THE
SYRO-MALABAR LITURGY

(A PLEA FOR PASTORAL ADAPTATION)

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The Syro-Malabar Liturgy

(Suggestions for further adaptations in the spirit of the Vatican Council.)

The Syro-Malabar Church will always be grateful to the Holy See for having taken the initiative to restore our ancient rite. The restored Mass is indeed a thing of beauty and love after the accretions that have crept in during the course of several centuries have been removed. The reform of the Mass has brought out once again the theological notion of the liturgy as the prayer of the whole Christ. The role of the priest, deacons and the congregation is brought to light once again in the restored Mass. The keen sense of history that worked behind the restoration is truly admirable. It was indeed this historical sense that has preserved intact the organic structure of our Mass.

But the work of restoration is only a beginning. It will remain an eternally unfinished task. Because the Church including its Kerala unit, is eternally young. The experience of the liturgy as the living worship of a living Church cannot be had if the liturgical life is tied to the moorings of a past age. 'Aggiornamento' has its place also in the life of the Eastern Church, because the liturgy is at the centre of the pastoral work of the Church. Hence without doing any violence to the Oriental Spirit, we have to adapt the Mass to the pastoral needs of the hour. For even divine worship has to encounter man as

he is here and now, and not as he might have been centuries ago.

The following suggestions are mainly meant as a practical and constructive method to make our restored Mass really popular among the faithful for whom it is intended. The approach is also expected to be a kind of psychological inducement necessary on the part of our priests before they are expected to take a more active interest in the liturgy. The theological richness inherent in our Mass which is centered about the Most Holy Trinity, the Incarnation, the work of redemption, the risen Christ and the Church, can be appreciated only when the Mass is approached along the pastoral way.

Besides a mere return to the past cannot be expected to contribute to the reunion of Kerala Nestorians or their counterparts elsewhere. They already possess their ancient liturgy. What they need is a living approach to it, an approach with a new spirit. An energetic generous striding out along the pastoral way on our part alone can induce them to join the mother Church. It is known that the pastoral approach already hinted in the present 'Ordo' has brought a favourable reaction on the part of some Nestorian priests and laity.

Some of the rites of the restored Mass do not explain themselves. It is with the intention of bringing the Mass to the faithful with greater ease that the following suggestions are made to the Fathers of the council belonging to the Syro-Malabar Hierarchy. Indian religious customs are absorbed into the proposals as they have been found to be in keeping with the genius of the Indian people, especially those of Kerala.

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I Abridgement of the formula of the Simple Mass

Guiding principles:—

1) It would seem that the necessity for shortening the Mass is not felt so intensely at present as it did when it was introduced for the first time. Besides advantage was not taken of the concessions granted by the "Ordo" v. g. that of curtailing the two litanies as soon as priest has prepared the oblata after the Gospel.

2) Pastoral, psychological and practical needs must guide us in the simplification without sacrificing the continuity of historical development.

3) The rites of Dedication of Churches and Consecration of Holy Oils given in our Pontifical (pp 33 ff, and pp 49 ff.) give us many hints how to simplify our Mass. These texts are a very close imitation of the Mass of the Apostles when the latter alone existed in a more simple state than it does at present.

4) We must consider the structure of the Mass and the commentaries given by ancient authors such as Pseudo-George of Arabel, Abraham Bar Lipheh and Abdiso Bar Breeka. They help us to find out later additions.

5) The liturgy of the Divine Word which is the first part of our Mass closely follows our Ramsha or Vespers in its structure. In the place of Dakdam, Maria kresak and D'wasar, we have the sacred readings. Hence no arbitrary shortening in this part without at the same time doing violence to the structure of Ramsha.

6) The very ancient Nestorian formula, which very closely resembles our 'old' Mass as far as prayers are concerned, is also a guide in the matter.

All these have been taken into consideration in making the following suggestions. The numbers given below refer to the pages of the Taksa d'Quddasha in Syriac, Alwaye, 1960.

Suggestions.

Page 1:

a) Teshbohta need not be recited thrice. Better to omit its response 'Amen' here. Instead let the congregation say 'Amen' at the end of the whole angelic salutation. In this case the priest should leave out the 'Amen' from the second part of the salutation. At present he is not doing so, which of course is meaningless.

b) Why not the priest start the 'Our Father' as he does in the recitation of the Breviary in community? The Nestorians do follow the same ancient custom.

c) The whole of the 'Our Father' should be kept including its Kanona in the beginning and the end. Because this Kanona is found invariably in the Pontifical, the Breviary and the Ritual. The omission of Kanona after the Gloria Patri will be a kind of mutilation. In view of several omissions proposed below, this should not be found difficult.

Page 3:

The three psalms of the Marmitha should not be curtailed because 1) a Marmitha is a unit of three psalms;

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2) these three psalms are found invariably in the most ancient MSS. and hence are of very ancient origin; 3) they are the most fitting psalms for the beginning of the Mass.

Western liturgical experts are unanimous for introducing whole psalms in the place of Introit in the Roman Mass. Thus only the full significance of this part will be brought to light according to them. It would be a pity if we reduce the Marmitha into a Suraya by just having a simple psalm. Besides the curtailment would affect the structure and consequently the beauty of the Mass formula.

Remember the various alternative Marmithas given in the Supplementum Mysteriorum, Rome, 1960 are invariably longer than this simple Marmitha.

It would be desirable if the Taksa itself provides for the alternative recitation of the Marmitha by the people themselves in two sides. This is the case with the Marmitha of Ramsa. Then why the direction that it should be recited alternatively by the priest and the deacon ?

After the Marmitha, Ma Shweeh is out of place here and hence to be omitted. It is the kanona of Ps. 84. (cfr. Breviary). After Marmitha, there can be two verses of Psalms (Aqqaptha and Unaya), but not a stray kanona as this one.

Page 7:

The hymn Laku Mara needs be said only once by the whole congregation in the simple Mass. Besides Pontifical p. 34 does not explicitly require its three-fold repetition. In spite of the contrary custom the single recital is recommended for its emphatic value and the gain in time.

Page 8:

a) What is said about Laku Mara is valid about the Trisagion too. cf. Pontifical p. 85.

b) In our rite, it is an invariable rule to say 'Amen, Barek Mar' whenever two Slothas (orations) are said successively. Should we not do thus after the Kandisha washwiha, the oration of the Trisagion ?

Page 10;

Kissing the hands of the celebrant to be discouraged. Blessing of the lector may be omitted in ordinary Mass. Or the answer given in the old Mass may be repeated by the people i.e. Messiha nevarkak. The Barek Mar was always understood by the Malabar tradition and that of Nestorians as addressed to God, and not to priest. The suggestion is made out of consideration for simplicity. Besides the performance of the altar boy is frequently awkward.

Page 12:

a) Directions given by Deacon before and after the Slama to be discontinued i.e. 'Be quiet and silent' and 'Amen. Be silent'. Reason: pastorally unnecessary; causes admiration; remains mere formality.

Blessing with the Gospel may be retained although it was not in our tradition nor in that of the Nestorians. In the absence of signing oneself on the forehead, lips and breast which is from the Roman rite, the Chaldean use is welcome.

b) Prayers of the litany are essential for the integrity of the Mass-structure. Roman liturgists are urging

the introduction of one at this place in the Roman Mass. If preparation of elements takes place at one end of the altar alone as we have been instructed to do now, there will not be time to say these prayers. Hence the first six verses of the first litany and the whole of the second are recommended to be said invariably. This will not consume much time.

Another alternative would be to say the first six verses of the first litany and the last verse of the second litany. This suggestion is partially based on Pontifical p. 93.

Page 16:

Slotha of the litany can't be omitted, So too the Syamida after it. They clearly show the end of the Mass of Catechumens. In ancient times Ramsha came to a close at this position as witnessed by Pseudo-George Arabel.

Page 18:

a) Leave out dismissals as they savour anachronism and archeologism. They serve no practical purpose whatsoever.

It may be retained in other Masses. But the newly introduced five-fold division is not traditional. Shamoe or 'audientes' were penitents of the second class. Unlike 'plorantes' who were penitents of the first class, they were allowed to be present for the Mass but without active participation. They were so to say, helpers of subdeacons whose main duty it was to send the non-baptized away.

b) Leave the Onitha d'raze to be said by the congregation. In the meanwhile the priest can gain time by washing the hands.

There is no justification for the repetition of the psalm verse i.e. Mesambaru at the beginning of the onitha. It is never found in the case of any other Onitha in our rite.

c) Omit Amen, which is given as the answer to Nassekh ..... Our old Mass as well as that of the Nestorians don't have it. The suggestion serves for the simplicity of the rite.

Instead the whole prayer together with Messiha..... (Offertory formula) may be recited loudly so that the Congregation may recite Amen towards its end. This is required, it seems, by pastoral and psychological considerations.

d) The striking at the bottom of the chalice with the rim of the paten is quite obsolete and hence better omitted. In this case the threefold repetition of the initial words are to be modified. This prayer too is to be said loudly and responded by the people as it is their gifts which are so solemnly placed on the altar.

Page 20:

a) The Onithas given are a continuation of the Onitha of the Mysteries. Hence not to be curtailed. They neatly sum up the doctrine of the Communion of Saints at this solemn moment.

b) Omit Kadhu Rezeezeen. Because our old Mass as well as that of the Nestorians don't have it. We need not have it just because the Chaldeans have it. Omission is favoured by tradition, not to count the gain in time. The equivalent effect of the prayer is obtained when the priest recites the kushappa En Maran. (p. 24) after the three-fold kissing of the altar.

If the prayer is omitted we may better see the connection between the Onitha of the Mystery and the Credo.

Page 22:

a) The formula of blessing before the Karosutha on p. 22 is out of place here and offends against simplicity. This can easily be appreciated if we just have a look at the pages of the Pontifical. Cfr. pp. 34 and 94.

b) The Barek Mar newly inserted within the karosutha also does not suit well. It has no place in our old Mass and that of the Nestorians. If it were given in some manuals for altar-boys, it was because the expression (with which the priest began his request for prayers from the people remaining at the right side of the altar) gave them the clue to begin the second part of the karosutha. Some Nestorian priests also agreed with this explanation.

Page 24:

a) The repetition usually met with in the beginning of kusappas may be omitted as they don't agree with Malayalam usage. Cfr. the prayer given on p. 34 of the Pontifical.

b) The repetitions found at both ends of gehanthas may be retained in view of the solemn nature of the prayers concerned. Cf. p. 34 ff and p. 94 ff.

Page 26:

An odd slotha is found on this page; a slotha ending in Abba waura..... never occurs otherwise in the anaphora proper. Is it possible that it is a mistake. Better omit it. Nestorians don't have it.

Page 27:

a) Omit the prayer of the veil because it affects the logical connection of the prayers. Some kind of allegorism is intended which displeases modern minds. There is besides no equivalent prayers in the parallel formulae of the Pontifical in view of simplifying the Mass according to the pattern found in the Pontifical. Cfr. pp. 35 and 94.

b) The transposition of the kusappa 'Marya' will be recommended elsewhere in these notes. Omit one of the Maryas because it is a repetition.

N. B.— It is worthwhile to note that the gehanthas of the Pontifical do not have any kusappas after them as is found in the Mass formula. Is this an indication that these kusappas were later additions to the Mass formula? In this case, may we do away with them in the simple Mass?

Preferably we may retain them. Nestorian formula and our old Mass too have them. In general they are after all personal reflections on the preceding gehanthas. Priest gets enough time to recite them since he finds he can't proceed with the Mass as the congregation is actively engaged otherwise.

In case the kusappas are maintained, repetitions in the beginning are to be dropped. Cf. the Vai lee on p. 29.

Page 32:

The Koolaza given here is taken from Chaldeans. It is not kept by our old Mass and Nestorians. No equivalent too in our Pontifical. Cf. p. 38 and p. 98. It can easily be omitted. In its stead it is requested that the priest may

recite the Prayer of Intercession in a loud voice so that the people may follow him. The prayers really touches the heart of common man and hence the suggestion to have it said loudly from the pastoral and psychological motives.

Page 33:

Omit the three-fold Barek Mar and the request for prayers to the Congregation with its response. It serves here no practical purpose unlike the one before the Gehantha of Consecration. We have already suppressed the one before the Gehantha of Sanctus in the restored Mass. Why not follow the principle here because the sacrifice proper is already over? If we drop it, the one request before consecration will gain momentum.

Page 34—35:

Ps. 50 and 123 to be omitted. Because the motive for their occurrence at this point is inexplicable, in spite of its position here in all the Mass formulae of both Catholics and Nestorians.

Page 37:

The prayer beginning "Barek Mar" need not be repeated thrice for obvious reasons.

Page 38:

The prayer "Mesamshanau" really consists of two stanzas of an onitha. Separate the stanzas properly so that they may be said by the deacon and congregation alternatively.

Page 42:

The prayer "Mewarakath" is found to be too long to be finished towards the end of deacon's karosuza and litany.

Hence it is suggested to recite it only up to "Dewe sraith." A better alternative will be to omit a portion i. e. from "Dewe sraith" up to "walhayye dalalam," but to recite the following portion which is very beautiful.

Page 45:

Omit 'Mar' from Sancta Sanctis according to western and Nestorian texts.

Page 46:

The private prayers of the priest before communion under both species are disproportionate. To bring a better order, these suggestions are made.

a) First recite 'Kandesh pagrain" as it mentions both the Body and Blood of our Lord.

b) Then say 'La Marya' which mentions the Divine Body alone.

c) Omit 'Marya Messiha' : because of its involved language and because of the necessity to bring about a sense of proportion.

d) 'Kaza dadmak' should be recited completely before communion of chalice. No difficulty with the meaning as the past tense has the meaning of perfect tense in Syriac.

Page 47:

Communion formula causes much practical difficulty when there are many communicants. In this case it may be shortened as "The Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Page 52:

Should we not better omit the last 'Pater Noster'?

Page 62:

Omit the last leave-taking in spite of its beauty as it is foreign to the trend of our Rite. After Hoothama, there should be no prayers to be said at the altar.

II Adaptation of the Rubrics

Guiding principles :—

1) Do away with the Rubrics that represent only archeologism, mere antiquity or formality.

2) Make the existing rubrics more meaningful and appealing to the people.

3) Bring uniformity regarding the various postures and gestures.

4) Make the various gestures as conducive to devotion as possible; also adapt them to the Kerala usages.

Suggestions

1) The Whole Mass in Malayalam.

The introduction of Malayalam into the Mass has gone a long way to make the latter acceptable to the laity. But this was only a beginning. To bring it to completion, it is requested to translate the whole Mass into Malayalam. Unless the whole Anaphora is recited in Malayalam, our great venture would remain incomplete. The concept that the whole Mass is the Sacrifice of the whole community should be the theological basis for this bold pastoral approach.

2) The voice.

The spirit of 'the mystery sacred and tremendous' was introduced into our Mass as a consequence of theological

discussions on Arian Heresy. It was mainly this movement that brought about the silent recitation of prayers in the Mass especially during the Anaphora. (No reference is here made about the strictly private and personal prayers of the priest at Mass) This too like the veil highlights the separation between priest and people.

We appreciate the ample facilities already enjoyed by the congregation for actively participating in the Mass. To bring this to a climax the priest has still to say the prayers of the Offertory, and the Anaphora loud enough so that people can join the priest easily and intelligently. This will also help so many people who don't know to read the prayers of the Missal themselves.

The responses of the various gehanthae are made by the people. At present they just follow only the kanonae (ecphonesis), not however the contents of the body of gehanthae.

Hence the following explanations are to be given to the rubrics. The term 'neehais' could be understood as low but audible voice. All the gehanthae accordingly may be said in an audible voice and their kanonae in a loud voice.

Kusappae are personal and private prayers of the priest. During most of them people are otherwise actively engaged. Hence these may be said in a low voice. But the Kusapa of the great Intercession (after Anamnesis) should be said in a loud voice in view of its pastoral value for the people.

3) The Sanctuary Veil.

This should not be used at the time of the Mass. The Nestorians do not use it during the Mass so as to hamper

the view of the altar and the celebrant. Indeed 'Ordo' no. 14 says that the veil need not be used where there is no custom.

There is no reason whatsoever to hide the first part of the Mass (from the beginning to the Laku Mara) to be performed behind the veil. If this was done anywhere in ancient times it was just for mystical reasons which moderns do not appreciate at all. Modern Kerala laity do not react to such customs as did the ancient or medieval Mesopotamians. Those who gather in the church will be easily distracted by the drawing of the curtains which will remind them of the operations on the stage.

When Holy Mother the Church is trying elsewhere to bring the Mass to the people in various ways, we in Kerala should not emphasize artificial separation of priest and people in the name of outmoded customs.

4) The Mass of the Catechumens.

To bring out the significance of the Liturgy of the Word, it is requested that this part should be entirely performed in the middle of the sanctuary, away from the altar.

On solemn occasions, the same may be performed in the middle of the nave, as was the very laudable ancient custom. At present, part of Solemn Vespers is conducted in this manner. This will enhance the idea that the first part of the Mass is entirely congregational in character.

5) Altare versus populum.

Perhaps this is the right place to speak of this subject. The rubrics given in the 'Ordo' are not against it. The very structure of the Mass with its strong and clear spirit

of union between the priest and the people seems to call for such an altar at least occasionally. v g. at the time of missions, bigger feasts, children's Mass.

6) Corrections in the Mass-text.

Some of these are grammatical; others owing to the mistakes of copysts; still others owing to transposition.

a) The second gehantha: Sawe l'shoovha (p. 28) Ancient MSS of the text of the Mass contain the added phrase "waprak b'nainasha bahanaane" after "He bestowed great favour on mortal men." Somehow the the Kerala text came to omit the same. If these words are added, the theological contents of the gehantha would be enhanced.

b) The Anamnesis (p. 31): The para is grammatically unacceptable as there is no well defined predicate for the subject, 'your servants.' The best solution would be to eliminate the 'wav' before the 'kambelnan.' Thus the only perfect tense in the para becomes the only predicate. The solution seems to be better than the text found in the Chaldean Missal. cfr. Dr. Wolley (Lit. Prim. ch. p. 91.)

c) 'Barek Mar' within the karosuza (p. 22.) seems to be out of place. Because this was put in the altar-boys' manuals just to indicate when server isto begin the second part. i. e. when he hears the priest saying 'barek mar' and blessing the people at the left corner of the altar.

d) The prayer of Deacon given on p. 38 is really two stanzas of an Oniza put together. "His ministers who do His will" and "Open to me the gates of justice" are versicles from psalms. That they are two stanzas can be seen from counting the syllabic members according to which they are made.

e) The ending 'Saleenan' of Deacon's prayer on p. 41 is to go with 'Rahame sookana.'

f) The 'mar' in Sancta Sanctis is to be eliminated. Cfr. the texts outside Kerala causes a shift in emphasis.

g) The formula for communion of chalice (p. 46) seems to contain two mistakes of gender. i. e. menna and mesmallal.

7) The Words of Institution.

The reconstruction of the Words of Institution as given in the present text suffers from certain defects. a) It does not take into account the fact that a typical second Gehantha is always addressed to the Divine Word. (The Second and Third Masses do not follow this as they are translations from Greek) Cfr. the parallel ceremonies given in the Pontifical. b) There is no connecting link between the preceding Gehantha and the account of the Institution. c) The words of Institution are addressed to God the Father towards the beginning but later continues the narration in the third person.

The abrupt transition from addressing God the Son to God the Father can be remedied by substituting 'Hakel' in place of 'Mar', and 'Maran Isho Messiha' in place of 'Davrak'.

There is no justification for reciting the words of Commemoration after the elevation of the chalice, softly as the sentence forms part of the words of Institution.

If the number of making sign of cross is reduced to one, the undesirable pause after 'barek' could be done away with in both consecrations.

It would be very much in keeping with the spirit of our Rite if the Congregation does not respond to the words of Consecration. This custom is foreign to the genuine rite. It is quite unknown to Kerala and to Nestorians here and abroad as Gehantha is always to be recited in a low voice. We may however recite the words of Institution in an audible voice. There is an Amen after this Gehantha.

8) The Last Gehantha.

The reasons for the transposition of the Anamnesis can be justified. However it should be remembered that the fourth Gehantha in the Consecration of Holy Oils and the Church has invariably a second para beginning with 'Wap hanan mar.' This can be appreciated only by a comparative study of the First Mass with all other formulae written out in its imitation at an early date. Here it is taken for granted that the Mass of the Apostles is the most ancient of all the Mass formulae. The reason for this assertion is the simple structure of the Anaphoral part of the above mentioned formulae where we do not find any kusappae, request for prayers etc. These formulae were made out at a time when the Mass of the Apostles had retained its simplicity. The decorations and make-weights came only at a later period.

Hence it is requested to transpose the three words "wap hanan Mar" to a place before Epiclesis and add to this the sentence found before Epiclesis in the second Mass. In this way we can keep up the traditional structure of our most ancient Mass formula.

As it is, the present transposition effected by Dom Botte would appear to be some what aprioristic. Theologically of course the change is quite to the point.

9) Kusappae.

These we may consider as personal reflection and application of some *preceding* solemn prayer, usually a gehantha. These were later additions to the Mass formula. That these Kusappae really follow gehanthae can be understood by analysing them. Almost always they take up the idea conveyed by their preceding gehanthae.

Thus the prayer En Maran on p. 24 can be considered as the Kusapa of Maudena lak on p. 23. This latter has repetition at both ends just like a gehantha in our old Mass and the Nestorian text.

It can be seen that the Kusappa Marya Marya on p. 27 is really an elaboration of the idea of fraternal love contained in the First Gehantha: Maudenan on p. 24. cfr. "Humba Shalma" of this Gehantha. Hence it is not proper to recite the kusappa immediately after the Dialogue. The Slotha Marya Alaha on p. 26 is an intruder in the Anaphora. (It is a 'slotha', because it ends in Ava vawra....) Hence it should be eliminated from the Mass and the Kusappa said in its place. In this case the Mass gains in a clearer structural plan.

That Kandisath etc. (p. 29) is the kusappa of the Preface is very clear.

So also the kusappa of intercession on p. 32 takes up the idea of oblation from the preceding Anamnesis which is part of the Third Gehantha.

Though a bit farfetched Messiha Slama on p. 35 may be considered the kusappa of the last Gehantha. Cfr. the idea of peace in the first para of of this Gehantha.

In the light of this explanation it is requested to suppress the slotha on p. 26 and to transpose the kusappa on

p. 27 so that it may be said immediately after the giving of Slama.

10) Sign of the Cross after Consecrations:

It is true at the time these crosses were introduced nobody asked himself at what precise moment the transubstantiation was effected. The theology of the Mass was not yet developed. Yet they knew the transubstantiation took place during the Anaphora which means Kurbana or Oblation.

Although we may justify the practice even now, would it not be more in keeping with the present development of Dogma to suppress the custom? Instead the sign of the Cross may be made on oneself (including the faithful behind the priest.) Thus before the Consecration the Rushma is made on the gifts which are to become the Body and Blood of our Lord and after the Consecration, it signifies that the virtue of the sacrifice just offered is being transferred upon those who offer it. In this way the principle "Lex orandi, Lex credendi" finds a better verification in our Mass.

The question treated just now does not hold good regarding the Epiclesis. Because the whole Anaphora keeps up the order of the Economy of salvation i.e. Creattion, Incarnation, Last Supper, Passion and Death, and lastly Pentecost which followed the Passion. These are respectively commemorated in the various Gehanthae. Hence the Epiclesis is rightly placed after the account of the Institution, not before it. Besides in the Epiclesis we pray for the greater realization of the fruits of the Mass and not for the Transubstantiation as such.

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11) Elevation after the Consecration:

Although it is a later development, it beautifully brings out the sacrificial significance of the Consecration. Indeed it takes into account the role of the laity in the offering of the Mass. Both the senses of sight and hearing are brought into play. They hear the words which transform their gifts into Christ the Victim and they respond to it. They also see the Victim offered. Indeed the Precious Blood cannot be seen directly. But the Body can be seen actually. Formerly when thick loaves were used, this was easily verified. But the present paper-thin host cannot be seen. The ordinary people will be helped to appreciate the significance of the sacrifice if they are actually shown the host above the paten. The history of elevation shows that it was done precisely to show the host to the people. They see the host which is being offered to God. Here adoration is secondary which they may do together with the priest each after elevation.

This theological explanation would justify the practice of showing the host to the people. It is requested that this practice should be introduced anew, if it is not already implicit in the practice. As in the Roman Mass, our people should greatly benefit from the very same practice in our Mass too.

The elevation of the Host before the Communion part has the purpose of adoration and worship. Cfr. the accompanying prayers.

12) Genuine Kerala customs.

a) It was very unfortunate that the posture of prayer with joint hands seems to be positively forbidden in the 'Ordo', No. II. May be this was the attitude of prayer of the younger German peoples which came to be adopted in

the Roman Rite. But it is also equally true that this is a typically Indian gesture of prayer so common among Hindus from Cape Comerin to the Himalayas. It is also a sign of profound respect in Indian civil life. The religious significance of Anjalimudra cannot be emphasized too much. Because a similar attitude has its place in the Roman Rite, it does not follow it should be suppressed in our Rite.

The principal of the Station High School, Pulgaon Camp, Maharashtra noted recently that all the boys and girls hailing from different states of the Indian Republic to this Ammunition Depot and belonging to all castes and creeds, hold their palms together, with even thumbs crossing each other during the time of morning prayer. It is significant that there was no Christian among the staff nor any Catholic among the students to teach them the Roman method! The conclusion is clear.

b) The attitude of prayer demanded for gehanthae is exactly what the Mohammedans observe at their five prayer times all over the world. May be Nestorians and Catholic Chaldeans derived this posture from the Mohammedans in the Middle East among whom thay are living since several centuries together. But why should we in Kerala be asked to adopt such strange customs belonging to people of a totally strange culture? This Muslim gesture of readiness to receive what Allah gives should be done away with in our Rite. After all, prayers of gehanthae are not prayers of petition, consequently folded arms are quite irrelevant.

After consulting several Hindu pandits, the following suggestion is made. Hold the head down. Or better bend your back profoundly (This is a typical Oriental gesture of

respect. This is also a common gesture of worship which Hindus make before their idols. Besides Indian subjects used this same gesture to indicate their submission and loyalty to Maharajas.) The hands are to be folded together or may be held at an angle of 75° (not at 45°) on both sides of the body. This is more impressive, and more in agreement with Indian and Kerala traditions. Above all it signifies "te contemplans se totum deficit" (Adoro te). Surely this agrees better with the theme of the various gehanthae. The Nestorians incline profoundly with hands hanging down and holding the Missal at a distance deep down.

13) Outstretched Hands.

We can't arrive at any general principle from this gesture as obtained in the restored Mass. In this matter, it would seem our old Mass is a better model.

Nestorian priests in Malabar are instructed to hold their hands in the form of 'orans' for all the slothas recited by them, and this for adequate reasons. Almost all these orations ending in Aba vavra.... so to say collect or recapitulate the prayers recited by the Congregation. Here priest is the leader of the people and as such these slavathas should be recited in a solemn manner.

No reason can be found for reciting M'ewarakath with hands elevated. (p. 42) It is a private prayer.

It is recommended that the Kusapppa of Intercession be recited with hands outstretched almost in the form of a cross.

14) Suppression of some gestures.

No need of bowing the head at syamida, Messiha slama etc. Kneeling for the kusappa also may be done away with. Cfr. pp. 16—17, 27, 35.

15) Incense burners.

An incense burner (better not to be thurible) may be placed in the centre of the sanctuary or in a more convenient place. At the most important points of the Mass, the server will burn incense without being blessed by the priest. This is recomended as a subtitute for more elaborate incensing according to the rubrics. This agrees perfectly with what Mar Abdiso prescribes in his Exposotio (Lib. I. Tract. III. cap. V. p. 100.)

Sandal-wood sticks may be given a place of honour in the Sanctuary at the time of the Mass. This sweet smelling substance, so cheaply obtained everywhere, is used profusely in Hindu Pujas.

16) Colour of Vestments.

The principle of liturgical colours may be encouraged, although it need not be made compulsory These colours have an educative value of their own. In spite of the proper of the day, our Mass has very little to instruct the faithful about the nature of the feast celebrated.

Green, the symbol of hope and expectation may be used during Advent; white or golden yellow on feasts of our Lord and our Lady and during Xmas, Denha, Paschal Season; Red for the Period of Apostles and the Holy Cross, as well as the feasts of martyrs; Violet during Lent (or red to indicate the Passion of our Lord.) Light blue may be used for the feasts of our Lady, especially her Immaculate Conception

Black is used all over India on occasions of the public mourning. At the same time Indian ladies, including young women of Kerala use this colour for their paraphernalia even on festive occasions. Hence black is not exclusively a colour of mourning. Hence there should be no

objection for its perusal for the Mass of the Dead. It would be strange if we people of Kerala were to use red as some other Orientals do as a sign of sorrow. Although Ordo does not proscribe it, some enthusiasts do. We want to use black, not because black is the colour of mourning in the Roman Rite but because it is Indian.

Black is the prescribed colour for the Byzantines on days of the Presanctified Mass. (Cfr. P. Bernardakis quoted in Eastern Churches by Pere Salaville., p. 166.) Besides Nestorians in Kerala use black vestments for Masses of the Dead.

17) Giving Pax. (p. 25)

The method given by the 'Ordo' is completely foreign to the Kerala usage. Really the one now prescribed (minister kissing the altar and then celebrant's hand) seems to have been borrowed from the Antiochean Rite.

The one we have in the old Mass is the traditional method of Kerala. The Deacon takes priest's hands between his own and than passes his own down the face. Thus he really receives the Pax from the priest whereas in the restored rite, there is no receiving the pax, but only kissing the hands. Nestorians too follow the traditional method. We don't see the motive for the suppression of the traditional and better method of accepting the Pax.

It would be welcome if the people, especially in case of larger crowds, are given a more simpler method of receiving this token Pax. Suggestions:

a) When the senior layman receives Pax from the server, let the people stretch their palms towards the front as if to receive Pax from him and put them to their own faces.

b) As the Deacon gives Pax to the chief layman, let the faithful give it to their neighbours. These methods do not take much time. No abuse is likely to occur.

18) Vestments.

A bell-shaped Paina was the typical East Syrian chasuble. The cope now prescribed is taken over from the Antiochean Rite. Hence it is earnestly requested to reintroduce the very ancient type of chasuble. This should have an opening for the head. The sides will have no trimmings as the Roman chasuble. It may look something like Gothic vestments. That of the priest may have only a single large cross in the middle. But to distinguish Bishops from priests, it may be covered with a number of smaller crosses (cf. the polystaurion of the Greek Bishop.)

For convenience, it may be made slightly shorter in front, but may not go higher than the cincture. Or better, following the custom of classical antiquity, the Paina may be cut somewhat shorter at the sides to make for freer movement. All these should be made of pliable silk, no stiff brocaded stuff to be used.

Here we may just hint at the spirit of regimentation and over-all control exhibited by the new Ordo. No other Rite in the world so authoritatively descends to the minutiae of the ornamentation of the Paina and such other things as ours do. Even the cross on the back of the paina should be of one type and that alone according to the Ordo! This narrow-mindedness and liturgical impoverishment do not do justice to the Kerala Church of the 20th century. After all we are not tribesmen and nomads whose cultural patterns some scholars have so adamantly restricted to set forms!

19) The Small Kothina.

It is a pity that the use of surplice is so explicitly ruled out without at the same time suggesting anything better. There is greater inconvenience in putting on the Kothina and cincture, v. g. for Communion outside Mass.

Even in the Roman Rite, surplice is one of the most modern of Church vestments and nobody finds fault with it on that score. Many oriental Churches, even non-Catholics v. g. the Nestorians of Kerala do not find any objection in making use of it.

Even if the essential core of the so called Oriental Spirit may lie precisely in appearing different from everything "Western" we can still make use of what we may call a small Kothina which is indeed different from the "Roman" surplice!

Thus it should be insisted that that the length of the small kothina should reach below the knees. (The 'Roman' surplices often do not reach nearly so far.) No Oriental can deny the fact that the classical antecedents of the present kothina were tunics which were either girded or ungirt. The hands too were either wide-sleeved or short-sleeved. To make it stylish we may give it even a collar. Hence there can be no objection to its use in our Rite.

Such a small kothina ensures liturgical decorum in administering the sacraments which neither the kothina, much less its absence ensures. There need not be any lace-work as it is a departure from Oriental tradition.

20) The sign of the Cross.

This is usually made in the 'Greek' manner in the East Syrian Rite. But it should be remembered that the

other way was also known to the Syrians and that its use was and is not restricted to the Roman Rite alone. We have the testimony of Elias Damascenus to this effect. In his "Concordia Fidei" he refers also to bringing the hand from the left to the right. The author speaks about the Nestorians, the Jacobites and the Melkites. Cfr. Assemani, III. p. 388.

21) Solemn Mass and Rasa.

It would be a very difficult task to prepare sung Masses in Malayalam. To sing prose in Malayalam is most unnatural and awkward. Besides it would be a pity if we have to part with the beautiful Syro-Malabar tunes of the sung Mass. They beautifully bring out the yearning of the human heart for the Divine in spite of their being a product of the last two centuries. This music is essentially modal, melodic and deeply spiritual.

Hence until a way is found for Malayalam sung Masses, we may have them in Syriac.

22) For a more perfect 'Ordo'.

There are so many lacunae in the present 'Ordo.' Some portions are not clear; there are differences in the explanation of the rubrics in the three varieties of the Holy Mass. It is requested that the Hierarchy should see to remedy these defects in the 'Ordo' in Malayalam which may be published at a subsequent date. A few relevent defects are pointed out.

a) No mention of crucifix on the altar.

b) No mention of corporal which is traditional in the East Syrian Rite. In ancient times the corporal used to be a square piece of the leather of ass encased within a

silk-bag. This might have indicated our Lord's triumphal entry into Jerusalem on the colt before his passion.
(Cf. Attwater)

c) Use of pall mentioned only in No. 24.

d) Position of priest at the time of the Apostle is to be specified e. g. sits down or stands turning to the lector.

e) Priest needs bow his head for the prayer: Et da nobis in No. 83 in Rasa like the other forms of the Mass.

f) Sosepa in simple Mass is to be handed over by the server (No. 69). But in Solemn Mass it is to be left upon the altar (No. 27).

g) Ordo No. 52: From second para it would appear that communion can be given by real intinction from hosts consecrated in a previous Mass. But in the first para it would seem symbolic intinction can be performed only on "alios panes quos consecravit".

h) Ordo No. 56: Bidding farewell to the altar is put outside the Mass whereas in the Missal it is definitely a part of the Mass.

23) Mass on Sundays and more Solemn days.

It is desirable to make the use of incense compulsory for Masses on these days. This will enhance the solemnity and grandeur of the occasion.

So too incense should be used for the Simple Mass when parts are solemnly sung by priest and people. (Sung Mass by one priest.)

24) Mass for various life-situations.

Nestorian priests select readings appropriate to the occasion v. g. baptism. As it is 'Ordo' doesn't take into consideration readings for such human situations as the

following: Death, Burial, Anniversary of death, Marriage, Sickness, Unity of the Church, Missions, Republican Day, Serious Sickness, Day of Penance, Day of Recollection, Votive Masses for the Saints.

Let us not be shy about these points. A Rite which has no provision for such necessities is already stagnant, if not dead.

25) Posture of the Faithful.

There is no uniformity in this respect at present. To avoid confusion the Hierarchy is requested to give some directions in this matter with the Taksa as the basis. As there is no fundamental difference between the old Mass and the restored one in this respect the directions may cover all the Masses in our churches.

Both extremes are to be avoided in this matter, specially taking the sensibilities of our people into consideration. An attempt to give some details in this matter is made below.

1) STAND: from the beginning up to the reading of the Apostle.

2) SIT: during the Apostle.

3) STAND: From the Slama up to the Offertory inclusively.

4) SIT: From the continuation of the Onitha d'Raze (p. 20.) up to Slama exclusively. During the Creed, they may sit. Otherwise it would be impossible to get some time to sit down at a stretch.

5) STAND: From Slama inclusively up to the request for prayers by the priest. Remember the Deacon asks the

people to keep standing in his karosutha (p. 26.) and this twice in the same admonition. There is no reason whatsoever for the people to kneel down when the priest does so for his kusappa which is his private prayer. For Sanctus the people are expected to stand up.

6) KNEEL DOWN: from the request for prayers till the end of the Third Gehantha. This is out of consideration for the sentiments of our people for the Consecration.

7) STAND: From the kusappa of Intercession up to the 'Barek Mar' (p- 37) At 'Nese Mar' the Deacon asks people to stand with a prayerful attitude.

8) KNEEL DOWN: From elevation inclusively upto the second 'Taiboose' on p.40.

9) STAND: From the Deacon's karosutha till communion of priest exclusively.

10) KNEEL: for Communion (where people can be persuaded or trained to receive communion standing, so much the better)

11) STAND: From the Deacon's last karosutha (p. 50) till the Huthama inclusively.

III Suggestions applied

After explaining the principles underlying the suggestions made above, we now try to apply them in an orderly manner.

Page 1:

Why not substitute the word 'benevolence' which is critically correct in place of 'good hope' in Lk. 2, 14 ?

Page 2:

Extended hands for the slotha before Marmitha.

Page 3:

The psalms should be recited by priest and people alternatively.

Page 6 and 7:

Hands outstretched for the slotha before Laku Mara.

Page 8:

a) Hands extended for the slothas on this page.

b) Wherever the word Mar is found in slothas and other prayers of a public character, translate it as 'Our Lord'.

c) The Amen after the slotha 'Athu Mar' should be shown as to be recited by the faithful and the rest by the Deacon.

d) Why not add a 'Barek Mar' to the Amen of Kandisha wasweeha?

Page 10:

a) Is it possible to substitute a more apt prayer before the reading of the Apostle on ordinary days? The prescribed one has nothing to do with the lesson.

b) Omit the blessing of the Reader. Would it not be better if he reads the Apostle standing at the centre of the door of the sanctuary which is aesthetically better? When there are readings also from the Old Testament, the position mentioned by the Ordo will be found better; otherwise not.

c) If the blessing of the Reader is retained and if he stands in the centre of the sanctuary door, let the priest turn by his right to do the blessing.

d) Let the priest sit down during the Apostle or keep standing but turned to the Reader. Only after the reading of the Apostle should the priest go to bring the Gospel book. One thing at a time.

Page 11:

a) 'Salma deesooseh' is the reading of Peshitto Heb. 1:3; but in Greek 'Character tes hipostaseos' which is adopted in the first slotha before the Gospel. Should this be corrected?

b) Carrying the Gospel breast-high is aesthetically better.

c) Recite all the prayers before the Gospel so as to be heard by the people.

Page 12:

a) Nestorians and some other Orientals always use a precious soseppa to cover the Gospel. Why not we too?

In imitation of Parsis who have the greatest veneration for their Granth Sahib (Great Book) we may keep the Gospel on a cushion on the altar.

Is it not more significant if we keep the Gospel open? It may remind the people of their role of living the Gospel truth in a better way.

b) No veil to be used in accordance with Ordo No. 14.

Page 15:

a) Say only 6 or 7 verses from the First Litany; then pass on to the Second.

b) Make it compulsory to do the preparation of the oblata on two credence tables whenever it is possible. Keep a small bowl with water and finger towel on the credence table at the right for greater convenience.

Page 16:

Priest should not bow his head for Syamida. Would it not be better if he turns to the people with hands stretched towards them in blessing?

In this way we can bring back the significance of this prayer which had its place when performed from the bema in the centre of the nave. At 'Hav lan' he turns to the altar.

Page 18:

a) Whenever possible let the people recite the Onitha d'Raze alternately. When they begin, priest can wash his hands and bring the gifts to the altar.

If the credence tables are put at two corners nearer to the people, they might even make the offertory procession on some solemn occasions.

b) Recite the prayers at washing the hands in a low voice.

Page 19:

a) Omit 'Amen' after 'Nassek....'

b) The prayers of Offertory to be recited in an audible voice for the sake of the people.

Page 20:

Omit 'Kadu Reseeseen' for reasons mentioned before.

Page 21:

a) To introduce bowing head at the mention of the Divine Persons during the Creed would foster active attention and participation. Such a custom was prevalent in ancient times according to Pseudo-George of Arabel.

b) To save time and not to interrupt Credo in a sung Mass, instead of singing it, let all simply recite it. Credo after all is not meant for singing but for recitation in community.

Page 22:

a) Blessing before Karosutha to be omitted for reasons given elsewhere.

b) Omit the intervening Barekmar.

c) Server to be instructed that the Karosutha should be recited as to be finished only at the end of the first Gehantha. The Barek mar within brackets hinted the time to do this effectively.

Page 23:

a) Would it not be better if the priest requests the prayers when he comes to the two corners of the altar in Masses said on Sundays and solemn occasions? Of course in this case he will make the sign of the cross over the people in both instances. This is specially recommended in sung Masses.

Page 24:

For the sake of simplicity reduce the number of kissing the altar to one when En Maran begins. Omit the repetition in the beginning.

Page 25:

a) Slama to be received by the Deacon according to the traditional and better method as suggested above.

b) Introduce the token Slama out of practical considerations.

Page 26:

Omit the slotha (p. 26-27.) as explained above and substitute Kusappa Marya (p. 27.) instead. No kneeling as people may think it is the most sacred prayer of the whole Anaphora!

Page 27:

Omit the formula for removing the veil.

Page 28:

Insert the words suggested above in the body of the Second Gehantha.

Page 30:

Begin the Gehantha of Consecration only after the response of the people (p. 29-30) is finished.

Introduce the changes and corrections as discussed above.

At elevation hold the host above the paten as mentioned above.

What about making Sign of the Cross on the mysteries after Consecration?

Page 32:

a) Omit the Koolaza as suggested earlier.

b) The Kusappa is to be recited loudly with hands outstretched.

Page 33:

a) Introduce a pause after the Kusappa of Intercession so that priest may remember his personal and private intentions. (cfr.the Chaldean custom)

b) Omit asking for prayers of the faithful with its response.

Page 34:

Introduce a second paragraph as suggested earlier before the Epiclesis.

Page 35:

a) No bowing head during Messiha Slama.

b) Omission of pss 51 and 123 as discussed earlier.

Page 37:

Recite the prayer Barek Mar only once.

Page 38:

a) Should we maintain the symbolic kissing?

b) Recite or sing the two oniyatha separately and alternately. This is to be done by the faithful.

c) Why bowing at the time of Karbinan?

Page 40:

Why not omit the formula when the soseppa is folded back?

Page 41:

a) Curtail Mewarakath as explained above.

b) Take out ciborium for communion from the tabernacle after Taibuthe (p. 40-41.), because the Communion service begins here. Or would it not be better to take it out even earlier i.e.before the prayer beginning Barek Mar on p. 37 so that priest may conveniently make the symbolic intinction on the hosts in ciborium?

Page 43:

According to the general principle found so often in the Mass should not the priest solemnly conclude the Litany (p. 41-42.) by reciting the prayer Hazza Mar in a loud voice?

Page 44:

Priest too should say the Our Father in accordance with the instruction, "let us say together." Now it is left to the choice of the priest.

Page 45:

a) For the Slama let the priest turn by his right towards the rightside of the altar and away from the Blessed Sacrament. The idea is that the priest should not turn his back to the Blessed Sacrament.

b) After Slama let him point to the Blessed Sacrament with both his hands and say Sancta Sanctis. Although this is something new, it is psychologically more suggestive to bring out the idea of Sancta Sanctis.

An alternative method (which is traditional in Kerala) would be to keep raising the right hand on high when priest says Sancta Sanctis.

c) Omit the word 'Mar' from Sancta Sanctis.

Page 46:

Rearrange the prayers before communion of the priest as indicated above.

Page 47:

The prayer Mauhause should be said only in case of actual communion.

Shorter formula for communion of the faithful in case there are too many to communicate.

Page 50:

The first three prayers given are traditionally those of purification and ablution both as regards Catholics and Nestorians. They are really prayers of thanksgiving, but not public ones. Why restrict the first prayer to cases when there is Blessed Sacrament to be consumed?

Page 52:

a) The Amen given towards the end of the slotha of Thanksgiving (i e. Messiha Maran and Brik Ikarak) and at present recited by the priest himself is to be relegated to the people. Otherwise it makes no sense.

b) When priest says the Huthama, why has he to stand towards the northern side of the sanctiuary door? It would be more fitting if he recites the prayer standing at the centre of the door.

c) Add more Huthamas to the Taksa so that priest may have a good variety of them at his disposal. We may borrow many more from the Chaldean and Nestorian Missals.

Page 54:

The Huthama "Ladhassi" has a longer formula with the Nestorians which we may adopt.

Page 62:

Omit 'Poosh Baslama' and kissing the altar for reasons mentioned elsewhere.

The last note in this page mentions the Second and Third Anaphorae. It is requested that these two Masses also be restored to us without delay. Objective variety is rather limited in our Mass-Liturgy, hence the introduction of the other two Masses will give new colour and inspiration to the participants. Besides their prayer-content is theologically richer.

N. B. Not all the suggestions made in the second part could be applied in detail to this third section.

IV The Calendar

Guiding Principles:-

1) The Calendar is adequate as regards the main divisions i. e. the temporal cycle. It is beautiful in its simplicity and logical connection.

2) As regards the sanctoral cycle, it is felt that this is far from adequate. Saints of a bygone age are given prominence which will never make any appeal to men of the twentieth century, especially our young people.

3) Much dissatisfaction is felt owing to the haphazard nature of the lessons especially of feasts. To mention just one instance: It is beyond one's ability to see the

relevance of Sleeha read on the feasts of Our Lady, i.e. Rom. 16, 1-27. Besides many readings are too long; others have no logical connection between their parts.

4) Without doing away with the very ancient readings traditionally maintained in our Rite, we should include, out of a long-range pastoral perspective, a three or four year cycle instead of the annual repetition of the san e extracts.

The principle of *logically connected* series of readings for the Sundays of the different seasons should be accepted. During week days, the principle of *continuous* readings would be most welcome. This latter will make up for days which have no special reading. The present arrangement for these latter days is conspicuous for its indecisiveness and lack of uniformity.

5) To bring out the significance of saints' feasts in a way palpable to the ordinary man, it is suggested to use the name of the day's saint, if any, in place of Mar Thoma in the 'Onitha of the Offertory.' The words 'Avoon Kandisha' is the accepted reading in the Menessian Mass. This would introduce a bit of easily assimated variety. Otherwise the ordinary man will never get a chance to get at the name of the day's saint.

6) The members of the hierarchy individually or even collectively should be authorized to add saints' feasts to the Calendar, saints whose commemoration would be an inspiration for the people at large but especially our youth. Religious Congregations should also get the privilege of celebrating the feasts of their special patrons in the same way.

It is worthwhile to remember that the recent Liturgical Codex of the Roman Rite gives Bishops ample faculties in this regard.

We may have only specific lessons for these feasts which will render their sanction more easy.

7) It is a pity that very few doctors of the Universal Church are represented in our liturgical Calendar.

8) The names of certain feasts v. g. Transitus B. V. M. should be modernized in view of the progress of dogma. Our modern Calendar represents a name of the early centuries !

So also the names of certain seasons v. g. the Big Fast (at a time when so much concessions are made regarding the fast). The "Fast of the Passion" has pride of place in the ancient commentaries on the Mass. Why not adopt it?

9) Inclusion of such feasts as the Holy Family, the Holy Name and Christophoria (Return from Egypt) may be made in the Christmas tide but before Denha.

10) Commemoration of the Dead to be observed on the 8th Friday is equivalent to the feast of All Saints according to ancient interpreters as Pseudo-George of Arabel. Hence November 2nd to be observed as the Commemoration of Holy Souls. The association of the memory of the Dead with Nov. 2 is so deeply ingrained in Kerala that it would be pastorally and psychologically unwise to undo it. Liturgy, it should be remembered here again, is meant for the faithful, not vice versa.

11) Is it advisable to retain the *concomitant feasts* of Denha and other seasons especially since they are commemorated on Fridays? Whatever good reasons could be suggested for defending the custom, it would appear artificial to the modern mind. Should not overhauling be done regarding many feasts in the Calendar?

12) There are some feasts which are duplicated in the present Calendar. v. g. Feast of Peter and Paul on 29th June and on Second Friday after Denha.

13) A Feast already suppressed in the Roman Calendar finds place in our restored Calendar. i. e. The Chair of St. Peter on 18th of January.

14) It is but fitting that each diocese and religious institute (the latter with the requisite approbation) has its own liturgical calendar. But the multiplicity of particular feasts should not overshadow the feasts and the seasonal cycle of the common calendar of our Rite. In preparing calendar, account should be taken of the demands of the sense of proportion, right order and pastoral needs of the diocese or institute. It is requested that a common calendar might be drawn up for all our dioceses.

V. For a Readable Translation of the Mass.

The present translation may be a faithful one in the sense that each word in the original Syriac is conscientiously replaced by a corresponding word in Malayalam, thought to be the nearest equivalent in meaning. But our Mass is not a document of a non-literary nature to be translated in this way. It is a work of imaginary expressions of creative ideas, savouring of Sacred Scripture in every prayer. Nowadays even Sacred Scripture is being translated according to the pattern of the present-day languages. We have to avoid archaism, jargon and all that is stilted or slipshod.

Hence we are badly in need of a new translation that is faithful and intelligible. Words should not be treated as units for translation. Many priests who sincerely love the Restored Mass feel that the dynamism of the original prayer has escaped into thin air in the translation. We have to remember that the translation is made for the benefit of all the worshippers, including laity. If the easy-to-read and the easy-to-grasp quality is lacking in the

translation, then an artificial barrier is set up in the process of worship which is detrimental to the spiritual life of all concerned.

The meaning and the message of the prayers is the core of the original, not the language-forms and sentence-structures. A good translation should read naturally and plainly just like the original. Our present version is a slavish reproduction of the structure and forms of the Syriac language. Phrases of the Syriac have to be transposed creatively so as to reduce them to the equivalent Malayalam idiom.

Hence even if the new translation may look different from the original—this is only a superficial difference—it should give fresh expression to the meaning of the original. The shape of sentences must be different; the phrases and style must follow genuine Malayalam pattern. Such a translation will be a more faithful one than a literal and mechanical translation. Only sach a modern translation can evoke a spontaneous response in the minds of priests who used to appreciate the beauty of the original Syriac. Above all only such a translation can let the Lord's "people and the sheep of his flock" into the spirit of the original. Mass itself can be a catechesis provided it is something intelligible and appreciable.

If this principle is accepted, then there will be no difficulty with making a new translation which reflects the current vocabulary, constructions and rhythms of contemporary speech.

A Note on Bible Translation:

The very same objections made against the present translation of Mass hold equally good regarding the Peshitto Malayalam version and the other versions. The

present versions of St. Paul are indeed Greek to the readers, not of course the Greek of the Koine!

If a portion of St. Paul is read in Malayalam it rapidly becomes tedious and attention begins to wander. It looks an unnatural piece of Malayalam which in its turn presents God's message as something boring.

A new version is the remedy. If it is so, will not our Hierarchy aim at a scholarly and readable translation from the original Greek or an equivalent version, a translation which could be had by all Christians in Kerala? This indeed ties up with the question of oecumenism. It would bring out that all the Christians have a single Bible in common.

An Up-to-date Psalm-Book:

The psalms occupy a place apart in the Breviary, the Mass, and its Propria. Just like the Vulgate Psalms, the Peshito Version too contains so many inaccuracies and mistakes. This is the testimony of a student who took pains to compare this version with the Hebrew, the Greek, the New Latin Version, and other modern critical editions. As the psalms form the core of our public worship, it is requested to prepare a new Malayalam version from a critical edition of the Hebrew original, of course, with an eye upon the Syriac Version.

The language should be chaste and modern. Besides it should be adapted for community use.

VI. Other Aspects of the Eucharist.

1) For a more simplified Rasa

It would appear that some rites of the Rasa are maintained in the Ordo just for the sake of tradition or of pageantry. Taking modern trends of people in Kerala

into consideration, we have to stick to the policy that our efforts at liturgical revival should be tending to do away with these antiquarian elaborations.

Why should the rite of prostration which has very little educational and psychological value be still kept up by us when the Chaldeans and Nestorians have done away with them decades ago ? Why should we still maintain the stilted Turgamas which have already become obsolete among the Chaldeans and Nestorians? What we need is a very solemn Rasa in which people are able to share easily and profitably. It is the simplicity and the uplifting quality of the Mass that move the faithful, not the beautiful pageants we exhibit and the gorgeous garments we put on.

2) *Holy Communion Outside the Mass.*

The following is an order of administering Holy Communion outside the Mass based on the Missal and ancient interpreters.

a) After opening the tabernacle, the priest bows deeply, takes out ciborium. Uncovering the ciborium priest says, "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ . . . . . " (Missal p. 40 – 41). Communicants say, "Amen".

b) Then the priest says "Washwalan . . . . . " (p. 44) The people say "Our Father" (p. 44).

c) After blessing the people saying "Mauhawsa . . . " (p. 47.), to which the people respond as in the Mass, the priest gives Communion in the usual way.

d) Without making the bow, he covers the ciborium, replaces it inside, makes the deep bow, and locks the tabernacle door.

e) Then he says the prayer "Thesbohtha . . . . . " (p. 52) to which the people respond, "Amen". Or shall the priest say the Huthama Ladhassi with the final blessing as given on p. 54 ? This has the final blessing which is an advantage.

f) In giving Viaticum, the same rite may be used. But while giving Communion, the formula recited in the old Mass may be used. The mention there of "life eternal" is found in Maronite formula, and is not merely confined to the Roman Rite.

3) *Prayers for Vesting*

It would be very much appreciated if some prayers are recommended or even required to say at the time of the vesting. We may make use of certain prayers from the various Ordination Rites given in our Pontifical. Besides being an apt preparation for the Mass about to be said, they help the priest to stir up the spirit of each of the Orders he has received. Only a few changes have to be made in the wording of the prayers which would mainly consist in changing the second person into the first.

1) Washing hands: Pontifical p. 111: Messiha Nakel
2) For Kothina: .... p. 111: Nalbesh lee
3) For Sunara: .... p. 111: Hasok Mar
4) For Urara: .... p. 136: Handar Maran
5) For Paina: .... p. 159: Nalbesh

4) *Restored Benediction Rite*

The Rite of Eucharistic Benediction is comparatively modern in the Roman Rite. Though of late origin, it has a sound basis in the theology of the Eucharist and in human psychology. Both of these are relevant to us

orientals too. Pastoral reasons require us to retain it in our Rite but with the necessary adaptations.

The psychological need and the desire to see the Blessed Sacrament exposed is legitimate and hence the Blessed Sacrament is to be exposed in the *monstrance*. In our Mass, the second elevation is specially meant forthe people to see and adore the Eucharist. Now the exposition in a monstrance is a legitimate extension of this elevation. In this light, the use of monstrance perfectly agrees with our Rite. Besides historically the idea of exposing the Blessed Sacrament in a monstrance is traced back to the institution of the festival of Corpus Christi. Now in the Restored Rite we have both the elevations during Mass and besides we have the feast of Corpus Christi. Hence nothing prevents us from using monstrance for the exposition. Maintaining or introducing difference for the mere sake of difference does not suit us both as Catholics and Orientals. The hierarchy is specially requested to see that this custom is maintained in the spiritual interests of our people. Besides suppression of monstrance would create a spirit of disappointment and diffidence in the renovations. The wide knowledge of theologians and the deep scholarship of archeologists are unavailable for our ordinary faithful and it is in behalf of these that the use of monstrance should be insisted upon. If the monstrance could not be against the Roman Rite when it was introduced, there is no reason why it should be forbidden to us now. If some orientalists are dead against it, let us remember many synods in the West also forbade its use many centuries ago!

The following Scheme for Benediction is tentatively submitted:

a) When the Blessed Sacrament is exposed, any

appropriate hymn (approved by the Ordinary) may be sung.

b) After coming down the priest kneels down and profoundly adores the Eucharist. This is a typical Indian attitude. Hence the people too follow suit.

c) Then standing up the priest incenses the Blessed Sacrament (modo orientali).

d) All standing up, the priest or another begins a litany of some 12 versicles. The first six versicles should refer to the spirit of the particular season (v. g. during Advent: "Our Father in heaven who have so kindly sent your only begotten Son for the salvation and renovation of our nature....Our Lord, have mercy on us.") The rest of the litany will be prayers of petition for Pope, Church, Bishop, Parish, families etc. This second part remains invariable while the first part changes accordiug to the temporal cycle. The last versicle, as is the custom in every typical Litany, is addressed to Christ our Lord, in this instance, present in the Eucharist. This litany is concluded by a slotha by priest.

e) Then all remaining prostrate, the people sing antiphonally the hymn of the three young men: Benedicite. Towards its close priest recites another oration, after which benediction is given in the usual way.

f) After the usual prayers, an approved hymn is sung.

g) If benediction is celebrated as a separate ceremony, it may have the usual Pater Noster in the beginning and even an appropriate Marmitha.

VII. Adaptation of Sacred Rites

Syro-Malabar Church has at present the inner dyanmism that can transform all that is noble and deeply human in its culture. Its hierarchy is conspicuous for its theological scholarship and deep pastoral concern. The clergy and laity is modern in its deeply spiritual outlook and fervour. Hence it is within the competence of the hierarchy and its cooperators to bring about the necessary adaptions in the various annual ceremonies. In the light of the policy of the Vatican Council, it is up to our spiritual leaders the Bishops to take the lead in this matter.

The outline-structures of the various ceremonies and suggestions given below, aim at reform in our public worship on a large scale. These reforms are not expected to be introduced by one stroke. They are also not meant to be the work of some commission of scholars working apart from the faithful of Kerala. For ultimate success of our venture some amount of experimentation in the practical order is necessary. The suggestions which we may obtain in this way, will surely prove valuable in perfecting the ceremonies even more. This precisely has been the practice of the Holy See regarding the Restored Easter Vigil of the Roman Rite. We may follow this wise method of bringing about liturgical reform. It will enable us to proceed in a controlled manner.

Some of our seminaries and monasteries might be chosen for the venue of liturgical experimentation. And a few priests skilled in the history of our liturgy and its problems and deeply sensitive to the pastoral needs of our people might be assigned by the hierarchy to supervise and report on the "living experience" with the proposed rites.

Guiding Principles:-

1) It is most desirable that we ourselves prepare a new set of ceremonies, original as far as they go but scripturally orientated and genuinely instructive and inspiring.

2) Some rites can be created anew on the model of the Liturgy of the Divine Word as we find it in the most solemn form of our Mass.

3) Devotion to the Holy Cross is vital for the East Syrian Rite and hence to be incorporated into the Holy Week Liturgy especially the Good Friday.

4) Para-liturgical devotions too are to be enlisted in this adaptation.

The following are some suggestions and trends that may be of some help in the matter.

1) Christmas Night Ceremonies.

Everything should be in Malayalam. The faithful must be given chance to take part intelligently and actively.

This para-liturgical ceremony may take place before the Midnight Mass. The rite should include recitation or singing of appropriate songs, singing of hymns and reading of appropriate Old and New Testament readings.

2) Palm Sunday.

The liturgical blessing of palms and their distribution followed by procession may conveniently take place after the Gospel in the Mass. The blessing is performed by the priest facing people. During distribution appropriate hymns are to be sung. Children should lead the procession and special hymns be sung by them. A statue of Christ

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crowned King may be taken in the procession around or near the church. When it returns to the church, the statue is placed near the main door and the priest in view of all, after a ferverino on the Kingship of Christ may recite a prayer of loyalty to our Lord. All sing Hosanna together. The procession then enters the Church and the Mass is continued.

3) Holy Thursday.

A single Mass on that day towards the evening. Concelebration if possible. Use of Psalms 115-118 recommended as our Lord used them at Last Supper on this day.

The Rite of washing legs after the Gospel. This may save time. Besides all the faithful will be able to take part in the ceremony.

During the parish Holy Hour that night, appropriate readings from the Gospel by the clergy and hymns by different sections of the faithful. A good use of Messianic Psalms also may be used during the night adoration.

4) The Good Friday.

Liturgy of the Divine Word must have full scope here. At least four readings with singing of psalms in between. The readings from the Old Testament should be on the Paschal Lamb and the suffering Servant of Jahweh. The Gospel may be a harmony of the four Gospels about the various trials of our Lord and His crucifixion.

Following a brief homily on the significance of the day, the Litanic prayers are solemnly recited. The first Litany must be made for the purpose; the second should be that of our Ramsa. (It used to be said in every Mass solemnly said in the ancient times. This is a prayer for the various categories of people in the Church and in the

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world. Even a new prayer may be newly prepared taking into account the present condition of the world and the present needs of the Church mentioned explicitly). The Third Litany follows.

After Trisagion, unveiling of the Crucifix with Ecce Agnus Dei thrice said (This is not Roman. It is taken from the Great Doxology of our Sunday Sapra. Besides it is derived from the Gospels). Following this Adoration of the Cross for which we East Syrians have traditionally a great devotion. In the meanwhile an Onitha of the Cross (longer than the one in our Rasa) is sung. The adoration of the faithful too takes place at this time. Homage to the Holy Relic of the Cross may conveniently take place here where it is available. Both the relic and the Crucifix are placed on the altar solemnly.

Then follows Our Father with the usual slavatha and Huthama (they are to be prepared). In the evening the celebrant reads the Gospel of Christ's crucifixion and burial followed by the sermon on the Passion. Then follows the Mass of the Presanctified. The Karosutha of Communion should be recited in full. After this customary procession or solemn Way of the Cross may be made.

5) Holy Saturday

Some appropriate functions with readings and psalms in honour of sorrows of the Blessed Virgin may be observed in the morning. This agrees with the deep sense of piety of the Kerala Catholics towards the Virgin. A procession with the statue of our Lady of Dolours may conclude this service.

In the evening,a Vigil Service proper will take place. This function should deepen the link between Baptismal consciousness and the Resurrection of Christ. Readings which should emphasize the role of Baptism should be read. This is followed by the Vigil Mass.

6) The Easter

After the Mass, the procession which had a place of honour in our ancient Rite should have the pride of place. In front of the main door solemn Slama is to be given by the priest which is to be shared by all present as a token of Christ's own peace. This is followed by recital of Our Father and other appropriate prayers.

7) Renovation of Baptismal and Matrimonial Vows

To be done on occasions of retreat, missions etc. Ceremonies to be simple; Holy scripture to be used; Appropriate common prayers and final blessing. This may be concluded with Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament.

8) Novenas etc.

A quasi-official book of Novenas and paraliturgical ceremonies as Way of the Cross, Prayers for Republican Day, Public Thanks-giving etc.,may be prepared in accordance with objective norms of solid piety and genuine liturgical spirit.

9) Various Blessings

A book that contains prayers and blessings that aim at the sanctification of domestic and social life may also be prepared.

VIII. Church Architecture in the Light of Liturgical Revival

The architectural plan of churches given in the Ordo would seem to reflect the idea that the priest and ministers are primarily the ministers of the altar, and only in the second place the leaders of the community in prayer and worship. The alienation of the people from the sanctuary is stressed to the extreme by the use of screen. The presence of kesthroma which is reserved to the clerics or choir shows the same tendency.

It is also another fact that no two churches of the same pattern ever existed in Kerala or in Meospotamia at any time. This is clear from the writings of the ancient commentators.

In view of liturgical revival by means of active participation (By the way we mention here that the traditional participation of the faithful in the Mass has been more or less ignored in the explanation of the rubrics for the three Masses as given in the Ordo. The provision given on pages 40—42 of the Ordo would appear to be an after-thought. It would seem the whole idea of the restored Mass and its rubrics is centred round the purity of rubrics to be observed by the clergy concerned. The Ordo has no clear mind to give the faithful their due place in the celebration of the Mass. This can be remedied only by a pastorally orientated Hierarchy.) a modern church architecture should take into account the Holy Mass as a community worship, a sacrifice which creates union. In the past the stress was on the mystery 'tremendous and awe-inspiring,' now the trend should be to insist upon union and collaboration. Hence:

(1) Altar to be built in such a way that the celebrant faces the congregation.

(2) If a distinct Bema is not built in middle of the nave, there should be ambo for the reading of the lessons. Ambo should be placed in a conspicuous place. This will show the link between the Liturgy of the Word and the Liturgy of the Sacrifice proper.

(3) Baptistery should be brought nearer to the Sanctuary perhaps to the right of the Sanctuary but outside it. Why not baptismal font be adapted for immersion which is according to our genuine Rite and also to the idea of Ritual bath of our Hindu brethren?

(4) A space relationship may be attempted between the baptismal font and the confessional.

A theological, practical and modern approach should be substituted for the fossilized idea of a church as envisaged by our present Ordo.

Here we cant give practical solutions of the problem which would require the services of experts in various fields. But the least we expect from the restoration of our Liturgy is that the Ordo should never stand in the way of a modern church for the Catholics of Kerala in this modern world. Let us also remember that temples and mutts are presently built in Hindu centres according to contemporary styles and modern architecture.

Conclusion

The problem of adapting our Liturgy to the pastoral needs of the people is one, the ultimate solution of which rests with the Sacred Congregation for the Oriental Church. Yet these suggestions are submitted to the Hier-

archy with a deep sense of loyalty and intelligent co-operation so that the Fathers may discuss the points raised and arrive at the correct solutions. Priests and laity, it is true, have no mandate to discuss these problems. However the discussion in this brochure may be considered as part of public opinion demanded by the Vatican Council from the children of the Church. The suggestions are intended as stimulants to serious thought than as cut-and-dried proposals. May this exposition of the pastoral needs that call for liturgical reforms help to bring about an intelligent and active lay participation in the Church's public worship as practised in the Syro-Malabar Church.

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"As the fulcrum of the spiritual life of the Church, the Divine Sacrifice ought to constitute the central concern of pastors of souls; the more the faithful will re-establish contact with the inexhaustible treasures contained in it, the more swiftly will that rebirth of liturgical piety occur, which our Holy Father Pius XII wished for with so much insistence" (Paul VI, the then Pro-Secretary on behalf of Pius XII to the Third Italian Congress on Pastoral Liturgy in Oct. 1954.)

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