe therein, they cannot be joined together, nor receive the blessings, though capable thereof, before the publications are made in the churches, without the prelate should be pleased to dispense therewith, to whose prudence and judgment the holy Council of Trent has committed the whole of this matter, and the priest who shall receive any couple without a licence from the prelate, before such publications have been made, shall be suspended from his office and benefice for six months.

DECREE IV

THAT MARRIAGE REGISTERS BE ENTERED AND KEPT WITH CARE

This Synod conforming itself in all things to the holy Council of Trent, doth command that in every parish there be a book, as was ordered as to baptism, wherein the vicar of the church shall write the names of the married persons, and the place, day of the month, and year, and the names of the two witnesses, commonly called the 'padrinhos,' where they were married, registering them thus, 'On such a day of such a month and year, I, *N.* vicar of the church, naming the saint to whom it is dedicated, in such a part, naming where the said church is, did join *N.* the son of *N.* and *N.* to *N.* the daughter of *N.* and of *N.* born in such a place, both at the gate of the church according to the holy Council of Trent; the witnesses were *N.* and *N.*' to which the vicar and the two witnesses shall sign their names, and when any priest shall by a licence from the vicar, or prelate, marry any couple, he shall write, 'On such a day of such a month, and year, I, *N.* a priest, by a licence from the vicar of such a place, or from the bishop,' if he granted the licence, 'did receive at the gate of the church *N.*' naming him, 'the son of *N.* and *N.*' naming his parents, 'born in such a place,' naming the town according to the holy Council of Trent, 'the witnesses were *N.* and *N.*' to which the said two witnesses and priest shall put their names; which book shall be kept among the registers of the church, and the prelate at his visitations shall see that there be no fault or neglect therein.

DECREE V

THE PARTIES TO CONFESS AND TAKE THE SACRAMENT BEFORE MARRIAGE—NONE TO BE MARRIED OUT OF CHURCH WITHOUT SPECIAL REASON

As holy matrimony is a sacrament, and as such conveys grace, it ought therefore to be received with great purity and holiness, wherefore this Synod conforming itself to the holy Council of Trent, doth exhort and admonish, and command all that are to be married, that at least three days before the celebration of this sacrament, they do confess themselves, and being capable do receive the holy sacrament of the eucharist, neither shall the vicars receive them before they have complied with this obligation, concerning which they shall make diligent inquiry. The Synod doth furthermore command, that all marriages be celebrated in the church, and that the parish priest do not accommodate himself to the negligence of those who do not care to be seen to marry in the church; but declaring withal that wheresoever matrimony is celebrated, if it be done by a parish priest, and in the presence of two witnesses, it is true and valid, though the parish priest ought not to marry any out of the church, but upon very urgent reasons.

DECREE VI

DEGREES OF CONSANGUINITY PROHIBITING MARRIAGE WITHOUT PAPAL DISPENSATION

There have been always in the church, even under the old law prohibited degrees of kindred, within which matrimony was not to be celebrated, and being celebrated, was null; and that not only as to such as were prohibited by a divine natural law, as betwixt persons in the first degree, and betwixt brothers and sisters, but as to others also who are prohibited by a divine positive law; wherefore the Synod doth declare, that the degrees at this time prohibited in the church, without which matrimony cannot be celebrated without a dispensation, and being celebrated, is void, are only to the fourth degree inclusive of consanguinity, and of affinity only to the second degree, as first cousins, second cousins, third cousins, fourth cousins, by father and mother, and the same degrees are prohibited in the kindred of affinity, betwixt the kinsfolk of the husband and wife, with whom either of the parties have been married; and besides, that the kindred in the first and second degree only with such, or of those with whom either of the parties have at any time had unlawful carnal knowledge, beyond which degrees there are no other of carnal kindred that can hinder matrimony, but in all these that have been mentioned, all marriages that are made, are null, and of no force, and all those that have married so, do live in the mortal sin of foul fornication: but if any upon just and reasonable accounts shall desire to marry within any of these degrees that are prohibited only by a positive law, they must have recourse

to the holy apostolic See for a dispensation, or to their prelate, having power from the said See to do it, declaring the degree of kindred wherein they desire to be dispensed, together with the causes why they do desire it, in which the prelate shall do what he shall judge convenient in the Lord, and so the prelate being empowered by the holy See to do it, shall do it gratis, without taking anything for the dispensation, though the parties of their own accord should offer to pay him for it.

DECREE VII

CASES OF SPIRITUAL AFFINITY THAT COME WITHIN THE SAME RULE

Besides the carnal kindred of consanguinity and affinity, which hinders matrimony in certain degrees, there is also another sort of kindred that does the same, which is called spiritual kindred, and is contracted in baptism betwixt the godfather and godmother, and the child that is baptised, and the parents of the said child, and in confirmation or chrism betwixt those who offer and present the person that is confirmed, as was ordered in the decrees of baptism and confirmation; which spiritual kindred of godfathers and godmothers, and gossips, does so hinder the celebration of matrimony, that without a dispensation from the apostolic See, or from some authorised by the pope to that purpose, the matrimony is null, and of no force, all that live therein living in fornication, and a state of damnation; and if any that are thus akin have a mind to marry together, they shall prefer a petition, as they shall be directed hereafter, but are to know that the church does very seldom or never, but for weighty causes, dispense in cases of spiritual affinity.

DECREE VIII

DISPENSATIONS GRANTED FOR ALL MARRIAGES HITHERTO CONTRACTED CONTRARY TO THE ABOVE DECREES

Whereas hitherto the prohibited degrees, and the reservation of dispensing with the same to the apostolical See, has not been understood in this diocese, the prelates thereof having dispensed in all degrees, prohibited only by a positive law, without having had authority for what they did, so that great numbers by virtue of such dispensations, have lived many years in a married estate, without any scruple concerning what was granted by their prelates; for which reason the Synod, for the greater security of the consciences of such people, has thought fit that the most reverend Metropolitan should dispense with them in all the said degrees, by virtue of the apostolic authority granted to him in these parts to that effect, and particularly by the brief of Gregory the Thirteenth of glorious memory, obtained at the instance of the Jesuits, and confirmed by our holy Father Clement the Eighth, at this time presiding in the church of God; wherefore for the quieting of the consciences of such as have been married with the forementioned dispensa-

tions, the said lord with the approbation of the fathers of the society, doth by the authority of the said brief, effectually dispense in all and every one of the said degrees of spiritual as well as carnal kindred and affinity, which are prohibited only by a positive law, and with all persons who have married within the same with such dispensations so far as of right can or ought to be done, as much as if they were here particularly named; commanding them for the further security of their consciences to be married again privately in their houses, or elsewhere, as they shall judge most convenient, by any priest they please, there being two witnesses present, according to the form of the holy Council of Trent: and the Synod doth command that henceforward such dispensations be not granted any otherwise than in form of the briefs of the holy apostolic See in these parts to that effect, declaring all that shall be granted otherwise to be null, and of no force; and the marriages that are celebrated by virtue of them, to be void, and the parties not to be married.

DECREE IX

APPOINTS SEASONS FOR MARRYING

The Synod recognising for the time to come the ancient prohibition, observed in the universal church, of not marrying from the first day of Advent until the Epiphany, and from Ash Wednesday until the Sunday of the octaves of Easter inclusive, doth command the same to be inviolably observed in this diocese, adding to those days the time from Quinquagesima Sunday forward, when by ancient custom Lent is begun in this church, but that at all other times, though of fasting, marriage may be celebrated as people shall think fit.

DECREE X

AT WHAT AGE PARTIES MAY BE MARRIED

Whereas in this diocese there has hitherto been no respect had in the celebration of matrimony to the age of the parties that the law appoints, therefore the Synod doth command, that no man shall be married hereafter, until he has attained the age of fourteen years at least, nor any woman before she is full twelve, declaring that herein the prelates have no power to dispense, but can only, if any that are under that age should pretend to marry, judge in their consciences whether they are ripe for matrimony, and judging them to be so, may grant them a licence, and dispense with their marrying; nevertheless, for several just respects, and the greater security of people's consciences, and to remove as far as is possible for the Synod to do it, the imitations of the marriages that are so much in use among the heathens, who marry people very young, there being also great numbers in this diocese who have been married at nine or ten years old, or under, the Synod will not have the said dispensation or anticipation of time to exceed four months as to men, and six as to women; nor to be granted by any but the bishop; and if any man

hereafter shall presume to marry without such a dispensation, before he has attained the age of fourteen, or any woman while she is under twelve, all such marriages shall be void, but may be resolved into contracts *de futuro*, and the priests that shall marry any such, shall be suspended from their office and benefice, for six months, and the parties shall be kept asunder until they are of a due age.

DECREE XI

SEPARATIONS FORBIDDEN WITHOUT AN ECCLESIATICAL ORDER

The Synod being informed, that great numbers of married people in this diocese do, without any sentence of the church, (to which all matrimonial causes do belong) forsake their wives, and, to the great offence of God, absent themselves from them for a long time together, doth command that there be no such separations made without the order of the church, and if any shall presume to make them, that they be constrained to come together again, upon pain of excommunication, or whatsoever other penalty the bishop shall think fit to inflict; and in case they refuse to comply, they shall be declared excommunicate, until such time as they return to one another; and in case they have any just cause to separate, they shall carry it before the prelate to be judged according to law, and what is just, and shall be obliged by censures to stand to his last determination. The Synod doth furthermore declare, that the non-payment of the portion that may have been promised, is no just cause to leave their wives, which they might have been careful to have secured before they were married to them; and that whosoever shall forsake their wives on that account, shall be punished and constrained by excommunication to live with them.

DECREE XII

ALL MARRIAGES VOID THAT ARE NOT CELEBRATED ACCORDING TO THE FOREGOING DECREES

The Synod being informed that the black slaves that are Christians, and even such of them as live in the mountains with Christians, do marry without a priest, by only tying a thread about the bride's neck, according to the usage of the heathens, doth declare, that all such marriages are void and null, and that all that live so, do live in uncleanness; commanding all that have been so married, to be brought to the church, there to be married by the vicar, according to the form of the holy Trent Council, and as is above ordered. The vicars must take pains to inform themselves of the marriages of all such slaves, in order to make them observe the said decrees inviolably; and the masters who have consented that their slaves or servants should be thus married, and have celebrated such marriages themselves, and shall not send them to church to be married, though they desire it, shall be severely punished

at the pleasure of the prelate, and shall be told of the great wrong they do to their own consciences therein, and of the scandal they give to Christianity.

DECREE XIII

FORBIDS POLYGAMY

The Synod being informed that some of the Christians of the mountains have been married to several women in the face of the church, their first wife being still alive, to the great affront and injury of the holy sacrament of matrimony; doth command all vicars and curates at their first institution into their churches, immediately to make strict inquiry into this matter, and to force all such to live with their first wives; and, in case they refuse, to declare them excommunicate, until such time as they comply, and do turn away all their other wives, removings them from the place where they live, which shall be done to all, who during the life of their first wife have presumed to take others, until they shall be brought to live only with the first; and besides, they shall be punished with other punishments at the pleasure of the prelate, or of the holy office of Inquisition to which this doth belong.

DECREE XIV

FORBIDS ALL HEATHEN PRACTICES TO INSURE SUCCESS IN MARRIAGE

Whereas it is a thing unworthy of a Christian to observe the superstitious ceremonies of the heathens, from whence it is imagined good success may be derived, the Synod being informed that there are some ill Christians, that, in imitation of the heathens, do go to some of them, and others to some of their own superstitious priests, to learn which are the best days and hours to be married on, after the manner of the infidels; and do furthermore on their wedding-day make certain circles, into which they put rice, and certian persons using several superstitious ceremonies, which are plainly heathen; and do moreover make certain figures behind their doors to make their marriage fortunate, and use several prayers with ceremonies, which they call the ring of Solomon; all which being devilish, superstitious, and heathenish ceremonies, condemned by holy mother church: wherefore the Synod doth command and exhort all faithful Christians, neither to practise any such ceremonies themselves, nor to suffer others to use them in their houses; and that all who shall presume to practise them themselves, or permit others to do it in their houses, shall be denied the sacrament for a whole year, and be rigorously punished at the pleasure of the prelate: and the same shall be done to those that go to heathens, to learn what days are fortunate.

DECREE XV

PROHIBITS HEATHEN SUPERSTITIONS IN MAKING MARRIAGE CONTRACTS

The Synod having been informed, that when contracts *de futuro* are celebrated among the Christians of this diocese, or marriages are concerted, that it is performed with some heathenish and superstitious ceremonies, and that many times when the parties contracted are not of age, or have not judgement enough to give their consent, doth command, that no such contracts be made, but when the parties contracting are of sufficient age to understand what they do, and are capable of giving their consent *de futuro*; and, if the parents will make such matches, they shall do it by a simple writing, or by shaking hands, or by any other way that has nothing of superstition in it; neither shall they use any superstitious ceremonies, upon pain of being severely chastised at the pleasure of the prelate; commanding the priests, in virtue of holy obedience, not to be present at contracts, where any such damnable superstitions are performed, that so they may not seem to authorise them by their person and dignity.

DECREE XVI

CONDEMNS A JUDAICAL CEREMONY ADOPTED BY SOME SYRIANS AT THEIR MARRIAGE

The Synod doth condemn the custom, or abuse that has obtained in this diocese of the new-married couple's not going to church till after the fourth day after their marriage, when they use to wash themselves, which is according to the Judaical ceremonies condemned by the law of Christ; but on the contrary, doth exhort all new-married people, without respect of days, to go to church and say their prayers, knowing for certain, that if any of the days that they stay from church, should happen either to be a saint's-day or a Sunday, upon which all people are obliged to hear mass, that they sin mortally in not hearing it, if hindered by no other cause: neither are they to imagine, that such washings do any way contribute to the spiritual health of their souls, the worship of God, or the reverence of the church.

SESSION VIII

Of the Reformation of Church affairs

DECREE 1

FOR DIVIDING THE DIOCESE INTO PARISHES AND APPOINTING MINISTERS

Whereas the universal catholic church is ruled, inspired, and taught by the Holy Spirit, by whose direction, for the better government of Christians, and the more commodious administration of the sacraments to the faithful, it has divided the provinces of the whole world into dioceses, which are all subject to their several bishops; and the dioceses into parishes, which are all subject to their parish priests, so that as the dioceses and all the faithful inhabitants of the same are subject to their several bishops, and through them to the Bishop of Rome, the universal pastor and head of the church, and Christ's vicar upon earth; so all the faithful inhabitants in every parish are subject to their rector or vicar, that administer the sacraments to them, and are the particular pastors and curates of their souls, through whom they are subject to their bishop, and through the bishop to the pope, and through the pope to Christ; which order has been at all times preserved in the church all over the world, and for want whereof, this church is so confused and disorderly as it is; everyone doing what seems good in his own eyes, without ever being called to an account for what they do, having none that are under any obligation to take care of their souls, nor any particular pastor to assist them in their necessities, nor distinct parishes, unto which everyone is bound to resort; therefore this Synod conforming itself to the government of the whole catholic church, doth ordain, that this diocese be also divided into parishes, allotting such a number of people to each parish as shall be found most convenient, and furnishing them with particular vicars and curates, to watch over the souls of the faithful; and as for other priests and curates that shall be in any church, they shall be therein as beneficed persons, and co-adjutors to the vicars in the administration of the sacraments to the people, as also in the divine service and worship of the Church, as they have hitherto been, having the same profits and dividend they had formerly, save that the Synod intends to deprive them of those fees which formerly they simonaically received for administration of the sacraments, as to which they shall observe what is before decreed, as the vicars and paarish priests are to have what is allotted for their maintenance in the twenty-first and twenty-second Decrees; and the said vicars shall make a roll of all the inhabitans of their several parishes, that so they may be acquainted with their customs and way of living, and may administer the sacraments unto them, and comfort them in their troubles and necessities; neither shall the faithful receive the sacrament from any but their own vicar, without his licence in form.

DECREE II

THE DIVISION, &C. TO BE CONDUCTED BY THE BISHOP

The Synod doth declare, that the division of parishes, and the laying of people to them, has at all times belonged to the prelate; so that he may at any time divide or unite parishes at his pleasure, and as he shall find to be most convenient for the administration of the sacraments to the faithful, to whom it also belongs to provide vicars and curates for churches, whom he may institute or depose as often as he shall judge it to be necessary, to the better feeding of the flock of Christ, which he is charged with, and is to give an account of; and for the present the most reverend Metropolitan shall make such a reparation of parishes and people in this his visitation, uniting or dividing them as shall seem to him to be most commodious for the administration of the sacraments to the faithful, who at the end of the Synod will name vicars for every parish: and the Synod, for the just respects and the better government of the church, will not have any vicars so established, as not to be removable at the pleasure of the prelate.

DECREE III

PLURALITIES CONDEMNED

The Synod doth furthermore declare, that no priest shall hold two churches with cure, or receive the fruits of them according to the holy canons: and whereas in this diocese there are many that have two or three churches, which they have had commended unto them in several parts, either because they were built by their relations, or for some other reason; all which being a great abuse, the Synod doth declare, that after the division of the parishes is made, none shall have any jurisdiction therein besides their proper vicars, to whom only it shall belong to order all the affairs of their churches, and to whom whosoever shall deny to yield obedience, shall be declared excommunicate, and shall be punished at the pleasure of the prelate as disturbers of the church; and all such priests as are in present possession of the churches, if qualified, and there be no just impediment, the Synod will have it be instituted vicars of one of their parishes, as the most reverend Metropolitan shall think fit; not that the Synod intends to prohibit the prelate, in case he is not provided of a sufficient number of able priests, or where there is not a sufficient maintenance, to recommend two churches to one vicar, provided they are at such a distance that he can look after both, without any wrong to the administration of the sacraments. However, this shall never be done, but when there is an urgent and necessary reason for it.

DECREE IV

NO CHURCH TO BE WITHOUT A MINISTER

Whereas there are a great many churches in this diocese who have no priests, to the great detriment of the faithful, who by that means are for several years without mass, or any to administer the sacraments to them as has appeared to the revered Metropolitan in his visitation of the churches, in some of which he found there had been no masses said in five or six years, and that there are children of that or a greater age, that have never been baptized; therefore the Synod doth command, that there be no church that is made parochial, how poor and inconsiderable soever the people may be, for any long time without a curate or vicar to administer the sacraments to the faithful, of which the prelate is to take special care; and if it should so happen, as it does too often, that he cannot have a priest to supply such cures, in that case, the Synod declares, that the prelate may oblige whomsoever he pleaseth, by penalties and censures to serve such churches, that so the necessities of the faithful may be provided for, given them whereon to subsist in the said churches.

*DECREE V

THE DISUSE OF CHRISTIANITY TO BE INQUIRED INTO

The Synod being informed that there are many villages in this diocese, which, by reason of their great distance from any church, have little of Christianity left in them besides the name of the Christians of St. Thomas, which has been occasioned through the great negligence of the former schismatical prelates of this bishopric; wherefore the Synod doth, in virtue of holy obedience, command all priests that are nominated vicars, so soon as they shall come to their churches, to make a strict inquiry into the Christians that live in the skirts of their parishes and to report what they shall discover as to this matter to the most reverend Metropolitan, that so he may take such course therein as shall be most for the service of Christ, and the benefit of souls; and the same diligence shall be used in all parts, where there are such people found, and have never been baptized, and where it is thought necessary, there shall be new churches built, and vicars appointed for the reducing such to true Christianity, and the use of the holy sacraments of the church.

DECREE VI

THE CHURCH OF TRAVANCORE TO BE REBUILT

Whereas the church of Travancore is at this time totally demolished, the greater part of its parishioners having above forty years ago turned perfect heathens, all which has happened through the negligence of sending priests

among them by reason of their great distance from any other church, there being nevertheless several good Christians there still, therefore the Synod doth command, that a vicar be forthwith collated to that place, who shall set immediately about rebuilding the church; there shall likewise be some preachers sent along with him to reduce the said people into the bosom of holy mother church, and to the holy catholic faith of Christ, according to the orders given therein by the most reverend Metropolitan, and the vicar shall continue there baptizing and receiving all, according to the necessity of the church, for which an *olla*, or licence has been already obtained from the king of Travancore, and shall from henceforth continue in the church according to the necessity thereof.

DECREE VII

MINISTERS TO BE SENT TO TADAMALLA

The Synod being informed, that upon the borders of the territories belonging to the Zamorin king of Calicut, at the distance of four leagues from any church in this bishopric, there is a country called Tadamalla, in which there are certain villages of Christians, who were anciently of this church, but at present have nothing of Christianity but the bare name, doth command that priests and preachers be sent thither immediately from this church, to reduce them to the catholic faith, and baptize them; in which matter, through the diligences that have been used by the most reverend Metropolitan, they will meet with no difficulties on the part of those who have lost their Christianity only for want of instruction, and the Synod doth recommend this people, as a member of their church to the spiritual care of the most reverend Metropolitan.

DECREE VIII

THREE VESSELS OF OIL TO BE KEPT IN EVERY CHURCH WITH GREAT CARE

Whereas the use of the holy oils was instituted by Christ in the church, who made the oil of Chrism, the matter of the sacrament of Confirmation and Extreme Unction; and did furthermore appoint other holy unctions for the Catechumeni, delivering the doctrine of the consecration of such oils in his last Supper to his Disciples, as we are taught by holy tradition from the apostles and the doctrine of the holy fathers of the church, and there having notwithstanding this been no such thing in use, or known in this church to this day: Therefore the Synod doth command, that in all parish churches there be a box that shall hold three vessels of plate, tin, or glass, in which the holy oils shall be kept with due decency and reverence, with their several names upon each vessel, so that they may not be used one for another, commanding the vicars that are to be nominated, not to go from hence without carrying these boxes along with them, to their respective churches, which the most reverend

Metropolitan will furnish them withal, and with the holy oils which he consecrated on Holy Thursday last for this purpose in the church of Carturte in this diocese, which boxes they shall put under lock and key in their repositories, either in the chief chapel of the high altar, or in their vestries, or near to the font, having them always decently covered with silk, or in case the vicars live at a considerable distance from their churches, or in the heaths, in some decent place in their houses for fear of infidel robbers, and that they may be always at hand, when they shall be called to administer the sacrament of unction; and whensoever they are carried to church for baptism, or are carried to the sick, they shall be always carried by a priest, if it is possible, but at least by one in holy orders; and upon holy Thursday they shall either burn all the oils that remain of that year in the lamps of the church, or pour them into the font, so as after that day not to make use of any oils but such as are new, which after Easter they shall either go or send to the prelate for, or to the place where he has ordered them to be distributed, and in case the see be vacant, they shall then by order from the governor of the diocese, have recourse to the bishop of Cochin, and the vicars that shall neglect to go or send for the said holy oils for the use of their churches, so as not to have them within a month after Easter, shall be suspended by the prelate, (who is desired to be very watchful in this matter,) from his office and benefice for six months, and be obliged to fetch them, and the children that shall be baptized during that time, shall be anointed with the holy oils of baptism when they come; neither shall the vicars depart from hence, until they are fully instructed in the use of the oils by persons appointed by the Synod to teach them, that so they may not be mistaken in the administration of the holy sacraments.

DECREE IX

WHAT HOLY DAYS OR FESTIVALS ARE TO BE KEPT

There being a great confusion in this bishopric as to the holy days that are to be kept under the obligation of a mortal sin, as well as to the hearing of mass, as to the doing of work; wherefore the Synod doth declare that they are these following, to wit, all the Sundays in the year.

In January, the first day being the Circumcision of our Lord, and the sixth being the feast of the Epiphany.

In February, the second day being the Purification of our Lady, and the twenty-fourth being the feast of the Apostle St. Matthew, which in the Bissextile is to be celebrated on the twenty-fifth.

In March, the twenty-fifth day, being the Annunciation of our Lady.

In April, the twenty-third being the Feast of St. George the Martyr, according to the custom of this bishopric.

In May, the first being the feast of the Apostles St. Philip and St. James.

In June, the twenty-fourth being the feast of St. John the Baptist, and the twenty-ninth being the feast of St.Peter and St. Paul.

In July, the second being the Visitation of our Lady, and the third being the feast of the glorious Apostle St. Thomas, which by some is said to be the day of his translation, by others of his arrival in these parts, and which has by ancient custom been still kept in this bishopric; and the twenty-fifth being the feast of the Apostle St. James.

In August, the sixth being the Transfiguration of our Lord, according to the custom of this bishopric, the fifteenth the Assumption of our Lady, and the twenty-fourth the feast of St. Bartholomew the Apostle.

In September, the eighth being the Nativity of our Lady, the fourteenth the feast of the Holy Cross, according to the custom of this bishopric. The twenty-first the feast of St. Matthew the Apostle, the twenty-ninth the feast of St. Michael the Archangel.

In October, the twenty-seventh being the feast of the Apostles St. Simon and St.Jude.

In November, the first being the feast of All Saints, the thirtieth of St. Andrew the Apostle.

In December, the eighth being the Conception of our Lady, the eighteenth being the day whereon the Holy Cross of the Apostle St. Thomas did sweat: the twenty-first being the feast of the same holy apostle St. Thomas; the twenty-fifth the feast of the Nativity; the twenty-sixth the feast of St. Stephen the Protomartyr, the twenty-seventh of St.John the Evangelist, the twenty-eighth of the Innocents.

The Thursday of our Lord's Supper, from the time the offices are begun in the church until midnight, according to the custom of the church. Easter, and the three days following, notwithstanding they may have hitherto observed only two days. The day of our Lord's Ascension, the most holy feast of Pentecost, with the two following days.

The most holy feast of the Body of God, or of the most Holy Sacrament, which, according to the custom of these parts, they celebrate on the Thursday after Easter.

Also the days of the consecration of their churches, and the feasts of the saints, to whom they were dedicated, in their own parishes only.

The Synod doth furthermore declare, That the Fridays from Christmas to Lent, which used to be observed in some parts, shall not be kept hereafter, the Saints that were celebrated on some of them, having their particular feasts; and others of them being dedicated to heretics, as is above observed, whose memories ought not to be celebrated; and the vicars shall not fail on Sundays at mass, to warn the people of all the holy days of the week, that so they may be advertised to keep them.

DECREE X

WHAT FAST DAYS ARE TO BE KEPT

Not only what holy days were to be kept, were uncertain, and not uniformly observed in this bishopric, but the same also happened to the fasting days, which Christians are under an obligation to keep; wherefore the Synod doth declare, that the fasting days, as well the ancient ones, as those that are now commanded, are these following.

The holy and solemn fast of Lent, which according to the custom of this bishopric, begins upon the Monday after Quinquagesima.

The holy fast of Advent, which is kept in this bishopric with great rigor from the Sunday, that is next to the first of December, until Christmas.

The first day of February, being the vigil of the Purification of our Lady, the 23rd being the vigil of St. Matthias the Apostle.

The 23rd of June, being the vigil of St. John the Baptist, and the 28th of St. Peter and St. Paul.

The 24th of July, being the vigil of St. James the Apostle.

The 12th of August, being the vigil of the Assumption of our Lady, and the 23rd of St. Bartholomew the Apostle.

The 7th of September, being the vigil of our Lady's Nativity, the 13th of the Holy Cross.

The 27th of October, being the vigil of St. Simon and Jude, and the last, of All Saints.

The 29th of November, being the vigil of St. Andrew.

The 2nd of December, being the vigil of the glorious Apostle St. Thomas, on the 24th of our Saviour's Nativity, notwithstanding these two do both fall in Advent.

And that this diocese may be in all things conformable to the customs of the universal church, the Synod doth command, the Fast of the four Times to be published and observed therein; they are the first Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday after the first Sunday in Lent; and the first Wednesday and Friday, and Saturday after Whitsuntide; and the first Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday after the feast of the Holy Cross, in September; and the Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday after the feast of the Holy Cross, on the 13th of December, which falls in with the Advent fast.

And the Synod doth furthermore declare, That the Fast of our Lady's Assumption, which begins on the first of August, and lasts to the day of the festivity, and the fast that is called the Apostles' which begins on the first day after Whitsuntide, and lasts fifty days, notwithstanding they are holy and laudable, it wisheth they were not kept as they are by the Christians of this diocese, after the same manner as the ancient fasts are; nevertheless, since they are observed by some and not by others, that there may be no scruples nor disorder, the Synod doth declare, that the keeping of them is not commanded under the precept of a mortal sin, though they may be kept out

of devotion by those that have a mind to it, neither are people under any obligation to a Lent fare on these days; and as to the three fasting days of the prophet Jonas, called *Mononebo*, which begins eighteen days before the first day in Lent, the Synod, out of respect to its antiquity and holiness, doth permit it to be observed with great strictness: but whereas people do assemble together in the churches on those days, there to eat the *Nerchas* that are distributed, the Synod, though it is not willing to oblige people to fast on those three days under the obligation of a mortal sin, doth nevertheless oblige them to a Lent diet at least upon them; and the vicars shall be obliged to give notice to the people of all the fasts of the week upon Sundays, that so all may be warned to observe them.

DECREE XI

THE SYRIAN CHRISTIANS' CUSTOM OF KEEPING LENT APPROVED OF AND CONFIRMED

The Synod doth approve of the holy and laudable custom observed by the Christians of this diocese, of eating neither eggs nor cheese, nor anything made of milk, nor of fish, and of abstaining totally from wine, and from their wives during the whole time of Lent; all which it desires them to continue to observe inviolably, as also to begin the fast upon the day after Quinquagesima Sunday; and some abuses being reformed, it doth declare, That fasting doth not only consist in people's abstaining from some sorts of meat, but also in their not eating so often as they may desire, the integrity of the precept of fasting obliging people not to eat above one meal a day; and that at hour appointed, and at night they that shall stand in need of it, and have an appetite to drink for their health's - sake, may eat a light collation, according to the permission of the church; but if they shall exceed either in the quality or quantity of the said collation, or eat oftener than twice after this manner, they do violate the fast, and sin mortally; and if through infirmity or weakness, they should break the fast upon any day, they shall not, as some imagine, be released by their having broke Lent once, from continuing the fast, but on the contrary, they shall be guilty of so many mortal sins, as there are days of obligation, on which they neglect to fast: they are also bound to fast on all the saints' days, though never so solemn, that shall fall in Lent, Sunday only excepted, upon which it is not lawful for any Christian to fast, as to which matter there are great abuses introduced into this diocese.

DECREE XII

WHAT PERSONS ARE EXEMPT FROM FASTING

The Synod doth declare, That, notwithstanding fasting is of great benefit, it doth not intend to oblige any that are under one and twenty, nor such as are very ancient, or weak, or sickly, nor women with child, nor those

that give suck, nor those that cannot fast conveniently by reason of some hard labour they are obliged to, to fast any otherwise than by eating a Lent diet on fasting days, as to which too the weak and sick are excepted, who may at all times eat what is necessary to their health; and it shall also be lawful for women with child to eat whatsoever they long for, to prevent abortion.

DECREE XIII

HEATHENISH ABLUTIONS CONDEMNED

The Synod doth very much condemn what some ignorant observers of heathenish superstition imagine, viz. That if they do not wash their bodies betimes in the morning on a fast-day, their fast will be of no worth; and that if they happen to touch any of a base race, or a Naire, they must wash themselves to make their fast to be of any merit; and declares, that all such washings and superstitious touches, are commanded neither by God nor the church , and are no ways proper for Christians; and doth futhermore command the observers of all such superstitions to be punished severely by the prelate, as followers of heathenish vanities, condemned by holy mother church, earnestly desiring that all such things may be totally rooted out of the hearts of the very infidels in this diocese.

DECREE XIV

CONSECRATED ASHES TO BE USED

Notwithstanding the Synod doth approve of the laudable custom that has obtained in this diocese, of beginning the holy fast of Lent, upon the Monday following Quinquagesima Sunday: nevertheless in conformity to the usage of the universal church, it doth ordain and command, that on the Wednesday following, they consecrate ashes in the church, which shall be sprinkled on the heads of the people by the priest that celebrates mass, using these words "Remember man that thou art dust, and that to dust thou shalt return," as he is directed by the Roman ceremonial, translated into Syriac, by the order of the most reverend Metropolitan, leading by this holy ceremony the faithful to a deeper repentance, for their sins, and a sense of their own vileness in that holy time; which ashes so far as it can be done, shall be made of the branches that were blessed the former year upon Palm Sunday, which is called Osana in this diocese, as it is likewise ordered in the said ceremonial, but at the same time the people shall be told that this is only a holy ceremony of the church, and not a sacrament.

DECREE XV

FLESH NOT TO BE EATEN ON SATURDAYS, BUT PERMITTED ON WEDNESDAYS

That this bishopric may in all things be conformable to the customs of the catholic church, the Synod doth command all the members thereof upon pain of mortal sin, not to eat flesh upon Saturdays, in memory of our Lord's burial; but eggs, milk, butter or cheese they may lawfully eat upon Saturdays, as also upon all fish days that are not fasts, and since the custom of not eating flesh on Wednesdays is not observed over the whole diocese, but only in some parts thereof, and that but by a few; the Synod doth declare, that albeit that custom is holy and laudable, and it were to be wished that it were universally observed by all Christians, it doth not think fit to oblige people thereunto upon pain of sin, so that all that list may eat flesh upon Wednesdays.

DECREE XVI

FASTS AND FESTIVALS TO LAST FROM MIDNIGHT TO MIDNIGHT

The Synod doth declare, That the obligation of not eating flesh on prohibited days, lasts from midnight to midnight, beginning at the midnight of the prohibited day, and ending at the midnight of the day following, so that the obligation of not eating flesh upon Fridays and Saturdays, begins at the midnight of Friday, and ends on the midnight of Sunday, and the obligation of ceasing from labour begins at the midnight of the said day, and ends at the midnight of Monday: being to understand that in beginning the fasts and festivities on the evening of the former, and continuing them to the evening of the latter day, they do conform themselves to the customs and rites of the Jews condemned by holy mother church, in which days and their observances are not reckoned from evening to evening, but from midnight to midnight.

DECREE XVII

HOLY WATER TO BE BLESSED WITH HOLY SALT, AND USED WITH CARE

Whereas it is the custom of the universal church, to have holy water at the entrance of the churches, that so the faithful by sprinkling themselves therewith, may have their venial sins pardoned, and the holy water that has been hitherto made use of in this diocese has not been blessed by the priest, nor by any prayer of the church, the sextons only throwing a little of the clay into it, that is brought by pilgrims from the sepulchre of St.Thomas, or from some other holy place relating to him, and where such clay has been wanting, the said sextons have thrown some grains of incense into it: whereupon without any further consecration, it has been esteemed holy: therefore the

Synod doth declare, that such water is not holy, and that the faithful ought not to make use of it; and albeit that all the earth of holy places, and of the sepulchres of saints approved of by the church, ought to be kept with much veneration, yet that the earth of the holy places belonging to St.Thoms, has not the virtue of such a consecration in it: for which reason it commands all priests to bless the said water, by throwing holy salt into it, according to the custom of the universal church, as is directed by the Roman ceremonial translated into Syriac by the order of the most reverend Metroplitan, according to the form whereof the true vicars shall take care to consecrate water, and every Saturday evening, or Sunday morning to furnish the waterpots therewith; and upon Sundays the people being assembled, the priest being in his surplice and stole, but without his planet, shall before he begins mass, sprinkle the whole congregation, repeating the Antiphona, and the Prayer contained in the said ceremonial and at masses at which the deacon and subdeacon officiate, the deacon may repeat the Antiphona, but the prayer shall always be said by the priest. The vicars must also instruct the people at their entering into the church, to take holy water and bless themselves therewith, in the form of a cross, and to give over the saying the prayer to the impious heretic Nestorius, which they used to do when they took holy water as they entered into the church, the Synod condemning the same as heretical and blasphemous.

DECREE XVIII

CHILDREN AND SERVANTS TO BE INSTRUCTED IN THE DOCTRINES OF ROME

Whereas the greatest part of the people of this bishopric are not instructed in the doctrine, and they that are, know only the Paternoster, and Ave Mary in the Syrian tongue, which they do not understand, and most of the children know not how to bless themselves, nay the clergy themselves are ignorant thereof, not being able to say the commandments; therefore the Synod doth command, that in all parish churches in the morning and evening, as the vicar shall think most convenient, one of the boys or the bellman shall ring the little bell to call the boys and girls together in the church, where being assembled, the vicar, or some other clergyman that he shall appoint, shall instruct them in the doctrine, that is to say, the sign of the cross, the Paternoster, Ave Mary, the creed, and the commandments of God, and the church, the articles of faith, and other Christian doctrines in the Malabar tongue, that so all may understand them, and not in the Syriac, which the people do not understand, it being the custom of the church to teach the doctrine to children, and to the people in their mother tongue, and furthermore upon all Sundays and holydays, either before or after mass, the vicar shall teach the said doctrine in the congregation, that so all may be instructed therein, and shall also after having called the people together with a bell,

teach it on the evenings of Sundays, and as for the churches that are in the heaths, the vicars shall give orders that the children, or at least such of them as are nighest to the church, shall upon a certain day of the week come to learn the doctrine, employing other persons to instruct the rest therein, and the schoolmasters that teach Syriac, or that teach to read and write, shall every day, before they begin school, repeat the said doctrine to their scholars in Malabar; neither shall any inferior orders, no, not the first tonsure, be given to children before they can say the whole doctrine in Malabar, in which they must be examined according to the holy Council of Trent; and in all churches there shall be a book of the doctrine in the Malabar tongue, for the instruction of children: which the Synod doth intreat the father rector, of the college of Jesuits of Vaipicotta, to order to be translated by some of that college, commanding all the churches of this diocese, as also exhorting all the Christians thereof at night to cause the said doctrine to be taught in their houses to their whole families, that so their servants and slaves may be instructed therein, and the confessors in their confessions must not fail to examine their penitents in the doctrine, and to exhort them to learn it.

DECREE XIX

DIRECTIONS FOR SAYING THE AVE MARIA

That the faithful Christians in this diocese may in their common prayer be conformable to the whole catholic church, they must not from henceforward say the Ave Mary, as they have been taught by the perfidious Nestorians, but must say it thus, 'Ave Mary full of grace, the Lord be with thee, blessed art thou among women, blessed is Jesus the fruit of thy womb; holy mother of God pray for us sinners, now, and at the hour of our death, amen, Jesus.' And in this form it shall be inserted into all the prayer-books of this diocese.

DECREE XX

COMMANDS ALL TO BOW AT THE NAME OF JESUS

Whereas the Christians of this diocese do not show the least reverence to the most holy name of Jesus when it is mentioned, which ariseth from the false doctrine of the Nestorian heretics, who do impiously assert, that it is not worthy of reverence, being the name of a human person, teaching falsely that there are two persons in Christ, therefore since that divine name contains in it so many divine mysteries, being the name of our redemption, and the name above all names, "At which," St.Paul saith, "every knee in heaven and in earth, and below the earth ought to bow," the Synod doth command, that as often either in the Gospel or prayers of the mass, or offices, or anywhere else that name is mentioned, all people do reverently bow their body, whether they be sitting or standing, and the clergy and other Christians, having their caps

on shall take them off, and the vicars and preachers must not neglect to put their people frequently in mind thereof; and whereas the name Lyo is the same with the most sweet name of Jesus in the Malabar language, and is commonly given to children in baptism; the Synod doth strictly prohibit the giving of that name to anybody for the future, commanding all that are called by it, to take another name in confirmation, or at any other time, it being a great irreverence for anyone to be called by so high and divine a name.

DECREE XXI

MATINS AND PROCESSIONS ORDERED ON CHRISTMAS EVE

Whereas it is necessary that the feast of Christ's nativity should be celebrated with great solemnity and uniformity through the whole catholic church; the Synod doth command that on the eve of that festivity, all the clergy and people do assemble together in the church, there to say the matins, with the greatest solemnity possible; and that after they have done these prayers, which shall end about midnight, they shall make the customary procession, which being over, a solemn mass shall be said, with all possible festivity, after which the priest may say a mass at break of day, and a third at the usual time of mass; for the priest must know, that for the greater solemnity of this festival, they are permitted to say three masses upon it, that is, one at midnight, one at break of day, and a third at the ordinary time; or being private masses, all three together after break of day, but being public, shall be all said in the forementioned order; neither shall they after the first two take the lavatory, but after having received the blood, shall go on with the mass without taking the lavatory, that so they may be fasting to celebrate the third; and they shall be very careful to have the cups well scoured, and their fingers washed clean with water, which shall be preserved in a particular vessel in order to its being afterwards either thrown into a pond, or poured under the altar, or into the baptismal water that is in the font; and if any priest through carelessness should in either of the two first masses take the lavatory, after that it shall not be lawful for him to say anymore, because the mass is not to be celebrated but fasting, which the taking of the lavatory breaks.

DECREE XXII

ECCLESIASTICAL VESTMENTS TO BE USED IN THE SACRAMENTS

The synod doth command, that the priests in the solemn administration of the sacraments of baptism, matrimony, and extreme unction, or when they administer the holy eucharist without the mass, for the greater decency and reverence for what they are about, do wear a surplice with a stole about their necks: and whereas hitherto there has been no such thing as a surplice in this bishopric, the most reverend Metropolitan having been pleased to provide such vestments as are necessary in this bishopric, no vicar shall go

from hence without taking a surplice along with him, which he is to wear in the administration of the holy sacraments, wherein the Synod commands them likewise to use the rites and ceremonies prescribed in the Roman ceremonial, which the said lord Metropolitan has commanded to be translated into the Syriac and to be kept in all churches, which contains the forms of baptizing, of anointing the sick, of marrying, of sacramental absolution, with the customary prayers therein; of administering the holy sacrament of the altar, of the exorcisms of the church, for people possessed with the devil, the blessings of holy water, of ashes, of chains and branches, as also the form of burying the dead, old and young, and of reconciling churches and churchyards. Which books being bound, shall be kept in all churches; neither shall any priest presume to apply them to his own private use, or to take them out of the church: and the Synod doth earnestly recommend it to the rector of the college of the Jesuits of Vaipicotta, to have always some of these books translated by some of the said college by him, in order to the supplying of the necessities of these churches.

*DECREE XXIII

CANDLES TO BE BLESSED ON STATED DAYS

The Synod desiring that this church may in all things be conformable to the holy Roman and whole Italian church, doth command, that on the second of February, being the day of our lady's purification, before mass, the wax candles which are in the church, be blessed, as also all the candles that shall be brought by the people out of devotion, according to the Roman ceremonial, translated into Syriac; and after the public and solemn benediction is over, there shall be a procession in or round the church, in which all the clergy shall carry blessed candles lighted in their hands, as the people shall also do that have any, in memory of the mystery of our Lord Jesus Christ, the divine light and splendour of the Father, first entrance into the temple, there to offer himself to his Eternal Father, clothed with our humanity: so likewise upon the Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday before the feast of our Lord's holy ascension, in the morning, either before or after mass, there shall be a procession in the church, or where the vicar shall appoint, in which the Litanies shall be said according to the customs of the church, which shall also be translated in the said Roman ceremonial, expunging the names of all the heretics, who according to the custom of the Nestorians, were commemorated in this church; and it is the desire of the Synod, that the use of the said Litanies be brought into this church to be read in their necessities, or when they desire to implore the divine mercy.

DECREE XXIV

COMMANDS ENTIRE REST FORM WORK ON THE SABBATH

The Synod being informed, that in the remote parts of this bishopric, as well towards the south, as towards the north, the Christians that dwell in the heaths are guilty of working and merchandising on Sundays and holydays, especially in the evenings, doth command the vicars to be very vigilant in this matter, and to admonish and reprehend all that they shall find so doing; and if after three particular admonitions, they shall not reform, they shall after that be thrown out of the church, and have the *casture* denied them; neither shall any priest go into their houses until they have yielded obedience.

DECREE XXV

CHURCHES TO BE DEDICATED HENCEFORTH TO NONE BUT ROMAN SAINTS

Whereas in this diocese there are many churches dedicated to Marxobro, and Mar Phrod, who are commonly styled saints, of whom there is nothing known, only it is commonly said, 'That they came into these parts and wrought miracles, and returned afterwards to Babylon, from whence they came, others affirming that they died in Coulon, there being nothing writ of them that is authentic, neither does it appear that they were ever canonized by the church; but on the contrary, since they came from Babylon, there is just cause to suspect that they might be heretics:' wherefore the Synod doth command, that all the churches which are dedicated to them, be dedicated to all the saints, and that the festivities used to be kept to their honour, and the *Nerchas* that used to be given upon their days, shall be given on All Saints' day, being the first of November: and for the future there be no more churches dedicated to them, churches and festivities being never to be dedicated, nor prayers made to any but to saints canonized and approved of by the church.

DECREE XXVI

DIRECTIONS FOR THE KEEPING OF THE POOR'S BOX

Whereas experience has demonstrated that many churches have been robbed by reason of the poors' box being kept in them and not opened in many years, no not when the necessities of the church did require it; therefore the Synod doth command, that in every church upon the first of January there be chosen four substantial and conscientious men to be overseers of the poor, and to take care of the church, who at the end of the year shall open the poors' box and take out all the alms they find therein, which shall be put down in a book by one of the four overseers, and the said alms shall be afterwards put into a chest locked with three different keys, which shall stand in any one of their houses as they shall agree, of which keys the vicar shall have one, and

the other two the two overseers, who are not the scrivener, or in whose houses the chest is not kept: he that's the scrivener shall also have a book, in which he shall set down the expenses of the said alms, how much has been laid out upon the fabric of the church, and in the reparation of the walls and roof, how much in adorning it, and in necessary linen, and in pictures, and in keeping it clean: and whensoever there is any great extraordinary expense, it shall not be made without the consent of the four overseers, according to custom; neither shall the chest be opened but when they are all five present, or some one in the place of him that is lawfully hindered; and when new overseers are chosen, the old ones shall deliver the said chest to them, for which the elect shall give a receipt, that so it may always appear how much has been received and how much is remaining: and the prelate in his visitation shall look over the said books and inform himself of the expenses, and may order the alms to be disposed of as he shall think fit and necessary. And the Synod intreats the most reverend Metropolitan to see that this decree be put in execution at the visitation he intends to make, it being a thing of great advantage to the churches.

DECREE XXVII

CAPIARS TO BE APPOINTED TO KEEP THE CHURCH CLEAN

Whereas most of the churches of this diocese are kept very nasty, being full of dust and cobwebs, for want of an officer to keep the church clean, therefore the Synod doth command, that the overseers appoint a capiar, who shall be paid out of the alms, for sweeping the church and keeping clean the lamps and candlesticks; and the capiar shall take care that the church be swept at least three times a week, and there be always one lamp at least lighted before the high altar, and the vessels wherein the lamp-oil is kept, without they be so small as not to be seen, shall not be kept in the church, nor the bategas or kettles, nor anything else that is indecent, but shall be kept in the capiar's or overseers' houses, that so the church may be kept clean and decent.

DECREE XXVIII

THE VESSELS AND CHURCH-PLATE TO BE SECURED IN CUPBOARDS OR CHESTS

The Synod doth command, that in all vestries of churches there be cupboards and chests with locks, to keep the cups, corporals, and ornaments in; and where there is no vestry, until one shall be built, they shall be kept somewhere in the church; except in the heaths, where the churches are in danger of being robbed, where the vicars shall keep them in their houses, and shall by no means leave any of them upon the altars, as has been the custom, which was the occasion of the ornaments being so dirty, and of the altars

being so much out of order: and whereas most of the chief chapels are extremely dark, they shall take care to have windows opened, and fortified with iron to let in air and light, which must nevertheless be so contrived, that the heathens when they come may not see the divine mysteries through them.

DECREE XXIX

COMMAND RESPECTING IMAGES, PULPITS AND BELLS IN ALL THE CHURCHES

Whereas almost all the churches of this diocese are without pictures, which was the effect of their being governed by Nestorian heretics, who do not allow of the healthful use of sacred images; therefore the Synod doth command, that in churches that are finished, the first work that shall be done after that of the baptismal font out of the alms of the parish, shall be to set up some images, according to the directions of the prelate, who shall always be consulted about every picture; and after that of the high altar is once set up, if the church has any side altars, they shall also have images set up in them, and on every altar besides an image, there shall be a cross or some matter or other set up; and in all churches that are large enough, and yet have no pulpits, pulpits shall be erected for the preaching of the word of God; and they shall also put bells in their steeples to be rung at meet times, and to call the people to church, which shall not be hung within the church, where besides that they cannot be rung as they ought to be, they do take up too much room; and in places where there is danger of having their bells stolen, they shall have their steeples fortified and shut up after the manner of towers; and where the kings and brahmins of the pagods will not consent to their having a building higher than the church, which often happens through their imagining that the pagods are made melancholy by the hearing of such bells; they shall hang them within the church but at such a height, that they may ring them without touching them with their hands, and that they shall take up no room below in the church; and in those churches where they have no bells, the Synod grants licence until such time as they can procure some, to make use of boards, as they have done formerly, to call the faithful together and to give the signal at the mass.

DECREE XXX

CAUSES THAT DEFILE A CHURCH, AND HOW TO BE PURIFIED

The Synod doth teach and declare, that by ancient right always observed in the church, churches may be so violated in certain cases, that it is not lawful to celebrate in them, nor to bury the dead until they are reconciled, which through the ignorance of the canons has not hitherto been observed in this bishopric; the cases are, when human blood is injuriously shed in the church, or there is a natural cause given of such shedding, or of

death; as if one has a mortal wound given him in the church, or a wound that fetches blood, notwithstanding the wounded person shall be got out of the church before any blood is shed; but if the wound was given without the church, notwithstanding the blood thereof should come to be shed therein, the church is not violated thereby; and by a wound that is injuriously given in the church, whereby blood is shed, though the wound should not prove mortal, the church is violated. The second case is, '*si semen voluntarie effundatur intra Templum, etiam si id fiat per copulam conjugalem*:' the third is, when one that is excommunicated is buried in the church: the fourth, when an infidel is buried in it; in which case the church is not only to be reconciled, but the walls are also to be scraped: the fifth is, when the church has been consecrated or blessed by a bishop that was publicly excommunicate; in all which cases the church is to be reconciled, which reconciliation being to be done to a church that was consecrated by a bishop, none but a bishop can perform it: but having been only blessed by one, or by a priest, the vicar may perform the reconciliation, according to the form, and with the prayers and ceremonies contained in the Roman ceremonial translated into Syriac; and it is to be observed, that when a church is violated, the churchyard that belongs to it is violated also, if they are not at some distance the one from the other; but when the churchyard is violated in any of the forementioned cases, the church it belongs and is joined to, is not violated thereby.

DECREE XXXI

THE SICK FORBIDDEN TO LIE IN THE CHURCH

It being of mighty moment that consecrated churches be had in great reverence; and whereas in this diocese it is a common thing for sick people out of devotion to lie in churches with their wives and families for several days, hoping thereby to be cured of their distempers, which cannot be done without many services; wherefore the Synod doth command, that no person whatsoever, though never so sick, do lie in the church with his family, the time of war only excepted, but the sick having performed their devotion, shall lie at home at their own houses, or if they shall desire it may lodge in some houses that are near to the church, or in the porches thereof, but by no means within the church.

DECREE XXXII

THE DEAD TO BE BURIED IN HOLY GROUND AND BY A PRIEST

Whereas there is a great neglect in carrying the corpse of those that die in the heaths to the church, which are sometimes buried without a priest, and in unconsecrated earth; wherefore the Synod doth command, that the kindred, or those in whose houses Christians do die, do carry their corpse, how far soever they may live off, near to the church, where the vicars shall

go to fetch them, with the cross of the church, and in their surplice and stole, praying all the way they go with the rest of the clergy, and inter them, which all, though never so poor, shall be obliged to do: and if at the time when they bring the corpse they shall meet with no priests in the church, they shall then assemble as many Christians together as conveniently they can, and bury the corpse in the churchyard, praying for their souls with Christian charity: and whosoever shall neglect to bring their dead to the church, and shall bury them in profane ground, shall be severely punished by the bishop.

*DECREE XXXIII

HOW TO INTER THOSE WHO DIE OF THE SMALLPOX

Whereas the SmallPox is looked upon in these parts as a very dangerous and infectious distemper for which reason a great many Christians dying thereof are not carried to the church, nor buried in holy ground; therefore the Synod doth very much recommend it to the vicars to take order, that the corpses of such as die of that sickness may be brought with due caution to the churchyard, where they with the rest of the clergy at some distance are to recommend them, and pray for them, as they do for others, and to see them interred: all which Christian charity will teach them to do, according to the obligation of their office.

DECREE XXXIV

NO CHURCH IS TO BE DEDICATED TO A SECOND SAINT, WITHOUT APPOINTING ANOTHER FESTIVAL FOR HIM

The Synod doth order that no town or village, wherein there is a church dedicated to any saint, shall dedicate the same to any other, or if they do, they shall appoint another Orago, or wake, so as to have two festivals to prevent those emulations that are common in these parts. The Synod also condemns the ignorance of those Christians who imagine that they do an injury to a church, in dedicating a new one in the same country to a different saint, from whence it is that all the churches in the same country are as it were called by the same name, and doth furthermore command, That upon the Orago's of churches where there are sermons, people having no sermon in their own parish, do repair thither, that so there may be no division among churches, to the prejudice of charity and Christian unity, as the Synod is informed there is in many places, all which it is desirous to remove, as not becoming Christians, and for the further service of the church commands fraternities to be erected, but especially for the festivities, by which means such things as are necessary for the church may be greatly advanced.

DECREE XXXV

GENTLENESS TO BE USED IN THE CONVERSION OF INFIDELS

The Synod doth very much recommend it to the vicars of churches, and other priests to labour much in the conversion of Infidels, and that by just and gentle methods, namely, by the preaching of the Gospel to bring them to the catholic faith, and to omit no opportunity of instructing as well the *Naires* as the *chegos*, or baser sort of people in the knowledge of the truth; but above all, the poor *malleans* who live in the heaths, who as the Synod is informed, are less wedded o their errors, particularly that of the adoration of idols, and are much better disposed to receive the evangelical doctrine than others; and whensoever any infidel is converted, the priest shall advise the prelate thereof, that he may take such order therein as he shall judge most convenient, and to be most for the service of Christ, earnestly entreating that the conversions that are begun in some parts by the most reverend Metropolitan, may be carried on by the clergy of this diocese, by providing themselves continually of such priests as are fit to advance the same, and wherever there is any considerable number of converts, they shall immediately build churches, and appoint vicars to take the cure of their souls.

DECREE XXXVI

ALL THE POOR WHO DESIRE IT ARE TO BE BAPTIZED

Whereas the Synod is informed, That the meaner sort of people are much better disposed to receive the faith than the *Naires*, or nobles, and being extremely desirous to find some way whereby such well disposed people may be made Christians, so as to assemble together with the old Christians, (as why should they not, since they all adore the same God, with whom there is no distinction of persons, and are all of the same faith, and do all use the same sacraments?) and whereas after mature deliberation, and having oftentimes recommended the matter to God, and conferred about the most proper methods for the effecting of it in the congregations, we have not been able to find any that are effectual, by reason of the heathen kings and lords to whom all the Christians in these parts are subject, who, if they should observe that we withdraw their common subjects from their religion, would correspond with us no longer to the loss of the trade and commerce we do at present maintain with them, all which being observed by the Synod, it doth command that if any of the poorer sort of people shall desire to turn Christian, that they be received to baptism, and the prelate shall be advised thereof, that he may give order for the building of distinct churches for them, and may appoint priests to take the cure thereof, that so the meaner sort of people may not have the gate of Christianity and salvation shut against them, as it has been hitherto in this church; and in case they have not a church to themselves, they shall then hear mass without doors in the porch, until Christ shall provide some

better way for them, and the heathen kings shall be brought to allow the mean people that turn Christians to be esteemed as noble, upon the account of the relation that all Christians stand in to one another: and the synod doth beg it of his majesty, the King of Portugal, that by means of the great power he has in these parts, he would procure this privilege of the kings and lords of Malabar.

DECREE XXXVII

ALL TO BE TAUGHT TO CROSS THEMSELVES FROM LEFT TO RIGHT

The Synod being desirous that the Church of the Serra, should in all things be conformable to the Latin customs, or holy mother Church of Rome, unto which see she has now yielded a perfect obedience, and whereas in the Roman Church, the custom is to make the sign of the Cross and Blessings from the left to the right, so that in saying, "In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," they put their hand on their forehead, and after that descended to their breast, where after having crossed themselves, they go next to the left shoulder, and from thence to the right, thereby signifying among other mysteries, that by virtue of the cross of Christ the Son of God, we are translated from the left hand, the place of reprobates, to the right, the place of the elect; and the custom of this diocese is to make the said sign from the right to the left; wherefore the Synod doth command that all children and all other people be taught to cross and bless themselves from the left to the right, according to the Latin custom, which shall also be observed by the priests in the blessings they give to the people, and in the crosses they make in the holy sacrifice of the mass, and the administration of the other sacraments.

DECREE XXXVIII

BISHOPS TO SEE TO THE EXECUTION OF WILLS

The Synod doth declare, That the execution of last wills lawfully made by deceased Christians does by the canon law belong to prelates and bishops, who are to take care that they be observed; and that whatsoever Christian has made a will that is valid according to the custom of the place, if it is not complied with in a year after the death of the testator, the bishop shall by censures, and other penalties, if found necessary, constrain the heirs, or others, whose duty it is to fulfil the same.

DECREE XXXIX

BURIAL SERVICE TO BE PERFORMED FOR ALL THAT DIE PENITENT

Whereas it often happens that persons dying who were under the scandal of having committed some grievous sin, though never proved upon

them, are upon that account denied the prayers, and other offices of the dead, especially if they desired confession, and were confessed at their death, which is contrary to the order and custom of the church, which deprives none of her public prayers, but such as die excommunicate, or in the act of some mortal sin, without having given any sign of contrition: Therefore the Synod doth command, that whatsoever sins one may have committed, if the censure of excommunication was not annexed to them; or unless the person died in the very act of some mortal sin, without giving any sign of contrition, or slowly in his bed, without desiring to be confessed or to have a priest called to him to that effect, as is appointed by the decrees of the sacrament of penance, they shall pray and perform the office of the dead for him, and bury him in holy ground with the same prayers they do other people.

DECREE XL

A GENERAL LICENCE GRANTED TO THE JESUITS

The Synod having thanked the Jesuits of the College of Vaipicotta in this diocese, and of the other residences, for the pains they have been at in instructing the Christians of these parts, does for the greater benefit of the souls of the said Christians, grant licence to the said religious, as well of the college, as of their other greater residences to preach and hear confessions, and administer the sacraments in all churches wherever they come, without standing in need of any further licence, the sacrament of matrimony only excepted, which it shall not be lawful for them to administer without leave from, or at the request of the parish priests, commanding all vicars and curates of churches, and all the people to receive the said fathers cheerfully, and to entertain them with great kindness and thanks, for the great trouble they are at in travelling continually over the mountains only for the salvation of their souls, and rejoice to learn from them how to administer the sacraments, and to have their flocks instructed by them in all such doctrines as are necessary to their souls; and their vicars shall oblige their people to come to church, to hear them, whenever they preach, the Synod being very confident, that the said fathers will exercise all the said functions in great love and charity with the parish, and all the other priests of the church.

DECREE XLI

THE SYRIAN CHRISTIANS TO BE BOUND BY THE CONSTITUTIONS OF GOA

Whereas the Constitutions of the Bishopric of Goa have been received in the provincial councils thereof, and have been ordered to be observed through the whole province, of which this church being a suffragan, is obliged by the said councils, and to which this synod yielding a due obedience, doth command, That in all things that can be observed in this

bishopric, or concerning which there is no provision made in this Synod, the said constitution be kept and obeyed, and doth likewise command, That appeals whensoever made from sentences given in this bishopric to the Metropolitan, such appeals being made in such cases wherein the canons allow them, shall be granted; nevertheless not intending hereby to alter anything in that mild method of the prelate, and four or more persons composing matters amicably to the prevention of many discords; but if the parties shall not submit to such determinations, but will appeal to the Metropolitan, it shall not be denied them, being done in due form.

SESSION IX

Of the Reformation of Manners

DECREE I

ALL SUPERSTITIOUS CUSTOMS TO BE ABOLISHED

Whereas of all the evil customs that are to be rooted from among the faithful, those are the most dangerous which have something of the heathen superstition in them, of which this bishopric is full; therefore the Synod desiring that all such customs were totally extirpated, that so Christians may enjoy Christianity in its purity, doth in order thereunto command, that all superstitious washings which are by some most superstitiously practised as holy ceremonies be utterly abolished, such as the washing of dead corpses the day after they have given a dole, reckoning it a sin to neglect such washings, the making of circles with rice, into which they put the parties that are to be married, having given rice before to children, as also the taking a thread out with great superstition when they cut a web of cloth, and the taking two grains of *nele* back again, after they have sold and measured it: all which heathenish vanities the Synod totally prohibits, commanding all that shall use them hereafter to be severely punished.

DECREE II

EXPLAINS IN WHAT CASES CHRISTIANS MAY TOUCH HEATHEN AND INFERIORS

Though it would much rejoice the Synod to see the superstitious and absurd customs of the heathen Malavars of the better sort not mixing with the lower, and of having no communication or correspondence with those that have but touched any of them, totally abolished among the Christians of this bishopric; yet forasmuch as the Christians thereof, by reason of their being subject to infidel princes, whom they are forced to obey in all things, wherein

the faith is no ways concerned; and that Christians, if they should but touch those of the baser rank, could not after that, according to the laws, have any trade or communication with the better sort of people, and so would not be able to live among them; for which reason the Synod doth declare, That the custom of not touching any of the baser sort, being observed only in compliance with the heathens, and looked upon as a superstitious heathen vanity, and not voluntarily observed, is no superstition, nor for the abovementioned reasons any matter of scruple, and that Christians may in all places thus lawfully observe it, where there are *Naires* or any of the better sort, or where it is likely they may be, or may come to hear of it: but in all places where these causes do not concur, or in secret, or among the Portuguese, this superstition cannot be observed without doing a great injury to their consciences; on the contrary, the Synod doth admonish all the faithful to receive all such with great love and charity, though never so poor and mean, and especially if they are Christians, knowing that there is no distinction of persons with God, who is Lord of all: and albeit they do not touch the base sort of people upon the forementioned account, yet if they should happen to touch any of them, they shall not wash themselves thereupon, that being a thing that can never come to the knowledge of the heathens, and would therefore be a manifest superstition; those also that will not touch the *Naires*, or if they should, do wash themselves, which, as the Synod is informed, is what the Christians in the southern parts do observe, where the forementioned impediment is not among the heathens, who are rather scandalized by such a contemptuous carriage: therefore the Synod doth command all that shall be found guilty of forbearing to touch such, or having touched them, shall wash themselves, to be severely punished as superstitious followers of the heathen customs, and commands the preachers and confessors to admonish them thereof in their sermons and confessions.

DECREE III

FORBIDS HEATHENISH PURIFICATIONS

The Synod being informed, that in some parts when anyone of the baser sort do but touch the cisterns of Christians, that Christians do Disempolear, or Purify them, by performing certain ceremonies after the manner of the heathens, which is very contrary to the purity of the Christian religion, being an intolerable superstition, doth with great rigour command those that make the said Disempoleamento, or Purification, or use the said ceremonies, to be thrown out of the communion of the church, and to be denied the *casture* during the prelate's pleasure, or at least for one year, and to be punished with the penalties that such ceremonies do deserve.

*DECREE IV

FORBIDS ATTENDANCE ON HEATHEN FESTIVITIES

Whereas in the feast of the heathen, called *Ona*, which is celebrated in August, in which they go out one against another with bows and arrows, and other arms, in which conflicts some are killed, and more wounded; and some Christians, unmindful of their obligations, living among them, and communicating much with them, do go forth with them, and armed as they are to the said feasts, and are thereby liable to the same disasters: therefore the Synod doth command all the faithful Christians of this bishopric, in holy obedience, and upon pain of excommunication not to presume to resort to this or any other heathen festivity, though there should be no ceremony belonging to a pagod therein; forasmuch as all such feasts are dedicated to the said pagods, and are celebrated and observed to their honour and veneration; which is the rather to be forborne in this of the *Ona*, by reason of the danger of death that there is probably therein, the heathens superstitiously imagining that all that die on that occasion, go immediately to heaven; but Christians shall only observe their own holy festivities among themselves, and that with a due moderation and decency, as becomes the professors of the law of Christ; without having anything to do with the superstitious festivals of the heathens, which are dedicated to the honour of the devil, and if any Christian shall die in the said heathen feast, he shall be denied ecclesiastical burial.

DECREE V

DIRECTIONS FOR WOMEN AFTER CHILDBIRTH

Faithful Christians must not only avoid the ceremonies and superstitions of the Heathens, but the Judaical rites and ceremonies also, which were all abrogated by the sufficient promulgation of the Gospel; for which reason the Synod, though it doth very much commend the holy custom of carrying children to church forty days after they are born, to offer them to the Lord, in imitation and praise of what was done by our lady the most holy Virgin; nevertheless it condemns the separating of women for the said forty days after the birth of a male, as if they were unclean so as not to suffer them to enter into the church, imagining they would sin in doing it, and eighty days after the birth of a female; both which are Jewish ceremonies, that are now abrogated, and not only useless but prejudicial, and as such, the Synod doth totally prohibit the observance of them; declaring, that if women have health and strength sooner, they shall be obliged to go to church to hear mass upon Sundays and holydays: and after forty days they may, according to their custom, carry their sons to church with devotion, understanding that there is no precept of the church for it, but that it is only a pious devotion of faithful women that are willing to make such an offering of their sons to God in imitation of the most holy Virgin Mary, the mother of God, taking her for the

intercessor of the children thus offered to God both for spirituals and temporals.

DECREE VI

AGAINST CONSULTING WITCHES AND FORTUNE-TELLERS

One of the greatest sins in the sight of God, and which he has always prohibited and punished above all others, is, The consulting of witches, and such as hold a correspondence with the devil; wherefore the Synod being informed that a great many Christians of this bishopric, and especially among those that live in the heaths, by reason of the communication they have with infidels, and their having so many witches and Fortune-tellers about them, when they intend to marry, have recourse to such people to know what success they shall have, governing themselves so much by what they are told, as to break off matches after they are concluded, and to make new ones at the pleasure of the said witches; as also when they are sick, that they send for such people to perform some ceremony whereby they hope to have their health restored; and at other times to help them to children, and to discover thefts, and for several other purposes; all which are things repugnant to the Christian religion, Doth command all Christians convicted of having consulted any of the said witches for these or any other purposes, to be thrown out of the church; neither shall any priest go to their houses or give them the *casture*, during the prelate's pleasure, or for one year at least, and shall be punished with such other penalties as the ceremonies they performed and consented to shall deserve.

DECREE VII

AGAINST WITCHCRAFT AND CONJURING

The Synod being informed, that some wicked Christians are not content only to go to witches to consult them, but do furthermore send for them to their houses, where they join with them in the invocation of their pagods, and in making offerings and sacrifices to them, in killing dogs, and performing other ceremonies, that are contrary to the faith, namely, one which they call '*Tollicanum, Ollicanum, Bellicorum, Conum*', which they do often publicly to the great scandal of Christianity, as if they were not Christians, and at other times permit the heathens to perform them in their houses, doth command in virtue of holy obedience, and upon pain of excommunication to be *ipso facto* incurred, that no Christian shall presume to perform any of the said ceremonies, or consent to the performing of them in their houses, and that all that do transgress therein, shall be declared excommunicate in the church, until they shall beg for mercy, and have undergone condign and public punishment in the church, and though upon their repentance appearing to be true and sincere, they may be absolved, yet

they shall not have the *casture* given them, neither shall any priest go to their houses in two years, save in case of peril of death; and they who shall go to offer anything to a pagod, or shall make any vow to one, shall be punished after the same manner, and with the same penance, and shall incur excommunication *ipso facto*, in all which matters the vicar must be very watchful for the prevention of all such idolatries.

DECREE VIII

AGAINST DIABOLICAL CHARMS

A great many ignorant Christians of this bishopric being unmindful of the purity of their Christian obligations, do carry notes about them which have been given them by witches for the cure of their distempers, hoping for relief from their virtue, hanging them likewise about the necks of their cattle to keep them well, and putting them in their orchards to increase the fruit, and communicating them to several other things for various effects; all which the Synod detesting as diabolical, doth command all that are guilty thereof to be severely punished by the prelate, and all vicars not to permit any such offenders to enter in to church nor to give them the *casture*, and no priests to go to their houses, and they shall be compelled to deliver all such notes to their vicars to be torn, and all that have used any of them, though they should never do it more, shall be punished for the space of six months with the said penalties.

DECREE IX

REGULATES THE INTEREST OF MONEY

The onzena, or practice of usury, is a grievous sin in the sight of God, and is very much condemned in the Scriptures, Christ commanding us "to lend to others, hoping for nothing again," and the Synod being very much troubled to find the greatest part of the Christians of this diocese entangled therein, through their ignorance of what gains are lawful, and what are not, and of what may be kept, and what ought to be restored, doth therefore admonish in the Lord, all faithful Christians to consult the learned about these matters, giving them an account of all their contracts, in order to their being rightly instructed as to what they may lawfully take for money they have lent out. And the Synod doth furthermore declare, that according to the best information it has received, the interest of money in Malabar is ten per cent and whatever is taken more, if the principal runs no risk is onzena, or usury, and as to the ten they shall likewise consult the learned, to whom they shall declare how money may be improved in the place where it is lent, that so they may be able to tell them, whether it be lawful for them to take so much, for it may happen that in some places, there will not be so much to be got by the negotiating of money, which must make such a high interest to be there

unlawful and whosoever shall take more than ten per cent. if his principal runs no risk, after having been three times admonished by the prelate of vicar without amendment shall be declared excommunicate, and shall not be absolved until he has dissolved the said contract.

DECREE X

AGAINST EXTORTION

The Synod doth condemn the taking of one per cent by the month, where the principal runs no risk, being secured by a pledge, and of two per cent by the month, if the one is not paid punctually, such contracts being very unjust and manifest onzena, or usury, so that neither the want of a pledge, nor anything else can justify the taking of two per cent by the month, if the principal is not in danger, all which contracts the Synod doth prohibit, and the vicars to give their consent to any such, and where they are made to dissolve them, compelling all that are faulty therein by penalties and censures if it shall be found necessary: the synod doth furthermore condemn their calling all gain arising from money, onzena, because it gives occasion for some to imagine that all such gain is unlawful, and notwithstanding such gain is lawful, and may be justly taken in several cases, to scruple the taking any.

DECREE XI

FORBIDS CONCUBINAGE

Whereas there are great numbers of Christians who for want of having the fear of God and the church before their eyes, do cohabit publicly with concubines, to the great scandal of Christianity; the vicars shall therefore with great charity admonish all such offenders, three times declaring to them, that if they do not reform, they must declare them excommunicate, and if after so many admonitions they do not turn away their concubines, they must be excommunicated until they are effectually parted, and be punished with other penalties at the pleasure of the prelate, according to the time that they have lived in that sin, and when it shall so happen that their concubines are their slaves, they shall constrain them not only to turn them out of their houses, but to send them out of the country where they live, that there may be no more danger of their relapsing, which shall be likewise observed as to all other women where there is the same danger.

DECREE XII

AN ADMONITION TO MASTERS AND PARENTS

The Synod doth very earnestly recommend it to all masters and fathers of families, to be very watchful over the lives and manners of their slaves and servants, and the rather for having been informed, that most of the black women belonging to Christians in this bishopric do lead very ill lives in being public whores, and known to be such by their masters, never going to mass

or confession, and being totally ignorant of the Christian religion, their masters taking no care to have them instructed therein, or of the good of their souls, notwithstanding the obligation they are under of doing it, St. Paul having told us, that "he that does not take care of his family, is worse than an infidel." Wherefore the Synod doth very much recommend it to the vicars of churches to be very watchful over, and to make diligent inquiry into the lives of the slaves that are in their parishes, and as they shall see occasion to exhort their masters, and oblige them not to suffer their slaves to live in a sinful state.

*DECREE XIII

FORBIDS THE BUYING AND SELLING OF CHILDREN

Whereas several poor wretched Christians following the custom of the heathen among whom they live, when they find themselves pinched with any want, do, contrary to all right and reason, sell their children: wherefore the Synod doth in virtue of obedience, and upon pain of the greater excommunication, prohibit all Christians to sell their children, or any of their kindred, no not to other Christians, and doth under the same precept and censure forbid all Christians to buy any such, or to keep them as slaves, except when they see parents so far despise this prohibition, as to be ready to sell their children to infidels, in which case they may buy them to keep the Christian children from coming under the power of heathens, whom nevertheless they shall not keep as slaves, but shall forthwith signify what they have done, to the prelate, that he may take such course therein, that the buyer may have his money, and the child its liberty, and the seller may be punished: all that shall buy such children in any other case, as well as those that sell them, shall be held excommunicate until they have effectually dissolved all such bargains; and if the child do happen to be made an infidel, he that sold it shall not be absolved until he has ransomed the said child, or at least until the vicar and people are satisfied of his having done all that he is able to have redeemed it, and the Synod doth furthermore recommend it to the vicars and curates of churches, and to all Christian people, that whenever any such thing happens, they do all that is in their power to recover such children, and to ransom them whatever it cost, by contributing money towards it, and by complaining thereof to their kings, and advising the prelate of it, leaving no means untried to rescue such children, that so they may not be bred up infidels.

DECREE XIV

APPROVES OF GIVING TO THE CHURCH THE TITHE OF THEIR WIVES' PORTION, &c.

The Synod doth approve of the laudable custom of this diocese of men's giving the tenth part of their wives' portion, when they are married, to the church; as also of that making a repartition of the said alms betwixt the

fabric of the church and the priests thereof; and whereas this custom does not obtain all over the diocese, and especially in the southern parts, the Synod doth intreat and command all people to conform themselves to the same, and willeth that the people among whom this custom is not as yet introduced, may be obliged to it by their procurators, there being no reason, since it is observed in the greater part of this diocese, why it should not be established all over it.

*DECREE XV

THE DISPUTES OF CHRISTIANS TO BE DECIDED BY THE BISHOP

Whereas by the ancient custom consented to by the infidel kings of Malabar, the whole government of the Christians of this bishopric, not only in spirituals but, temporals also, is devolved to the church and the bishop thereof, who is to determine all differences that are among Christians, and that some, dreading the justice and judgment of the prelate in their controversies, do without any fear of God, carry them before infidel kings and their judges, who are easily bribed to do as they would have them, to the great prejudice of Christianity; the said kings taking occasion from thence to intrude themselves into the affairs of Christians, by which means, besides that they do not understand such matters, being tyrants and idolaters, they become very grievous and vexatious to Christians; for the avoiding of which, and several other mischiefs arising from thence to Christianity, the Synod doth strictly command all the Christians of this diocese, not upon any pretence whatsoever, to presume to carry any of their causes before infidel kings or their judges, without express licence from the prelate; which, whensoever it shall be judged necessary, shall be granted to them as shall be thought fit in the Lord; but all causes shall be first carried before the prelate, that he may judge or compose them according to reason and justice; and all that shall do otherwise, shall be severely punished for the same, at the pleasure of the prelate, and be thrown out of the church for so long time as he shall think fit.

DECREE XVI

AGAINST THE USE OF HEATHENISH ORDEALS AND OATHS

Whereas the Christians of this bishopric are subject to kings and lords that are infidels, by whom they are many times obliged to handle bars of hot iron, or to thrust their hand into boiling oil, or to swim through rivers that are full of snakes; reckoning, that if they are innocent, none of those things can hurt them, but will certainly, if guilty of what they are accused: and seeing there are not wanting some ill-minded Christians, who finding themselves unjustly accused, do voluntarily offer themselves to undergo the said ordeals for the manifestation of their innocency; and notwithstanding that it is true that God has sometimes concurred with people's innocency and simplicity

in such cases, by not suffering them to be hurt by such things; nevertheless, since for any to offer themselves to undergo such ordeals, is to tempt God, and to pretend to work a miracle, which is not lawful, and may sometimes so succeed, as to be a great affront to our catholic faith; therefore the Synod doth prohibit all Christians to presume to offer themselves to undergo any such ordeals, knowing that they sin mortally in so doing, in being guilty therein,of tempting God; commanding all that shall transgress therein, to be severely punished. And when it shall happen that any such ordeals shall be so imposed upon them by their infidel princes, that there is no avoiding it, in such cases they shall submit themselves to the will of God, as to the injustices and violences laid upon them by infidel tyrants; and in case of any oath being tendered to them by infidels, wherein they must swear by their pagods, they must know that they ought rather to suffer death, than take any such oath, the taking of an oath being an act of worship and veneration, that is due to God alone: neither shall Christians use any ordeals among themselves, or oaths, but such as were in use in the church, the foresaid oaths being what Christians ought to dread more than all the torments of the world.

DECREE XVII

CHRISTIANS TO BE DISTINGUISHED FROM HEATHEN BY THEIR DRESS, &c.

Whereas the distinction of the faithful from unbelievers, even by outward signs and habits, is a thing which has always been endeavoured, that so the one may be known and divided from the other; therefore the Synod having observed that there is no distinction either in their habits or in their hair, or in anything else, betwixt the Christians of this diocese and the heathen *Naires*, doth command, that henceforward no Christian do presume to bore their ears, or to do anything to make them large, except women, among whom it is a universal ornament; and whosoever shall transgress herein, shall be punished at the pleasure of the prelate, who shall not suffer them to wear an ornament of gold or of anything else in their ears; and whosoever shall presume to wear any such ornament, shall be thrown out of the church, neither shall the *casture* be given them until such time as they are brought to yield effectual obedience, and to leave off all such ornaments; but as for those whose ears are bored already, if they are not children, they may wear what they please, or what they have accustomed themselves to.

DECREE XVIII

AGAINST THE USE AND SALE OF SPIRITUOUS LIQUORS

The Synod being desirous to rectify whatever is amiss in this diocese, and so far as it is possible, to reform all evil customs; and having observed the great debauchery of many, and especially of the poorer sort, in drinking

Orraca, from whence do follow many disasters, murders, and wounds; wherefore in order to the preventing such mischiefs so far as is possible, the Synod doth prohibit the selling of Orraca in any Christian inn, neither shall Christians trade in that commodity upon pain of being punished at the pleasure of the prelate, by which means not only disorders, but the great communication the faithful hath with the heathen in such inns, will also be prevented.

DECREE XIX

AGAINST THE USE OF DIFFERENT WEIGHTS AND MEASURES

Whereas it is a manifest injustice to have diverse weights in the same country, the Synod being informed, that in many markets of this bishopric everyone sells with what weights they please, doth command, That there be but one weight for the same merchandize in a market and all the shops thereof, and that it be the usual weight of the place; to which all that do not yield obedience, shall be admonished by the vicars, and if they do not reform thereupon,shall be chastised at the pleasure of the prelate, who shall constrain them to the same by penalties and censures, if they shall be found necessary; there being no other government among the Christians of this diocese but that of the church, nor any other coercive power but that of censures.

DECREE XX

FEMALES TO INHERIT IN DEFAULT OF MALE ISSUE

Whereas an unreasonable custom has obtained in this diocese, viz. That males only inherit their fathers' goods, the females having no share at all thereof; and that not only when there are sons, but when there are daughters only, and they unmarried, and many times infants, by which means great numbers of them perish, and others ruin themselves for want of necessaries, the father's goods falling to the males that are next in blood, though never so remote or collateral, there being no regard had to daughters any more than if their parents were under no obligation to provide for them; all which being very unreasonable, and contrary to the natural right that sons and daughters have to succeed, to the good of their parents; the kindred who have thus possessed themselves of such goods, are bound to restore them to the daughters as the lawful heiresses to them; wherefore the Synod doth decree and declare this custom to be unjust, and that the next akin can have no right when there are daughters to inherit their father's estate; and being possessed of such estates, are bound in conscience to restore them; neither is it lawful for the males to divide the estate among them, without giving an equal portion to the females; or if they have not done it already, they stand indebted for their portions; or if the father has disposed of the third part of his estate by will, the remaining two parts shall be equally divided betwixt the

sons and the daughters, the portions that have been received by those that are married being discounted; all which the Synod doth command to be observed, intreating and commanding all the Christians of the diocese to receive this decree as a law, and observe it entirely, it being laid as a duty upon their consciences; and if any shall act otherwise, and being a kinsman, shall seize upon the goods belonging to daughters; or being a son, shall deny to give portions to his sisters, or being in possession of the said goods, shall refuse to make restitution; the prelate, if it cannot be done otherwise, shall compel them to it by penalties and censures, declaring them excommunicate, without any hope of absolution, until such time as they shall pay an effectual obedience, and shall make restitution.

*DECREE XXI

ADOPTION OF SONS ILLEGAL EXCEPT IN DEFAULT OF CHILDREN

The Adoption of Sons is not lawful, but in defect of natural children; which not being understood by the Christians of this bishopric through their ignorance of the law, they do commonly adopt the children of their slaves born in their houses, or of other people, disinheriting their lawfully begotten children, sometimes upon the account of some differences they have had with them, and sometimes only for the affection they have to strangers, all which is contrary to law and reason, and is a manifest injustice and wrong done to their legitimate children; wherefore the Synod doth declare, that the said adoptions must not be practised where there are natural children, and being done are void, so that the persons thus adopted are not capable of inheriting anything, except what may be left them by way of legacy, which must not exceed the third of the estate; no, not though the adoption was made before there were any legitimate children to inherit. The Synod doth furthermore declare, That the adoptions which have been made before the celebration of this Synod, where there are children, and the adopted are not in actual possession of the estate, are void, neither shall the adopted have any share thereof, or having had any, shall be obliged to restore it, to which if it be found necessary, the prelate shall compel them by penalties and censures; but as to those who by virtue of such adoptions, have for a long time been in quiet possession of estates, the Synod by this decree does not intend to dispossess them thereof, by reason of the great disturbance and confusion the doing so would make in this diocese, which is what this Synod pretends to hinder, leaving everyone however in such cases, at liberty to take their remedy at law.

*DECREE XXII

FORBIDS THE BISHOP TO SANCTION SUCH ADOPTION

Whereas the way of adopting by ancient custom in this diocese, is to carry the parties that are to be adopted before the bishop or prelate, with

certain testimonials, before whom they declare, that they take such a one for their son, whereupon the bishop passeth an *olla* or certificate, and so the adoption is perfected; the Synod doth command, That from henceforward, the prelate do not accept of an adoption from any that have children of their own; or in case they have none, yet it shall be declared in the *olla*, That if they shall afterwards happen to have any, that the said *olla* shall be void to all intents and purposes; by which means the great injustices that are now so common in this diocese will be prevented.

DECREE XXIII

CHRISTIANS DESIRED TO DWELL TOGETHER IN VILLAGES

The Synod being desirous to have all the Christians of this diocese to live together in villages, by reason of the great inconveniences they are under that live in the heaths, as well by reason of the great communication they must have with infidels, as for wanting opportunities of going to church, and sacraments, whereby they are kept in ignorance of Christianity, doth in order thereunto very earnestly recommend it to all Christians that live in heaths, to do all they are able, either to come and live in some village, or to build new villages with churches, that so they may live more civilly, and be separated from the communication of infidels, and be the better instructed in the customs of our holy catholic faith, recommending it earnestly to the vicars to persuade their sheep thereunto, for the spiritual profit they will receive thereby: which the prelate shall also endeavour to effect with all his power.

DECREE XXIV

DESIRES THE KING OF PORTUGAL TO TAKE THE CHRISTIANS UNDER HIS PROTECTION

The Synod having taken into consideration the manifold injustices, oppressions and grievances wherewith infidel kings and governors do often treat the Christians of this bishopric; and that out of enmity to our holy catholic faith, and observing the necessity they are in of defence and protection, doth with great instance desire, That his Majesty the King of Portugal would be graciously pleased to take all the Christians of this bishopric under his favour and protection, he being the only Christian king or lord in all these oriental parts; and the Christians of this diocese shall on their parts be ready at all times to sacrifice their lives to their holy catholic faith, the preservation of Christianity, and the defence of Christians, which they shall be always prepared to do with their lives and fortunes; beseeching the most reverend Metropolitan, President of this Synod, to present this their petition to his majesty, and to let him know how ready all the Christians of this bishopric are to serve him.

DECREE XXV

ORDERS ALL VICARS TO HAVE A COPY OF THESE DECREES, AND FOR WHAT PURPOSE

Whereas in this Synod, matters pertaining to our holy catholic faith, the holy sacraments of the church, the reformation of affairs thereof, and the customs of Christian people have been handled; the Synod doth command all vicars of churches not to fail to have all its decrees transcribed from the original Malabar, and to have a copy thereof in all their churches, signed by the reverend the Archdeacon of this diocese, and the Rector of the College of Vaipicotta, and upon every Sunday and holy day, when there is no sermon or no lecture upon the Catechism set forth by the most reverend Metropolitan, that a portion of this Synod be read to the people; but on the seasons when the said Catechism is ordered to be read, it shall be read on Sundays, and the Synod upon holy days, that so all that is decreed therein may come to the knowledge of the people, and may be remembered and observed by them; the original of the said Synod being signed by the most reverend Metropolitan and all the other members thereof, shall be put in the archives of the Jesuits' College of Vaipicotta in this diocese, from whence so many copies as shall be thought necessary, shall be transmitted to the churches; there shall also be another original signed by the most reverend Metropolitan, the Archdeacon, and other members, kept in the archives of the church of Angamale, called the Archbishop's see, that all copies may at all times be corrected according to either of those originals; and the Synod doth furthermore recommend it to all vicars, priests, and curates, and to all and every Christian of this diocese, and commands them all in the Lord to conform themselves to the Decrees of this Diocesan Synod, and so far as is in their power, to observe and cause them to be observed inviolably, and to govern themselves by them in all things; which the Synod is confident they will do with the help of "God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, who liveth and reigneth for ever. Amen."

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The Acts And Decrees of The Synod of Diamper

The Acts and Decrees of the Synod of Diamper (1599) is an important document in the study of Thomas Christians of India, Portuguese colonization, colonial modernity and religious imperialism.

The English text (1694), a faithful translation of the Portuguese version (1606), is reproduced with a critical introduction by Dr Scaria Zacharia the editor of the volume. Rich in evidence and subtlety of analysis, this study introduces the readers to the challenges and possibilities of understanding the text in the historical context.

The introduction also includes the English translation of three chapters of Antonio Gouvea's Jornada (1606) describing in detail the proceedings of the synod. Students of Indian history, culture and religion will find this volume informative, stimulating and provoking.

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