

**Appendix II**  
**Vatican Approval for the Synodal Decision**  
**of the Syro-Malabar Bishops regarding the**  
**Celebration of the Holy Qurbana in Uniform Mode**  
**in the Whole Church**



CONGREGATIO  
PRO ECCLESIIIS ORIENTALIBUS

17 dicembre 1999

Prot. N. 1796/99

0193 Roma,  
Via della Conciliazione, 34  
Indirizzo postale: 00120 Città del Vaticano

Eccellenza Reverendissima,

E' pervenuto a questa Congregazione, con lettera del 21 novembre 1999, il testo relativo alle modalita di celebrazione del Holy Qurbana, approvato unanimemente dal Sinodo Siro-Malabarese durante la sessione dei giorni 15-20 novembre scorsi.

La considerazione del testo, nonche la forma della sua approvazione e l' impegno del Sinodo-per la sua pronta e accurata diffusion offrono possibilita a questa Congregazione di rallegrarsi vivamente per il raggiungimento di questo importante risultato.

Questo Dicastero non ha obiezioni nei confronti della decisione assunta, che considera un nuovo, importante passo nella coscienza dell' identita della Chiesa siromalabarese e un fondamentale contributo alla comunione ecclesiale mediante una prassi pastorale omogenea. In allegato si uniscono alcune avvertenze concrete per la corretta applicazione del provvedimento.

Perche la decisione possa sortire l' effetto desiderato e indispensabile che, nella promulgazione e nell' applicazione, l' intero Sinodo dei Vescovi, sia collegialmente sia in ciascuno dei membri, si assuma la piena responsabilita pastorale di una fedele e corretta attuazione.

Con sentimenti di distinto ossequio mi confermo

Suo dev.mo

*Uscell Carl. Albertini, Prefetto*

A Sua Eccellenza Reverendissima  
Mons. Varkey VITHAYATHIL, C.Ss.R.  
Amministratore Apostolico di Ernakulam-Angamaly  
Mount St. Thomas P.O. Box N° 10  
Bharath Matha College  
KOCHI 682 021  
Kerala - India

*M. Marunyan, Segr.*

(Approval & Directives from Rome)

**Congregatio Pro Ecclesiis Orientalibus**

17-12-1999

Prot. N. 1796/99

(Free Translation from the Italian)

Your Excellency,

This Congregation has received your letter of 21 Nov. 1999 with the text about the modifications in the celebration of Holy Qurbana, unanimously approved by the Synod of the Syro-Malabar bishops during the session of Nov. 15-20, 1999.

Considering the text as well as manner of the approval and the desire of the Synod for a prompt and accurate promulgation of the same, offers this Congregation the opportunity to appreciate warmly this important decision.

This Dicastery has no objection to approve the decision taken, which it considers an important stage in the awareness of the identity of the Syro-Malabar Church and an important contribution to the ecclesial communion, through a uniform pastoral practice. The Enclosure gives some concrete directives for the correct application of the proposal.

In order that the decision may have the desired effect it is necessary that both in its promulgation and implementation the entire Synod of Bishops, both collectively and individually, take up the pastoral responsibility for a faithful and correct execution.

With sentiments of esteem and regard,

Yours very devotedly

(Achille Cardinal Silvestrini, Prefect)

(sd)

(M. Marusyn, Secretary)

(sd)

ENCLOSURE

1. The rubrics to be promulgated for the implementation of this Synodal decision should be unmistakably explicit. They should state clearly, as in the above mentioned document, that during the Anaphora the priest faces East (or the altar, i.e., with his back to the congregation, leading the people in prayer while facing in the same direction the people themselves are facing); and that the priest begins to face in this direction (toward the altar and away from the congregation) beginning with and including the Prayer of *accessus ad altare*: “I give you thanks, my Father, Lord of heaven and earth...” The priest remains facing in this direction during the entire Anaphora, except of course at those points where the traditional rubrics order him to turn to the congregation for a greeting.
2. It should be noted that in churches which have restored the once-traditional Bema in the centre of the nave, in the midst of the congregation – and such a restoration would certainly be desirable at least *ad experimentum* for example in liturgical centres and seminary or monastic chapels – then during the Liturgy of the Word the clergy on the Bema would be seated in the midst of the people and facing in the same direction as they, in the direction of the lecterns for the readings of the Liturgy of the Word.
3. Furthermore, in churches so designed, it would be not be necessary for the presiding priest to come to the Bema for the concluding rites of the liturgy, which would be celebrated from the front of the qestroma or sanctuary platform, facing the people.