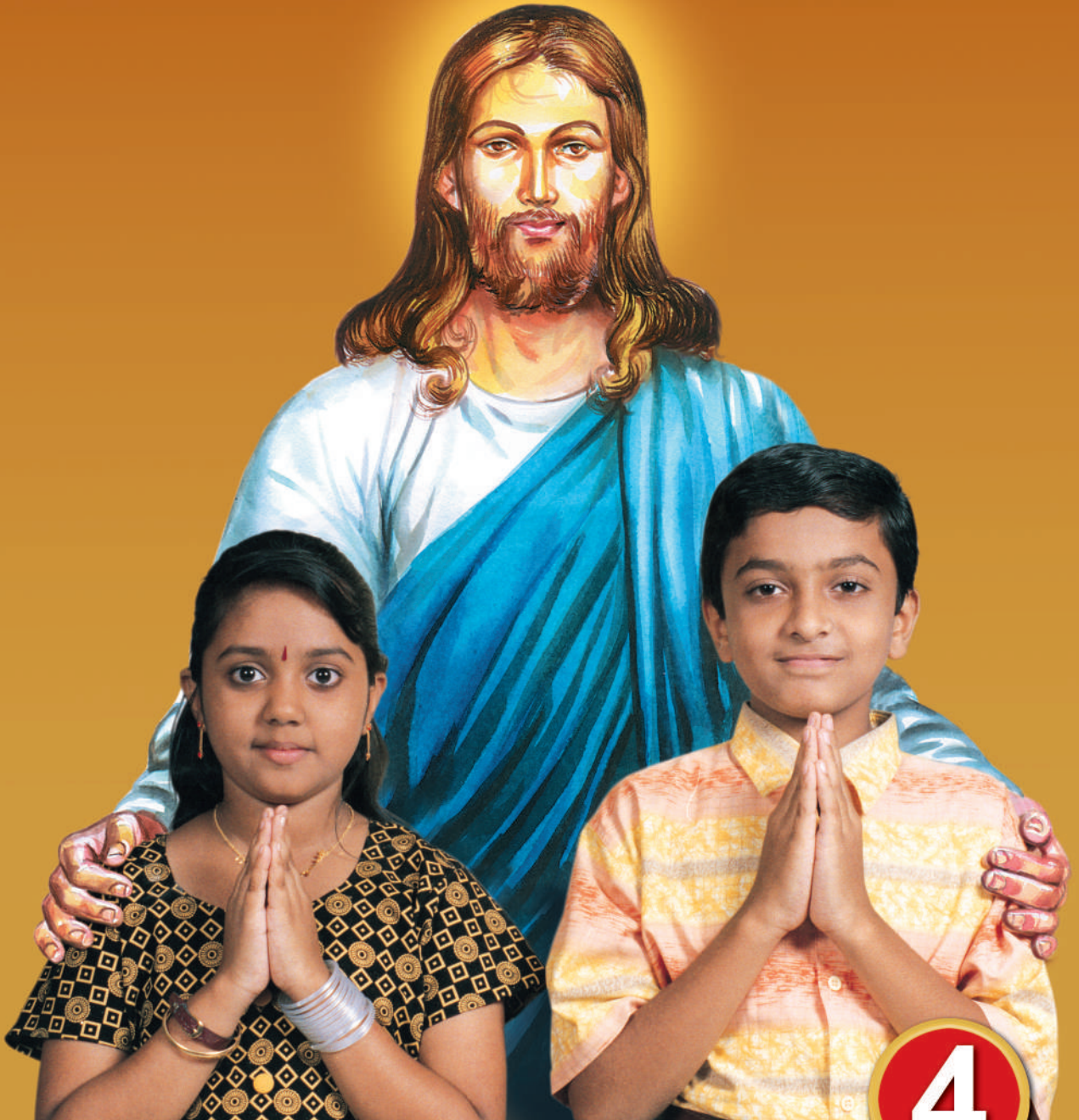


GLORY TO THE MERCIFUL GOD



THE SYRO-MALANKARA CATHOLIC CATECHISM

GLORY TO THE MERCIFUL GOD

STANDARD - 4



The Synodal Commission for Faith Formation
Catholicate Centre, Pattom, Trivandrum-695 004

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GLORY TO THE MERCIFUL GOD**
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23 March 2020

BENEDICTORY MESSAGE

It is with great pleasure and reverence that I cherish the publication of the catechism Text of the Syro Malankara Catholic Church in 2002, during the apostolic ministry of His Beatitude Moran Mor Cyril Beselios Catholicos. It was indeed a dream come true as it helped the Church to make a truly measured step towards faith formation. With God's immense grace we are also able to publish the text in Malayalam, Tamil and English for classes one to twelve.

The message of creation and salvation manifested through the life of Jesus Christ was revealed to us all the way through from the Old Testament to the New Testament. The history of this revelation is the history of the salvation of the Church. The core of catechism is this history of revelation and salvation. Through the Holy Spirit this history of salvation continues today in and through the Church. For us this salvation becomes a living experience through the ecclesial life of the Syro-Malankara Catholic Church. Therefore the history of salvation and the patrimony or the valuable traditions of the Syro-Malankara Catholic Church become the fundamental source for this catechism. I pray that this Catechism Text brings a new vigour in the growth of the Syro-Malankara Catholic Church and I earnestly advise the faithful to receive this Catechism Text and help in the promotion and progress of the Church for the greater glory of God.

I sincerely appreciate this unique achievement. I express my profound gratitude to His Grace Most Rev. Thomas Mar Koorilos, the former Chairman and Rev. Dr. Antony Kakkanatt, the former Secretary of the Synodal Commission for faith formation who continues to give commendable leadership to prepare and publish this Catechism Text. I wholeheartedly appreciate the genuine efforts taken by His Excellency Most Rev. Dr. Thomas Mar Eusebius, the present Chairman of the the Synodal Commission for Faith Formation, for his services. God bless them and all those who have collaborated with them in this noble mission.

God bless you all!

✠ **Baselios Cardinal Cleemis**
Major Archbishop-Catholicos
of the Syro-Malankara Catholic Church.

INTRODUCTION

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

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

In the first grade our goal was to help the child to glorify God and in the second grade it has been to help the child to glorify the Triune God. In the third grade the thrust is to know Jesus Christ and to glorify Him.

The central theme of our fourth grade Catechism is “God’s Infinite Mercy Towards Man”. In the Bible, we can see that God shows his mercy and love towards man from the moment of creation. However, man refused God’s love and turned away from him. In spite of this rejection, God went after humankind who had turned away from him through sin. God’s chosen people, Israel also went away from God; but God did not forsake them. God has continually showered mercy on them. In the fullness of time God sent his only Son to redeem humanity, which turned away from him through sin. “God so loved the world that he sent even his only Begotten Son” (John 3:16). The incarnation of Jesus Christ is the supreme sign of the mercy of God the Father to humanity. In Jesus we see the perfect shepherd who goes after the lost sheep. Jesus was always kind to people who approached him. Jesus gave witness throughout his life to the love and mercy of God the Father. He healed the sick and forgave the sins of many. He showed love and compassion to those who were suffering and to those who were burdened in life. At the end of his public life Jesus offered

himself completely on the cross and this is the most explicit sign of his love and kindness to man.

Today the love and mercy of God continue through the Holy Spirit in the Church. This is in and through the sacraments, especially, the Holy Qurbono and Sacrament of Reconciliation. Therefore these two sacraments are treated in detail in the text.

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

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

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

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

+ Thomas Mar Koorilos

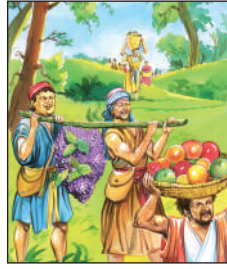
Former Chairman, The Synodal Commission for Faith Formation

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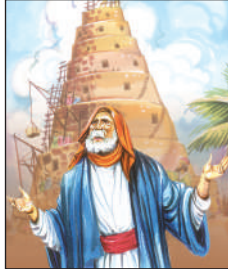
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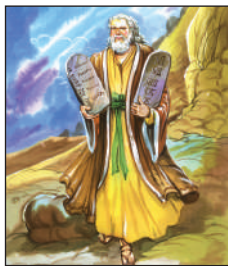
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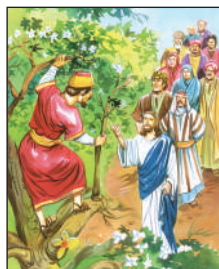
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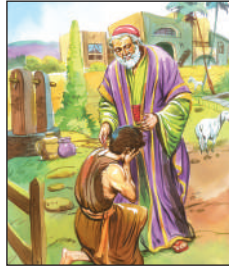
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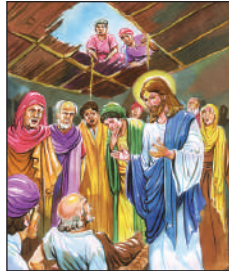
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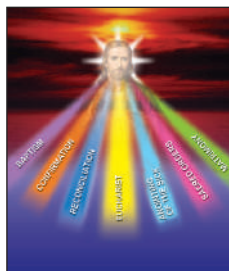
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GLORY TO THE MERCIFUL GOD



God created man in His own image and likeness. God gave His life to man. God made our first parents, Adam and Eve, dwell in the Garden of Eden. They lived there enjoying all privileges. But they disobeyed the commandment of God by eating the fruit of the tree, about which God had said, “You shall not eat”. Thus they

lost the love of God and they became subject to the sufferings of life. Adam and Eve were expelled from the Garden of Eden because they disobeyed the Commandment of God.

The first parents who were expelled from the Garden of Eden lost all their blessings. There arose suffering and sorrow in their life. God felt pity over them because of their sufferings and miseries. God willed to save them. He promised a Saviour for that.

He prepared a people to receive that Saviour. For that God chose a person, Abraham. Through him God formed a particular community. This community is Israel. Israel continuously did wrong to God. God corrected them and showed mercy to them. Through Moses, the Prophets and the Kings, God taught them the lessons of His love, care and salvation. In the fullness of time God sent His Son to the world. Thus God expressed His love and mercy fully towards man. **“God so loved the world that He gave His only Son”** (John 3:16).

The incarnation of Jesus, the Son of God, was the greatest proof of the love and mercy of God, the Father. Jesus gave to men the mercy and love of God throughout His public life. Jesus cured many sick people and absolved the sins of many. He imparted peace and love to those who experienced anguish and affliction. He dealt with pity all who approached Him. Once Jesus said, **“Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful”** (Luke 6:36). Jesus showed His mercy and love fully at the end of His public life by offering Himself on the cross on Calvary.

In order to perpetuate the love and mercy of God for mankind till the end of the world, He sent to us the Holy Spirit. The mercy of God continues even today through the Church led by the Holy Spirit.

The history of salvation is the history of God's showing mercy to man, who acts against the will of God, but repents and calls upon Him. This is what we see in the Scriptures all through. Let us praise God, who shows mercy to mankind.

Let us Pray

"Merciful Lord, bless us and help us".
(Order of the Malanakara Qurbono)

Let us Sing

(Karuna nidhiyam Karthave)
"Treasure of mercy, O my Lord,
Hearken my supplication;
For my sin is indeed great,
Your grace, behold! is greater".
(Order of the Malankara Qurbono)

Let us Do

I shall show mercy to all.

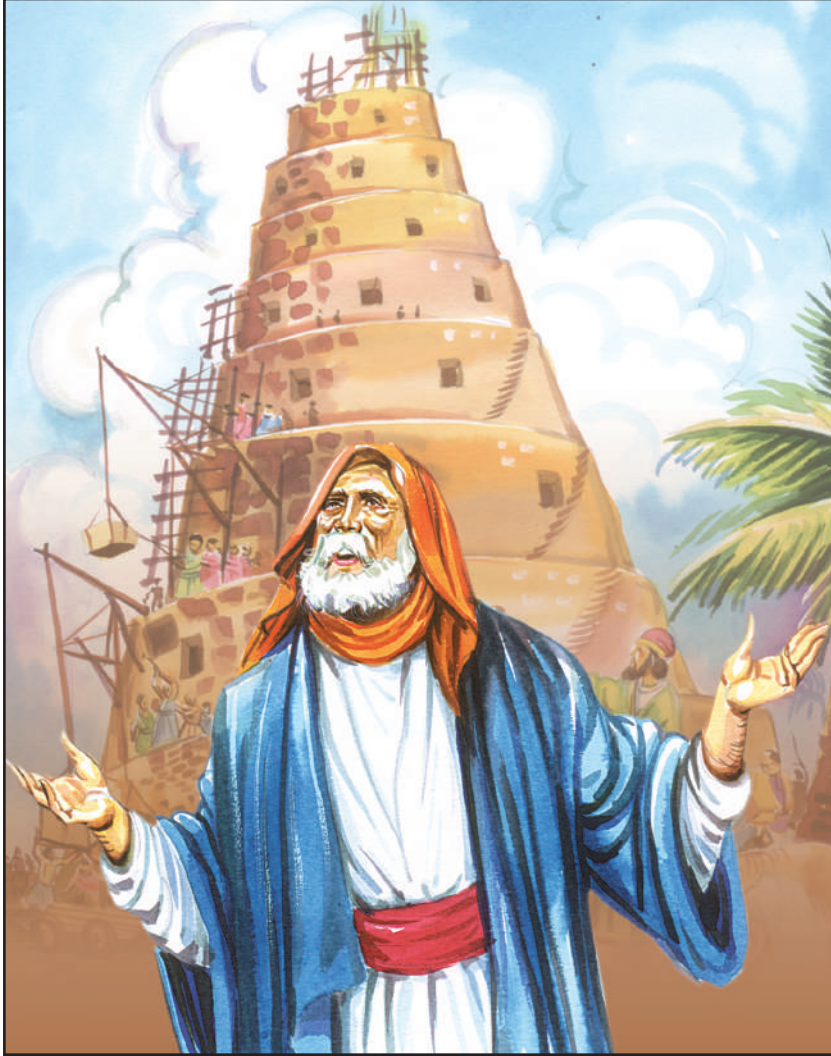
Let us Memorise

"Be merciful, just as your
Father is merciful".
(Luke 6:36)

Questions

1. How did Adam and Eve defy God?
2. How did God show His love and mercy to men?
3. What is the history of Salvation?

THE CALL OF ABRAHAM



The children of the first parents increased on earth. When evil also increased along with them, there was a deluge, in accordance with the command of God. The flood destroyed all evil doers. But God saved from among them Noah, the just, and his family and showed them mercy.

The children of Noah increased on earth. They too defied God. Those who lived in Shinar (modern Iraq), an ancient plateau, gathered together and said to one another, **“Come, let us build ourselves a city, and a tower with its top in the heavens, and let us make a name for ourselves, otherwise we shall be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth”** (Genesis 11:4).

God came down to see the tower, men were building. Since evil was increasing among the people, God confused their language. Hence they scattered all over the earth. They could not complete the construction of the tower. The tower of Babel stood there incomplete, as a sign of man’s pride. That was the effort of man to become great apart from God.

Though men incurred punishment by doing evil, God did not forsake them. He called Abraham in His mercy. He set apart a people for Himself through him.

Abraham was the son of Terah, who belonged to the genealogy of Noah, the just. God intended to save mankind through Abraham. God called Abraham when he was living in a place called Haran. The Lord said to Abraham: **“Go from your country and your kindred and your father’s house to the land that I will show you. I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you, and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and the one who curses you I will curse; and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed”** (Genesis 12:1-3).

Abraham accepted the call of God. He set out in obedience to the command of God. Abraham was 75 years old when he left Haran. He took along with him Sarah, his wife and Lot, his brother’s son. Abraham took with him his possessions and the people he gathered in Haran and went. God led them to the land of Canaan. When Abraham reached the

land of Canaan; God said thus: **“To your offspring I will give this land”** (Genesis 12:7). Abraham worshipped God. After that, he continued his journey from there. Abraham lived obeying the commandments of God.

Those who started to build the tower of Babel, excluding God, were dispersed. But Abraham, who lived in accordance with the command of God, received lot of blessings. Let us always live obeying the will of God. Then we too will be blessed.

Let us Pray

“O Lord God of our fathers, you are blessed. Your name is always great and glorious”.
(Prayer of Lent)

Let us Sing

(Adima neethinjare...)

"God, who blessed Adam and Eve
In his a...bundant grace
May he bless (+) these his servants, O God
Have mercy on us.
God, who blessed Abram, Sarah
In his a...bundant grace
May he bless (+) these his servants, O God
Have mercy on us".
(Order of the Sacrament – Matrimony)

Let us Do

I shall rely on God in all my endeavours.

Let us Memorise

“The Lord is faithful in all his words,
and gracious in all his deeds”.
(Psalm 145:13)

Questions

1. Which family did God save from the deluge?
2. What were the experiences of those, who started to build the tower of Babel?
3. What does the tower of Babel symbolize?
4. What promises did God make to Abraham?
5. How did Abraham reach Canaan?

THE DELIVERANCE FROM EGYPT



God specially called Abraham, separated him and blessed him. This blessing continued through his son, Isaac. Isaac had two sons. God specially blessed Jacob, the younger of them. God promised that a great nation would arise through the descendants of Jacob. Jacob was known by the name 'Israel'. Hence the children of Jacob were known as the 'People of Israel'.

There arose a great famine at that time among the people of Israel. Consequently, the people of Israel went to Egypt, seeking help. There, they multiplied and became a large community. In course of time, the people of Israel were made slaves in Egypt. At that time the kings of Egypt were known by the name 'Pharaoh'.

The people of Israel underwent a lot of miseries in Egypt. In tears they entreated God to be freed from the Egyptians. God felt pity over His people.

God promised them that He would lead them to Canaan, a land overflowing with milk and honey. Jacob had informed them of this at the time of his death. He said: **"I am about to die, but God will be with you and will bring you again to the land of your ancestors"** (Genesis 48:21). For that, they prayed to Yahweh crying aloud. God appointed Moses as their leader.

God appointed Aaron to help Moses, his brother. They went to Pharaoh and told him that Yahweh had ordered to set free the Israelites. Pharaoh did not pay heed to it. His heart was hardened. Then God sent ten plagues, one after the other, on the Egyptians. When the first born of Pharaoh was killed, he permitted the Israelites to be freed.

The heart of Pharaoh was hardened when the Israelites set out on their journey from Egypt to Canaan. Pharaoh and his army advanced on the Israelites. By that time they had reached near the Red Sea. The people of Israel prayed to God as they saw the sea in front and the army of Pharaoh behind them. God showed mercy on them. Moses, obeying the command of God, stretched forth his rod towards the water. The sea retreated on either side. The Israelites crossed to the other side through the dry land. When Pharaoh and his army reached the middle of the sea, Moses turned back and stretched his hand over the sea. The waters from the sides merged

and drowned the Egyptians. The people of Israel, who were saved, sang songs praising God (Exodus 14:1-31).

The Lord continued to lead them. God gave them shade during daytime by means of a cloud and at night, He gave them light by means of a pillar of fire. God gave ‘manna’ and quails from heaven for them to eat and water from rock to drink.

God is forever merciful. Even though men sinned, God cared and loved them forever. Let us praise the Lord, who sides with us in our miseries.

Let us Pray

“Lead us this day in your way.
Let your strength sustain us today”.
(Dedication of the Day)

Let us Sing

(Prarthana moolam..)

"Moses, the meek paved a path in
the sea through his prayers
Israelites crossed it safely; while
Pharaoh was drowned".
(Service of the House Blessing)

Let us Do

I shall pray for all who are in misery.

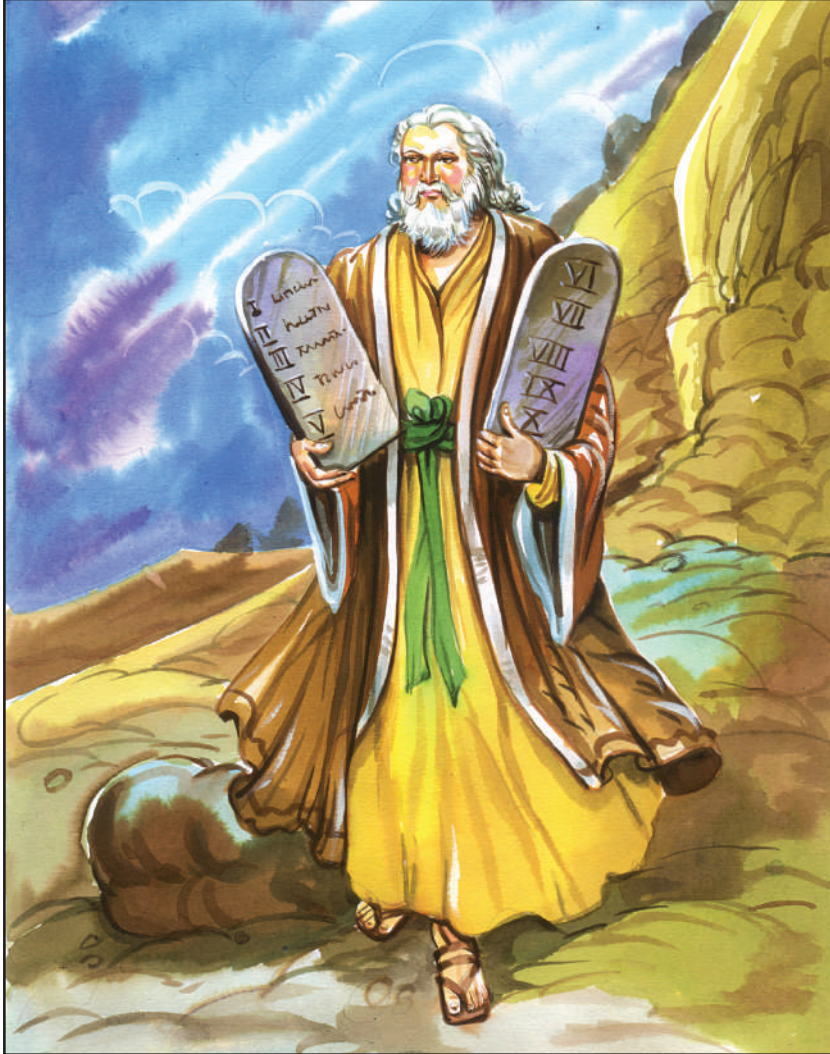
Let us Memorise

“The Lord was my support. He brought
me out into a broad place”.
(Psalm 18:18-19)

Questions

1. Why were the descendants of Jacob called the ‘people of Israel’?
2. What promise did God give to the Israelites?
3. Why did Pharaoh decide to free the Israelites?
4. How did God save the Israelites from Egypt?

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS



The people of Israel reached the base of Mount Sinai on the first day of the third month of their leaving from Egypt. There they pitched their tents and took rest. When all took rest, Moses went up to the presence of God. God asked Moses to inform the Israelites thus: **“If you obey My voice and keep My covenant, you shall be My treasured possession out of all the peoples”** (Exodus 19:5). Moses informed

the people of this message. The people, in one voice replied, **“Everything that the Lord has spoken we will do”** (Exodus 19:8).

On the third day there were sounds of thunder and lightning. On the top of Mount Sinai, there appeared a thick cloud. A loud trumpet blast was resounding there. Smoke rose up from Mount Sinai, because the Lord descended upon it in fire. God called Moses to the top of the mountain and gave him the Ten Commandments. Moses received the Ten Commandments from God and made them known to the people. These Ten Commandments were to corroborate that Israel was God’s own people. (Exodus 19:1- 20:17).

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

1. I am the Lord your God, you shall have no other gods before Me.

The core of the first commandment is ‘belief in one God’. Man should adore only God in the fullness of the theological virtues – faith, hope and charity. This commandment also teaches that there is only one God, Creator, Protector, Saviour and Sanctifier. Therefore we should not worship other deities or idols.

2. You shall not take the holy name of God in vain.

The holy name of God is more glorious and holy than all other names. This commandment demands us to praise and bless the name of God. God’s name should be glorified in our thoughts, words and deeds.

3. Keep the day of God holy.

In the Old Testament, the Sabbath day was the Lord’s Day. In the New Testament, Sunday, the day of the resurrection of Jesus, is observed as the day of the Lord. This commandment asks us to observe Sunday, holy.

4. Honour your father and your mother.

We ought to honour, respect and obey our parents, masters, priests, religious, superiors and the rest.

5. You shall not kill.

Life is the gift of God. This commandment demands us to respect, protect and care for life. Each one of us is obliged to uphold the value of life. This commandment also means not to defame or cause pain to others.

6. You shall not commit adultery.

Man and woman should honour and respect each other. All should keep chastity. That is, this commandment asks us to keep our body, mind and soul pure.

7. You shall not steal.

Do not appropriate things that belong to others without their permission. Do not steal any body’s wealth.

8. You shall not bear false witness.

This commandment teaches us that we should respect truth and deal truthfully. It is wrong to tell lies, to raise false accusations, to divulge the secrets detrimental to others and to indiscreetly judge others.

9. Do not covet your neighbour's wife.

We have to honour the family life of others; and respect others' family relationship. Thus we are obliged to promote holiness in life.

10. Do not covet your neighbour's property.

The desire to appropriate things belonging to others is wrong.

These Ten Commandments are known as the commandments of God. Since they are the commandments of God, they are unchangeable. Jesus also taught the same commandments to His followers in the New Testament.

The commandments are given for the welfare of men. The first three of the Ten Commandments deal with the relationship of God with man. The seven that follow teach how we should deal with each other. Jesus also observed these commandments in His life. We ought to live in obedience to these commandments of God. It is thus that we should express our love for God.

Let us Pray

“Give me the grace to observe your commandments, to meditate on your precepts day and night and to fulfil your will”.
(Prayer of the Midnight)

Let us Sing

(Nin kalpana marge..)
"Through your commandment,
Discipline me, so that I
Shall live by your grace.
I shall observe them;
Set your guards to the door
Of my limbs in order
That your divine gifts
May not be stolen".
(S'himo, Saturday)

Let us Do

I shall live observing the Ten
Commandments of God.

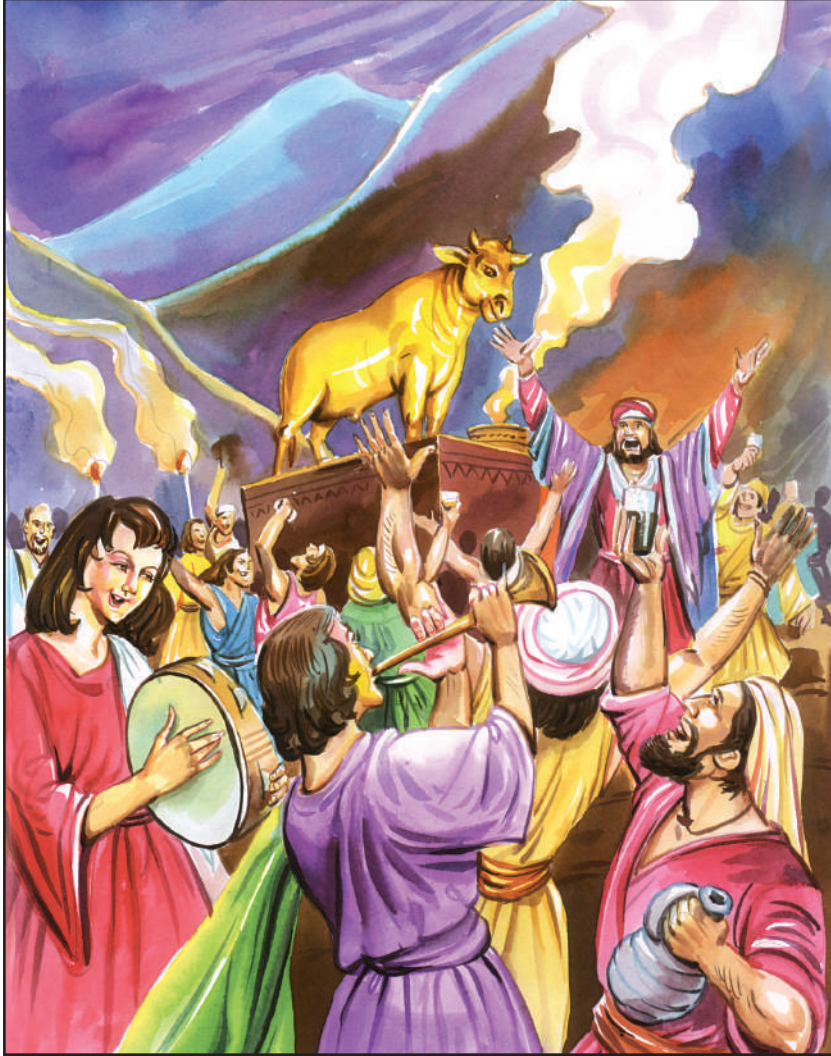
Let us Memorise

“All his ordinances were before me, and
his statutes I did not put away from me”.
(Psalm 18:22)

Questions

1. What was the covenant God made with the Israelites on Mount Sinai?
2. How many are the Commandments God gave through Moses? Which are they?

WORSHIPPING THE CALF



Israel became Yahweh's chosen people through the covenant of Sinai. God promised that if Israel remained faithful to the covenant, they would be a priestly nation and a holy people to Him. Israel accepted the commandments of God. They accepted Yahweh as their only God. Israel confessed that thereafter they should have no other God.

God called Moses again to Mount Sinai. Moses entrusted the care of the Israelites with Aaron and went on top of the mountain to the presence of God. The glory of God dwelt on Mount Sinai. Moses was on top of the mountain for forty days and forty nights. On that occasion, God wrote His commandments on two stone slabs and gave them to Moses.

Since Moses delayed to come down from the mountain, the people became impatient. They gathered around Aaron and said, “Make in haste gods in order to guide us. We do not know what happened to Moses, the man who brought us out of Egypt”. Aaron had no guts to resist the obstinacy of the people. He succumbed to their compulsion. He asked the people of Israel to bring to him all their gold rings. They brought them before Aaron. He received the gold, melted them in a crucible and carved a molten calf. Then the people of Israel cried aloud: “These are your gods O Israel, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt”. When Aaron saw this, he built an altar in front of the calf. Then he said thus: “Tomorrow shall be a festival to the Lord”. They rose up on the next day, offered sacrifices and they ate and drank and engaged themselves in merry making (Exodus 32:1-6).

Having seen the infidelity of the Israelites, God was angry. God had commanded the people of Israel, “You shall have no other gods before Me”. He had strictly ordered them, ‘not to worship idols’. The Lord said to Moses, **“Go down at once! Your people, whom you brought up out of the land of Egypt, have acted perversely”** (Exodus 32:7). Since they have installed a calf in the place of God, the wrath of God blazed on them. God told Moses again, “I have seen this people, and behold! It is a stiff-necked people. Therefore, let Me alone that My wrath may burn hot against them and I may consume them”. But Moses besought the Lord's pity for the people of Israel. God accepted the petition of Moses that ‘He should withdraw from His decision against the people’. The Lord was pacified. He withdrew from His decision against His people.

Moses went down towards the Israelites from the top of Mount Sinai. Seeing their licentiousness, Moses got angry against the people. Moses destroyed the calf they made.

Moses prayed to God again, not to destroy His people. On account of the prayer of Moses, God exempted the people of Israel from severe punishment. God showed them mercy and forgave them (Exodus 32:8-36).

Let us be steadfast in worshipping God. Let us praise God wholeheartedly.

Let us Pray

"As long as we live we will always praise,
worship and glorify the Father,
the Son and the Holy Spirit".
(Night Prayer)

Let us Sing

(Nin mahimavin sannidhiyil...)
"The crimes that I have committed
In front of your majesty,
Recall not them against me
Be pleased with me mercifully".
(Order of the Holy Qurbono)

Let us Do

I shall adore God wholeheartedly.

Let us Memorise

"O come, let us worship and bow down,
let us kneel before the Lord, our Maker".
(Psalm 95:6)

Questions

1. How did Israel show infidelity to God?
2. How did God refrain from His wrath against the people?
3. What did Moses do when he came down from the mountain?

THE PROMISED LAND



The people of Israel set out from the valley of Mount Sinai as per command of God. Their journey aimed at the land promised by God to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. The people of Israel travelled through the wilderness for forty years. God expressed His mercy and love to them by providing them

with necessary food and water. Whenever they were confronted with crises, God protected them miraculously. God gave victory to the Israelites whenever they fought against enemies. God gave the Israelites opportunity to return whenever they showed infidelity. God led the Israelites to the Promised Land.

Under the leadership of Joshua, the successor of Moses, the Israelites entered the land of Canaan. This was the land promised by God. The Israelites defeated the Canaanites. They made the land of Canaan their own. Thus the Lord gave them the land, which He promised to the fathers, that He would give to Israel. They settled down there.

The Judges are those whom God had appointed to save the tribes of Israel from external enemies after the death of Joshua. They were warriors. Whenever the people showed infidelity to God, He handed them over to the enemies. But when they prayed calling God, He freed them through the Judges. Samuel was the last of the Judges of Israel.

The people of Israel hoped that they would get peace and prosperity if they had a king like the other nations. Although Samuel had the opinion that, “Besides the Lord there need not be any other king”, he received instruction from the Lord to act according to the desire of the people. Samuel anointed Saul as the first king of Israel. After that David and his son Solomon gave strong leadership to Israel. After the death of Solomon, Israel was divided into Judea and Israel. Thereafter, many kings ruled over Judea and Israel. The people of Israel did not fully believe in Yahweh, the God. Both the kings and the people showed infidelity to God.

Many a time the people of Israel acted against the will of God. They left Yahweh and began to worship other gods. The people of Israel engaged themselves in evil and injustice. God sent the Prophets to bring back to Him the people of Israel whenever they went astray from Him. Many

Prophets worked among the Israelites. Through them God prepared Israel for repentance. When the repentant people entreated Him, God showed mercy on them. God always gave hope to Israel. God promised them a Saviour, who is to come, through the Prophets.

God did not fully reject the people of Israel, who wronged Him. Throughout the history we see Israel trespassing the commandment of God and repenting over it and God showing mercy to them. We too go astray from God committing mistake. When we repent and call upon God, He will show mercy on us and will forgive our sins.

Let us Pray

“Merciful God, protect and sanctify us by being present in front of us and behind us today, at our right and left, below and above us, in us and at all our sides”.

(Dedication of the Day)

Let us Sing

(Davidin prarthana kettisan...)

"Having heard the prayer of David, God felt pity Absolved sin and gave him again prophetic power.

When Hanania entreated from furnace of fire God protected him and his friends from the burning fire".

(Service of House Blessing)

Let us Do

I shall always act faithfully to God.

Let us Memorise

“For the Lord is good; his steadfast love endures forever, and his faithfulness to all generations”.

(Psalm 100:5)

Questions

1. What was the mission of the Judges?
2. Who were the Judges?
3. Why did the people demand Samuel to give them a king?
4. What is the reason for sending Prophets among the Israelites?

THE COMING OF THE SAVIOUR



The first parents committed sin transgressing the command of God. Evil increased among their descendants. By doing evil they went astray from God. To the men, who went astray from Him, God showed in diverse ways His mercy and love.

In the fullness of time, God gave His Son to the world in order to save man. Many prophets prophesied about the coming of the Son of God. Isaiah had prophesied thus: **“Look, the young woman is with child and shall bear a son, and shall name Him Immanuel”** (Isaiah 7:14). The meaning of the word ‘Immanuel’ is ‘God with us’.

According to the promise of God, Messiah, the Saviour was born in Bethlehem from the Holy Virgin Mary, belonging to the tribe of David. He was called Jesus as suggested by God. Mary and Joseph ran away to Egypt with Jesus in order to escape from Herod. After the death of Herod, they came back from Egypt and settled down in Nazareth. For that reason Jesus was called ‘Nazarene’. In obedience to His parents Jesus lived with them (Luke 2:51-52).

In those days, John the Baptist came to the wilderness of Judea and preached. People from the whole of Judea and Jerusalem came near him. They confessed their sins and received Baptism in the river Jordan. Jesus also came to river Jordan and received Baptism from John the Baptist. At the time of the Baptism of Jesus, God the Father bore witness to His Son, Jesus: **“You are My Son, the Beloved; with You I am well pleased”** (Mark1:11). When John the Baptist was arrested, Jesus came to Galilee preaching the Gospel of God. He said: **“The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news”** (Mark1:15). Thus Jesus began His public ministry.

Jesus came to Nazareth, His native place, entered the synagogue one day and He stood up to read. Jesus read from the book of prophet Isaiah thus: **“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because He has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favour”** (Luke 4:18-19). After that, Jesus said thus: **“Today this scripture has been fulfilled”**.

Jesus went around the whole of Galilee preaching in synagogues, in the temple of Jerusalem and in other places, curing the sick, working miracles and forgiving sins. There was a crowd after Him always. He imparted consolation and love to the suffering and the poor. Jesus showed mercy and love to the sinners and tax collectors and He pardoned their sins. Thus mankind received the love and pity of God the Father through Jesus.

Jesus came to this world for our sake. He was born man in order to save us, sinners. Jesus leads every one to the Father. Let us love Jesus, incarnated for our sake.

Let us Pray

"I will praise you my Lord and my King
Only Son and Word of the heavenly Father
Who is immortal by nature
Christ O God, you deigned to come down
For the life and salvation of mankind
And took flesh of the Blessed Virgin Mary
The pure Mother of God
Without change you became man
And were crucified for us
And by your death you trampled on our death.
You are one of the most Holy Trinity
Worshipped and glorified equally
With the Father and the Holy Spirit.
Have mercy on us O Lord".
(Order of Malankara Qurbono)

Let us Sing

(Jananathinnai..)

"The Messiah, who has come to be born,
Praise to him, whose birth saved the Church.
We praise you and we exalt you;
Praise to you, O Son of Mary!"
(Order of the Service of Yaldo)

Let us Memorise

"The Word became flesh
and lived among us".
(John 1:14)

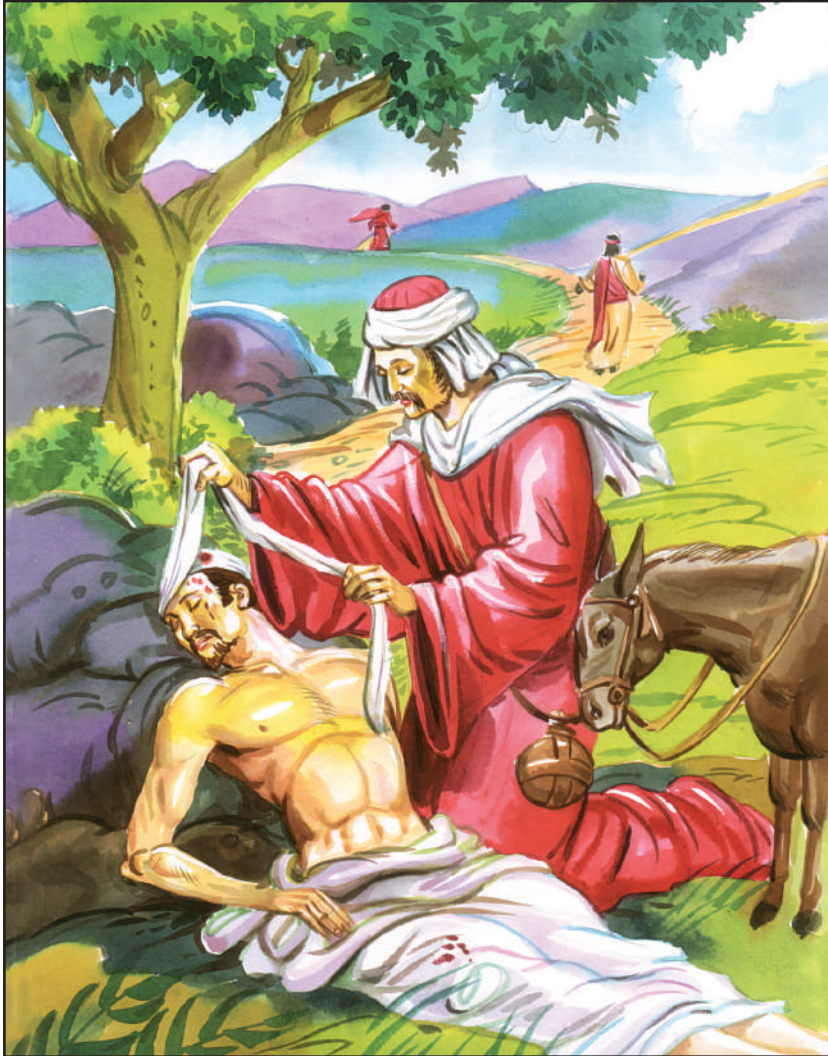
Let us Do

I shall help those who suffer.

Questions

1. What did Isaiah prophesy about the coming of the Son of God?
2. How did God the Father bear witness to His Son, Jesus on the occasion of the baptism of Jesus?
3. What did Jesus read from the book of Isaiah?

THE MOST IMPORTANT COMMANDMENT



One day when Jesus was teaching, a lawyer stood up and asked in order to test Jesus: “Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?” Then Jesus asked him: “What is written in the law? How do you read?” He answered, “**You shall**

love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbour as yourself” (Luke 10:27). Jesus said to him: “You have answered right; do this, and you will live”. But he, desiring to justify himself, asked Jesus: “Who is my neighbour?”

Jesus told a parable in answer to this question. A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho. He fell in the hands of robbers. They stripped off his robes. They beat him and plundered him. They departed, leaving him half dead. A priest came that way. When he saw him, he passed by on the other side. Likewise a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. But a Samaritan as he journeyed, came to where he was; and when he saw him, he had compassion, and went to him and bound up his wounds, pouring oil and wine. Then he put him on his own animal and brought him to an inn and took care of him. And the next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper, saying: “Take care of him; and whatever more you spend, I will repay you when I come back”. When He had finished saying the parable, Jesus asked the lawyer, “Which of the three, do you think, proved neighbour to the man who fell among the robbers?” The lawyer replied, **“The one who showed him mercy”**. Jesus said to him, **“Go and do likewise”** (Luke 10:25-37).

What is contained in the answer, Jesus gave to the lawyer, is the sum total of the Commandments God had given to the Israelites. The first and foremost commandment is to ‘love God’. The second commandment is the continuation of this, ‘Love your neighbour as yourself’. Therefore, to love is the most important commandment. Irrespective of enemy or friend love all, is what Jesus taught. On another occasion Jesus said, **“I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another”** (John 13:34). Jesus loved all during His life. Jesus loved even His enemies and prayed for them.

Let us imitate the loving Jesus, who pardoned those who crucified Him and prayed for them.

Jesus loved all and showed mercy to all. We, too, ought to love others and show mercy to them.

Let us Pray

“Lord you are blessed. Show us the way of your commandments and teach us”.
(Prayer of Lent)

Let us Sing

(Priyare ithu karunayudeyum..)
"Beloved, this is opportune
Time for pity and mercy,
The exact time that imparts peace
Together with true charity".
(Order of Malankara Qurbono)

Let us Do

I shall share in the difficulties of others.

Let us Memorise

“I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another”.
(John 13:34)

Questions

1. How should we love God?
2. What is the parable Jesus told in answer to the question of the lawyer?
3. What is the sum total of the Ten Commandments?
4. What is the new commandment Jesus gave?

JESUS, THE GOOD SHEPHERD



Jesus once related a parable. A man had a hundred sheep. One day when he was grazing the sheep one of them got lost. Then he left the remaining ninety-nine in the wilderness and went in search of the lost one. When he had found it, he laid it on his shoulders rejoicing and went back home. He called together his friends and

neighbours and said thus: **“Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep that was lost”** (Luke 15:6).

On another day, Jesus said to those who accompanied Him: “I am the true shepherd. The good shepherd lays down His life for the sheep”. He who is not the shepherd and a hireling, whose own the sheep are not, when he sees the wolf coming, flees leaving the sheep alone. He flees because he is a hireling” (John 10:7-18). But Jesus is the Good Shepherd. He lays down His life for the sheep.

Man, who is a creature of God, on several occasions, went astray from God due to sin. The man, who trod the path of evil, lived forgetting God. But the merciful God sent His only Begotten Son to this world in order to bring back mankind, which went astray from Him, because, the heavenly Father does not like even a little one of His creatures perish. Jesus who came to save the sinners said thus, ‘those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick’. ‘I came not to call the righteous, but sinners’ (Matthew 9:12-13).

God rejoices when everyone, who went astray from God on account of sin, comes back. There will be joy before God. Therefore, **“There will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over the ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance”** (Luke 15:7).

Jesus came to this world in order to find out the lost ones. Jesus came in search of everyone, who went astray from God, in the path of sin. Since Jesus is the Good Shepherd, He is solicitous about us, His sheep. God desires that none of us lose our way. Jesus offered His own life in order to save us.

We, too, commit sin and go away from God. Each time when we go astray from God, God comes in search of us. Let us go back to God, who

comes seeking us. Let us escape from the way of falsehood. Thus let us live in a manner pleasing to God.

Let us Pray

“O Good Shepherd, make me a lamb in your sheepfold”.
(Prayer of the Nineveh Fast)

Let us Sing

(Thettiyoradine thedi iranguka...)

"O good shepherd, search the sheep that has gone astray
Save it from the evil one who seeks to kill it.
Answer us Lord and do kindly show your mercy
And persuade your chosen people for repentance".
(S'himo, Monday)

Let us Do

I shall do good things and be careful
not to go astray from God.

Let us Memorise

“I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep”.
(John 10:11)

Questions

1. Explain the parable Jesus said, ‘the Good Shepherd’.
2. Why did God send His only begotten Son to this world?
3. Why did God offer His own life?

THE CONVERSION OF ZACHAEUS



Jesus went around in Palestine and its neighbouring places during His public life preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God. **“The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has**

come near; repent, and believe in the good news” (Mark 1:15). This was the chief message of Jesus. Jesus wrought many miracles. All these were for the glory of the name of God.

Once Jesus was passing through a city called Jericho near the bank of river Jordan. There was in the city a man by name Zachaeus, who was the chief tax collector and was rich. Zachaeus was the man who collected tax from the people for the Roman rulers. The people did not like Zachaeus because he unjustly collected tax from them. When Zachaeus knew that Jesus was passing through Jericho he had the desire to see Jesus. But because he was small in stature, he could not see Jesus standing in the crowd. So he ran on ahead and climbed up and sat on a sycamore tree. When Jesus came to the place, He looked up and said to him: **“Zachaeus, make haste and come down. I must stay at your house today”** (Luke 19:1-5).

So he made haste and came down and received Jesus in his house joyfully. When the people knew that Jesus was staying in the house of Zachaeus, they murmured. Then Zachaeus said to Jesus, **“Look, half of my possessions, Lord, I will give to the poor; and if I have defrauded anyone of anything, I will pay back four times as much”** (Luke 19:8). Seeing the conversion of Zachaeus, Jesus said, **“Today salvation has come to this house because he too is a son of Abraham. For the Son of Man came to seek out and to save the lost”** (Luke 19:9-10).

Zachaeus, who led a life of sin, was in the path of conversion from the moment he decided to meet Jesus. When he experienced the presence of Jesus directly, he was ready to correct his mistakes. Thus he became just and holy. The meaning of the name ‘Zachaeus’ is ‘the just’ or ‘the holy’.

We too, commit mistakes in our life. Let us turn to Jesus, who loves us, sinners. Let us repent of our mistakes and convert ourselves like Zachaeus.

Let us do reparation for all sins we have committed. Thus let us try to fulfil the will of Jesus.

Let us Pray

“Lord, we pray to receive absolution of sin from you. We entreat you with a sigh. Expiate our debts”.
(Morning Prayer of Lent, Friday)

Let us Sing

(Chunkakkaran pol...)

"Like the tax collector
And the thief and adulteress,
I call Almighty;
Wipe out sin and answer me,
Have mercy on me, a sinner".
(S'himo, Thursday Morning)

Let us Do

I shall do penance for my wrongs.

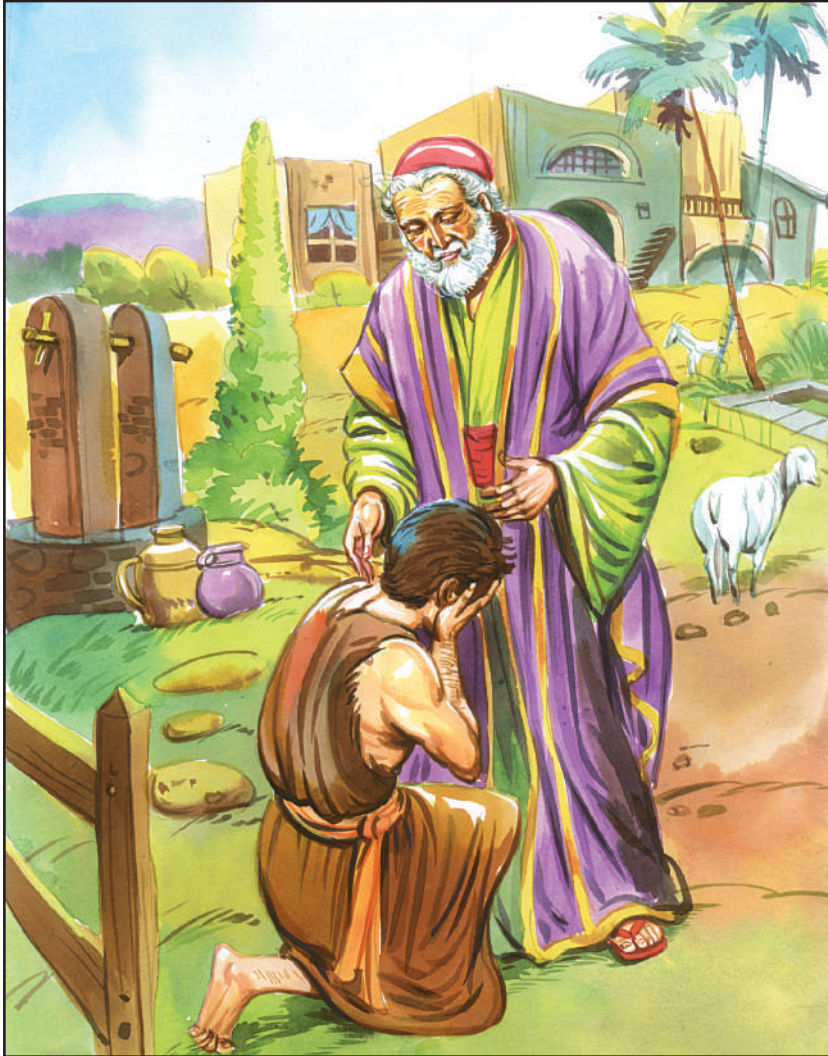
Let us Memorise

“Today salvation has come to this house”.
(Luke 19:9)

Questions

1. What was the chief message of Jesus?
2. What kind of a man was Zachaeus?
3. What was the change in Zachaeus after seeing Jesus?
4. What have we to do when we commit wrongs?

THE PARABLE OF THE PRODIGAL SON



God loves all. He cares for all without any discrimination. He loves the sinners too. God receives with both hands extended, those who repent of their wrongs and return to God. In order to show this, Jesus once told a parable.

A rich man had two sons. The younger of them said to his father; “Father, give me the share of the property that falls to me”. He divided his wealth and gave the younger son his share. The younger one gathered all he had and went to a far off country. There he squandered his property and lost every thing. When he had spent every thing, a great famine arose in that country. He began to be in want. He had nothing even to satisfy his hunger. He approached a man for a job. He sent him into the fields to feed swine. He would gladly have fed on the pods that the swine ate. But no one gave it to him. Then he came to his senses. He thought about his father and his house. He said: **“I will get up and go to my father, and I will say to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son; treat me like one of your hired hands’”** (Luke 15:18-19).

He arose and came to his father. His father saw the son, who was returning to the house while he was yet at a distance. He felt compassion and ran and embraced him and kissed him. He said to his father thus: “Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son”. But the father pardoned him and gave him everything he needed. The father rejoiced much at his coming back. And the father ordered his servants to put on him the best robes, a ring on his finger and shoes on his feet. The father decided to share his joy with others. Having killed a fatted calf, he conducted a banquet. The father said, **“This son of mine was dead; and is alive again, he was lost, and is found”** (Luke 15:11-32).

The heavenly Father, too, is like this. He is waiting for the return of those who went astray from Him. We often misuse the freedom we have and we commit wrong against the will of God. But when we repent and return to God, God will receive us.

Whenever we go astray from God, we ought to repent and seek His mercy. God will forgive us and make us again children of God.

Let us Pray

“O Lord, full of mercy, you make all those sinners, who knock at the door of mercy, worthy of forgiveness of sin”.
(Prayer of Lent)

Let us Sing

(Swargam mun thava sannidhiyum..)
"O my Lord, I have sinned before you and heaven
Behold! I am unworthy,
Accept me as a hired servant; for I am no more
Worthy to be called your son".
(S'himo, Monday)

Let us Do

I shall repent and return to God,
if I fall into sin.

Let us Memorise

“This son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found”.
(Luke 15:24)

Questions

1. What is the approach of God towards repentant sinners?
2. What is the parable Jesus said to show the merciful love of God the Father towards sinners?
3. What happened when the prodigal son left the father?
4. How did the father receive the prodigal son when he returned home?

JESUS ABSOLVES SIN



Once Simon, the Pharisee, invited Jesus to dine with him. When Jesus took His place at table in his house, a woman of the city, who was a sinner, came there. She came with an alabaster flask of ointment. She stood near His feet weeping.

She washed His feet and wiped them with the hair of her head. After that she anointed them with the ointment and kissed them. Simon and the others who were eating with Jesus did not like this. They showed resentment since Jesus allowed a sinner woman to touch Him. Jesus understood their thought and said to Simon: **“I have something to say to you; you did not give me water to wash my feet. But she has washed my feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair. You gave me no kiss. But from the time I came in, she has not ceased to kiss my feet. You did not anoint my head with oil. But she has anointed my head with ointment. Therefore, I tell you. Her many sins are forgiven. For, she loved much”**. Jesus said to the sinner woman, “Your sins are forgiven”. He absolved her sins and showed her mercy (Luke 7:36-50).

On another occasion, Jesus was preaching the Word in a house in Capernaum. Many gathered there, so that there was no room for them, not even about the door. Then four men came there, carrying a paralytic, so that he might be cured. But they could not get near Him because of the crowd. Hence they removed the roof above Jesus and they let down the pallet on which the paralytic lay. Jesus saw the faith of those who brought him and said to the paralytic: **“My son, your sins are forgiven”**. Jesus absolved his sins because the Son of Man has authority to absolve sins on earth. After that Jesus said to him: **“I say to you, rise, take up your pallet and go home”**.

Immediately he rose, took up the pallet and went out before them. All of them glorified God (Mark 2:1-12).

Jesus absolved the sins of many others. On several occasions when He cured the sick, He also absolved their sins.

We should, with repentance, confess our sins and ask for absolution from Jesus. Since Jesus is God, He will absolve our sins.

Let us Pray

"O Lord God of everything, make us worthy to live today without sin and impurity. Preserve us in justice".
(Prayer of Lent)

Let us Sing

(Ente Kadangal..)

"Blot out all my debts, O Lord,
By your hyssop of mercy
And cleanse me from all my sins
Making holy through your grace".
(Order of Malankara Qurbono)

Let us Do

I shall pray to Jesus for the
absolution of sins.

Let us Memorise

"If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained".
(John 20:23)

Questions

1. How did the woman who came to Simon's house honour Jesus?
2. What did Jesus say to Simon?
3. What was the reason why Jesus absolved the sins of the sinner woman?
4. How did Jesus cure the paralytic?

JESUS, THE BREAD OF LIFE



Once Jesus was teaching the multitude on a hill on the opposite side of the Sea of Galilee. There was no means of appeasing the hunger of the people, who were weak. But the Apostles found out a boy there, who had five barley loaves and two fish. Jesus asked

them to make the people sit down. The Apostles did so. Jesus then took the loaves, and when He had given thanks; He distributed them to those who were seated. So also, He gave the fish, as much as they wanted. They all ate and were satisfied. Besides women and children, there were five thousand men, who ate (John 6:1-15). On another occasion, Jesus multiplied seven loaves and a few fish for a large crowd (Luke 8:1-9).

Just as the body needs bread, souls also need food. Jesus is our spiritual food. He is our living bread. Jesus said thus: 'I am the bread that has come down from heaven. He who comes to Me will never be hungry. He who believes in Me will never thirst' (John 6:25-40). Jesus said again about the bread of life: **“I am the bread of life. Your ancestors ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died. This is the bread that comes down from heaven, so that one may eat of it and not die. I am the living bread that came down from heaven. Whoever eats of this bread will live forever; and the bread that I will give for the life of the world is My flesh”** (John 6:48-51).

Jesus came to this world in order to give eternal life to man. God is born man in order to give divine life to man, who lost it through sin. Jesus said, **“Those who eat My flesh and drink My blood have eternal life”** (John 6:54).

In order that all shall attain eternal life, Jesus said thus: **“Do not work for the food that perishes, but for the food that endures for eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you”** (John 6:27).

We share in the Body and Blood of Jesus through the Holy Eucharist. Hence on the last day the Lord shall raise us. He who shares in the Body and Blood of Jesus abides in Jesus and Jesus in him. The Holy Eucharist is given for the remission of sins and for life everlasting. A man associates with Jesus through the reception of the Holy Eucharist. Let us become

one with Jesus through receiving the Holy Eucharist. Thus we shall be worthy of eternal life.

Let us Pray

“Praise to him the heavenly bread, who broke his body and made us eat, who mixed his blood and made us drink and who made us inheritors of his heavenly kingdom”.
(Benediction with the Holy Eucharist)

Let us Sing

(Jeevaharam ..)

"Indeed! I am the bread of life, the Lord has so declared:
I have come down from above that I shall save the world.
The Father has sent – His Word that I am,
I was born of – the Holy Spirit
In the womb of Mary, who is a fertile land.
The priests do take me in their hands just as the angels;
Halleluiah, while they celebrate me".
(Benediction with the Holy Eucharist)

Let us Do

I shall glorify Jesus, present in the Holy Eucharist.

Let us Memorise

“I am the living bread that came down from heaven. Whoever eats of this bread will live forever”.
(John 6:51)

Capital Sins and their Opposite Virtues

Pride	x	Humility
Avarice	x	Generosity
Lust	x	Temperance
Anger	x	Patience
Greed	x	Moderation
Envy	x	Charity
Laziness	x	Enthusiasm

Questions

1. Explain the incident of the multiplication of loaves.
2. What did Jesus say about acquiring eternal life?
3. What did Jesus say about the bread of life?
4. How do we get the sacred body and blood of Jesus?

THE HOLY EUCHARIST



Jesus came to Jerusalem to observe the Passover. The Apostles prepared the Passover in accordance with the instruction of Jesus. They prepared the Passover in a room of a big mansion. When it was evening, Jesus sat at table

along with His twelve Apostles. It was the last supper Jesus had with His disciples.

During the supper, Jesus showed a great example of love to the disciples. Jesus rose, laid aside His garments, and girded Himself with a towel on His waist. Then He poured water into a basin, and began to wash the feet of the disciples and wipe them with the towel with which He was girded. After that, He put on His outer garment, resumed His seat and said to them: **“If I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another’s feet. For I have set you an example, that you also should do as I have done to you”** (John 13:1-15).

After that Jesus gave a new commandment to His disciples: **“Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. By this everyone will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another”** (John 13:34-35).

As they were eating, Jesus took bread, and broke it and gave it to His disciples and said: **“Take, eat; this is My body”** (Matthew 26:26).

Then He took the cup, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them saying, **“Drink from it, all of you; for this is My blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins”** (Matthew 26:27-28). Thus Jesus instituted the Holy Eucharist.

After instituting the Holy Eucharist, Jesus commanded His disciples: **“Do this in memory of Me”**.

Jesus instituted the sacrament of Holy Eucharist so that we may share in His sacred body and blood.

Jesus changed the bread and the wine into His body and blood and gave them in anticipation of His sacrifice on the cross. When the Church

celebrates the Eucharistic Sacrifice today, we commemorate and celebrate the whole salvific events; especially Holy Qurbono is the commemoration of the last supper of Jesus and His sacrifice on the cross.

Jesus gave His body and blood for the salvation of mankind. When one participates in the Eucharistic service, one gets eternal life. The presence of Jesus continues till the end of the world through the Holy Eucharist.

Let us participate in the Holy Qurbono with devotion and fear. Let us receive the body and blood of Jesus with due preparation.

Let us Pray

“Have mercy on us, O Lord, who gave us your body and blood in order to commemorate your death”.
(Prayer of Lent)

Let us Sing

(Malikayil vechesumisiha...)
“This is the food which Jesus, the Messiah
Blessed and gave in the cenacle.
Lord of heaven and lofty bridegroom!
We do praise you and exalt you”.
(Maundy Thursday, Qurbono)

Let us Do

I shall devoutly participate
in the Holy Qurbono.

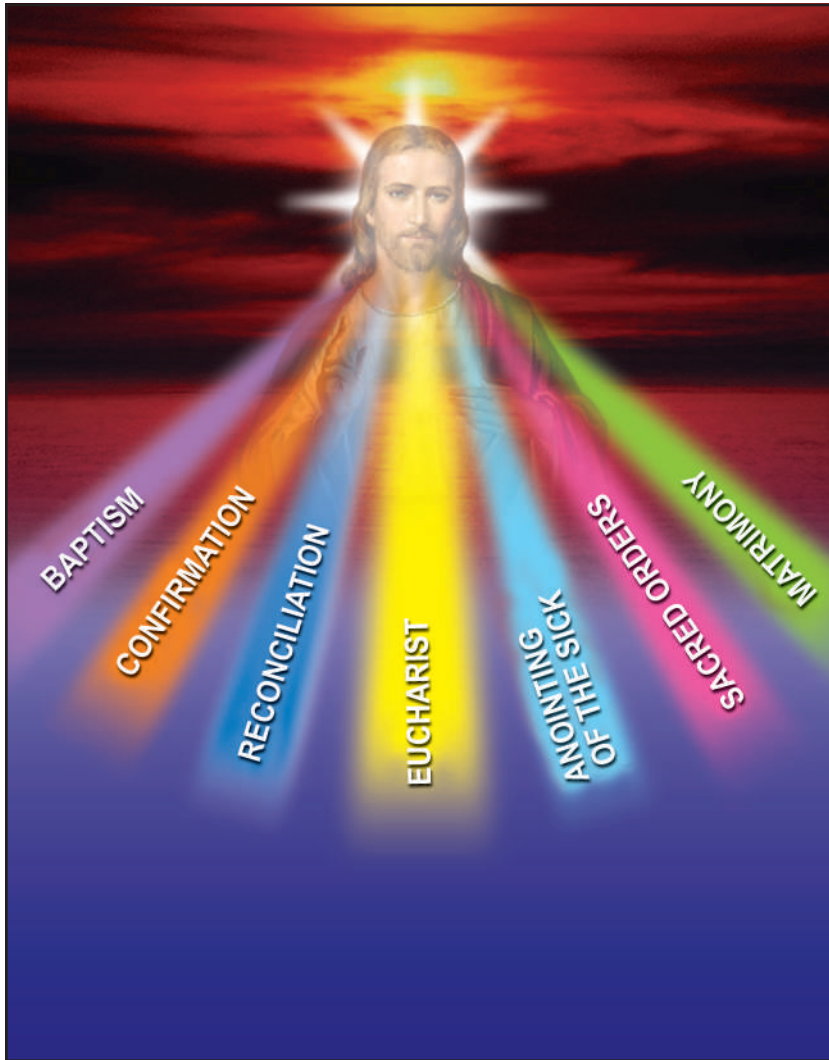
Let us Memorise

“As often as you eat this bread and drink
the cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death
until he comes”.
(I Corinthians 11:26)

Questions

1. How did Jesus show to His disciples the great model of love?
2. How did Jesus institute the Holy Qurbono?
3. What did Jesus command His disciples after instituting the Holy Qurbono?

THE SACRAMENTS



The word ‘Sacrament’ originates from the Syriac word ‘Kadesh’. The Syriac root means, ‘to make holy’ or ‘to sanctify’.

Our first parents sinned and lost divine life. But God felt pity on them. God desired to give back the lost divine life. For that God sent His Son to the world. Jesus, the Son of God, the Messiah,

fulfilled the works of salvation through His earthly life. After the death and resurrection of Jesus, His works of salvation or His sanctifying works are being continued in the Church through the Holy Spirit.

On special occasions of human life, God enters into man and sanctifies him giving him grace through the Sacraments. God pours forth into man the invisible grace through visible signs, the Sacraments. Since man receives grace, which surpasses human understanding, it is known as mystery.

It is through the Sacraments that we today, experience the salvation given through Jesus Christ and encounter Jesus Christ. When sacrament is administered in the Church, the Holy Trinity specially intervenes in the life of man and sanctifies him and gives him divine grace. The Sacraments are the sanctifying works of Jesus Christ in the Church continued through the Holy Spirit. The seven Sacraments are thus, the seven operations with which God interacts with man and sanctifies him. They are: Baptism, Confirmation, Eucharist, Reconciliation, Anointing of the Sick, Sacred Orders and Matrimony.

- 1. Baptism:** Baptism is a sacrament, which unites a person through the Holy Spirit to God, the Father, to Jesus Christ and to the Church, which is His body. Thus it fully sanctifies men and makes them the children of God.
- 2. Confirmation (Mooron):** A person is sealed in the name of the Holy Trinity having given him the Holy Spirit in a special manner. Thus it is the sacrament, which confirms a person in faith, as a perfect Christian and as a soldier of Christ.
- 3. Eucharist:** The Holy Eucharist is the Sacrament through which we celebrate the entire history of salvation of Jesus Christ and we commemorate them and by participating in them, we receive the grace of God.
- 4. Reconciliation:** This is a sacrament, which gives absolution to a person who has committed sins against the will of God and having

repented, and confessed them to a priest, the representative of Christ.

5. **Anointing of the Sick:** Anointing of the sick is a special sacrament, which is given when one is ill in order to get relief from it.
6. **Sacred Orders:** When a person offers himself for the service of the priesthood, God sanctifies him through this sacrament.
7. **Matrimony:** Matrimony is a sacrament, by which a grown up man and woman enter into family life and God unites them and gives special graces to them.

We need sanctification in our life. Through the reception of Sacraments, we receive specially the divine life. Therefore, let us make use of the occasions we get to receive the Sacraments.

Let us Pray

“Lord, according to the abundance of your blessings, you give me whatever that is good for the salvation of my life”.
(Prayer of the III Hour)

Let us Sing

(Thirusabha Makkalkkai...)
"The holy Church in immense grief
For her children
Is weeping thus:
O! Lord, those who embraced you
Through Baptism
Shall not enter the fire of hell
Halleluiah – let them rejoice".
(Qymtho IX Hour)

Let us Do

I shall devoutly participate
in the sacraments.

Let us Memorise

“Purge me with hyssop,
and I shall be clean; wash me,
and I shall be whiter than snow”.
(Psalms 51:7)

Questions

1. What is a sacrament?
2. Which are the sacraments? What does each sacrament signify?
3. 'We should whole-heartedly make use of the occasions we get to receive the sacraments'. Why?

THE SACRAMENTS OF INITIATION



Out of the seven sacraments, Holy Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist, the first three, are known as the Sacraments of Initiation. It is through these Sacraments that we receive the Holy Spirit and become the children of God. A person enters into the Christian life; becomes member of the Church and have a share in the mysteries of salvation of Jesus through

these Sacraments. Hence they are called the Sacraments of Initiation.

It is the custom of the Malankara Catholic Church to confer Confirmation and Holy Eucharist along with Baptism. Thus a candidate receives these first three sacraments together.

BAPTISM

Our parents desired to impart to us in our infancy, the faith, the love of God, which they experienced and the divine grace. So they got us baptized when we were infants. Thus they made us the children of God. It is the first sacrament, which associates us with Jesus Christ, with His mysteries of salvation and with His body, the Church. The Syriac word, ‘Mamodiso’ means, ‘Baptism’. The practice that is in vogue today is to baptize a person with the water of baptism, in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. For, Jesus said: **“Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit”** (Matthew 28:19).

God created our first parents and gave them the divine life. They lost the divine life when they committed sin. Therefore all their children are born in a state without divine life. This state, devoid of divine life, is said to be the state of ‘original sin’. Through the Sacrament of Baptism, the Holy Spirit sanctifies us and original sin is absolved; we get the grace of God and the divine life. Thus, through Baptism we become the children of God. Baptism is the first sacrament by which through receiving the Holy Spirit, and being sanctified by the Holy Spirit, we are united with God. We are allowed to receive this sacrament only once in life.

CONFIRMATION (MOORON)

The sacrament of Mooron or Confirmation gives the Holy Spirit in a special manner to each one, who by baptism has become the son of God. Through the special indwelling of the Holy Spirit, this sacrament confirms one in faith, makes one a true Christian and a soldier of Christ. The sacrament of Confirmation stabilises the presence of the Holy Spirit in the one, who has received the Spirit through baptism. The Sacrament of Mooron brings a person closer to the Holy Trinity and to the Church, the

body of Christ. This Sacrament imprints an indelible seal in a person like in Baptism. This shows that one belongs to Christ. Hence one could receive this sacrament only once. The chief service of this sacrament is the sealing with Mooron, in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, on the forehead of the one who receives Baptism (Acts of the Apostles 8:15- 17).

THE EUCHARIST

The faithful lives in Jesus and Jesus in him through receiving the body and blood of Jesus Christ. If one is to share in the life of Christ, one ought to share in the body and blood of Jesus. For Jesus said: **“Those who eat My flesh and drink My blood abide in Me, and I in them”** (John 6:56). It is through this Sacrament that one is fully and intimately united with the life of Christ. The reception of the Eucharist is essential in order to perfect the grace, one received in Baptism and in the Anointing with Mooron.

That is why in the Malankara Church these three are administered together. When we were children we received these Sacraments and became partakers of divine grace.

Let us Pray

“Make us worthy to stand firm before you with pure spirit and with unsullied heart, praising you for all the graces you showered on us”.
(Prayer of the III Hour)

Let us Do

I shall specially remember the day of my Baptism and on that day with due preparation, I shall participate in the Holy Eucharist.

Question

1. Which are the Sacraments of Initiation? Explain them.

Let us Sing

(Mamodisa moolam...)

"Through Baptism

With the seal of Christ

The souls are being sealed

Who, eat his holy body

And who, drink his sacred blood

From the dust, they shall be saved

By means of their resurrection

And put on the robe of glory".

(Morning Prayers of the Season of Sleebo)

Let us Memorise

“As he who called you is holy; be holy yourselves in all your conduct”.

(I Peter 1:15)

SIN



God created the universe in the fullness of His love. He created man in His own image and likeness as the crown of the universe. God made our first parents dwell in the Garden of Eden and He gave it to them as their inheritance. But yielding to temptation, Adam and Eve defied the Command of God. Thus, they rejected

the love of God. Since they disobeyed the Command of God, they lost the divine life. Their descendants too are born in a state devoid of the life of God. This state is known as 'original sin'.

The descendants of the first parents disobeyed the commandments of God and lived in sin. The chosen people of God, the Israel, too, committed mistakes in loving God and neighbour. We cause pain to God and our neighbour when we act against the love of God and neighbour. All actions against the Commandment of God are actions against love. So the rejection of love is sin.

Whenever we act against love, we sin. The sum total of the Ten Commandments is 'love'. The first three of the Ten Commandments teach us how the love of man towards God should be. The Commandments from four to ten deal with how men should love each other. We commit sin when we do not love God and our neighbour and when we act against him. It is sin that we don't take care of our life, which is a gift of God, and to act against it. It is also our duty to preserve the universe. It is also sin to put impediment to the onward journey of the universe. Whatever we think or speak or act against the Commandment of God is sin.

The sin, which one commits after reaching the age of reason, i.e., having the knowledge to discern right and wrong, is called actual sin. Whatever wrong one does in thought, word or deed is actual sin. The actual sin is divided into two; venial sin and mortal sin.

When the matter of sin is not grave, it is venial sin. Even in grave matter, if there is lack of full knowledge or free decision, the sin is not grave. It is called a venial sin.

Infringement of a Commandment of God in any serious matter with full knowledge and freedom of will is called a mortal sin.

As a result of sin, divine grace, love of God, heavenly bliss and the merits a person had obtained through good deeds are lost to him. Those who committed sin are estranged from God and become slaves to Satan. It is to save these people that Jesus came to this world.

Jesus absolved the sins of many during His public life. He instituted the Sacrament of Reconciliation for the remission of our sins. It is through the Sacrament of Reconciliation that the sins we committed after receiving Baptism are absolved. Let us confess our sins and obtain absolution for our sins through the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

Let us Pray

“O Lord, who shows mercy to the sinners, have mercy on us on the day of your judgment. Forgive our sins in the abundance of your grace”.
(Morning Prayer)

Let us Sing

(Karuna kadale...)

"On sea of mercy, I look
O Son of God, my sin has multiplied and
my errors increased.
Wash me well with your hyssop;
Cleanse me white with my tears, I entreat for
love of the Father.
Let not the enemy deride me.
May the angels be pleased in men, who
repent and let them say thus:
"To the repentant ones, the door
Is left open day and night
Halleluiah, you are praiseworthy".
(Order of the Holy Qurbono)

Let us Do

I shall try not to fall into sin.

Let us Memorise

“Have mercy on me, O God, according to the steadfast love; according to your abundant mercy blot out my transgressions”.
(Psalm 51:1)

Questions

1. What is sin?
2. How can we explain sin in connection with the commandments of God?
3. What are the losses incurred by the soul of a person on account of sin?
4. What is actual sin? How is it divided? Explain.

THE SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION



Sacraments are actions that make available divine grace to men in a special way. They are the occasions of the interaction of God with man. The Sacrament of Reconciliation is a means for the one, who has gone astray from God by sin, to return to God.

Jesus absolved the sins of many during His public life. Jesus said to them, “Your sins are forgiven; go in peace”. Jesus teaches that the Son of Man has the authority to absolve sin. The occasion of the curing of the paralytic is a perfect example for this. The one, who lost divine life through sin and thus dead, gets back the divine grace through the word of Jesus. The sin, which paralyses the soul, is absolved through the word of Jesus. The authority of Jesus to absolve sin is today continued in the Church through the priests.

Jesus gave the authority to absolve sin to His Apostles, **“If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained”** (John 20:23). Their successors the Bishops also have this authority, which the Apostles received. The priests get this authority to absolve sin through the imposition of the hands of the Bishops. The priest hears confession as the representative of Christ and the Church. Therefore one confesses one’s sins to Christ and to the Church. A person has to examine his conscience; repent of his sins he has committed and has to confess them.

One has to confess clearly the sins one has committed. Each one has to approach the Sacrament of Reconciliation, thinking that he is in the presence of God. The priest will not divulge to anyone the sins we confess. The Sacrament of Reconciliation is a sacred sacrament. Each one receives divine grace through the Sacrament of Reconciliation. It helps us to grow in divine life we confess often and receive Holy Eucharist repeatedly. If one happens to fall in mortal sin, one should repent upon it and confess it at the earliest. One should listen to the advice of the priest carefully and fulfil the penance given by him.

One reconciles with oneself and the community through the Sacrament of Reconciliation. This sacrament enables us to resume the unity with God and neighbour, which we lost through sin. For, Jesus in His Sermon

on the Mount says: **“When you are offering your gift at the altar, if you remember that your brother or sister has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your brother or sister, and then come and offer your gift”** (Matthew 5:23-24). One should not offer sacrifice without reconciliation. The Holy Eucharist is the Lord’s own sacrifice. Hence one should be reconciled with all when one comes for the Holy Eucharist.

We too commit sin and separate ourselves from God and neighbour. Let us confess our sins in the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Thus, being absolved from sin, let us reconcile with God and our brethren.

Let us Pray

“O Lord, Jesus Christ, I cry out before you. I entreat you. O merciful one, rich in blessings; do not punish me according to my wickedness”.

(Prayer of Lent, Thursday)

Let us Sing

(Karunakkadale...)

"Sinners shall come and rejoice
By the good news they gain life'
The word of the Saviour, is immensely sweet.
I give to the ba...rren land,
Spiritual drink and life-giving rain,
Which proves that - I am the true farmer.
Those who thirst shall sip water,
Having entered my presence
Halleluiah, for sin's remi...ttance".
(Order of the Holy Qurbono)

Let us Do

I shall approach the Sacrament of Reconciliation with proper preparation.

Let us Memorise

“To those who repent He grants a return,
and He encourages those
who are losing hope”.
(Sirach17:24)

Questions

1. What did Jesus say about the remission of sin?
2. Why do we say that the priests have authority to absolve sins?
3. With whom all does one reconcile through the Sacrament of Reconciliation?
4. Why do we say that without reconciliation we should not offer sacrifice?
5. What are the graces we receive through the Sacrament of Reconciliation?

MY RECEPTION OF THE SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION



The Sacrament of Reconciliation is a sacrament by which one, who has committed sin and separated oneself from God and one's brother, gets reconciled with God and his brother. One should receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation with due preparation and with conviction that one stands in the presence of God. We confess all the sins

committed against God and neighbour to the priest and receive absolution from God in the Sacrament of Reconciliation. We ought to make confession only with a contrite heart. One gets divine grace in a special way from this Sacrament. In order to make a good Confession one should have previous preparation. **To receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation well, five basic requirements are necessary: Examination of conscience, Repentance, Resolution, Confession and Penance.**

1. Examination of Conscience

In order to truly find out the sins, the help of the Holy Spirit is required. Examination of conscience is to recall to mind all sins of thought, word and deed against the Commandments of God, the Precepts of the Church, the theological virtues and above all against the love of God, committed after the previous confession. If only one makes the examination of conscience well, one can receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation properly.

Before making the examination of conscience, recite the prayer to the Holy Spirit given below.

PETITION

Come, God the Holy Spirit and enlighten my mind. Give me the grace to find out all my sins, to understand their malice and degree, to truly repent on them and to confess and abandon them. O Mary, refuge of sinners, mother of sorrows, pray for me that I may have perfect contrition for my sins. My beloved guardian angel, pray for me that I shall make this confession conscientiously, as if it is the last one in my life and that henceforth I shall not sin against the good God. Amen.

While making the examination of conscience, pay attention to the following things.

Have I done anything against the loving relationship with God?

Have anything happened against faith in God and hope in Him?

Have I failed to worship God?

Have I made the daily prayers without attention or omitted them?

Have I shown disrespect to the Holy Eucharist?

Have I dishonoured the church or divine matters or divine things or holy persons?

How was my participation in worship, active or not?

Have I done idolatry or intended to do the same?

Have I practised any superstition?

Have I received the Holy Sacraments in the state of sin?

Have I participated in the holy sacraments or holy services without proper disposition?

Have I hidden any sin, which I ought to have said in confession?

Have I showed lack of enthusiasm in matter of salvation due to my interest in worldly affairs or love of pleasure or due to laziness?

Have I forsaken catechism, sermons and meditations without paying heed to know God properly?

Have I believed or spoken or acted anything contrary to the teachings of the holy Catholic Church?

Have I taken oath unnecessarily or against truth or borne false witness? Have I insulted the name of God?

Have I thought of or said blasphemy?

Have I failed to attend Holy Mass on Sundays and other days of obligation or engaged myself in affairs contrary to the holiness of those days or have I encouraged others to do the same?

Have I dealt with my parents or priests or religious or teachers without respect?

Have I failed to love them, honour them or show gratitude to them?

Have I made them angry or wished evil against them?

Have I failed in helping them in their works and in their needs?

Have I acted without love to my brothers and sisters, friends and classmates?

Have I inflicted bodily injury on others or caused financial loss or infamy to them?

Have I been not in good terms with anyone? Have I fostered animosity towards anyone?

Have I caused scandal to anyone through word or action?

Have I anger or complaint or grumbling against anyone or have I cursed any?

Have I tried to take away the life of anyone or desired to do so?

Have I wished the destruction of others or their distress?

Have I taken pleasure in the sufferings of others?

Have I failed to protect life, the gift of God?

Have I taught others evil or made others accomplices in sin?

Have I had thoughts or words or actions against chastity?

Have I stolen anything or caused loss to anyone?

Having undertaken any job, have I failed to fulfil it with justice and fidelity or have I caused loss to the employers?

Have I acted without mercy to the poor and the needy?

Have I avoided occasions to do good to others?

Have I done anything against truth?

Have I committed mistakes such as saying lies, using abusive words, finding fault with others, uttering calumny or speaking ill of others, causing damage to their good name?

Have I kept decorum in my speech?

Have I published any secret that might have caused damage to others?

Have I been proud over my own abilities or talents?

Have I used properly my God-given abilities or not?

Have I neglected my study due to laziness? Have I done mal-practice in exams or neglected the instructions regarding exams?

Examine whether there is any other sin besides these.

Repent over the sins after the examination of conscience.

2. Repentance

Repentance is our heart-felt sorrow over the sins committed. It should be genuine. We should be sorry for offending the loving God through sin. Repentance is essential for a good confession. The basis of our repentance is the love of God for us.

3. Resolution

If only there is genuine repentance, one can take a firm resolution not to sin any more. This resolution, not to sin any longer, is an important factor for a good confession.

4. Confession

After making the examination of conscience, one has to confess one's sins to the priest. One confesses one's sins to the priest only after saying the 'Prayer of Repentance' and the prayer called 'Maudyonuso'. All sins are to be clearly confessed, remembering that one is standing in the presence of God. One should not hide any sin purposely for any reason. One should request absolution for sins from the priest after relating the sins.

Prayer of Repentance

O eternal and almighty God, you are the Lord; I am your slave. Without any fear of you, this slave sinned against you, the embodiment of all goodness; and cherished wicked thoughts against you. Lord, I fixed you on the cross by my sins. I am the cause

of your sacred wounds and your shedding of blood. I destroyed my soul by my sins. I became the slave of Satan. I made myself worthy of eternal hell. But I regret for having offended you, the good Father. It is more than the sorrow of my losing heaven or my fear of going to hell. Father, I have sinned before heaven and against you. Forgive me. Do not cast me out from your presence. Do not take away your Holy Spirit from me. I resolve not to sin against you. Eternal Father, have pity on me on account of the merits of your holy Son.

Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world, my Jesus, considering the merits of your sacred wounds, forgive my sins. Bless me. Wash my soul with the precious blood that flows from your sacred wounds.

O Mother of sorrows! let me find my Lord again with your help. Angels of heaven and Saints, you also pray for me. Amen.

Maudyonuso

(Prayer before Confession)

Before the one true God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, before Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God, before all angels and saints and before you, priest of God and before your priesthood, which has been entrusted to you by God in order to absolve and bind sins, I confess: I am a sinner. I am a sinner. I am a great sinner.

(Here, confess your sins to the priest)

I am truly sorry for my sins. I willingly detest them and abandon them. I rely on the activities of salvation of the Lord, Jesus Christ and in His mercy. Father, absolve me from my sins and bless me.

(After having finished the confession)

I request absolution for all the sins I confessed and those I have forgotten and for my past sins, especially (say the sin for which you are particularly sorry).

5. Penance

After one has finished confessing sins, the priest gives necessary advice and instructions. Then the priest suggests retribution for the sins committed. This is called penance. You have to fulfil this penance imposed by the priest at the earliest with humility and with a sense of sorrow. One should express gratitude to God for having forgiven the sins. One has to entreat grace to grow in divine life and should be grateful to God, who has absolved sins through the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

(After confession, say the Act of Contrition, the Thanksgiving Prayer and fulfil the penance imposed).

Act of Contrition

O God Almighty, who is lovable above all things, I am sorry for having sinned against you. I love you. I am sorry for defiling my soul by my sins, for losing the heavenly bliss, for making me deserving of hell. By the help of your sanctifying grace, I resolve not to sin hereafter and I detest all occasions of sin. I am prepared to die before I commit any other sin. Bless me God. Amen.

Prayer of Thanksgiving after Confession

Most merciful God, I am unable to express thanks in proportion to the manifold blessings you have showered on me. Up to now, I was a slave of Satan because of my sins. But now I am your servant. By the intensity of my sin I deserved everlasting hell. But now I am made worthy for the heavenly bliss. Due to my sins, I was in the image of Satan. But now, by the fruit of the sacred blood of Jesus Christ, I am like the angels. I was bound by the chain of sin because of the enormity of my sins. But now, because of your special grace, I have become one of your loving sons / daughters.

O Good Father, I praise and adore you gratefully. I offer you my life in order to praise and glorify you. O Mother of God and all the saints and angels, pray for me. Amen.

The Sacrament of Reconciliation is very holy. It is the means of absolution of sins. Therefore let us approach this Sacrament with due preparation.

Questions

1. What are the basic requirements for a good Confession?
2. What shall we do to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation in the proper manner?
3. What is repentance?

MY RECEPTION OF HOLY COMMUNION



The commemoration and celebration of the whole history of Salvation through Jesus Christ takes place in the Holy Qurbano. The Holy Qurbano re-enacts vividly before us in symbols, the whole history of salvation through Jesus. Holy Qurbano is the divine service, which makes present before the faithful, Jesus as King, Prophet, Priest and Son of God. When we commemorate

each event in the life of Jesus, we also participate in it. We see the four essential parts of divine worship fulfilled in the Malankara Qurbono: i.e., Praise, Repentance, Intercession and Self-offering.

Holy Eucharist is at the same time a Sacrament and a Sacrifice. The reception of the Holy Eucharist signifies the participation in the banquet of the bridal chamber of the kingdom of heaven. The sacred species are distributed to the faithful in the Malankara Church, with these words: “The propitiatory live coal of the body and blood of Jesus Christ, our God, are given to the faithful for the remission of sins and life everlasting”. This signifies the Seraph having in his hands a burning coal, which he had taken with tongs from the altar and given to prophet Isaiah in order that his filth may be removed and sin absolved. The hymn, “Gazing at Him fiery angels do stand trembling”, is sung during the distribution of Holy Communion. It is with fear and trembling that even the angels stand in front of God. This signifies the glory of God and His holiness. But Jesus, the Son of God, comes to man under the species of bread and wine in the Holy Qurbono. This signifies the immense love of God towards mankind.

When one receives the Sacraments of Initiation, one receives Holy Communion and enters into fellowship with Jesus. But after having reached the age of reason, when one repents, confesses one’s sins and receives Holy Communion for the first time, it is called the ‘First Communion’. On this most memorable moment of life, one ought to receive Jesus only with due preparation and devotion. Jesus comes into us and dwells in us through receiving Him in the Holy Eucharist. The white dress, which we wear on the occasion of receiving Jesus for the first time signifies the purity of the soul.

We should receive Jesus only when we are in the state of grace. Whenever we go astray from the love of God we should repent, confess our sins and get reconciled with Jesus. Only after that we should receive Holy Communion. We are united with Jesus through receiving His body and blood.

PSALM 51

Have mercy on me, O God, in your loving kindness. In the abundance of your mercy, blot out my sins.

Wash me thoroughly from my guilt. And cleanse me from my sin.

For I acknowledge my fault. And my sins are always before me.

Against you, you alone, have I sinned. And done evil in your sight;

That you may be justified in your words; And vindicated in your judgment.

For I was born in guilt. And in sin did my mother conceive me.

But you take pleasure in truth. And you have made known to me the secrets of your wisdom.

Sprinkle me with your hyssop and I shall be clean; Wash me and I shall be whiter than snow.

Give me the comfort of your joy and gladness. And the bones, which have been humbled, shall rejoice.

Turn away your face from my sin. And blot out all my faults.

Create in me a clean heart, O God. And renew your steadfast spirit within me.

Do not cast me out from your presence. And take not your Holy Spirit from me.

But give me back your joy and your salvation. And let your glorious spirit sustain me.

Then I will teach the wicked your way. And sinners shall return to you.

Deliver me from blood, O God, God of my salvation. And my tongue shall praise your justice.

O Lord, open my lips. And my mouth shall sing your praise.

For you did not take pleasure in sacrifice. Nor were you appeased in burnt offerings.

The sacrifice of God is a humble spirit. And a contrite heart, God will not despise.

Do good in your good pleasure to Sion. And build up the walls of Jerusalem.

Then shall you be satisfied with sacrifices and whole burnt offerings. Then shall they offer bullocks upon your altar.

And to you belongs the praise, O God. Barekmor.

PETITION (Morning)

O Lord, how good it is to praise you and to glorify your exalted sacred name and to proclaim your grace in the morning and to profess faith in you during night times.

Lord, hear my voice in the morning. I shall be seen prepared in the morning.

Lord, have mercy on your people. Lord, remit our sins and absolve us.

O Holy One, place your right hand upon us and cure our diseases on account of your sacred name.

DEDICATION OF THE DAY (Morning)

O merciful God, to you, we dedicate this day. We offer to you all the Holy Eucharistic Sacrifices, prayers and all the good works performed today in churches all over the world. Together with these, we offer our prayers, joys and sufferings.

Lead us today along your path. May your strength sustain us today. Grant us that all our thoughts, words and actions of this day, bring honour to your sacred name.

Lord, keep us safe from the snares of Satan and from temptations to sin.

O Merciful Lord, you be, in front of us and behind us, on our right and left, above and below us, in us and around us and protect and sanctify us today.

Let the prayers and blessings of the Mother of God and all the saints; be with us now and always. Amen.

THE PRECEPTS OF THE HOLY CHURCH

1. Attend Holy Qurbano on Sundays and on all days of obligation.
2. Receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation at least once a year and receive Holy Communion during the Season of the Passover.
3. Keep the days of Fasting and Abstinence appointed by the Church.
4. Do not solemnize marriage at the forbidden times and with people forbidden by the Church.
5. Contribute stipends and shares prescribed by the Heads of the Church for the support of the Church and her clergy.

CATECHISM OF THE SYRO-MALANKARA CATHOLIC CHURCH

Archbishop
Geevarghese
Mar Ivanios
Prophet of Reunion
Movement



The Synodal Commission for Faith Formation
Catholicate Centre, Pattom, Trivandrum