



## Book Review

Joy George Mangalathil (ed.), *The All-India Jurisdiction of the Syro Malabar Church*, *Qanona* 4, OIRSI, Kottayam, 2019, pp. 196, ₹ 150.

*The All-India Jurisdiction of the Syro-Malabar Church* is a collection of papers presented for the *Rev. Dr. Joseph Koikakudy Endowment Lectures 2019*. They are published in the periodical *Qanona* of the faculty of the Institute of Eastern Canon Law, Paurastya Vidyapitham, Kottayam, and edited by Joy George Mangalathil. The subject is treated in the context of the Letter of Pope Francis to the Bishops of India, dated October 9, 2017 that granted all-India jurisdiction to the Syro-Malabar Church. After the preface by the editor, the letter of Pope Francis is given followed by the Inaugural Address of the Lectures of Rev. Fr. Sunny Kokkaravalayil SJ, faculty of Pontifical Oriental Institute, Rome. There are six articles, of which five are written by the professors of the Institute of Eastern Canon Law, *Paurastya Vidyapitham* and one is by the bishop of the eparchy of Shamshabad which was erected as after effect of the papal letter.

Roy Joseph Kaduppil gives a synopsis of canonical concept of Church *sui iuris* in his scholarly article, “The Concept of Church *sui iuris* and the Observance and Preservation of Proper Rite in Canon

Law.” He develops the theme of individual Churches from the insights given by the Vatican II to the canonical notion of Church *sui iuris*. He analyzed c. 27 of CCEO and clarifies the term *sui iuris* and explains the constitutive elements of a *sui iuris* Church. After having narrated the different grades of Churches, he emphasizes the equal dignity of the Churches *sui iuris* including the Latin Church. He summarizes the main themes of Title II of the Eastern Code, such as enrolment in a Church *sui iuris*, and the preservation of Rites. The related issues of non-Catholics coming into the full communion of the Catholic Church, the procedure for the Transfers, and faithful committed to pastoral care of another church *sui iuris* are also discussed in the article. Further he develops the concept of Rite, its diversity, its contrast to church *sui iuris*, equality and preservation of the proper Rite, etc. He concludes that the present canonical provisions on Church *sui iuris* and Rite are the articulation of the vision of the Vatican II. In addition, he adds two explanatory notes of Pontifical Council for Legislative Text regarding Latin Church as Church *sui iuris* and inscription of an adopted Orthodox baby by Latin parents as an Appendix. Though the matter regarding Church *sui iuris* is easily available the uniqueness of the article is that it gives a summary of the matter in a scientific manner with lot of references.

Taking into account the Letter of the Pope Francis regarding the all-India jurisdiction, Joy George Mangalathil, describes the historical background of the Syro-Malabar Major Archiepiscopal Church, in his article, “The Metropolitan and Gate of All India: A Proud Legacy of the St. Thomas Christians.” He tries to prove that historically St. Thomas Christians enjoyed all-India jurisdiction, which is clear from the title given to the metropolitan sent by the Chaldean patriarchs ‘Metropolitan and Gate of All-India.’ In his erudite article he analyzes four distinct periods in the history of the St. Thomas Christians, The Early Malabar Church and its Hierarchy, Persian-Chaldean period, the Latin period (1599-1896) and the Syro-Malabar period (1896). The author gives in a nutshell, a long history from the arrival of St.

Thomas the Apostle to the present day papal document of 2017 - a narrative substantiated with valid historical documents. It is his contribution to better understand the issue of all-India jurisdiction of the Syro-Malabar Church in a historical background.

After Vatican II, there was a revival in the Syro-Malabar Church to grow into an autonomous Church as envisaged by the teaching of the Council. However, it was a herculean task to establish the identity of the Oriental Churches in India and gain its rightful jurisdiction. The Latin hierarchy of India was reluctant to accept the inter-ritual and multi-jurisdictional existence of the Oriental Churches in India. It was a slow process for the CBCI and other ecclesiastical bodies to accept this reality. Different CBCI meetings and national seminars, the appointment of an Apostolic Visitor to study the situation of the Syro-Malabar migrants in different parts of the world, the intervention of the Oriental Bishops in the Synod of Bishops of 1985 and final recognition of the Syro-Malabar Church as the Major Archiepiscopal Church in 1992 are the milestones of the recent history of the Syro-Malabar Church. James Thalachelloor in his meticulously written article, "Objections and Resistance against Self-Governance and Rightful Jurisdiction of the Orientals in India," gives an outline of the historical struggle of the Thomas Christians to regain the status of all-India jurisdiction.

Denial of all-India jurisdiction to the Syro-Malabar Church was criticized by many on the ground of the innate right of every Christian faithful to proclaim the Word of God. It was an anomaly that the missionary Church of the Syro-Malabar Christians was restricted from preaching the Gospel outside proper territory. The issues related to the evangelization of the Syro-Malabar Church is discussed in the article, "The Restoration of the Right of the Syro-Malabar Church and the Future Prospects," written by George Thekkekara. In the first part of the article he summarizes the right and duties of the Church for evangelization and its canonical implications in the context of the Syro-Malabar Church. Further he gives a history of the erection of

Syro-Malabar eparchies and exarchies outside the proper territory and various missions run by different religious congregations. He concludes the articles giving future possibilities of evangelization by the Syro-Malabar Church. This article furnishes much information about the missions in India.

The Syro-Malabar Church got the green signal to go forward with her claim for all-India jurisdiction with the erection of the Eparchy of Kalyan in 1988. In the article “The Erection of Kalyan as the First Eparchy for the Syro-Malabar Migrants” Varghese Palathingal gives a splendid episode of the erection of the Eparchy of Kalyan, its canonical status, challenges and the anxieties of the faithful. Proudly he presents the legacy of Kalyan in his well-written paper starting with the conceptual clarification of autonomy, self-governance, conciliar vision, canonical legislation and canonical implications of the erection of the Eparchy. It is good to know the relevant documents related to the erection of the new Eparchy and its consequences, such as the letter of John Paul II before the erection of Kalyan, Decree of erection, and indult of privilege to continue in the Latin rite. The article concludes with an appraisal of the three decades of the existence of the Eparchy of Kalyan in an inter-ritual and multi-jurisdictional context.

The fruit of the letter of the Pope Francis is the erection of the Eparchy of Shamshabad for the ‘rest of India’ which guarantees all-India jurisdiction. Bishop Mar Raphael Thattil in his article, “The Erection of the Eparchy of Shamshabad: The Reality of All-India Jurisdiction Revisited” narrates the ecclesiological context of the papal letter and statistical report of the growth of the Syro-Malabar Christians to the whole of India and beyond through migration. He gives a short history of the efforts of the Synod of Bishops of the Syro Malabar Church, its commissions and Apostolic Visitors to arrive at the present position. The author clarifies different modifications made to the extension of the territories of the eparchies of Mandya, Ramanathapuram and Thucklay, the erection of new the eparchy of Hosur and that of Shamshabad for the ‘rest of India,’ which marked

the extension of the proper territory of Syro-Malabar Church all over India under the Major Archbishop. Thus he categorically concluded that the Syro-Malabar Major Archiepiscopal Church has full all-India jurisdiction given by *Varietas Ecclesiarum*, the Letter of Pope Francis to the Bishops of India, October 9, 2017. This article sheds light on many of the grey areas related to all-India jurisdiction of the Syro-Malabar Church.

The selection of a relevant issue for the *Rev. Dr. Joseph Koikakudy Endowment Lectures 2019* is praiseworthy. The book presents a thorough study of the subject from a historical, ecclesiological, canonical, and procedural viewpoint. It expounds the nuance of the papal document and verifies that the long cherished dream – the all-India jurisdiction of the Syro-Malabar Major Archiepiscopal Church - has become a reality. Since the articles are written in a scientific way, there are ample references for a deeper study. All authors deserve compliments for their great contributions. It is obvious that the letter of the Pope is not unanimously received by the whole catholic hierarchy in India. There are disagreements and misunderstandings about the letter and a few responsible persons even misinterpreted the content of the letter in public. It would have been better to include their response to the papal letter for a holistic view of the issue.

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