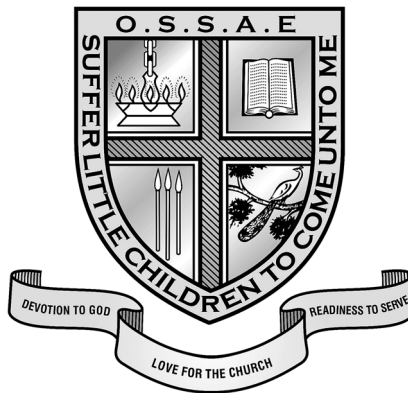


# ORTHODOX SYRIAN SUNDAY SCHOOL ASSOCIATION OF THE EAST



## JERUSALEM DIVISION

### Class IX

(English)

Sunday School Central Office  
Devalokom, Kottayam-4

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## Foreword

Biblical education has been considered to be of utmost importance in the spiritual and liturgical practices of our church. Our Lord in His words “Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the Kingdom of God belongs to such as these” expresses His great tender care for children and recognizes their value. Growing up by knowing God from childhood is a blessed privilege of the Christian life. We should develop a lifestyle in which the basics of spiritual life are practiced and reinforced, because a strong spiritual foundation is necessary to make our life meaningful. Training our children in Christian witness is a mission and a big responsibility before God. Sunday School education is a sacred service where we impart the knowledge of the Scripture to the children to help them to experience God. It helps them to experience the life of the saints who understood the beauty of that experience, the glory of worship which is a grateful response to the divine experience, and the social responsibility which is to be carried out in the fullness of that experience and identity. The greatest gift that we have to offer our children is the strong Orthodox faith that has been handed down to us through generations.

Sunday School education should not be evaluated in terms of secular education. It is a quest for the divine in which the teachers and students partake together making it a life-long learning experience. Sunday school education becomes perfect only with the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. The aim of this learning system is to recognize the value of the divine revelations that happened before ages and to interpret it according to the needs of the present age. This must be fulfilled in the model we see in the Holy Scripture. God has raised prophets and visionaries in different ages to reveal the divine will to His own people. The Sunday School teachers fulfill this great responsibility.

Sunday School education becomes meaningful only when the parents involve in the teaching and learning process. Values instilled from the Sunday School should be further reinforced and practiced at homes to make them part of their personality. Moses told the Israelites to teach their children the commandments of God “recite them to your children and talk about them when you are at home and when you are away, when you lie down and when you rise” (Deuteronomy 6:7).

We should train the new generation to respond with a Christian conviction to the changes in the society. Our young generation should be able to share the models of love and forgiveness in this troubled society. Only then our new generation will inherit the blessings of those children who are blessed by our Lord. This is the universal responsibility that the Church has to carry out for the transformation of our society to goodness, and its growth to the Kingdom of God.

Our Sunday School curriculum has been developed effectively to teach the Scriptures and the spiritual practices of our church. This is visible in the content and teaching modules. Also, the online resources have been very valuable in the learning process. Let our Sunday School teachers and students make use of the available resources and opportunities to make the Sunday School learning a joyful experience which will enhance the moral and spiritual values of our younger generation.

01-06-2022

**Alexios Mar Eusebius Metropolitan**  
President  
O.S.S.A.E

## Introduction

Reading is necessary for all to achieve their goal in life. Today a reader, tomorrow a leader is quietly trusting maxim in human life. Really a book opens a door of infinite possibilities and probabilities in life; new persons, new ideas and ideals which may transform the whole life. It is interesting that no entertainment is so cheap as reading, nor any pleasure so lasting. For learning and success, books have an unavoidable part in human life. As Patrick Rothfuss says, "I always read. You know how sharks have to keep swimming or they die? I'm like that. If I stop reading, I die".

This text book for OSSAE class IX comprises contents like bible studies including both Old Testament and New Testament, Prayer, liturgical hymns, ecclesiology, liturgy, dogmas and biographies of great men of God. Also the text includes current affairs like ecology, media and psychological issues faced by teenagers. The lessons are prepared after a pretty long stretch of study, discussions and corrections by a team of people who have expertise in the field of education, theology and liturgy. However, suggestions for improvement are most welcome. The contributions of those who prepared various lessons are invaluable. Being the notable teachers who paved the way for the coming generations we owe them a lot.

A book communicates knowledge, and not only knowledge but wisdom of all kinds. The lessons you study from this text may become best friends who will never walk away from you. They will help you to build a life which is centered in Christ. May it help you to have knowledge about our Lord Jesus Christ, great men of God and the way of spiritual life. Thus you can improve yourself in order to take better decisions in the future. The aim of Sunday School education has been based on Jesus' teaching about the Kingdom of God. It is the continuation of Jesus' teaching ministry in order to equip the people to inherit the Kingdom of Heaven. Hence our ultimate purpose is the achievement of eternal life in the Kingdom of God.

May God continue to bless you all.

**Fr. Dr. Varghese Varghese**

Director General

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## **STRUCTURE OF THE LESSONS**

**(PREPARED BY PROF. DR. SAM V. DANIEL)**

1. **Message:** The central idea that should be sensitised through each lesson is given here.
2. **Verse to be Memorized:** A biblical verse related to the central theme of the lesson is given for memorizing. The teacher should read out this verse from the Holy Bible at the end of the class and the students should say it aloud several times.
3. **Teaching Aids:** Information on pictures, books, etc. connected to the central theme are given to present lessons effectively.
4. **Introduction:** This section helps in making the presentation of the lesson attractive and enjoyable.
5. **The Lesson or Text:** This is the content of the lesson. We have tried our best to make it student-centred. The ideas should be presented by participating students. The teacher should take the Holy Bible to class and should read out the biblical passages. The descriptions made should have the quality of a narration. The students should be encouraged through interaction questions. When important ideas come let the students recite them in Chorus.
6. **Song or Hymns:** A song or hymn connected with the lesson is given here. The teacher should sing it aloud and the students should recite it in chorus.
7. **Let Us Pray:** A simple prayer connected with the theme of the lesson is given here. The teacher and the students can say this prayer in the class together. All should stand up and cross themselves before the prayer.
8. **Our Decision or Resolution:** An idea that can touch the students' mind like a decision and that can be implemented in their lives is given in this section. Make the students say aloud this concept.
9. **Let Us Think:** These are evaluation questions given to examine how far the students have grasped the ideas in the text.
10. **Activities:** Most of the tasks given in the section are for enacting, drawing, physical action or narration.
11. **Further Reading:** Various biblical passages connected with the lesson are given for reading in the evening and in the morning of all days of a week.



# UNIT I

## BIBLE STUDIES

### Chapter 1

### Major Prophets

**Learning Objectives:** The Holy Bible tells us about a number of prophets. They revealed the Word of God to His chosen people. Let us learn about prophets. Some of these prophets are referred to as Major Prophets. Let us learn about their prophetic missions and the features of the Books they authored.

**Verse to be Memorized:** “For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.” (Isaiah 9:6).

**Learning Aids:** A map of Jerusalem, four big cards on which the names of Major Prophets and twelve small cards on which the names of Minor Prophets are written, a chart containing the names of sixteen prophets (the names shall be highlighted using different colours), the Holy Bible, the Book of Holy Eucharist and the Book of Canonical Prayers.

### Introduction

The prophesies in the Old Testament give light and greater meaning to the New Testament. They inspire us to lead a perfect spiritual life in Jesus Christ. Who are prophets? They are people chosen by God to foretell future events. The prophets interpreted the events of history and the contemporary times. They received God’s commandments from the Holy Spirit and boldly revealed them to the people. Some of them prophesied against own people while others made their prophesies against other nations. Generally they spoke against evil. They made their prophesies at various periods of history. Their prophesies sometimes comforted people suffering hardships from others; and sometimes gave warnings about future events. They tried to lead their people in the path of righteousness. They revealed God’s commandments to the people. The books of Prophets record their teachings and interventions.

Prophetic Books are generally categorized into early Prophetic Books and Later Prophetic Books. The Early Prophetic Books are historical records inspired by God’s Spirit. They contain prophecies and their impact upon people. The most voluminous among them are Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel. They are known as Major Prophetic Books. The authors of these prophesies are called Major Prophets. The

smaller prophets from Hosea to Malachi are known as Minor Prophets. Today let's learn about Major Prophets and their writings.

## **The Lesson**

### **Who are Major Prophets?**

They are prophets who were traditionally regarded as authors of books of long Prophecies. This does not mean that they are superior to other prophets. Let's now identify the Major Prophets, their message, and the relevance of their message in our times.

### **Isaiah**

The name Isaiah means "Yahweh is my salvation/One who proclaimed salvation in Yahweh." Book of Isaiah is a voluminous work containing 66 Chapters. It contains prophecies spanning over a long period of time. It proclaims God's will to the people. In fact there are three periods the prophecies addressed. The first is the period of the Kingdom or the pre-exile period. It was a period of prosperity. The people of Israel had their own country. The second is the exilic period. It was a period of despair and hopelessness in which the people lost everything owned and had to live in exile. The third is the post-exilic period which marks the end of exile and which is filled with the hope of return. The first period of Isaiah's prophecies belongs to the reign of King Uzziah and the period that succeeded his death.

King Uzziah (BC 786-742) reigned in Israel for about half a century (2 Chron 26). The initial phase of his reign was marked by obedience and faithfulness to God. Later Uzziah grew proud and haughty and hence he was punished by God. The prophet had a grand vision of God and his purification experience after the death of the king (Isaiah 6:1-8). The delegation of mission that followed sanctification of the prophet became a conviction in his life. These are referred to in Isaiah 6:8-12. Isaiah made his prophecies during a period of wickedness and evil (Isaiah 1:21-25, 10:1-4, 5:3-10). He was a staunch critic of his times. It is notable that he prophesied to a people who believed that God will listen to all their prayers.

The prophet spoke against violating the covenant with Yahweh and forming alliances with gentile kings. He decried idolatry and wickedness among the people (2 Kings 16, Isaiah 7). He gave the message of hope of redemption through faithfulness to Yahweh (1:2-8), obedience to parents and preparation for a righteous life (1:16-21).

Isaiah foretold that people will invite punishments through injustice, pride and luxury (1:9). Those who remain faithful alone will be spared from punishments. prophet also spoke about the period of captivity as well (Isaiah 40-55). The book of kings describes how Israel became a vassal country of a major nation of those days namely Assyria (2 Kings chapter 16 onwards). This happened during BC 721-22. Later another major power, Babylon conquered the southern regions of Judea and forced the people into exile (2 Kings: 25). This is considered the main period of captivity

and messages are given about this period. Isaiah chapters 40-55 give message of hope to the exiled people in despair. A gentile king, Cyrus (2 Chron 36:22), who helps the people in captivity is presented as the messenger of Yahweh and the flag bearer of restoration (Isaiah 44:28, 45:1).

Verses known as ‘songs of the servant of Yahweh’ form an important part of the messages of captivity (Isaiah 42:1-7, 49:1-9, 50:4-9, 52:13-53). These songs describe the suffering servant of Yahweh. Even though this righteous servant appear to suffer in the eyes of the world, God will honour and raise him. The central theme described here is the glorification of righteous suffering. In the New Testament context, the “suffering servant of God” is identified as Jesus Christ.

The Book of Isaiah also contains instructions for the post-exilic life of the people of Israel (Isaiah 56-66). During exile, the people of Israel could not pray at the Temple of Jerusalem. They revived this worship after their return from exile (Isaiah 60:7). Yet the land was not safe from threats. The people resorted to blasphemy even when the fort and city were yet to be rebuilt. Isaiah announced God’s justice and comfort (Isaiah 58:1-8, 65:1-5) and the everlasting salvation (Isaiah 59:1-13).

### **Jeremiah**

The books of Jeremiah, Ezekiel and Daniel are also considered major prophetic books. The book of Jeremiah contains 52 chapters. It describes the struggles of a man of God raised by Yahweh to greatness. Jeremiah was raised to be a prophet while he was a boy (Jeremiah 1-3). It is a perfect example of the call to fulfil God’s purposes. Similar instances of the Lord’s call are seen in the lives of Moses (Exodus 3:1-6) and Samuel (1 Samuel 3:1-20).

Jeremiah suffered trials and tribulations and shed a lot of tears. Yet he gave the message of God’s compassion, righteousness and hope. The initial chapters of Jeremiah’s book deal with God’s call, God’s love, the response of Israelites to God’s love and God’s response to His backsliding people. The prophet speaks about the days of God’s love for Israel, the early days of Israel’s obedience and the later days of the broken covenant. The book also speaks about God’s grief over the broken covenant and the prophet’s indignation at the ingratitude of the Israelites.

### **Ezekiel and Daniel**

The name Ezekiel means ‘God empowers.’ He lived with the people of Judea deported to Babylon. Ezekiel was a God-loving prophet who served as a priest as well (Ezekiel 1:3-5, 3:15-17, 8:1-5, 20:1-3). The message of Ezekiel is that we can search for God in hope and faith even in the midst of the trials in life.

Daniel was a Jewish youth who worked in the palace of the gentiles along with Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah. His life and message makes it known that one can lead a life of purity and holiness even amidst strange and adverse conditions.

## Hymn

(This is an intercessory hymn to prophets, apostles and martyrs given  
in the Hymns of Eucharistic devotion in the Holy Eucharist)

(Paavana Nibimaare...)

O saintly Prophets, heaven's princes Apostles,  
Pray for this world, and its well being  
Let all wars and – quarrels come to an end, and  
Church and children, praise Jesus ever  
Barekmor.

O taintless Prophets, Apostles, Martyrs... your  
Crowns are in heaven – devotees on earth  
Glorified is Lord, who extolled your memory  
You did strengthen - Holy Church of Christ  
.....

## Let Us Pray

*O Lord, we praise you for enabling us to learn about the Prophets. Enable us like them and be your true followers, to lead a divinely inspired life and announce your will before the world. Help us to bear true witness and glorify you. Enable us to praise Father Son and the Holy Spirit forever. Amen.*  
.....

## Resolution

*We would live according to God's will like the great prophets received God's commandments and lived accordingly, and carried God's messages to the people .*

## Let Us Think

1. Who are the Major prophets? List the number of chapters in each book of the Major Prophets.
2. What are the functions of prophets?
3. Name the different parts of the Book of Isaiah.
4. What does the name 'Isaiah' mean?
5. What are the special features of the reign of Uzziah?
6. Which chapters of Isaiah give hope to people who lived in exile?
7. Name the kings who reigned during the prophetic ministry of Isaiah.
8. List the three virtues upheld by Isaiah in his message.
9. Which chapters of Isaiah give hope to people who lived in exile?

10. Name the kings who reigned during the prophetic ministry of Daniel.
11. List the biblical passages which prove the priestly vocation of prophet Ezekiel.
12. A prophet is a representative of God; do you think he is a representative of the people as well?
13. Compare and contrast life in a free country and life in exile.

### **Activities**

1. Read Isaiah chapter 6 and, 2 Chronicles chapter 26 and prepare a diary summarizing the main ideas.
2. Does God listen to prayers of wicked people? Discuss the significance of worship, which involves a constant relationship with God and a search for God's will in everything.
3. Prepare from the Book of Isaiah, a chart of verses and their reference which prophesies about Jesus Christ, the 'Awaited Messaiah.'
4. Prepare a table of major prophets, their prophetic books and the chapters contained in each.
5. Write four or five prophesies each made by any three Major prophets and role play them in the class.

### **Further Reading**

<b>Day</b>	<b>Morning</b>	<b>Evening</b>
Sunday	*	Isaiah 7
Monday	Isaiah 42	Isaiah 53
Tuesday	Isaiah 11	Isaiah 49
Wednesday	Isaiah 6	2 Chronicles 26
Thursday	Isaiah 50	Isaiah 52
Friday	Isaiah 57	Isaiah 58
Saturday	Jeremiah 23	*

## Chapter 2

# Minor Prophets

**Learning Objectives:** To learn about Minor Prophets of the Holy Bible, details of the time and place of their ministry, and their prophetic books and live according to God's will, as they did.

**Verse to be Memorized:** "The sun shall be turned to darkness, and the moon to blood, before the great and terrible day of the Lord comes. Then everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved" (Joel 2:31,32).

**Learning Aids:** The map of Palestine (with the areas of the ministry of the prophets marked), bill boards on which the names of Minor Prophets are written, the Holy Bible, the liturgical Book of 'The Holy Eucharist' and the Book of Common Prayer.

### Introduction

The prophets foretold about the future; and also interpreted contemporary events in the light of God's Will. They had no personal interests and they acted according to God's Will. God chose them to be prophets, endowed them with skills and abilities and prepared them for His ministry. In this chapter let us learn about the Minor Prophets.

### The Lesson

The Minor Prophetic books are later prophetic compositions, smaller in size. Twelve books from Hosea to Malachi fall in this category. Even though the Minor Prophetic books are smaller in size, they and their authors are significant because of the significance of the message they convey.

### The Minor Prophets and their Prophetic Period

The Minor prophetic books too can be understood by categorising the period of prophetic ministry into three. You might remember that this was the criterion of classification adopted in the case of Major Prophets as well. Amos, Hosea and Micah were prophets of the pre-exilic period (800-700 BC). They were also the contemporaries of the Major Prophet Isaiah (mentioned in chapters 1-39 of Book of Isaiah)

During the period of Kingdom there was prosperity in Israel. But even in the days of social and economic security provided by a stable administration, many people failed to take care of the weak and the poor. They could not prize hardships, tears, toil and sweat. Those were times when people were hesitant to show kindness, justice and righteousness were conspicuously absent. It was in this context that Amos

who proclaimed justice, Hosea who practised love for God and Micah announced the supremacy of God.

### **Pre-exile Period**

Eighth century BC was a period of peace and prosperity. The stable administration of Jeroboam II enabled the expansion of the country's territory and economic prosperity came from the resources of the annexed countries as well as from trade. Consequently there was an increase in luxury, exploitation, injustice and callousness (Amos 4, 5:10-12, 8:4-6, Micah 1:5-6, 3:9-11). The spiritual realm became polluted and the social sphere was in shambles during the period. Along with the increase in wealth, the external expressions of worship of God also increased proportionately (Amos 4:4, Isaiah chapter 58). The prophets exhorted to eschew evil and embrace goodness, lead a righteous life and worship God from the strong foundation of a truthful life (Amos 5:15, 5:24, Micah 6:6-8).

### **Hosea's Prophecy**

Hosea's book of Prophecy gives great insights into the relationship between God and human in times of trouble. There existed adverse conditions at three different levels. First of all there was faithlessness in the relationship with God. Secondly social and religious standards had deteriorated. Thirdly faithlessness in personal life had badly affected family and social life.

i. The great imperial powers of those days were Assyria and Egypt (Hosea 7:11, 8:8-10). The kingdom of Israel not only fell into the captivity of these foreign powers but also depended on them for existence and also took to their sinful and idolatrous ways. Prophet Isaiah in similar circumstances had predicted that if one doesn't have faith in God, one cannot have a sustained existence (Isaiah 7:9). Even King Solomon became wayward because he established relationship with gentile people.

ii. In society, theft and murders increased. There was no trace of kindness and truth. Yahweh had to chastise and charge the people with sinfulness. A similar situation existed in the religious atmosphere as well. Idolatry (Hosea 2:12-13) and a life devoid of knowledge of God (4:6) were in existence. Hosea (6:6) declares the response of Yahweh "For I desire steadfast love and not sacrifice, the knowledge of God rather than burnt offerings." This points out to the total absence of God's grace in life, even for making offerings to God.

iii. The prophet quotes the case of his own wife as an example for deterioration and faithlessness in personal life. She showed infidelity to the prophet (1:2-3) and the prophet sees it as a characteristic of the whole nation (4:14).

The prophet's message is that the people and leaders need to repent for offences. They should confess their sins and 'seek God's face.' Hosea taught the people about the love and mercy of God. He gave the assurance that God will show mercy to even those who transgressed the covenant through infidelity, sin and injustice. The very

name Hosea means ‘God helps.’ The prophet declares that forgetting the true God is as sinful as the mutual infidelity of married couples (2:4). God is kind and merciful.

### **Later Minor Prophets**

In the subsequent period (700-600 BC), the ministry of prophesy was carried forward by Nahum, Habakkuk and Zephaniah. Their prophesies were made in the social and political backgrounds of the last periods of seventh century BC. What were the social and political developments that influenced the religious experiences of Israel during this period? The consequences of Assyria conquering Northern Israel and unleashing a reign of cruelty, the religious reformation of king Josiah and love of luxury and lack of kindness formed the background of these prophesies. However the greatest message given here is the salvation of the suffering people of God.

Nahum prophesied that God would save the people of Israel who were crushed under the cruelty of the Assyrian empire. He also predicted the destruction of Nineveh on account of the cruelty it unleashed (Nahum 2:13, 3:3-7). There are similar prophesies in Habakkuk as well (Habakkuk 1:5-9). It was during this period that the Assyrians who ruled over the nations of the world were defeated and the Babylonian empire was founded (2:1-2, 4-8, 3:8).

Habakkuk made his prophesies in the background of sinfulness and idolatry rampant in eighth century BC. The prophet raised his voice against love for wealth, lack of mercy, idolatry and alcoholism (2:6-8, 9-12, 15-16, 18-19). Zephaniah also gives a similar message (1:4-8, 2:2-4, 3:1-5).

Minor prophets like Haggai, Zechariah, Obadiah and Malachi also gave powerful messages to the people. Prophets like Haggai and Zechariah under took their ministry during the period of ascendancy of the Persian empire (BC 588) in place of Babylon which had conquered Israel.

Cyrus, King of Persia liberated Jews from captivity and allowed them to return to their homeland (Ezra 1:2-4). The people returned to Judah. Apart from the decree of Cyrus, prophet Haggai also asked them to engage in the restoration of the Temple. Haggai prophesied that it was God’s will to restore the Temple (Haggai 1:3-15, 2:2-9). But the people paid no attention to him. The theme of Haggai is the unfinished Temple and his mission is to admonish and encourage the builders.

Prophet Zechariah asked the people to rebuild the Temple, trusting in God (1:15-16, 6:10-13). Along with upholding a spiritual life connected with the Temple (2:10, 8:3), he emphasized human relationship founded on justice and compassion (7:9-8:17).

‘The Minor prophets’ were really great prophets who gave strong and timely messages to the people of God. Their ministry in Israel is laudable because of their



convictions regarding the Scriptures, relationship with God, covenant with God and God's own people.

### Hymn

Bliss to the prophets  
And the apostles  
And to the martyrs  
At resurrection.

Barekmor  
Those martyrs who longed  
For seeing the Christ,  
By their death took wings,  
And fluttered to heights  
Moryio Rahemelain...

.....

### Let Us Pray

*O Lord, we praise You for giving the messages of the prophets through the Holy Bible. Help us to follow their words, eschew evil and live in goodness. Grant us wisdom to understand the wickedness of the contemporary world. Lead us through the path of righteousness. We would praise You, Your Father and the Holy Spirit. Amen.*

.....

### Resolution

*We would lead a just life as advised by prophet Amos. We would participate in worship of God whole heartedly. We would be on guard against deterioration and faithlessness in personal life. We would remember the Lord's Last Judgment and would repent our sins.*

### Let Us Think

1. What is meant by 'Minor Prophets'?
2. How do we classify the period of prophetic ministry? Which are the categories?
3. What is the significant message of the prophesies of Amos, Hosea and Micah?1
4. What are the three stages of deterioration mentioned in Hosea?
5. What was the reason for the waywardness of Solomon?
6. What are the important causes for the deterioration of Israel?
7. Do you find signs of such deterioration in the present day world?
8. Which prophesy relates to Jesus Christ's birth and activities?

## Activities

1. Prepare a speech based on Amos 5:24, Isaiah 1:15-16 and Micah 6:8 and present it in the class.
2. Learn the verses Micah 6:8 and Amos 5:24 by heart.
3. Analyse the relevance of Hosea 6:6
4. Learn the verses Hosea 6:6 and Joel 2:28 by heart
5. Discuss the important messages and ministry of any one of the minor Prophets.
6. Wear a badge on which a minor Prophet's name is written and role play his prophetic ministry in the class.

## Further Reading

<b>Day</b>	<b>Morning</b>	<b>Evening</b>
Sunday	*	Hosea 11
Monday	Joel 3	Amos 8
Tuesday	Obadiah 1	Jonah 4
Wednesday	Micah 6	Nahum 1
Thursday	Habakkuk 3	Zephaniah 1
Friday	Haggai 1	Zechariah 9
Saturday	Malachi 2	*

## Chapter 3

# Israel's Religious Life in Captivity

(Worship at the Synagogue, Compilation of the Scriptures)

**Learning Objectives:** To learn about the forms of worship in Israel during their captivity and also their relationship with God during this period. Let us also learn about their history during exile. We shall also learn about the prophets and follow their great messages in our lives.

**Verse to be Memorized:** "I told them that the hand of my God had been gracious upon me, and also the words that the king had spoken to me. Then they said, "Let us start building!" So they committed themselves to the common good" (Nehemiah 2:18).

**Learning Aids:** A picture of a Jewish synagogue, a picture of the destroyed Temple of Jerusalem, a chart containing names of books written during Jewish exile, the Holy Bible, the liturgical book of Holy Eucharist and the Book of Common Prayer.

### Introduction

We have learned about the period of captivity of Israelites in Egypt and their deliverance under the leadership of Moses. After they settled down in the Promised Land, they demanded for Kingship. God anointed Saul as the first King of Israel. The kings who succeeded great monarchs like David and Solomon disobeyed God's commandments and started worshipping other gods. Besides they refused to obey the prophets who arose in various periods of history. This invited God's wrath upon Israel and consequently the people of Israel had to live in captivity in Babylon for seventy years. Today we are going to learn about the Babylonian captivity.

### The Lesson

Babylonian captivity is an important event in the history of Israel. It played a crucial role in shaping the life of the Jews in the subsequent periods. The captivity followed the conquest of Judah by Nebuchadnezzar, the ruler of Babylon. It was a period of political instability for Israel. The kings were weak and they reigned only for a brief period. The Babylonians attacked Judah several times between BC 597 and BC 587. As a result the city of Jerusalem and the Temple of Jerusalem were plundered and destroyed and the people of Jerusalem were taken captives to Babylon (2 Kings 24:25).

#### **The apparent effects of the exile as described by the Holy Bible are as follows:**

1. Israel which had been an independent nation lost its freedom and identity and became a vassal country under Babylon.
2. The Temple of Jerusalem which had been the centre of spirituality as well as the external expression of the unity of the country was destroyed.

3. Kingship, palaces and systems which gave protection to people dissipated.
4. A significant section of Jews who lived in Judah was taken captive to Babylon and only a remnant resided in their homeland.

### **1. The Spiritual Consequences of the Exile**

Along with the difficulties created in the physical environment, the exile caused a lot of changes in spiritual thinking as well. The Temple of Jerusalem had been their spiritual and material centre and the source of their unity. The Temple had been the foot-stool of God (Malachi 2:1), the abode of Yahweh (1 Kings 8:13, Ezekiel 43:7), His place of rest (Psalms 132:14) and His court (Isaiah 1:12). But when it was set fire to (2 Chron 25:10-14, Lamentations 1:10) people lost all hope and were thrown into despair.

The people of Israel retained a similar faith regarding the throne and kingship of David. They believed that the stability of kingship was promised by God in the succession of the house of David (2 Samuel 7). They believed that the King who sat on the throne of David was the son of God. They also thought that Kingship was the means of obtaining God's mercy (Psalms 72:10). But when they saw that Zedekiah, the successor of David, too was captured and that Kingship was coming to an end, it became a great spiritual problem for them.

The spiritual life of Israelites greatly depended on the God - given land, priesthood, worship of Yahweh, Scriptures and the recital of Psalms. But after losing their homeland they had to live in a strange land devoid of the song of Yahweh (Jeremiah 31:32, Psalms 137:4).

### **The Changes in Religious Life during the Exile**

For Israelites, Exile was a period of loss and conflicts. However, they encountered the physical as well as the spiritual destruction and developed a special kind of spiritual and religious experience. The following developments took place.

i. When the Israelites lost Temple worship and offerings at the Temple and their home land during the exile, certain other religious forms came into prominence. The worship at the Temple of Jerusalem was highly centralized. Jews came there to worship even from far away places like Samaria and Galilee at least during the important feasts. After the destruction of the Temple, Jews assembled for worship at synagogues in various localities. During the time of Jesus Christ, there are references to coming to Jerusalem for worship (St. Matthew 21: 12, 23, St. Luke 2:24). At the same time, there are also references to people assembling locally for worship. These local places of worship were known as Synagogues (St. Luke 6:6, 7:5).

ii. It was during the period of exile that certain religious rituals became very significant. One of them was the observance of Sabbath. Some scholars are of the opinion that the description of Sabbath in the book of Genesis (2:2-3) assumes importance and relevance during this period. That is why we find repeated references

to Sabbath in the books of Nehemiah (9:14, 10:32, 10:34, 13:17) and Ezekiel (6:6, 7:24). Observance of Sabbath teaches that one should rather depend on God's greatness and mercy than on one's own effort.

iii. Another important development during the exile was the compilation of the Scriptures and other books. Reading and interpretation of these books assumed great significance. The narratives of God inspired convictions which had been in vogue among them before the exile remained as an oral tradition. These stories became a written document mainly during this period. The narration of Creation and most of the traditions connected with fathers of the tribes and Moses got recorded during the exile.

iv. Prophecies regarding the reconstruction of the Temple were made during the exile and post exile periods. Prophets like Haggai and Zechariah inspired the remnant who returned from exile to take initiative to rebuild the Temple. The prophets exhorted that the rebuilding of the Temple should be attempted at the appropriate time without neglecting matters related to worship.

### Hymn

(This hymn is recited after Evangelion in the Holy Eucharist on Hoodos Eetho Sunday (New Year Day as per the Church Calender)  
(Massihayodevam sabha cholli...)

The Church pleaded – to Lord Jesus  
See I'm a sinful harlot  
Make thou me thy beloved one  
O holy – holy Lord's son  
    Kindly make me a pure one  
    Replied, Lord Jesus to her  
    Go and be baptized so that  
The waters shall make you pure  
And thus be raised as my bride.

.....

### Let Us Pray

*O! One True God, we praise You for all the gifts given to us. You have blessed us to live freely, enjoy fellowship and worship You. Enable us to defend our faith and lead our lives like our fore-fathers who remained steadfast in Your faith despite several trials in life. We praise You, Father, Son and the Holy Spirit. Amen.*

.....

### Resolution

*We would make saintly people who worshipped and obeyed God and conquered adversity, as our role-model in life. We would adhere to God even in adversity.*

## Let Us Think

1. What is meant by Babylonian captivity?
2. What are the features of the of Babylonian exile?
3. Explain the circumstances that caused Babylonian exile of the Israelites.
4. What are the social and religious consequences of the exile on the Israelites?
5. What lessons do we learn from the experiences of exile of the Israelites?
6. How important was the Temple of God to the scattered Jews?
7. Which practice was kept up by the Jews even during the exile?
8. What are the difficulties faced by those who live discarding God? How can we overcome those difficulties?
9. What are the changes brought about in the spiritual life of the Israelites by Babylonian exile?
10. What was the popular belief about rulers who sat on the throne of David?
11. What are the factors that played a great role in the spiritual life of the Israelites?

## Activities

1. Read the following biblical passages and conduct a discussion on the important aspects of Babylonian exile.  
2 Kings 25:25, Isaiah 40:11-12, Psalm 137, Lamentations 4:1-10, Nehemiah 2
2. Read the book of Haggai and prepare a diary entry on the perspectives regarding reconstruction of the Temple and worship.
3. Read Ezra Chapter 1 and discuss the return of Israelites and the decree to rebuild the Temple.

## Further Reading

<b>Day</b>	<b>Morning</b>	<b>Evening</b>
Sunday	*	2 Kings 25
Monday	Isaiah 40	Psalm 137
Tuesday	Lamentations 4	1 Kings 8
Wednesday	2 Samuel 7	Lamentations 2
Thursday	1 Samuel 10	2 Kings 4
Friday	Acts 13	Ezra 3
Saturday	Nehemiah 2	*

## Chapter 4

# Israel and the Greek Civilization

**Learning Objectives:** To learn about the influence of Greek civilization on Israel and the changes brought about by this influence. Let us also look at the lack of faith and faulty practices that plagued Israel. Train yourself to tread in the path of God and obey His commandments. Never give up the faith and rituals we uphold.

**Verse to be Memorized:** “ If our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the furnace of blazing fire and out of your hand, O king, let him deliver us. But if not, be it known to you, O king, that we will not serve your gods and we will not worship the golden statue that you have set up.” (Daniel 3:17, 18).

**Learning Aids:** A chart containing features of Greek civilization, a picture of Emperor Alexander, a chart containing Hebrew and Greek alphabets, the Holy Bible, the liturgical book of Holy Eucharist, and the Book of Common Prayer.

### Introduction

Any social group or movement that originates and develops in the world comes under the influence of civilizations to which it comes into contact. The great civilizations that influenced the world include the Indus Valley, the Egyptian, the Hebrew, the Mesopotamian and the Greek civilizations. Among them, the Greek civilization has deeply influenced the Holy Bible and the Hebrew-Christian traditions. Greek civilization is often known after the famous emperor Alexander and his successors Ptolemy and Seleucids. Today we are going to learn how this civilization influenced Israel.

### The Lesson

The major global power mentioned in the Old Testament is Egypt. We read about Egypt in connection with Jacob and Joseph. Joseph lived with his father Jacob and his brothers in Egypt and later became slaves in that land (Genesis 47:27, Exodus 1:1-22). Moses grew up in this culture (Exodus 2:9-10:15) and it is considered that ten commandments and the books of laws originated as a result of the influence of this culture. Later Israel conquered the land of Canaan and stamped their cultural imprints upon this land. Kings and other leaders arose among them. subsequently Assyrians developed as a global power. They conquered and exerted their influence on Israel. The next political power to ascend and exert a great cultural influence was Mesopotamia. The Mesopotamians conquered the Jews and sent them into exile. Their rule lasted for about seventy years. They were followed by the Persians who influenced the Israelites culturally and politically. The Greek civilization ascended

under Alexander the Great and Greek cultural invasion of the world took place after this period. At the time of Jesus Christ Romans were the global power (St. Matthew 2:1, St. Luke 2:1) The Greek civilization exerted a great influence on the subsequent Jewish practices, beliefs and rituals as well as on the compilation of books and on language. Let us have an idea of the various aspects of Greek influence on Jews.

### **Influence of Greek Civilization**

One of the important characteristics of Greek civilization was the flourishing of philosophical schools beginning with Plato and Aristotle. Philosophy was used for finding the truth of life. The writings of Greek philosophers were much deep and insightful. They tried to assess the origin and meaning of human life, the laws, conditions and principles governing human nature and physical phenomena. Their language, culture, forms of art and sports developed to great levels. The Greek intolerance towards other religions and cultures and their linguistic rigidity were too much for the Jews.

At the end of fourth century BC (BC 333), Emperor Alexander, as part of his imperial invasion conquered Israel and other neighbouring countries. After that, Greek language and culture were imposed on them. The freedom of Jews in matters of worship decreased. Under the Greek influence the Jews gradually drifted away from commandments regarding circumcision, Jewish forms of worship, observance of Sabbath, and fidelity in married life.

The Greek influence was mostly visible in the new generation. Young people and children, people who didn't know Hebrew and people who knew only Greek came under the influence of Greek thought. The young people wanted to join the Greeks who participated nudely in various sporting events and for this purpose became ready to remove the mark of circumcision, the symbol of their covenant with God, from their body through surgery (Nehemiah 9:1-3, 13:23-25, Ezra 9:2, 10:2, Esther 1:22). Circumcision was the rite of removing the foreskin of young boys as part of the covenantal obligation from the time of Abraham (Genesis 17:10-11).

Because of the influence of Greek language and culture, the young generation drifted away from Scriptures and it became a great cultural shock to the Jews. The loss of practices like assembling in homes and places of worship for reading and interpretation of Scriptures, meditating over the commandments at the individual level and living accordingly resulted in deterioration of morality. As observance of Sabbath, offerings and daily worship at the synagogue deteriorated, there developed a lot of prejudice against the Greek culture. The Greek influence was evident in the people's concept of God, divine revelations and ways of divine enquiry.

### **Greek Translation of the Old Testament**

The first translation of the Old Testament was to the Greek. It was called 'The Septuagint'. It was done for the sake of Jews who were scattered in various places and



those who were attracted by Greek culture as well as those who grew up in Greek culture. The boundaries of Israel nation had been obliterated by Alexander's invasion. Consequently, the Hebrews learned Greek and was attracted to that culture. Under the inspiration of King Ptolemy II, seventy or seventy two scholars from Jerusalem reached Alexandria. The Greek translation of the Old Testament made by these scholars is known as 'The Septuagint.' The Greek domination reached its zenith during second century BC, the last phase of Greek influence. We shall learn about it in the next chapter.

### Hymn

(This hymn is recited during the Holy Eucharist on Khudosh Eetho Sunday)

(Sabhaye Nityam Nin....)

Holy Church your - gate-keepers' vigil  
Protects you ever- from the Evil One  
Simon laid the base - St. Paul sculptored it  
Beloved Yuhanon- rendered great service  
Haleluiah-vu-Haleluiah  
King David is the – harp of Lord's Spirit

.....

### Let Us Pray

*O Almighty God, we praise You for endowing us with a great tradition. Enable us to remain steadfast in this tradition and worship You. Transform those forces which harm into what is good for us. Remain our God for ever. We are Your inheritance. We shall Praise and thank You, Your Only Begotten Son and the Holy Spirit. Amen.*

.....

### Resolution

*We will never go away from the great tradition of the Church for the sake of material gains. We will never welcome forces which act against the faith of the Church.*

### Let Us Think

1. What are the global powers mentioned in the Old Testament?
2. Which are the major civilizations that influenced the world?
3. What were the main features of Greek civilization?
4. What was the influence of Greek civilization on the Jews?
5. What were the changes brought about by Greek culture in the social and spiritual life of Jews?

6. List the global powers who subjugated Israel.
7. How did the Greek imperial forces help the conservation of the Scriptures?
8. What were the features of main influences on Greek culture?
9. What moral downfall happened among the Jews as a result of the Greek influence?
10. What is Septuagint? For whom was this version made?

### **Activities**

1. Compare the generation of Jews who gave up mother tongue under the influence of Greek language and culture with the contemporary Nasrani Christians (St. Thomas Christians) and conduct a discussion in the class.
2. Write a note on the activities of Greeks during the period of Jesus Christ.
3. Collect pictures displaying the features of Greek culture and prepare an album.

### **Further Reading**

<b>Day</b>	<b>Morning</b>	<b>Evening</b>
Sunday	*	Genesis 47
Monday	Exodus 2	St. Matthew 2
Tuesday	St. Luke 2	Nehemiah 9
Wednesday	Ezra 9	Esther 1
Thursday	Nehemiah 13	Ezra 10
Friday	Acts 6	St. John 12
Saturday	Romans 1	*

## Chapter 5

# The Period of Maccabees

**Learning Objectives:** To learn about the Maccabees and the trials of the Jews. Let's understand the role of the Maccabees in the conservation of Jewish faith and traditions. Let's learn from the Book of Maccabees and remain steadfast in the faith and traditions of the Church.

**Verse to be Memorized:** "Now at the dedication of the wall of Jerusalem they sought out the Levites in all their places, to bring them to Jerusalem to celebrate the dedication with rejoicing, with thanksgivings and with singing, with cymbals, harps, and lyres" (Nehemiah 12:27).

**Learning Aids:** A poster showing idol worship, pictures of religious persecution, Apocrypha which contains the Book of Maccabees, the Holy Bible, the liturgical book of the Holy Eucharist, and Book of Common Prayer.

### Introduction

The later periods of Greek domination were too despotic. The period of Maccabees refers to the period of resistance of Jews against the Greeks. The Jews struggled to retain their lives, identity, culture, faith and rituals. Today let us learn about the features of this period.

### The Lesson

After the period of Alexander the Great (+323 BC), the Greek Empire was divided into several political units. Egypt came to be ruled by Ptolemys and provinces like Babylon, Syria and Asia Minor came under the control of Seleucids. The successors of Alexander tried to impose Greek culture in lands under their control. The most notorious among these successors was the Syrian administrator Antiochus Epiphanius (175-157 BC).

### The Tyrannical Reign of Antiochus

Antiochus Eppiphanius was interested in empire building and in cultural invasion. He led his forces to Palestine and conquered it. Later he fought against Egypt which had similar interests and consolidated his power over Judea. His plan was to bring Syria, Palestine and Egypt under a uniform administrative system. He wanted to unite them culturally so that the administration would be easier. But Antiochus found that cultural uniqueness, fondness for language, rigidity of religion and rituals and the laws of Jews were a hindrance to his administrative goals. Hence he resorted to tyranny against the Jews.

Antiochus declared himself to be the Incarnation of Zeus. He conquered the Temple of Jerusalem, converted it into the temple of Zeus and made offerings to please this pagan god. Thus pigs, the forbidden animal of the Jews, were sacrificed there (Dan. 9:27). Besides, the high-priests were appointed and removed indiscriminately and idolatry was popularised throughout the country. Antiochus also banned religious codes by prohibiting the Law of Moses, the Sabbath and circumcision.

### **Defence and Retaliation**

The Jewish society reacted in several ways to Greek social and religious domination. Some of the Jews gave up the Law of Moses in the light of King's punishments as well as enticements. Some others withdrew into the interiors of the forest and continued with the practices of their religion secretly. Some rigorously faithful Jews remained as a community known as 'Hasidim'. Yet others not only defended their faith but also launched counter attacks through guerilla warfare. We shall learn about this group of resisters.

### **Maccabees and the Defence of Jewish Faith**

The Maccabees were a rebellious group who fought against Antiochus. The Jewish priest Mattathias gave leadership to this rebellion at first. He bravely encountered and killed those who came with royal decree to make sacrifices to a pagan god and to compel the Jews to do so. Later he fled into the forests. He was aided in this rebellion by his sons Jude, John, Eliezer, Jonathan and Simon. Jude, also known as Maccabees, was the third among them. He became the leader of the Jewish resistance after the death of Mattathias. They first tried to follow and practice the commandments of the Scriptures and arrange their lives accordingly. They undertook circumcision and sacrifices.

Then they attempted to liberate Judea from the Greeks, reclaim the Temple of Jerusalem and reinstate the worship of Yahweh there. Thus in BC 165, the temple of Jerusalem was purified and rededicated to Yahweh. This event was commemorated in later periods as the Feast of Dedication (Hanukkah) mentioned in St. John 10:22. The rebellion of the Maccabees enabled the return of the Temple of Jerusalem, Judea and Samaria to Yahweh and the Scriptures. This rebellion is believed to have lasted successfully for about a century. It was carried on till the death of John Hyrcanus, the youngest of the Maccabee brothers in BC 103.

### **The Book of the Maccabees**

This book has various parts and contains the lives and struggles of Mathattias and his sons including Jude Maccabees. During the Greek domination they fiercely sustained the faith in Yahweh and the practice of the scriptures. This book is also known as the Book of Hasmonians. The book is considered to have four parts. However the Latin translation of the Holy Bible (The Vulgate) recognized only the

first two parts and hence the first two parts only have the official recognition of the Church. It was during this time the committed Jewish communities like the Pharisees and the Sadducees developed and affirmed their faith in Yahweh. The concept of attaining martyrdom to sustain true faith in case of inability to oppose enticements and suppression developed during this period. Moreover monotheistic faith was sought to be sustained even in different expressions.

### **Hymn**

(This hymn is sung in the morning worship of Holy Cross (Sleeba) season))

(Jeevakaram Mrutikaram...)

Martyrs saw – pathways twin ahead  
Those leading to life and death  
Narrow route – they did choose for them  
New life in God, to attain  
They came to fight – Evil one  
Victorious, they did come out  
Blessed the Name of the Lord  
Friend of all his worshippers  
Refuge for those who call Him!

.....

### **Let Us Pray**

*Our Father in heaven, abide in us. Make us firm and the stable in faith. Confirm us the faith You. Enable us to become firm and brave like the Maccabees and retain our faith without wavering. Help us to lead a true Christian life even in the face of adversities. We shall praise and worship You, the Father and the Holy Spirit. Amen.*

.....

### **Resolution**

*We would try to preserve the faith of the Church at any cost. We are proud of the great faith, rituals, practices and tradition of our Church.*

### **Let Us Think**

1. What are the major events during the days of the Maccabees?
2. What was the role played by the Maccabees in conserving Jewish faith?
3. What did the Jews commemorate through the Feast of Dedication?
4. Describe the content and significance of the book of Maccabees.

## Activites

1. Conduct a discussion in the class on the similarities and differences between Khudhos Eetho and Hoodhos Eetho.
2. Enact in the class the story of Mother, her seven children and their teacher Eleazar described in the Book of Maccabees.
3. Read the Book of Maccabees from the Apocrypha.

## Further Reading

<b>Day</b>	<b>Morning</b>	<b>Evening</b>
Sunday	*	St. John 20
Monday	Nehemiah 12:27, 47	1 Kings 8: 22-53
Tuesday	Esther 9	Exodus 23
Wednesday	Levictus 23	Numbers 29
Thursday	Deuteronomy 16	Numbers 15
Friday	Nehemiah 8	Ezra 3
Saturday	2 Kings 23	*

## Chapter 6

# The Conversion of St. Paul

Biblical References: Acts 9:1-20, 22:4-16, 26:9-18, Galatians 1: 11-17.

**Learning Objectives:** To compare Saul the ‘tormenter’ and the ‘converted’ St. Paul. Let us understand how Jesus Christ can transform an individual. To imitate the life of the transformed St. Paul.

**Verse to be Memorized:** “It is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me” (Galatians 2:20).

**Learning Aids:** The Holy Bible, the picture of St. Paul, the Liturgical Book of the Holy Eucharist, and the Book of Common Prayer.

### Introduction

Is it not that we remember St. Paul during our Holy Eucharist? Can you say when this commemoration is made? We make readings from the epistles of St. Paul in all our sacraments. Why do we do so? We do so because these epistles are essential for Christian faith and Christian way of life. St. Paul was once a person who hated Jesus Christ and who tormented Christians. How did St. Paul become the chief evangelist and activist of the Church? We shall learn how St. Paul was converted as an Apostle of Jesus Christ.

### The Lesson

The Hebrew name of St. Paul was Saul. He was known by this name in the early phase of his life. Paul is the Roman form of the same name and Saul became popular as Paul in the later phase of his life. Saul was born in the city of Tarsus in Cilicia Province. After his primary education in his hometown, Saul came to Jerusalem. He was trained under a scholarly Rabbi Gamaliel. He was steeped in the laws given by Moses and strictly followed the Jewish rituals and practices. He considered Jesus Christ as the enemy of the Jewish Scriptures and hated Christ. Hence he started attacking and tormenting the followers of Christ.

After tormenting the Christians in Jerusalem, Saul and his fellow men left for the ancient city of Damascus. Their aim was to wipe out Christianity from Damascus. The city lay two day journey away. When they reached near the city it was almost noon. Suddenly a miracle happened. A bright light was shone around them. Saul fell to the ground. He heard a voice “Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?” Saul was surprised and he asked “Who are you Lord?” And the Lord said “I am Jesus, whom

you are persecuting. But get up and enter the city and you will be told what you are to do” (Acts. 9:5).

The people who accompanied Saul saw the light and heard the voice. But they did not see Jesus Christ nor hear the message. Instead they observed changes in Saul. When Saul rose up from the ground he was blind. However he was happy at heart. Aided by those who accompanied him, Saul reached the house of Judas, a Christian in Damascus.

The leader of the Christian Church in Damascus at that time was Ananias. (This is not the same Ananias who met with disaster in Jerusalem). Ananias had a vision of the Lord and according to Lord’s instruction visited Saul and prayed by laying his hand on Saul’s head. Then something like scales fell off from Saul’s eyes and he regained his vision. Ananias baptized Saul and made him a member of the Christian Church. Only then did Saul end his fasting for three days and ate food.

Saul wanted to harm Christians and destroy Christianity. Saul lost his eye sight. But he acquired spiritual light and after Ananias prayed for him regained external vision as well. This incident transformed Saul’s life completely. He received his commandment of ministry directly from the resurrected Jesus Christ. Hence he became entitled to the position of an apostle. Later he asks those who criticized him: “Have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord?” (1 Corinthians 9:1). He claims that he is in no way inferior to the other apostles on the basis of his vision of Jesus Christ.

What changes were effected in Saul as a result of his experience? Not only his life but also his outlook and faith were transformed. Three main changes happened to him.

1. Paul became convinced that Jesus Christ who he had hated by him as his enemy was the Promised Saviour. Thus his belief regarding Jesus Christ was transformed.
2. Since Jesus had been crucified on a cross, Saul had thought that he was a condemned man (Deuteronomy 21:22). But after his vision Paul believed that Jesus Christ was the Saviour of the entire humankind.
3. Paul changed his notion that the Jews alone were God’s people. He understood that all who believe in Jesus Christ are people of God. He realized that the Christian Church was the true people of God, the New Israel.

### Hymn

This hymn is recited after the Evangelion during the Holy Eucharist on the feast of St. Peter and St. Paul (June 29)

(Mar Paulose! Punyanidhe....)

O... Saint Paul, treasure of virtues - intercede to -  
Lord Jesus on day of thy feast - for our sake



In - no time hearkens Jesus to thy prayers  
And grants in haste all that thou ask - for the Church.  
Let the Lord - grant Peace to Church and  
Remission - of sins - to children  
They shall ever observe thy Feast through - out the world.

.....

### **Let Us Pray**

*Peace unto you St. Paul, our saintly father and pinnacle of beauty. You are the great treasure of help to the aggrieved. As per the Lord's promise, Lord Jesus Christ dwells in You and you dwell in Him. O faithful treasurer of God! Pray for us so that we sinners became eligible for mercy and remission of sins. Help us by the strength that God has granted to you and enable us to imitate your saintly nature. Let your prayers be a fortress for us. Amen.*

.....

### **Resolution**

*We would imitate his noble life of Apostle St. Paul. We would seek refuge in the intercession of that Saint.*

### **Let Us Think**

1. Have you heard any instance of religious intolerance?
2. Is it right to hate and harm those who don't belong to your religion or faith?
3. What should be our approach to people of other faiths?
4. When do we remember St. Paul during the Holy Eucharist?
5. Name the birthplace of Saul.
6. Who was Saul's teacher?
7. What was the voice heard by Saul on his way to Damascus?
8. What was Saul's goal in travelling to Damascus?
9. What happened when he reached the city gates?

### **Activities**

1. Apostle St. Paul is said to have had frequent visions. How is this vision different from all others?
2. Role play St. Paul's description of his vision in the class.
3. Describe the changes that happened Paul as a result of his experience on way to Damascus.
4. Compare and contrast the character of Saul and St. Paul.

5. Read the epistle to the Philippians (Chapter 3) and prepare a list of the great qualities of St. Paul.

### Further Reading

<b>Day</b>	<b>Morning</b>	<b>Evening</b>
Sunday	*	Acts. 8:1-24
Monday	Acts. 8:25-40	Acts. 9:1-19
Tuesday	Acts. 22:4-16	Acts 26:9-18
Wednesday	Acts 27	Deuter 21
Thursday	1 Corinthians 9:1-14	1 Corinthians 9:15-27
Friday	Galatians 1:11-17	Galatians 2:16-21
Saturday	Philippians 3	*

## Chapter 7

# The First Missionary Journey of St. Paul (AD 47-49)

Biblical Passages: Acts 13:1-14:28

**Learning Objectives:** To learn about the first missionary journey of St. Paul. Also to find out the specialities of his evangelical mission.

**Verse to be Memorized:** And he said to them, “Go into all the world and proclaim the good news to the whole creation” (St. Mark 16:15)

**Learning Aids:** A map showing the places of the first missionary journey of apostle St. Paul. The Holy Bible, The Book of Holy Eucharist, Book of Common Prayer.

### Introduction

We travel around for various purposes. We travel either alone or as a group. Can you name a few journeys we often make? We go on picnics, study tour, pilgrimage or rally. Another different kind of journey is the journey for spreading the gospels. This is known as missionary journey. Jesus Christ himself first undertook a missionary trip. He went around the villages and towns of Galilee and Judea and taught and preached to the people (St. Mark 1:14-15). Lord Jesus Christ entrusted the Church to continue this mission. The apostles continued with this mission faithfully and earnestly. We have got detailed information regarding the ministry of Apostle St. Paul. We can read about it in the Acts of the Apostles. We read in that book that Apostle St. Paul undertook three missionary journeys. Today we are learning about the first missionary journey of St. Paul.

### The Lesson

The following are the general features of the missionary journeys.

1. It was the Church that authorized the apostles to undertake evangelical trips.
2. They were inspired and aided by the Holy Spirit during their journey and ministry.
3. They began their work in the towns.
4. They first evangelized the Jews and later turned to the gentiles.
5. They travelled and spread the Gospel not individually but in groups.
6. Along with preaching the Gospel they healed the sick.

These principles should become a model and inspiration for all missionary activities.

The first missionary journey of St. Paul began from Antioch, the capital city of Syria. The church in Antioch prayed and sent Paul and Barnabas for mission activities. Mark, also known as John, joined them in order to assist them. They first went to Cyprus, the native place of Barnabas. At a place called Paphos, the deputy of the country Sergius Paulus was converted to Christianity. Thereafter the apostle is known by his Roman name 'Paul.' The apostle took this name perhaps to show his respect to Sergius Paulus, who was the first to be converted as a result of his ministry. Or else he might have wanted to declare that he was the apostle of the gentiles.

Up to this juncture, Barnabas had been the leader of the journey. But after this point, Paul became the leader. The references made thereafter is to 'Paul and Barnabas.' It was Paul who preached at all places. When they reached Perga in Asia Minor, Mark departed from them. We read that Mark's return to Jerusalem was not liked by Paul.

Paul and Barnabas continued their journey and reached Antioch in Pisidia. They went to the Jewish synagogue in Antioch on a Sabbath day. The sermon of Paul at the synagogue is significant (Acts. 13:17-41). He quoted the Jewish Scriptures, history of Israel and words of prophets to prove that Jesus is the promised Saviour. He exhorted people to come to salvation through belief in Jesus Christ. Several people believed in Jesus Christ. But the Jews vehemently opposed them and so they had to depart for Iconium, located about 100 kilometers away.

In Iconium too, Paul went to the synagogue of the Jews and preached. He also performed several miracles there. He relied on God's grace and preached with great skill and effectiveness. The Jews here also became envious. They caused division among people and brought harm to the apostles. The apostles left for Lystra and performed a miracle there. They healed a cripple, who had never walked since birth. When the gentiles of the land saw this, they thought that Paul and Barnabas were two gods who had come down in the likeness of men. The gentiles tried to worship and make sacrifices to the apostles. However Paul prevented them and said that they too were human beings like them. He asked them to turn away from vanities and exhorted them to worship the Living God who created heaven and earth. Here too the Jews who saw their successful ministry, and started create trouble. They persuaded the people to stone the apostle and throw him out of the city.

The apostles survived their oppositions and went to the city of Derbe. There too several people heard the gospel, repented and joined the church. Then the apostles returned again to the cities where they had been attacked and opposed. This reveals three things.

1. They were not in the habit of withdrawing on the face of opposition. They thought that it was a blessing to suffer for the sake of Jesus Christ.
2. They had great care and concern for the churches they founded and this prompted them to revisit the places. They wanted to make the faithful bold enough to withstand opposition from Jews and opponents.

3. In order to carry on the ministry of Jesus Christ, they ordained and appointed elders in every church they had founded. Thus the work in every church was set in order and arranged before they returned.
4. Paul had began his journey from Antioch. He returned to Antioch and informed the church there about his journey and work at various places.

What do we learn from the first missionary journey of St. Paul?

1. This missionary journey revealed and confirmed St. Paul’s statement, ”For I am not ashamed of the gospel” (Romans 1:16).
2. He not only preached the Gospel but revealed the strength of God’s kingdom by healing the sick.
3. The apostle’s work was not solitary; it was founded on fellowship. When Jesus Christ sent His disciples He also sent them as groups of two (St. Luke 10:1).
4. The apostle thought that it was a blessing to suffer for Jesus Christ and the Kingdom of God. This attitude shall become an inspiration to all believers.

### Hymn

(This hymn is recited instead of ‘Hearken gracious Lord’ during the Holy Eucharist on the feast of St. Peter and St. Paul (June 29).

St. Paul during his mission trips  
reached gentiles and spread Christ’s gospels  
W-ithout any rest – and full of zest  
He tread all paths  
And reached all lands.

.....

### Let Us Pray

(Book of Common Prayer, Prayer to the Saints)

*O, Apostle St. Paul, our beloved father! Let God turn us towards your goodness and make us eligible for His mercy and compassion by virtue of your prayers. Amen.*

.....

### Resolution

*We would follow the good example of St. Paul in evangelism.*

### Let Us Think

1. Say a few words about Paul’s missionary journeys.
2. Where did the first missionary journey begin from?

3. Who all travelled together?
4. What were the fruits of this journey?
5. Explain St. Paul's ministry at Antioch.
6. What was the miracle performed at Lystra?

### **Activities**

1. Imagine that you are St. Paul and you made the first missionary journey. Write a travelogue as a first person narrative and present it in the class.
2. On a map, mark the places St. Paul visited during his first missionary journey.

### **Further Reading**

<b>Day</b>	<b>Morning</b>	<b>Evening</b>
Sunday	*	Acts 13:1-12
Monday	Acts 13:13-25	Acts 13:26-39
Tuesday	Acts 13:40-52	Acts 14:1-7
Wednesday	Acts 14:8-18	Acts 14:19-28
Thursday	St. Mark 1	Romans 1
Friday	St. Luke 10	I Corinthians 9:16
Saturday	Romans 15:22-23	*

## Chapter 8

# The Second Missionary Journey of St. Paul (AD 49-52)

Biblical Passage: Acts 15:35; 18:22

**Learning Objectives:** We shall learn about the second missionary journey of St. Paul. We have to compare the ancient modes of travel and the present modes of travel. We shall try to understand the sufferings of our Apostles in evangelical work. We shall also develop interest in mission activities.

**Verse to be Memorized:** “If I proclaim the gospel, this gives me no ground for boasting, for an obligation is laid on me, and woe to me if I do not proclaim the gospel!” (1 Corinthians 9:16).

**Learning Aids:** A map showing the places where St. Paul visited during his second missionary journey, the Holy Bible, the liturgical book of the Holy Eucharist, and the book of Common Prayer.

### Introduction

Do you know how people travelled during olden days? If they went by land, they mostly went on foot or on back of horses or donkeys. There were no other vehicles available in those days. Those who travelled through the desert used camels. Voyage by sea was often made on masted ships. If the winds blew the other way, the voyage would become dangerous. St. Paul was a great traveller. He travelled around to preach the gospels and establish churches. Not long after the first journey, he set out for his second journey. Today let us learn about the second missionary journey of St. Paul.

### The Lesson

There arose a difference of opinion between Paul and Barnabas at the beginning of the journey. Barnabas wanted to take Mark along with them. But Paul opposed this suggestion (Acts 15:37-38). Mark had been criticized for withdrawing midway from work during the first journey. Hence Paul refused to take Mark along with him. As a result of the contention Paul and Barnabas parted ways. Barnabas took his relative, Mark to Cyprus and carried on the mission work.

Paul travelled with Silas. Silas was a citizen of Rome and a member of the church of Jerusalem. His Roman name was Silvanus and Paul used this Roman name (1 Thessalonians 1:1, 2 Thessalonians 1:1). Paul and Silas first went to Syria and Cilicia (the hometown of Paul).

After that they visited the churches they had established during the first journey. After visiting Derbe they went to Lystra. Paul wanted to strengthen and encourage the

believers. So, he visited the churches again. At Lystra a youngman named Timothy was selected for evangelical activities.

Timothy's father was a Greek gentile and his mother, Eunice was a devout Jew. Paul must have converted this family during his first missionary trip. Paul took Timothy along with him during the second missionary journey. The three of them travelled from Lystra to Iconium and Antioch (Pisidia). He explained the decisions of the council of Jerusalem at all these places (The council of Jerusalem is discussed in detail in a following lesson).

The missionaries did not travel on their own will. Instead they were delegated and controlled by the Holy Spirit. We read that the Holy Spirit forbade them to travel to certain places (Acts 16:7). They reached Troas where St. Paul had a vision. A man from Macedonia was seen requesting them "Come over into Macedonia and help us." Paul decided to comply and go to Macedonia. Luke joined them in their journey. They boarded a ship from Troas the next day and went to Neapolis and then to Philippi, the chief city of Macedonia.

### **St. Paul at Philippi (Acts 16:12-20)**

Three notable incidents happened at Philippi.

**1. The Conversion of Lydia:** Lydia was a pious woman from Thyatira. She was a vendor of purple clothes. There was no synagogue at that place and hence women assembled by a river for worship. Paul and Silas reached there on a Sabbath and preached. Lydia was converted by the preaching of Paul and she and her household were baptized. She is often described as the first convert in Europe.

**2. Healing the Soothsaying Slave Girl:** There was a slave girl who was possessed with a spirit of divination. Her masters gained a lot of money by her sooth saying. Paul cast out the demon in her and as a consequence the masters lost their source of income. They became furious, caught Paul and Silas and took them to the magistrates. The magistrates rent off their clothes and ordered that they be flogged. Finally they were thrown into prison.

**3. Conversion of the Philippian Jailor:** In jail, Paul and Silas prayed and sang praises to God at midnight. Suddenly there was an earthquake and the doors of the prison were opened. The jailor on seeing this was alarmed. He thought that the prisoners might have escaped. So he drew out his sword and prepared to kill himself. Then Paul prevented him and assured him that none of the prisoners had escaped. Paul baptized him and his family.

Paul and Silas were set free from prison. They passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia and reached Thessalonica. Paul, as was his practice, went to the synagogue of the Jews and preached about Jesus Christ. This was repeated on three consecutive Sabbath days. As a result several people came to believe in Jesus Christ and were



baptized. This created a lot of commotion among the Jewish rulers. Since they could not catch Paul and Silas, they produced their host Jason before the rulers of the city. Paul and Silas left for Beroea that night itself. The Jews at Beroea were quite noble. They received the word of God gladly. Several people became believers and were baptized. But when the Jews of Thessalonica came to know about this, they came over to Beroea and stirred up the people. Paul went away from the place to Athens. But Silas and Timotheus remained in Beroea. Paul waited for them in Athens.

### **Paul at Athens**

Athens was the capital city of Greece and had attained a lot of educational and cultural progress. There were several philosophers living in the city. There were idols of several gods. Paul went to the most important centre of the city and preached, the gospel of Jesus Christ. His sermon was highly philosophical and only very few people became believers. Paul could not found a church in Athens.

### **Paul at Corinth**

Paul went from Athens to Corinth. This city was a commercial centre and was notorious for its immorality. Corinthians had been a synonym for immorality. Here Paul resided with Aquila and his wife Priscilla. Like Paul, they too were tentmakers by occupation. They had migrated there from Rome and might have been converted to Christianity in Rome itself. That might have been the reason why Paul decided to stay with them.

At first, Paul preached in the synagogue of the Jews. When he faced opposition there, he went to the gentiles and worked among them for about one and a half years. When the opposition became severe he left the place. Aquilla and Priscilla followed him till Ephesus. Paul sailed from Caesarea to Antioch through Galatia and Phrygia. There the second missionary journey of Paul came to an end.

Let us now evaluate the second missionary journey of Paul.

1. He revisited the places he had gone to earlier. The aim of the visit is to confirm and strengthen the new church community in faith.
2. He did not stay at one place for a long time. Instead, he went from one place to another. He was always in search of new places where the Gospel had not reached.
3. His initial work in every place was among the Jews. It was easier for them to understand about Jesus Christ. Then he turned to the gentiles and as the 'apostle of the gentiles' evangelised them also.
4. It is estimated that the second journey lasted for about three years. The apostle thought that his success was because 'God stood with him and acted.'

## Hymn

(This hymn is sung during the Holy Eucharist on the Feast of St. Peter and St. Paul, June 29)

(Manninum Mazhikkum Naatha...)

O Lord of Earth and Oceans  
Praise unto Thee for choosing  
The poorest men for preaching  
Thy gospels a-round the world.  
Called St. Peter from the sea,  
Transformed St. Paul in the street.  
And made them the sculptors of  
Apostolic - Holy - Church.

---

## Let Us Pray

*O Lord Jesus Christ, You have entrusted the true faith of the Church in the hands of Paul. Enable us to hold on to it against all odds. Enable us to live and die in that faith. Make us worthy of praising you with and amidst the apostles. Amen.*

---

## Resolution

*We learned about the hardships suffered by Paul for the sake of Jesus Christ. We would seek refuge in the intercession of St. Paul who suffered so much for the spreading of the Church.*

## Let Us Think

1. What was cause of the difference of opinion between St. Paul and Barnabas?
2. Who was Silas?
3. Why did Paul revisit the Churches he established in different places?
4. When did the Holy Spirit forbid Paul from going?
5. Describe the three important incidents during their journey to Philippi.
6. Describe the incident of conversion of the jailor.
7. What were the activities of Paul and Silas after they were set free from prison?
8. What was the attitude of the Jews of Berea?
9. Say a couple of sentences about Athens.

## Activities

1. Describe the second missionary journey of St. Paul.
2. Sketch a map of the places through which St. Paul travelled during his second missionary journey.
3. What lessons can evangelists who work for Jesus Christ learn from the second missionary journey of Paul?

## Further Reading

<b>Day</b>	<b>Morning</b>	<b>Evening</b>
Sunday	*	Acts 15:35-40
Monday	Acts 16:1-10	Acts 16:16-40
Tuesday	Acts 16:19-34	Acts 17:16-37
Wednesday	Acts 17:1-9	1 Corinthians 9:15-27
Thursday	Acts 17:16-21	Acts 17:22-34
Friday	Acts 18:1-4	Acts 18:15-11
Saturday	Acts 18:12-17	*

## Chapter 9

# The Third Missionary Journey of St. Paul (AD 53-57)

Biblical passage: Acts. 18:23-21:16

**Learning Objectives:** To learn about the third missionary journey of St. Paul. Also about the details of Paul's work and develop our interest in preaching the Gospel.

**Verse to be Memorized:** "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: It is the power of God for salvation to everyone who has faith; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek" (Romans 1:16).

**Learning Aids:** A map showing places where St. Paul travelled during the third missionary journey, the Holy Bible, the Book of Holy Eucharist, and the Book of Common Prayer.

### Introduction

Both the journeys begin from the same place, Antioch. St. Paul's was always committed to his work. He was very enthusiastic about preaching the Gospel and bringing people into salvation in Jesus Christ. With this aim in mind, he travelled to various new places. He also revisited the churches he had founded during his first missionary trip and confirmed them in faith. He was careful about post-mission care was well. It was not mere church-planting. The believers of the church in Jerusalem were suffering from famine. Paul made a third missionary journey with the aim of collecting financial help for them. He visited various churches during his trip. Today we are going to learn about the details of Paul's third missionary journey.

### The Lesson

The third missionary journey of St. Paul too began from Antioch. He visited the churches he had founded during the first journey and reached Ephesus. The apostle had visited these places during the second journey also, but hadn't stayed there for long. But during the third trip he lived there for about three years and continued with his work. Let us look at Ephesus in the map. Look at the map of places travelled by St. Paul appended to the Holy Bible. Look at the location of Ephesus and its direction and distance from Antioch. Ephesus was the capital of the province of Asia Minor. It was a rich and prosperous city. There was a huge temple dedicated to the gentile goddess Diana there. This temple was as important to the Greeks as the temple of Jerusalem was to the Jews. There were several superstitions and evil practices among the people here.

Paul lived and worked here for about three years. He had several bitter experiences at Ephesus and suffered a lot of physical and mental hardships. His life was in danger.

Paul mentions these experiences in his epistle to the Corinthians (2 Corinthians 1:8-10). He was even put in jail.

The important events that happened when St. Paul was living in Ephesus were:

1. There were twelve disciples of John the Baptist living in Ephesus. Paul baptized them and made them Christians.
2. **The Conversion of Exorcists:** Certain Jews who were exorcists used to perform miracles in the name of Jesus Christ. But a person with an evil spirit in him leaped upon them and harmed them. Paul's preaching led to their conversion to Christianity. They burned their books of magic in public. This shows that their conversion was total.
3. **The Uproar of the Silversmiths at Ephesus:** When the Gospel spread around, several people came forward to give up idol worship. This caused great financial loss to silversmiths who made and sold small silver idols of Artemis (Diana). Their leader called the workmen together and caused a lot of uproar in the city. This grew into a riot against Paul and his fellowmen. The chief of the city appeased the rioters through his diplomacy.

Paul understood that it was not wise for him to remain in Ephesus. After addressing the church community he departed for Macedonia by sea. While living in Macedonia he tried to spread the Gospel in the neighboring regions. St. Paul's plan was to go to Jerusalem after his Macedonian mission. He had to give the financial aid he had collected for the church at Jerusalem. For this purpose the apostle took representatives of various churches along with him to Jerusalem.

### **Paul at Troas (Acts 20:7-12)**

An important incident which happened in Troas was the gathering of all disciples together in the upper chamber on a Sunday to break bread. This incident reveals three things.

- a. The gathering on Sundays had begun in the church.
- b. Worship means 'breaking of bread' or celebration of the Holy Eucharist.
- c. Along with breaking of bread there was preaching as well.

Here was Paul bringing a dead person back to life.

### **Paul at Meletus**

Paul travelled by sea from Troas and after visiting various places reached Meletus. Meletus was near Ephesus and the elders of the church from Ephesus came and visited Paul. Paul made a heart rending speech to them (Acts 20:18-35). He recounted his experiences and instructed the elders how to do their ministry. They are chosen by the Holy Spirit as overseers to lead the Church of God. The apostle entrusts the church at Ephesus in the hands of God and bids farewell to the church leaders.

## Paul at Tyre

The voyage was along several islands. Paul was bound for Syria. The ship anchored at Tyre, the principal port city of Phoenicia. It had been a famous centre of the Palestinians, since the Old Testament times. Paul and his companions stayed there for about a week. He could meet and interact with the Christians in the city.

## Paul at Caesarea

Paul and his men travelled from Tyre and reached Ptolemais in the south. They stayed there for only a day and went to Caesarea. Philip, the evangelist had returned to Caesarea after the conversion of the Ethiopian Eunuch and was living in the city. Paul and his companion resided in the house of Philip, the evangelist.

While they were residing with Philip, a Christian prophet from Judea named Agabas came there. He prophesied that Paul would be imprisoned in Jerusalem. The companions who heard these words forbade the Apostle from going to Jerusalem. But Paul thought that it was a blessing to suffer for the sake of the Lord Jesus and continued his journey. He travelled from Caesarea to Jerusalem by land. Majority of people in the church at Jerusalem were Jewish Christians. Paul and his companions took lodging in the house of Mnason of Cyprus (Acts 21:16). Thus St. Paul's third missionary journey ends in Jerusalem.

What do we learn from the third missionary journey of St. Paul?

1. This journey lasted for about four years. During this journey, Paul lived in Ephesus for about three years. He tarried so long at Ephesus perhaps because of the opposition and imprisonment he suffered there.
2. Most members of the churches he visited were converted gentiles. Paul collected financial aid for the church in Jerusalem from these churches. He reached Jerusalem with the money he collected.
3. St. Paul wrote epistles to various churches (Eg: Corinthians, Romans) from various places during this journey.
4. The apostle is not detained by warnings of hardships and tribulations from going to Jerusalem. This reveals his determination and firmness of faith.

## Hymn

(This hymn is sung after the Evangelion on the Day of commemoration of a particular saint) (Mar Paulose Siddhaa Bhagyam...)

O apostle (St. Paul) – “Bliss to you” – says the Church,  
“You will attain heavenly bliss – Jesus has pro-mised”  
Bliss since you have – eschewed the mortal world  
Bliss since you have – embraced Lord Jesus  
Blessed is the hour when – Lord Jesus calls us.  
“come and inherit the world – of Eternal Life”  
Halleluiah – Let your prayer guard us.

.....  
**Let Us Pray**

*O Lord Jesus, Your apostles have spread the gospels around the world and led many people to salvation. Similarly, enable us to love You to do good deeds so that we too will become the agents of salvation for several others. Amen*

.....

**Resolution**

*We would seek refuge in the intercession of the great apostle St. Paul and try to imitate his life in our lives*

**Let Us Think**

1. Where did St. Paul begin his third missionary journey from?
2. Give a small discription of Ephesus.
3. Explain the work of St. Paul at Ephesus.
4. Describe the important incidents that happened during Paul's stay at Ephesus?
5. Who did Paul bring back to life at Treas?
6. What all things happened at the gathering of disciples in the upper chamber?

**Activities**

1. Write an essay on the objectives of the third missionary journey of St. Paul, the places he visited and the sufferings he underwent.
2. Draw a map of the important places visited by Paul during the three missionary journeys he undertook. (Refer to the map given at the end of the Holy Bible)
3. Conduct a discussion in the class regarding the third missionary journey of St. Paul.
4. Prepare a note of the incidents which reveal the determination and firmness of faith of Paul.

**Further Reading**

<b>Day</b>	<b>Morning</b>	<b>Evening</b>
Sunday	*	Acts 18:23-28
Monday	Acts 19:1-7	Acts 19:8-12
Tuesday	Acts 19:31-41	Acts 20:1-6
Wednesday	Acts 19:31-41	Romans 1:8-17
Thursday	Acts 20:7-12	Acts 20:13-16
Friday	Acts 20:17-35	Acts 20:36-38
Saturday	Acts 21:1-6	*

## Chapter 10

# The Council of Jerusalem

Biblical Passage - Acts 15:1-29

**Learning Objectives:** Let us understand the background, the procedure, deliberations and decisions of the Council of Jerusalem. Let us also try to understand the importance of this council in history of the Christian Church.

**Verse to be Memorized:** “For neither circumcision nor uncircumcision is anything; but a new creation is everything!” (Galatians 6:15).

**Learning Aids:** The Holy Bible, the Book of Holy Eucharist, and the Book of Common prayer.

### Introduction

The gathering of the bishops of the Church is called a synod or council. There are three Great Councils of Nicea, Constantinople and Ephesus. A council is often known after the place where it is held. It is the fifth Thubden (Diptych) which refers to these councils. Before these General Councils, another synod was held in Jerusalem in the New Testament times. It was the first of its kind in history of Christianity. This council is known as the Council of Jerusalem. Today we are trying to find out the details of this synod.

### The Lesson

The Council of Jerusalem held in AD 50 is the first council of the Church. In the beginning the members of the Christian Church were mainly from the Jewish community. Later gentiles were admitted to the Church. Then the question of how these gentiles should be admitted to the Church arose. Two opinions came up regarding the manner of admission. Some people argued that the gentiles needed to be circumcised before they were baptized and admitted into the Church. Those who wanted to uphold the Jewish practice of circumcision were called Judaisers. Some others argued that there was no need for circumcision because those who accepted the faith in Jesus Christ were free from Jewish scriptures. The Judaisers were in majority in Jerusalem.

When these divergent opinions arose in the Church, the elders assembled in Jerusalem to take a decision in the matter. Hence this gathering is described as the first council of the Church. The Council of Jerusalem was presided over by St. James, the Episcopa of the church of Jerusalem. Eventhough he was not one among the twelve disciples of Jesus Christ, he was revered as the “brother of Jesus Christ.”



The first to speak at the council was St. Peter. He talked about the liberty provided by the Gospel. He had taken the initiative in admitting gentiles to the Church. God had delegated him to do so. He said that the religious practices of the Jews were “an unbearable yoke.” Gentiles who believe and join the Church should not be burdened with that yoke. The only basis of salvation is the belief in Lord Jesus Christ.

St. Paul, the Apostle of the gentiles, and Barnabas supported the view of St. Peter. They described the miracles and wonders of God during their work among the gentiles. Finally St. James who presided over the council declared the final decision. He consolidated the discussions that took place and gave his verdict that the gentiles who embrace Christian faith need not observe the religious practices of the Jews. Hence there was no need for them to be circumcised. However they should abide by certain principles. They should abstain from idolatry and meats offered to the idols. Secondly, they should abstain from fornication and should be disciplined in matters of sex. Thirdly, even though they can eat meat, they should avoid the meat of strangled animals. The council unanimously accepted the opinion of St. James. They declared that since the conclusions were made under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

Let us look at the decisions taken at the Council of Jerusalem.

1. Those gentiles who join Christian Church need not be circumcised. This proves that Christian Church is not a vestige of Jewish religion. It is different and has an identity of its own.
2. The converts from gentiles should abstain from idols, fornication and strangled animals. This decision was quite necessary in the circumstances of those days. The prohibitions regarding food in those days are not relevant today.
3. The decisions taken were recorded and are sent to various churches. In those days there was no postal system and hence the letters were not sent by post. Instead some representatives from the church of Jerusalem were selected to carry the letters to various churches by hand.

Let us try to understand the significance of the Council of Jerusalem. The council seems to give a few lessons to the churches.

1. Issues and problems are likely to arise within the Church because they are run by human beings who are fallible. What is more important is how to solve these problems.
2. Issues should be settled through proper discussions, in the atmosphere of prayer and inspired by the Holy Spirit. Decisions should not be thrust upon others. Instead the issue should be addressed through mutual respect and understanding.
3. The path of reconciliation should always be followed. There should be a readiness for compromise without deviating from the fundamental principles.
4. Taking decisions is not sufficient. Steps should be taken to implement them.

## Hymn

(This hymn is sung during The Holy Eucharist on the day of commemorating Church Fathers and Teachers)

(Maanam Ningalkkekiyataam...)

Let prosperity reign in the-  
church that reverts you ever  
Let Lord save from treachery-  
those who commemorate you.

.....

## Let Us Pray

(This prayer is said during the vespers on the day of commemorating Church Fathers and Teachers)

*O Lord Jesus Christ, enable us to remain steadfast in the teachings of our Church Fathers and Teachers who gave us the true faith and tended us on good pastures. Let peace and tranquility be promoted in the church by virtue of their prayers. Amen.*

.....

## Resolution

*We have read the decisions taken in the council of Jerusalem. We have understood that the gentiles who came to Christian faith in the early Church had to suffer a lot and the decisions taken against the Judaizers in the Council of Jerusalem helped the growth of the Church. We will never give up the true faith we received from our Fathers. We would uphold the Orthodox faith for ever.*

## Let Us Think

1. What are the circumstances under which the Council of Jerusalem was convened?
2. How did Peter describe the religious practices of the Jews?
3. What was Paul's opinion regarding the issues discussed by the council?
4. Describe the ideas put forward by St. James at the Council of Jerusalem.
5. What are the three principles that the gentiles who accepted Christianity were asked to observe?
6. What were the decisions of the Council of Jerusalem?

## Activities

1. Write the decisions of the Council of Jerusalem on a chart.
2. Imagine that you presided over the Council of Jerusalem. What would have been your experiences at the council? Prepare a write up.

3. Make a presentation of the Council of Jerusalem in the class by taking up various roles.

### Further Reading

<b>Day</b>	<b>Morning</b>	<b>Evening</b>
Sunday	*	Galatians 6:11-16
Monday	Acts 15:1-4	Acts 15:5-7
Tuesday	Acts 15:8-11	Acts 15:12-13
Wednesday	Acts 15:14-17	Acts 15:18-21
Thursday	Acts 15: 22-26	Acts 15:27-29
Friday	Acts 15:30-34	Acts 15:36-40
Saturday	Acts 16:1-10	*

## UNIT 2

# PRAYER

### Chapter 11

## The Litany used in the Vespers

**Learning Objectives:** Understand the meaning and significance of the litany said at the end of the vespers. To encourage recite this litany everyday.

**Verse to be Memorized:** “Hear, O Lord, and have mercy upon me: O Lord, be my helper” (Psalm 30:10).

**Learning Aids:** Book of Common Prayer and the Holy Bible

### Introduction

We do pray together every morning and evening at our homes. Don't we? won't every one in your family join in that prayer? At what time do you usually say your evening prayers at home? What prayer book do you follow? At the end of the vespers and the matins you will find a 'litany.' Today we are going to learn the litany given in the vespers.

### The Lesson

Litanies are prayers in which a leader would recite a verse and is followed by a response from others. the prayers that can be said at the end of the prayers of canonical hours are often given in the form of Litany (See the Book of common prayer). Today let us recite of litany, “O thou, who art the one true God...” used in the vespers. The teacher would recite the verse of the leader. Let us all recite the words of response together.

### The Litany used in Vespers

Leader: O, our Father who art in heaven!

Others: Have mercy upon us.

Leader: O Son of God who art the Saviour of the world.

Others: Have mercy upon us.

Leader: O God, the Holy Spirit.

Others: Have mercy upon us.

Leader: O Holy Trinity, the Triune God.

Others: Have mercy upon us.

Leader: From all evils and wickedness, from malice and from evil thoughts, from devilish passions and from evil dreams, from all hidden snares, from evil associations and from all temptations of the world.

Others: Save us all, O merciful Lord.

Leader: From all enemies, from treacherous and deceitful companions, from temptations of the devil and from the wickedness of men.

Others: Save us all, O merciful Lord.

Leader: From rods of rage, from sudden death, from anger, from hatred, from lightnings and thunder-bolts, from plagues.

Others: Save us all, O merciful Lord.

Leader: From hellfire, from unbearable pains, from undying worms, from unquenchable fire, from lamentations and from bitter occurrences.

Others: Save us all, O merciful Lord.

Leader: From evil hours, from tormenting powers, from famine, from fears, from sudden shocks, from all unbearable punishments, from Thy words saying, 'Depart, from me, I know you not,' and from all that shall separate us from Thee.

Others: Save us all, O merciful Lord.

Leader: O Lord, bless us all by virtue of the fellowship and intercession of St. Mary, Mother of God and our Fathers, Apostle St. Thomas, St. Yeldho Mar Baselios, St. Gregorios and St. Dionysius and all other saints.

Others: O Lord Jesus Christ, accept our supplications.

Leader: O Lord Jesus Christ, bless and protect us, cast the light of Thy face upon us and bless us, turn Thy face upon us and grant us peace.

Others: O Lord Jesus Christ, accept our supplications.

Belief in the Holy Trinity is fundamental to the Orthodox faith. Hence the prayer begins by addressing the Holy Trinity and is a proclamation of faith in the Holy Trinity. The first supplication follows the prayer to the Holy Trinity. We pray that we be saved from all evils, all evil thoughts and deadly passions. The greatest ambition of our life should be sanctity of life. We require the grace of God to resist temptations of the devil and save ourselves from sins and impurity. This prayer for a pure life should be foremost in our thoughts and prayers. Humans had been created in God's own image. But he had lost that divine image because of his sins. Hence our ultimate aim is to return to that divine image. This is known as 'Theosis' in the Orthodox spiritual tradition. The first supplication in this litany is a prayer for that process of Theosis.

This is followed by supplications which include various needs of personal life. The leader recites each verse and others respond by saying “Save us all, O merciful Lord.”

The prayer ‘save us from hellfire, from undying worms, from unquenchable fire’, is meant to remind us of the Last Judgment. We pray that we shall be saved from the places reserved for those on the left on the day of the Last Judgment. Death, Hell and Heaven shall always in our minds always remember. The prayer ends by seeking the intercession of St. Mary and all the saints. This part reminds us that all prayers are said in the fellowship with saints. In the list of saints, along with St. Yeldho Mar Baselios, St. Gregorios of Parumala and Mar Dionysus of Vattasseril, one can also add the interceding saint of one’s parish as well.

### Hymn

The day is waning O my Lord  
We have laboured all the day  
And come to You for our rest.  
Free from all material thoughts  
And with a very tranquil mind  
Let us Lord come before You  
Lord of world and salvation  
At this hour of evening  
Gladly we praise Your mercy  
Praise ever for the Father and  
Christ and the Holy Spirit  
Haleluiah... Haleluiah

.....

### Let us pray

*O Lord Jesus Christ bless us to grow into your image through incessant prayers and sanctity of life.*

.....

### Resolution

*We will say our vespers together everyday. We would reciting it, understanding its real meaning.*

### Let Us Think

1. What is meant by a ‘litaney?’
2. Find out instances where litanies are used in Orthodox worship (At least three instances).
3. What is meant by ‘Theosis’ in the Orthodox spiritual tradition?

## Activities

1. Say this prayer in the form of a litany (One should become the leader and others should say response. This can be repeated by making another person the leader).
2. Compare this litany with the prayer, 'O Thou, who art one true God...' given in the common prayers for evening.
3. Find out other prayers which declare faith in the Holy Trinity and prepare a list.
4. Say the verse that attracted you most in the litany of the vespers. Write this verse in your diary.

## Further Reading

<b>Day</b>	<b>Morning</b>	<b>Evening</b>
Sunday	*	Psalm 34:1-5
Monday	St. Matthew 5:21-26	Psalm 34:6-10
Tuesday	St. Matthew 5:27-32	Psalm 34: 10-15
Wednesday	St. Matthew 5:33-37	Psalm 34: 16-22
Thursday	St. Matthew 5:38-42	Psalm 84:1-7
Friday	St. Matthew 5:43-48	Psalm 84:8-12
Saturday	St. Matthew 6:1-4	*

## Chapter 12

# The Litany used in the Matins

**Learning Objectives:** To understand the meaning and significance of the litany used at the end of the matins. To say this prayer daily during the morning worship.

**Verse to be Memorized:** “Yet have thou respect unto the prayer of thy servant, and to his supplication, O Lord my God, to hearken unto the cry and to the prayer, which thy servant prayeth before thee today” (1 Kings 8:28).

**Learning Aids:** The Book of Common Prayer, The Holy Bible

### Introduction

We learned the litany used in vespers in the previous lesson. in the Book of common prayer we have a litany given at the end of matins. Do you say your morning prayers regularly? After having studied Sunday school up to Class IX, you are sure to say your morning prayers. Do all members of your family pray together? The litany we are learning today is said along with our prayers for Matins.

### The Lesson

In the previous lesson, we learnt a litany. Litanies are prayers in which the leader recites a supplication followed by others reciting a verse of response in chorus. We use prayers of this kind during the service of Feast of the Denha (Epiphany), during funeral service, feast of the Pentecost and during the ceremonial act of breaking the consecrated bread and mixed in with blood (wine) during the celebration of Holy Eucharist. (This service is known as ‘Fraction.’) Today let us learn the litany used in matins of our common prayer.

### Litany of Matins

Leader: O our father who art in heaven!

Others: Have mercy upon us.

Leader: O son of God who art the Saviour of the world.

Others: Have mercy Upon us.

Leader: O God, the Holy spirit.

Others: Have mercy upon us.

Leader: O Holy Trinity, the Triune God

Others: Have mercy upon us.



Leader: O Lord Jesus Christ who has preserved us without harm during the previous night and has brought us forth to see this dawn, be kind enough to preserve our life today free from sins and wrong doings.

Others: O Lord accept our supplication.

Leader: Protect us from sins of thought, word or deed which we commit knowingly or unknowingly, willingly or unwillingly. Empower us to execute our Christian responsibilities according to our calling.

Others: O Lord accept our supplication.

Leader: Empower us to keep off from the evil desires of the world, body and the devil, from all temptations that stand against the love of God and from all fellowships and associations that stand against the true faith.

Others: O Lord accept our supplication.

Leader: Help us to oppose all violations and injustice and to hold on boldly to the truth you have revealed to us. Help us to follow your will in everything we do throughout our lives. Make us and our departed ones eligible for the eternal bliss of salvation in heaven.

Others: O Lord accept our supplication.

Leader: Help us to love you and our fellow beings. Help us to live in peace and tranquility and efface enmity, competition and jealousy.

Others: O Lord accept our...

Leader: O Lord Jesus Christ banish all unbearable trials, afflicting diseases and punishments for sin from us.

Others: O Lord accept our...

Leader: Bless us by the fellowship and intercession of St. Mary, mother of God, Our Fathers, Apostle St. Thomas, St. Gregorios of Parumala, St. Dionysius of Vattasseril and all other saints.

Others: O Lord accept our...

Leader: O Lord Jesus Christ bless and protect us. Radiate the brilliance of Your Face upon us and grant us Your peace.

Others: O Lord accept our...

Just as we have seen in the litany of vespers, the litany of Matins too begin in the name of the Holy Trinity and end by seeking the intercession of St. Mary and all other saints.

After addressing the Holy Trinity, we say thanks for protecting us throughout the night. Then we ask for grace to lead a holy life. When we say this prayer sincerely we feel inspired to keep off from sin.

The prayer “protect us from sins of thought, word or deed which we commit knowingly or unknowingly, willfully or inadvertently” should not only be the prayer said in matins but also be our oft-repeated prayer.

Note that all the prayers use the plural form ‘us’ and not the singular form ‘me.’ Prayer for oneself only is not Christian. When we pray for the bliss of heaven, we also pray for our departed ones. Commemorating the dead in all our prayers is also part of Orthodox liturgy and devotion.

What are the other supplications included in this litany? They are usually the blessings needed for life in this world. There are also three domains from which we should keep off. We pray for grace required for this abstinence.

1. Evil desires of the world, the body and the devil.
2. Temptations that stand against the love of God.
3. All fellowships and associations that stand against true faith.

This is followed by the prayer for grace to do the things we should do.

1. Oppose all injustice, and evil.
2. Hold on boldly to the truth revealed by God.
3. Do God’s will throughout life.
4. Love one another.
5. Abandon enmity, competition and jealousy.

When we pray for these things we should earnestly try to live according to the will of God. The prayer also includes supplications for three things needed for a happy life.

1. Banish all unbearable trials.
2. Prevent incurable diseases.
3. Avoid punishments for our sin.

Try to recite this meaningful prayer regularly along with your morning worship.

### Hymn

(This hymn can be recited along with morning prayers)

(Pulariyil nidrayunarnnange...)

Walking up at dawn I come  
Almighty God before You  
O Christ, I would bow with thanks  
For Your mercy - upon me.  
O protector of mankind  
Humbly do I praise You Lord  
Grant me blessing, grace and peace  
Also remission for my sins.

Fixing my gaze upon You  
Let me begin my daily chores  
Lead me without any fall  
O Lord bless me with success.

.....

### **Let Us Pray**

*O Lord Jesus Christ, kindly prohibit unbearable trials, incurable diseases and punishments of sin from tormenting us.*

.....

### **Resolution**

*We would say our morning prayers and recite this litany regularly.*

### **Activities**

1. Recite this prayer in the form of litany in the class.
2. Note the prayer to the Holy Trinity. Conduct a discussion on the supplication to each person in the Holy Trinity.
3. The Psalm to be read along with your evening worship in Psalm 141. But it is given as Psalm 140 in your Book of Prayer. Find out the reason.
4. Reflect on the sins of thought, word and deed you have committed in life. Take a resolve to give them up completely.

### **Further Reading**

<b>Day</b>	<b>Morning</b>	<b>Evening</b>
Sunday	*	Psalm 141:1-10
Monday	St. Luke 6:12-19	Psalm 142:1-7
Tuesday	St. John 20:1-10	Psalm 119:105-112
Wednesday	St. John 21:1-6	Psalm 91:1-8
Thursday	St. Luke 24:1-12	Psalm 91:9-16
Friday	St. Mark 16:1-8	Psalm 121:1-8
Saturday	St. Matthew 28:1-10	*

## Chapter 13

# Prayers of Canonical Hours

**Learning Objectives:** To understand the significance of canonical prayers in Orthodox worship and recite the prayers of canonical Hours regularly.

**Verse to be Memorized:** “Seven times a day I praise You for Your righteous judgments” (Psalm 119:164).

**Learning Aids:** Book of Common Prayer, the liturgical Book of the Holy Eucharist, the Book of Worship of Syrian Christians, book of Sleeba (Holy Cross) season worship, Prayers of Three day Fast and the Great Lent, and the Holy Bible.

### Introduction

Do you pray together with your family in your homes? How often do you pray together? Do you know the meaning of the word ‘Orthodox?’ The word ‘Orthodox’ means “praising God in the right manner.” Do you know how many times a day we should pray? We should pray incessantly. St. Paul teaches us to pray incessantly (1 Thessalonians 5:17). Our church teaches us that an Orthodox faithful should pray seven times a day. This scheme of worship is known as Prayers of Seven Canonical Hours. Today we are going learn about the prayers of canonical hours in general.

### The Lesson

Some of you pray twice at home daily. Which book of prayer do you follow? If you follow any Book of Prayer used in our church, you shall complete prayers for seven canonical Hours while praying twice a day. How? The offices for None, Vespers and Compline are combined for Evening Worship and those for Nocturn, Matins (Prime), Terce and Sext for the morning worship.

### What are Canonical Hours?

In ancient India, time was measured using horologue units of twenty four minutes known as ‘Naazhika.’ One day was divided into sixty ‘Naazhikas.’ The present day measurement of time using ‘hours’ was not prevalent then. One hour was equivalent to two and a half ‘Naazhika.’ A time unit consisting of seven and a half ‘Naazhikas’ was called a canonical hour. The first canonical hour is Matins (6 am) at dawn. The Second canonical hour that comes after dawn (6 am) is called Terce (9 am). The next canonical hour comes three hours (or seven and a half ‘Naazhika’) later and is called Sext (12 noon). This canonical hour is followed after three hours by the Hour called None (3 pm). Again after three hours comes the Hour of vespers (6 pm). Besides

these five canonical hours during day time, we have compline (9 pm) and Nocturn (12 midnight) during night. These hours are called canonical hours because prayers are prescribed for each of them. Thus we have seven canonical hours a day and the prayers prescribed for them are known as the Canonical Hours.

1. Name the seven canonical hours.
2. Find out the prayers for each canonical hour from the Book of common prayer. (Sometimes the prayers for each canonical hour is categorically stated. Sometimes the end of prayers for one canonical hour will be indicated by a 'Kauma' to be recited.)
3. Find out from the Holy Bible how prayers for each canonical hour were said.
4. Read the following biblical passages aloud in the class. Psalms 55:17, 119:147, 148, 164, Daniel 6:10, St. Mark 1:35, 6:46, Acts 2:15, 3:1, 10:9, 6:25.
5. Prayers of which canonical hours are included in our evening worship?
6. What are the canonical hours included in our morning worship?

Prayers of canonical hours are related to the Passion of Christ. The Jews had to pray three times a day. But King David used to pray seven times a day. The Orthodox Church has seven canonical hours in order to commemorate the Passion of Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ was taken captive at night (St. John 18:12). He was trialed in the morning (St. John 18:28). He was sentenced for crucifixion at the third hour, crucified at the sixth hour (St. Matthew 27:45). Jesus Christ yielded up the spirit and died at the ninth hour (St. Matthew 27:46). Jesus Christ's body was taken from the cross by Joseph and Nicodemus before dusk (St. Matthew 27:57). They entombed Christ. Can we refrain from prayers during these hours of Jesus Christ's passion?

In monasteries and convents, canonical offices are said at the specified hours. In homes the prayers of seven Canonical hours are allowed to be said as morning and evening worship.

### **Prayers during Three Day Fast and the Great Lent**

Do you say the special prayers for three day fast and great lent at home during those days of fast? What differences do you find between three special prayers and the common prayers of those prayers from the common prayers used in other seasons? During these days of fast, the prayers of canonical hours are said as three devotions - morning, noon and evening worship. The noon worship should be done at noon itself. The prayers for the canonical hours of Terce, Sext and None are included in the noon worship. At the end of noon worship forty prostrations are done during these lenten days. Those who are too busy with their work during day time should do this worship along with the morning prayers.

## Hymn

(Sandhya Sootharaa pinne...)

Seven in number - Hour of Prayer  
Vespers Compline- and Necturn  
Prime and Terce and Sext and None  
Canonical Hours for Lord  
At these hours - we must pray  
Seven times let us - pray a day  
Let these prayers illumine.  
Our path of life every-day.

.....

## Let Us Pray

*O Lord Jesus Christ, help us to pray during all Canonical Hours and think about You all the days of our life. Amen,*

.....

## Resolution

*We know that prayer empowers Christian life and that prayers of canonical hours prescribed by the church are very important in life. We would say the prayers of all Canonical Hours regularly.*

## Let Us Think

1. Shall we not praise God in the morning for the new dawn and the new day as well as for guarding us throughout the night?
2. Can we refrain from worshipping God in the evening for protecting us during the day time?
3. Shall we not pray before retiring to sleep and request us to be guarded during the thoughtless abandon of sleep?
4. Can a believer refrain from prayers during the third hour when the Holy Spirit descended on the Apostles? Can we keep away from prayers at noon, the hour of Jesus Christ's crucifixion and at None, the hour of Christ's death?

After studying in Sunday school up to class IX, we should not fail to say the prayers of canonical hours regularly. We should pray with our family at home.

## Activities

1. We have learned about the various canonical hours. Let us recollect them. We shall reflect on the connection between these hours and the passion of Jesus Christ.

Nocturn: Jesus Christ is taken captive (St. John 18:12)  
 Matins (Prime): The trial of Jesus (St. John 18:28)  
 Terce: Pontis Pilate sentences Jesus to be crucified. (Three hours after dawn)  
 Sext: Crucifixion of Christ (St. Matthew 27:45)  
 None: Christ dies (Three hours after noon) (St. Matthew 27:46)  
 Vespers: Jesus Christ is taken from the cross (St. Matthew 27:57)  
 Compline: Jesus Christ is entombed (Compline = guard) (St. Luke 23:54)

Shall you say prayers for all these Canonical Hours regularly?

2. Prepare a chart of the seven canonical hours and their relationship with Jesus Christ's Passion (You may make use of the information given above).

### Further Reading

Day	Morning	Evening
Sunday	*	St. Matthew 26:36-42 Psalm 4:1-8
Monday	Daniel 9:20-23 Psalm 3:1-8	Acts 16:25 Ephesians 6:18
Tuesday	Psalm 5:1-12, 42:7-11	St. Luke 6:12 Psalm 55:16-23
Wednesday	Psalm 119:57-64 St. Mark 9:28, 29	Daniel 6:7-12 St. Mark 1:35-39
Thursday	St. Matthew 17:19-21 Psalm 63:1-8	St. Luke 11:1-4 St. Mark 14:32-42
Friday	St. Matthew 18:19, 20 Psalm 119:154-160	St. Mark 6:46, 47 St. Luke 9:28-36
Saturday	St. Matthew 7:7-11 Psalm 119:161-168	*

## UNIT 3

# HYMNS OF EUCHARISTIC DEVOTION

## Chapter 14

### The Morning Prayers of sleeba (Holy Cross) Season Worship

**Learning Objectives:** To learn to recite the hymns of morning worship included in the liturgical Book of Holy Eucharist. Let us understand the meaning, context and significance of these hymns. Let us try to recite these hymns during the Holy Eucharist comprehending their meaning.

**Verse to be Memorized:** “O God, you are my God; early will I seek thee: my soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee in a dry and thirsty land where no water is” (Psalm 63:1).

**Learning Aids:** The Holy Bible, the Liturgical Book of the Holy Eucharist, and the Book of Common Prayer

### Introduction

When do you often reach the church on Sundays? How many of you come to church time for of morning worship? We use two kinds of morning worship, namely Sleeba (Holy Cross) season worship and Kyamtha (Resurrection) season worship. We follow the Holy Cross season worship from the Feast of Holy Cross onwards. We start following the Resurrection season prayers from Easter onwards. The theme of meditation for these two liturgies of morning prayers are different. The main theme of Easter Season worship is Jesus Christ’s resurrection and subsequent incidents. But in Sleeba (Holy Cross) season worship we meditate on incidents related to St. Mary. This lends variety to Hymns of Devotion we sing on Sundays.

The prayers for Wednesday in Canonical offices are given as morning prayers in Holy Cross season worship. That is why St. Mary becomes the dominant theme of this liturgy. Wednesday is the day of commemorating St. Mary. Wednesdays and Fridays are set apart as days of Fast in our tradition. Prayers of Matins, Terce, and Sext are included in our Holy Eucharist. Hence we have to say the prayers of Nocturn at home before coming to the church for the Holy Eucharist. Today we shall learn certain hymns sung during the morning prayers.



## The Lesson

Let us learn the first hymn (The teacher recites the hymn twice and the students listen carefully. Then the whole class can sing the hymn in chorus).

Door that leads one to-Kingdom of heaven  
Rather is narrow-and always full of hurdles  
He, who would enter therein  
Shall be diligent, or he-  
Towards evil ways, is drawn  
And lose his-soul by his own will.

The door that leads to the kingdom of heaven is narrow and the path is always full of hurdles. Hence those who travel by this path should be very alert and committed. If they show laziness, they will be attracted towards evil ways and they will destroy their soul. This hymn exhorts a Christian to keep away from sin and remain diligent always. Every believer should be earnest and tireless. Laziness is one of the seven deadly sins. Laziness includes omission of duties as well as reluctant execution of duties. This hymn reveals one significant features of Orthodox worship. The Orthodox Church considers worship as the chief means for teaching faith, the Holy Bible and moral lessons.

## Let us learn another hymn

Righteous get light in darkness  
Veil of darkness recedes, O Lord!  
Brilliant light doth shine on us  
Firmament-and earth worship thee  
Sisters two who came anon  
Firmament above waters  
Earth is abode for water  
Atmosphere, bridal chamber  
Made in the wink of an eye  
Glori-ous Thy handiwork, Lord!

Light dawned for the wise people amidst darkness. O Lord the two sisters sky and the earth, which were created in a fraction of time, worship you in this prime of the day. The sky and the earth were created when God said 'Let them be' (Genesis 1:7-9). That is why they are picturised as two sisters born immediately after the word of creation was uttered by God. The lines that follow are a description of nature. The sky stands above the waters. The earth carries and contains water. When God created and divided earth and the sky a beautiful chamber called the atmosphere arose in between them. O God, the sophistication and intricacy of your creation is praise worthy.

Orthodox worship involves a high level of ecological consciousness. The hymn which we have learned inspires thoughts of nature in the faithful.

1. Jesus Christ has taught us a parable which proves that those who act wisely will get light in darkness. Find out this parable.
2. It is Jesus Christ who said that the door to the kingdom of heaven is narrow. Find out the biblical verse.

### **Let us learn another hymn**

Church confounds-teaching heretic  
Showing them metaphors three:  
Tree bearing-fruit of miracle,  
Stubborn flint, and fish of sea  
Tree that, did bring forth-a-lamb  
Flint stubborn flowed out-water  
Coin, fish of sea-gave forth  
Thus, church brings to naught-  
Those who-question virgin giving birth.

This is hymn sung in the Terce of Sleeba (Holy Cross) season worship. The prayer of Terce is to be said three hours after morning (9 A.M.). In old prayer books it is sometimes called “Prayers of seven and a half hour (Ezhara namaskaram).” Can you say way it is called so? When we divide one day into sixty ‘Naazhika’, three hour duration consists of seven and a half ‘Naazhika.’ The name “Prayers of seven and a half hour” comes from this old system of measuring time.

This hymn is a reply to those who question the virginhood of St. Mary. God is capable of transferring the impossible to something possible. In order to prove this omnipotence of God, three incidents from the Holy Bible are mentioned here. The Church points out to the heretics who question the virginhood of St. Mary. Three incidents in the Holy Bible which prove St. Mary’s virginity. They are the tree that bore a miraculous fruit (Genesis 22:13), the hard rock that gave water (Exodus 17:6) and fish of sea which gave forth coin (St. Matthew 17:27). When Yahweh forbade Abraham from offering Issac as a sacrifice, Abraham saw a ram caught in a thicket by its horns. This ram was taken and offered to Yahweh. This incident is described as “the tree providing forth a lamb.”

When the Israelites thirsted for water in Meriba, God commanded Moses to smite a rock with his rod and water gushed forth to quench their thirst. This is described as the stubborn flint providing water. When Caesar’s men came to collect tax, Jesus Christ asked Peter to cast a fish line in the sea. When Peter opened the mouth of the first fish he caught he found a coin (Esthera). This coin was given as tribute money (tax) for Jesus Christ and Peter. These three miracles disprove the arguments of those who deny the virginhood of St. Mary.

## Hymn

Recite the hymns you have learned in this lesson.

.....

## Let Us Pray

(This prayer is said during the Vespers on the Feast of St. Mary.)

*O Virgin Mary, Mother of God who was selected to bear Lord Jesus Christ in her womb, let your prayers be a fortress for us. The day of your commemoration prevails in high heaven, in depths and in various corners of the world. They rejoice in your commemoration. O virgin Mary, let your commemoration become a blessing for us. Amen.*

.....

## Resolution

*We would attend the morning prayers preceding the Holy Eucharist on all Sundays. We would comprehend their meaning, meditate on them and recite them properly.*

## Activities

1. Find out the biblical passages referred to in the above hymns and read them.
2. Read St. Matthew 17:27 and find out the value of the coin Peter got.
3. The canonical hour of Terce is seven and a half 'Naazhika.' How many 'Naazhika' are there in the canonical hour of None?
4. We have learned only three hymns of the morning prayers of 'Sleeba' season worship. Try to comprehend the meaning of other hymns of morning worship and recite them.

## Further Reading

Day	Morning	Evening
Sunday	*	St. John 10:7-18
Monday	Ephesians 2:14-22	Psalm 1
Tuesday	Genesis 1	Genesis 22:10-19
Wednesday	Exodus 17:6,7	St. Matthew 17:24-27
Thursday	Exodus 30:11-16	Exodus 38:24-31
Friday	St. Matthew 22:17-22	St. Mark 12:13-17
Saturday	Romans 13:1-7	*

## Chapter 15

# The Morning Prayers of Easter Season Worship

**Learning Objectives:** To learn the hymns included in the morning prayers of Easter season worship and to recite these hymns in a proper manner during the Holy Eucharist.

**Verse to be Memorized:** “O Lord, in the morning you hear my voice; in the morning I plead my case to you, and watch” (Psalm 5:3).

**Learning Aids:** The Holy Bible, the Liturgical book of the Holy Eucharist, and the Book of Common Prayer.

### Introduction

We would get the opportunity to recite and meditate on the beautiful hymns we learn today only if we reach the church before the morning prayers on all Sundays. Today we learn the hymns of Easter season worship. Easter season prayers are followed on Sundays following Easter. The Holy Cross season begins after the Feast of the Holy Cross. Now let us go to the hymns of the Easter season worship.

### The Lesson

Let us learn hymns based on certain biblical passages connected with the Resurrection of Jesus Christ. This hymn is divided into various parts. Let us sing it part by part and try to understand the meaning. These hymns are rather simple. However we can understand that most of our hymns are enriched with Bible passages.

#### 1

God in glory-arose from death, and gave life to  
Adam and all his-children  
Angels on high adored their Lord  
Earth was made bright  
And trembling stood watchers then

God resurrected from the dead gloriously and gave life to Adam and all his children. The choirs of angels who saw this, adored their Lord. Light illuminated the world and the watchers who saw it stood trembling (St. Matthew 28:4).

#### 2

Simon Peter-and Yuhanon-ran along to  
Tomb of Jesus-this morning

Joyous was James and contented was Saint Thomas  
And Saint Matthew sang-for joy.

Simon Peter and John who heard about the Resurrection of Jesus Christ ran to the sepulchre. When James heard about it, he became very happy and Thomas was satisfied (St. John 20:4). The first part of the hymn is based on a biblical incident but the second part is the author's imagination.

3

Lord descended-into Hades-and saved the church  
From worship of idols mute  
Defeating death-rose in glory  
And in His might  
From her enemies saved-the church.

The incident referred to 1 Peter 3:19 is described in this hymn. After his crucifixion Jesus Christ descended to the Hades and preached the Gospel to the dead in captivity. He resurrected on the third day and saved the Church from enemies. Through his death and resurrection Christ selected Church, his bride from gentiles. While being gentiles, they worshiped idols. Now through the resurrection from death Jesus Christ saved Church from idol worship. Christ effaced that sin through his death.

1. Who told Peter and John about the resurrection of Jesus Christ?
2. Read the Bible passages mentioned in the hymns.

4

This day Lord as one out of that stupor of wine  
Rose alive from sleep-of death  
He slew death; and gates of hades  
Came crashing down  
Built His altar for ever.

Jesus Christ who resurrected on Sunday is compared to a person who has woken up from the stupor of wine. He destroyed death by His resurrection and transformed the door of Hades into his eternal foot-stool. Hades is here used as the symbol of eternal death. Crashing down the door of Hades and making it His foot-stool is a poetic way of saying that Christ destroyed death by virtue of His Crucifixion (1 Peter 4:6).

5

This day God did rise from the dead and those watchers  
He made them all sore afraid.  
They made known in Jerusalem  
"Christ is risen"  
Crucifiers were-ashamed

Christ's Resurrection caused great fear among the keepers of the sepulchre (St. Matthew 28:4). They went to Jerusalem and announced that Jesus Christ resurrected from the dead. Hearing this the chief priests and others who crucified Christ became ashamed (St. Matthew 28:11).

## 6

Those departed-waiting for Thy Second Coming  
Today saw Thy glory that  
Gladden all those sorrowful ones  
They adore Thee  
Rejoicing they raise-their heads.

Many people had lived in expectation of Jesus Christ's birth and had died in grief without seeing it. But when these departed saw Christ's Resurrection they raised their heads in happiness and adored Christ. Jesus Christ has told us that "Many prophets and kings desired to see what you see, but did not see it" (St. Luke 10:24). This hymn states that those people who expected Christ's birth but died without seeing Christ, rejoice abundantly on the day of Christ's resurrection. Haven't you seen how our hymns are built upon Bible passages? This is a feature of orthodox worship.

We should comprehend the meaning of all hymns used in the morning prayers of Easter season worship. We should also find out the Bible passages referred to in them.

## 7

Now let us learn one more hymn (Daivathin Puthrane Mariam...)

Mary saw Son of God in that garden  
Like a Gardner on that morn of Resurrection,  
"Why-do you cry lady, seekest thou whom?"  
She answered: "They took my Lord  
Where to,-know not I"  
Endearingly He said: "Mary"  
Hastened she-to the Apostles  
And she told them, "The Lord has risen from the tomb."

This hymn is a poetic rendering of St. John 20:15-18. This passage is a conversation between two people. They are the resurrected Jesus Christ and Mary Magdalene. Mary thought that the one standing in front of her was the gardener. When Christ asks her why she was weeping and who she was seeking? She said that someone had taken her Master away. When Christ call her 'Mary', she identified Him. she ran to the disciples and told them that Jesus Christ has risen from the dead.

## Hymn

Let us recite the hymns we learned in the class.

.....

## Let Us Pray

(This prayer is said during the Vespers on Easter)

*O Jesus Christ, the sky and the earth rejoice in your Resurrection, whereas Death, Satan and Hades are ashamed. The authority of Death has been effaced. The Vigilant Heavenly Hosts and angels sing Your praise. The human race is saved and the lost paradise is returned to them. O Christ, loosen the chains of injustice that bind us. Enable us to praise you along with the Heavenly Hosts. Amen.*

.....

## Resolution

*We would learn the hymns of morning prayers of Easter season worship and their meaning. We would recite them properly on Sundays.*

## Further Reading

<b>Day</b>	<b>Morning</b>	<b>Evening</b>
Sunday	*	Psalm 5
Monday	St. Matthew 27:62-66	St. Matthew 28:1-10
Tuesday	St. Matthew 28:11-15	St. John 20:1-10
Wednesday	St. John 20:11-18	St. John 20:19-23
Thursday	St. John 20:24-31	St. Luke 24:1-12
Friday	St. Luke 14:13-35	St. Luke 24:36-49
Saturday	St. Mark 16:1-8	*

# UNIT 4

## MY CHURCH

### Chapter 16

## The Church upto the Twelfth Century

(AD 1054 -The Division between East and the West)

**Learning Objectives:** To learn how the Christian Church which had the same tradition of faith got divided into two groups – the Eastern and the Western Churches and also to understand the consequences of this early division. To find out the differences between the Eastern (Orthodox) and Western churches.

**Verse to be Memorized:** “ For our struggle is not against enemies of blood and flesh, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers of this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places” (Ephesians 6:12).

**Learning Aids:** The Holy Bible, the Church Encyclopedia, the liturgical book of the Holy Eucharist, and the Book of Common Prayer.

### Introduction

Today there are several churches in the world. After the synod of Chalcedon (451 AD), the universal Church was divide in to two, Chalcedonians (one who accepted the decision of the Chalcedon Council) and non Chalcedonians (who did not accept the decision of the council of Chalcedon). The Western Church, both the Church of Rome and Church of Constantinople accepted the council of Chalcedon. However a great scism occurred among them and thus divided in to two in 1054. However till the eleventh century AD the Western Church shared the same faith though it spread across different nations and had different centres of authority. This structure of the church changed with the division of 1054. The pan - Western Christian church got divided into Eastern and Western churches. Today let us learn more about this division.

### The Lesson

In AD 330, the Roman Emperor Constantine shifted his capital to Constantinople. This caused a lot of political and ecclesiastical changes. In AD 395, Emperor Theodosius divided his administrative set up into Eastern and Western segments and this was one of the causes for the division between East and the West. Let us look at the causes of this division at the ecclesiastical level.



## **Causes of the Division**

The Church got divided into Eastern and Western in AD 1054. The Roman Catholic Church stood with the Western faction whereas the Orthodox churches stood with the Eastern group. The following are the causes of this division.

- Changes in faith and rituals.
- Political differences.
- The Pope's and the Patriarch's love for power.
- The controversy of Filioque or the question of the procession of the Holy Spirit.

## **Immediate Cause of the Division**

The arguments between the Western and the Eastern Churches reached its zenith when the Heads of Churches issued censures and excommunications against each other. In 1043 AD the Patriarch of Constantinople Michael I Cerularius and in 1049 AD Pope Leo IX of Rome issued excommunications against each other. Pope asked the Patriarch who turned against the activities of the Roman Church, to appear before him. The Patriarch refused to receive the Papal representatives and these representatives excommunicated the Patriarch in the name of Pope. The Patriarch retaliated by excommunicating the Pope and his delegates. Thus the Roman Church and the Byzantine (Greek) Church got divided into two.

## **The Consequences of the Division**

1. Ecumenical activities were disrupted.
2. The mutual relationship between the Churches was shattered.
3. It activated missionary work.

## **Differences between Western and the Eastern Churches**

### **Language**

Latin became the official language of the Western Church and Greek became the accepted language of the Eastern Church.

### **Theology**

When the Western Church added new faith-clauses, like 'purgatory' and Filioque the Eastern Church denied them, and remained faithful to the unadulterated Apostolic faith.

### **Hymn**

(This hymn is recited during the Holy Euchrist on Hoodos-Eatho Sunday)

(Sabhaye Ninnude Vishwasam...)

The faith of Holy Church is true  
What a fortune it has been!

Church takes pride in praising the-  
Lord who has died for its sake  
Rejoice O Holy Church  
Purify thyself and live  
In your Groom, Lord Jesus Christ.  
Who gives you joy through His Feast.

.....

### **Let Us Pray**

This prayer is said along with the Vespers on Kudosh Eetho Sunday.

*O Lord Jesus Christ, let Your peace reign in the Church and Your love permeate it. Remove all strifes, struggles and dissents from it. Endow the priests, bishops, kings and officers with knowledge and wisdom so that they shall tend and guide their flock properly – the flock that You have saved by paying with Your Holy Blood of Crucifixion. Amen.*

.....

### **Resolution**

*We are proud of being members of Malankara Orthodox Church which is the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church. We would always try to preserve the true faith and unity of the Church.*

### **Let Us Think**

1. What are the consequences of the early division in the Church?
2. What are the differences between the Western and the Eastern Churches?
3. What would have been the condition of the Church had not the division happened?
4. How did the Division of the one Church happen?
5. Do you think that this division was more than ecclesiastical?
6. Where and when did emperor Constantine shift his empire to?
7. What are the causes of the division of the church in 1054?

### **Activities**

1. Analyse the division in the early Church in the light of the various Church denominations today and write a note on it.
2. Prepare a chart of the various stages of the division in the Early Church?
3. Collect more information about divisions in the Church.

## Further Reading

Let us read and meditate on certain books of the Holy Bible from this week onwards. First of all let us read the Epistles of St. Paul.

<b>Day</b>	<b>Morning</b>	<b>Evening</b>
Sunday	*	Romans 1
Monday	Romans 2	Romans 3
Tuesday	Romans 4, 5	Romans 6
Wednesday	Romans 7	Romans 8
Thursday	Romans 9	Romans 10
Friday	Romans 11,12	Romans 13,14
Saturday	Romans 15,16	*

## Chapter 17

# The Crusades

**Learning Objectives:** To understand the causes and results of the crusades; and also develop a consciousness of the futility of war.

**Verse to be Memorized:** “Teach me your way, O Lord, and lead me on a level path because of my enemies” (Psalm 27:11)

**Learning Aids:** The Holy Bible, the Church Encyclopedia, the Liturgical book of the Holy Eucharist, and the Book of Common Prayer.

### Introduction

The history of the world contains narratives of numerous wars. Battles for independence are always remembered. We have heard about several battles in the Christian world also. The most important of such battles were the Crusades. Let us learn about them in this lesson.

### The Lesson

An important event that followed the theological and administrative divisions in Church history are the Crusades. The Crusades originated in Europe during the Middle Ages, especially during the eleventh, twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Let us learn about the Crusades in detail.

### The Crusades

Jerusalem, the holy city of Christians, fell to Turkish Muslims in AD 1071. The Crusades were begun in 1095 AD in order to reclaim the Holy Land from Muslim foes. There are eight main Crusades recorded in history. All those who participated in this war wore a red coloured cross mark on their right shoulder or chest. Moreover their banner and badge were in the shape of cross. Hence the battles are called Crusades.

### Causes of Crusades

- Famine of Europe during AD 970-1085.
- Ascendancy of Christians to power in places like Spain, and the Mediterranean countries which were earlier ruled by Muslim rulers.
- The concern of Christians regarding the Holy Land and the holy relics.
- The religious fervour of Turkish Muslims and their persecution of Christians.
- The teachings of the Roman Catholic Church about remission of sins and attainment of heaven through wars for the sake of Jesus Christ.

1. What are Crusades? Why are they called so?
2. What were the causes of Crusades?

### **The important Crusades**

#### **First Crusade (1095-1099)**

The first Crusade was led by Pope Urban and people like Godfrey and Peter. They wrested the control of Jerusalem, Antioch and Edessa from Muslims.

#### **Second Crusade (1147-1148)**

The Second Crusade began when Edessa was lost to the Christians in AD 1147. This was led by Pope Eugenius II and St. Bernard. This war was a total failure.

#### **Third Crusade (1188-1192)**

The third Crusade began when Saladin, the Sultan of Turkey conquered Jerusalem in AD 1187. Eventhough the Kings of England and France participated in the war, it couldn't achieve much success. The Crusades could reclaim only a few places around Palestine.

#### **Fourth Crusade (1202-1204)**

Pope Innocent III gave leadership to this Crusade. The King of Constantinople was ousted from power and the Roman Empire was established there. This Crusade was only a means for consolidating the authority of Pope of Rome.

#### **Crusade of Children**

This took place during the period of Pope Innocent III. About thirty thousand children participated in this war. But it was a total failure. Several children were killed and the rest were taken away as captives.

#### **Fifth Crusade (1217-1221)**

This Crusade was led by Pope Innocent III and the King of Hungary, Andrew II. This too was a failure.

#### **Sixth Crusade (1228-1229)**

This Crusade was fought under the leadership of Frederick II, the Emperor of Germany who had been disregarded by the church for his reluctance in participating in the Crusades. He signed a war treaty with the Muslims and reclaimed regions like Jerusalem, Bethlehem, Nazareth, and Joppa.

#### **Seventh Crusade (1248-54)**

This crusade was led by Pope Innocent IV and Louis IX, the emperor of France. It was inspired by the recapture of Jerusalem by the Turks in 1244. However this crusade also ended in failure.

### **Eighth Crusade (1270-1274)**

This crusade was also led by Louis IX and was instigated by Pope Urban IV. During the war, Louis IX died of plague and the war ended with a treaty two years after it had begun. At the end of the war, most regions of Jerusalem fell into the hands of Muslims.

### **Consequences of the Crusades**

1. They led to the downfall of the Eastern empire.
2. The religious spirit and organizational fervour of Christians were heightened.
3. The differences between the Eastern and Western churches increased.
4. The authority of Pope of Rome increased much beyond its traditional See.
5. It caused the dispersal of European culture.
6. The rift between Christians and Muslims increased.

### **Hymn**

(This hymn is recited after the Holy Eucharist adoring the Holy Cross)

By Thy Cross the Holy Church was spread  
O Lord, sacrifice unclean  
By it-shone she ran from the dark,  
Spread up-on her brow; the cross  
On this day she celebrates-bows to the cross  
honour gives and praise

.....

### **Let Us Pray**

(This prayer is said along with the vespers on the Feast of Holy Cross)

*O Lord Jesus Christ, You have redeemed the race of Adam through Your Holy Cross. Your Holy Cross enabled the thief on the right to claim eternal life. Your holy Church adores Your Holy Cross and confesses without shame that the Holy Cross is its shield of defence. Let your cross be a weapon and a shield for us in war. Amen.*

.....

### **Resolution**

*We learned about the crusades, which are the most important battles fought in church history. We understood the fervour of fighting spirit of the Christians from these battles. We are unhappy that most of the crusades ended in failure; and caused the death of so many. "Fighting for the church should never mean violence." We resolve to eschew violence.*

## Let Us Think

1. Define 'crusades.'
2. What were the conditions that led to the crusades?
3. The crusades centred around the Popes of Rome. Why?
4. Explain the general features of the crusades.
5. What were the consequences of the crusades?
6. When did the first Crusade take place? Who gave leadership to this Crusade?
7. What is meant by 'Crusade of children?'

## Activities

1. List the important characteristics of the crusades in the form of a table.
2. Collect pictures of the leading crusaders and prepare an album.
3. Evaluate the crusades in the light of present day conditions.
4. Write a critical note on crusades.

## A point to Ponder

“Quarrelsome people are numerous whereas people who stand for peace are rare. It may be because the doomsday is quite near” -St. Gregorios of Parumala.

## Further Reading

Day	Morning	Evening
Sunday	*	1 Corinthians 1
Monday	1 Corinthians 2	1 Corinthians 3
Tuesday	1 Corinthians 4	1 Corinthians 5
Wednesday	1 Corinthians 6	1 Corinthians 7
Thursday	1 Corinthians 8,9	1 Corinthians 10
Friday	1 Corinthians 11,12	1 Corinthians 13, 14
Saturday	1 Corinthians 15,16	*

## Chapter 18

# The Christian Kingdom of South India

**Learning Objectives:** To be learn about the only Christian kingdom that is believed to have existed in Kerala. To collect evidences of Vilyarvattam Kingdom and compare it with the other local kingdoms that existed in those days.

**Verse to be Memorized:** “Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine” (Isaiah 43:1).

**Learning Aids:** The Holy Bible, the Liturgical Book of the Holy Eucharist, the Book of Common Prayer, and map of Kerala on which ancient Christian centres are marked.

### Introduction

When did India get her independence? Our country had been ruled by several local chieftans and kings before independence. Their administrative reforms had greatly helped the development of Indian culture. It is believed that a Christian dynasty ruled in South India between AD ninth century and fourteenth century. Let us learn about this dynasty in detail in this lesson.

### The Lesson

The Christians of Kerala enjoyed a high status in the society in ancient times. One of the important evidence of it is the existence of a Christian kingdom. It was called ‘Vilyarvattam dynasty.’

### The Vilyarvattam Dynasty

After the reign of Cheraman Perumal dynasty, Kerala witnessed the rise of several princely states and local principalities. Vilyarvattam dynasty is one of these local kingdoms. The capital of this kingdom was Chennamangalam south of Kodungalloor. Later this kingdom expanded till Diamper (Udayamperoor) in the south (You may look at the map of Kerala and find out places like Kodungalloor, Chennamangalam, and Udayamperoor). Books like Paliyam Inscriptions show that this dynasty was a branch of Perumpadappu Swaroopam. In later ages this dynasty disappeared due to lack of male heirs and its territory was integrated with the kingdom of Kochi. Legend says that the church of Udayamperoor was built by the King of Vilyarvattam in AD 510.

Kings of Vilyarvattam were known as Thoma Kings. They maintained a standing army. The last of Thoma kings who reigned in this kingdom left behind only his queen in the royal family when he died. This queen was later married to a prince of the Kochi dynasty. The prince was converted to Christianity before the marriage



and this invited the displeasure of the reigning king of Kochi. As a consequence the prince had to go into exile and the queen died of grief. This is the legend associated with the disappearance of this royal dynasty.

### **Why was the kingdom known as Vilyarvattam?**

There are several views regarding the origin of the name 'Vilyarvattam.' Some say that the name came from 'Villarpettem' which means "one who is an expert in martial arts." Some others are of the opinion that the name is a variant of 'Valiyedathu' (The great place). Some other views are relate to the shape of the landscape. The first headquarters of the dynasty, Chennamangalam was encircled by a river in the shape of a loop or a bow. A bow is called 'Villu' in Malayalam and hence the land encircled by a bow-like river came to be called as 'Villarvattam' which was later corrupted as 'Vilyarvattam.'

### **Evidences for the Existence of Vilyarvattam Kings**

There are disagreements among historians as to whether a dynasty called Vilyarvattam existed or not. The main reason for the dispute is lack of authentic documents. Certain documents that endorse the existence of this kingdom are given below:

1. The letter sent by Eugenius, Pope of Rome to Thoma king in 1439.
2. The Christians of Kerala who visited Vasco de Gama in 1502 presented him with a sceptre which is believed to have been sent by the king.
3. A rock inscription about the death of the last king of this dynasty (It is said to have been found in the premises of Udayamperoor church in 1952).
4. An ancient song called 'Vilyarvattam Paana.'
5. The references made by Giuseppe Simone Assemani (the Roman Catholic historian) and Antonio de Gouvea (the Chronicler of Synod of Diamper).
6. The census report of Kochi compiled in 1911 in which there is reference to Vilyarvattam.

### **Hymn**

We have learned about king of Vilyarvattam who followed Christian faith. Similarly Emperor Constantine had embraced Christian faith while reigning over the Roman Empire. We know how Emperor Constantine earnestly tried to find out the cross of Jesus Christ. The hymn given below tells us the incident that led to the conversion of Emperor Constantine. Let us sing it in chorus. This hymn is recited on Friday morning in the canonical offices.

(Raajavam Kusthanthinos...)

Emperor Constantine did-see in the sky  
Wondrous sight of holy Cross of Christ-in glory

Then he heard a voice saying to him  
You will attain victory with this salvific Cross  
He removed-all pagan idols  
And revered-only Holy Cross  
Blessed is who kept-the Holy-Cross aloft for us.

.....

### **Let Us Pray**

(This prayer is an extract from 'Prayer for Kings' given in the special prayers of 'Book of Prayer')

*O omnipotent God, who is King of kings and God of gods, Kingship, Authority, Power and Domination belong to You for ever. You are the one who selects kings and rulers. You help kings and rulers who fear, respect and adore You. You punish those who disregard You and those who live and reign in injustice. O Lord, You have thus taught us through your words and deeds that all authority belong to You. Hence it is our responsibility to obey kings and rulers. Enable us to pray for the kings and rulers for all the helps they give us because of your grace. Also enable us to us praise you ever for everything we enjoy from the rulers. Amen.*

.....

### **Resolution**

*We are really amazed by the status enjoyed by ancient Nazranis in South India. We shall try to learn more about the ancient history of Christianity in Kerala.*

### **Let Us Think**

1. Name the places that belonged to the territory of Vilyarvattam.
2. Give a small description of Vilyarvattam Dynasty.
3. How were the kings of Vilyarvattam known?
4. How did the Vilyarvattam dynasty decline?What are the different interpretations for the name Vilyarvattam?
5. List the documents that prove the existence of Vilyarvattam dynasty.
6. What are the larger implications of a Nazrani Christian Kingdom in ancient times?

### **Activities**

1. Collect more details about the Vilyarvattam dynasty.
2. Mark the places under this dynasty in a map of Kerala.

## Points to Ponder

“Serve God and do His work, praise and glorify God. Then our lives will be made holy” – Ramban Mathews of Mylapra.

### Further Reading

<b>Day</b>	<b>Morning</b>	<b>Evening</b>
Sunday	*	2 Corinthians 1
Monday	2 Corinthians 2	2 Corinthians 3
Tuesday	2 Corinthians 4	2 Corinthians 5
Wednesday	2 Corinthians 6	2 Corinthians 7
Thursday	2 Corinthians 8	2 Corinthians 9
Friday	2 Corinthians 10	2 Corinthians 11
Saturday	2 Corinthians 12, 13	*

## Chapter 19

# The Coming of the Portuguese

(Synod of Diamper & Coonan Cross Oath)

**Learning Objectives:** To understand two critical incidents which became turning points in the history of Malankara Church. To try to know with sympathy the suffering of the children of the Church under foreign yoke. To help children develop concern for the preservation of faith of the Church and grow in commitment and obedience to the church.

**Verse to be Memorized:** “Remember your leaders, those who spoke the word of God to you; consider the outcome of their way of life, and imitate their faith” (Hebrews 13:7).

**Learning Aids:** A picture of Coonan Cross Oath, the Holy Bible, the Liturgical Book of the Holy Eucharist, and the Book of Common Prayer.

### Introduction

The Portuguese were the first and the British were the last of the foreign powers to dominate India partially or in full. India gained her independence from these foreign powers after a long periods of struggle. Similarly the Christian Church of India too suffered from a foreign domination. In the synod of Diamper, St. Thomas Christians were forcefully brought under Roman Catholic domination, by threats and enticements. ‘Coonan Cross Oath’ was the resistance of Malankara Christians against this foreign domination. Let us learn about them in this lesson.

### The Lesson

Synod of Diamper was an attempt made by the Portuguese to bring Malankara Church under the Roman Catholic Church. Coonan Cross Oath was the historic struggle of Malankara Christians to regain their independence.

### The Synod of Diamper

The Portuguese came to India for trade. Gradually they started interfering in political and religious affairs. The synod of Diamper was aimed at the dissemination of Roman Catholic faith, by bringing the Nazrani Community under it by force and by threat.

The synod of Diamper was held from 20 to 26 June 1599. The Roman Catholic Archbishop of Goa, Alexis de Menesis presided over the synod. Apart from Roman Catholic priests and theologians, 153 priests and 671 representatives from the churches

of Malankara participated in this synod. The synod was held at the church of Diamper. Nine assemblies were held during the synod and altogether 200 decrees were passed in them. These decisions were written in advance by Archbishop Menesis and he got them passed at the assemblies by force and by threat. Historians are also of the opinion that he had added certain decisions on his own after the synod was over.

The effect of the Synod of Diamper was that it could bring the Malankara Church under the Roman Catholic fold. Till then St. Thomas Christians had upheld its individuality and independence. But the Synod of Diamper brought about radical changes in the rituals and practices of the Malankara Church and the religious and liturgical books were set on fire. Moreover Malankara Church was placed under the governance of Latin bishops. Thus the synod of Diamper could Latinise the Malankara Church completely.

### **Coonan Cross Oath**

The domination of the Portuguese Roman Catholics over Malankara Church did not last for long. The St. Thomas Christians who lost their independence as a result of the Synod of Diamper attempted to regain their independence through the 'Coonan Cross Oath.' The St. Thomas Orthodox Christians who followed the Oriental faith and liturgical system could not agree with the Roman faith. The elders of Nazranis sent several letters to various Oriental Orthodox Churches seeking help from them in overcoming the Roman domination. As a result an Oriental bishop Ahathalla arrived in Malankara and this caused a new awakening in the people (There are differences of opinion among historians as to who sent Ahathalla to Malankara).

The Roman Catholic authorities who came to know about the arrival of Ahathalla took him captive to Mylapore. Two deacons (Itty and Kurian) saw Ahathalla by chance in Mylapore and came to know about the purpose of his arrival. The St. Thomas Christians who came to know about this, demanded the release of Ahathalla. But later news spread around that Ahathalla was killed by immersing into the sea.

The Christians of Kerala were stirred with anger. Under Arch deacon Thomas they assembled in Mattaanchery church on January 3, 1653. They tied ropes to a wayside cross made by stone there and took the pledge that they would never be under the Roman Catholic Church. Historians testify that out of the two lakh St. Thomas Christians at that time all except four hundred participated in this freedom struggle. Because of the great crowd who tugged at the rope, the cross slanted to one side. Hence this came to be called 'Coonan Cross.' Roman Catholic historians call those who participated in the 'Coonan Cross Oath,' 'New Allegiant group' and those who did not participate in it 'Old Allegiant group'; and this explanation is totally baseless.

After the Coonan Cross Oath, the St. Thomas Christians assembled in Alangattu church. They elected Archdeacon Thomas as a bishop under the title 'Marthoma.' It is said that twelve priests laid their hands and ordained him as bishop. Thus the

Christians of Kerala regained their faith and independence through the Coonan Cross Oath. Moreover Coonan Cross Oath is the first independence movement in India against foreign domination.

### Hymn

(Aahwanam cheyunnuthavi...)

Come and help us, Lord! We do-call up on Thee  
Earth is torn by dissentions by that-Evil one  
Discord he strikes among the-judges and kings  
He tries even to deceive those who-are righteous  
Wherewith is refuge for us, Lord!  
But in Thine abounding mercy  
Efface Lord! That Evil One from us-by Thy Cross.

.....

### Let Us Pray

(This prayer is said along with the morning prayers on the day of commemorating priests and teachers of the Church)

*O Lord Jesus Christ, let your grace and blessing help us to remain steadfast in One True Orthodox and Apostolic faith till our last breath. Enable us to live and die in that faith and oppose those who oppose that faith. O Christ glorify the name of our fathers who always enlightened the four corners of this world with lamps of True faith and who suffered trials and tribulations for the sake of True faith. By virtue of their intercessions, enable us to love You in the same intensity as they loved You. Amen.*

.....

### Resolution

*We have come to know the sufferings of the St. Thomas Christians under foreign yoke. We would remain steadfast in the true faith our church fathers have shown us, and defend it.*

### Let Us Think

1. What are the conditions that led to 'Coonan Cross Oath'?
2. How did the 'Coonan Cross Oath' lead Malankara Church into independence?
3. Who are the real 'Old Allegiant group?' Justify your answer.
4. Write a note on illegal, uncanonical and unchristian domination by the Portuguese who were Roman Catholicos.
5. How did the arrival of the Portuguese affect the St. Thomas Christians?

6. Who presided over the Synod of Diamper?
7. List the sad effects of this Synod on St.Thomas Christians.

### **Activities**

1. How did the canons of the decisions of the Synod of Diamper affect the St. Thomas Christians?
2. Write the impressions you gathered from the picture of Coonan Cross Oath displayed in the class.
3. Write an essay on the topic: “Coonan Cross Oath: The first struggle of independence in India.”

### **Saying to Ponder**

“The St. Thomas Christians of Kerala, till the end of their generations, will neither accept Roman faith nor come under the rule of Pope of Rome” - Coonan Cross Oath.

### **Further Reading**

<b>Day</b>	<b>Morning</b>	<b>Evening</b>
Sunday	*	Galatians 1
Monday	Galatians 2	Galatians 3
Tuesday	Galatians 4	Galatians 5
Wednesday	Galatians 6	Ephesians 1
Thursday	Ephesians 2	Ephesians 3
Friday	Ephesians 4	Ephesians 5
Saturday	Ephesians 6	*

## UNIT 5

# THE HOLY EUCHARIST: A STUDY

## Chapter 20

### Fathers and Doctors of the Church Commemorated in the fifth Diptych

#### Part I

#### Church Fathers till the Fourth Century

**Learning Objectives:** To learn about the saintly Church Fathers included in the fifth Diptych of the Holy Eucharist.

**Verse to be Memorized:** “So whether we are at home or away, we make it our aim to please him” (2 Corinthians 5:9).

**Learning Aid:** The liturgical book of the Holy Eucharist

#### Introduction

Diptychs or the Great Intercession is an important part of our Holy Eucharist. The first three Diptychs remember the living whereas the last three Diptychs commemorate the departed. In the fifth Diptych we commemorate the spiritual fathers who formulated the fundamental dogmas of the Church and laid the foundation for the spiritual tradition of the Church. The list of spiritual fathers includes 23 Church Fathers who lived during the first seven centuries of Christianity and three proclaimed saints in the Malankara Church. These 26 Church Fathers are not listed in the chronological order in the fifth Diptych. But for the ease of learning, we may categorise them into different periods of history. The biographical details of some Church Fathers are available whereas the details of others are sketchy. In the two chapters that follow we shall attempt a description of these Church Fathers.

#### A General Analysis of the Diptych

Let us read the first part of the fifth Diptych from the liturgical book of the Holy Eucharist.

1. First of all these Church Fathers have “maintained and delivered and entrusted to us the apostolic and orthodox faith of the undivided Church.” They



have fallen asleep in holiness' and "taken repose in the abode of saints." We commemorate them in all Holy Eucharists so that "their intercession be a strong-hold to us."

2. The goal of the Church in commemorating only to revere them, the fathers who handed down the Orthodox faith to us. We shall try to understand their teachings as well. Let us resolve to hold on to the faith received through them throughout our lives. They have proclaimed the faith of the Church during the Great Councils of Nicea (AD 325), Constantinople (AD 381), Ephesus (AD 431). The principles they stood for were accepted in the first three Great Councils and hence the names of Church Fathers who participated in them are listed in the fifth Diptych separately.
3. We have already learned that the Council of Chalcedon (AD 451) had rejected the arguments of our Church Fathers and had made an alternate proclamation of faith. Hence we remember the Fathers who upheld the true faith in this Council and suffered persecutions. Later studies have revealed that the grounds of these differences were not very strong; and the faith of the undivided Church is valid for all times.
4. After commemorating the Spiritual Fathers mentioned above, we remember the Doctors of the Church who composed our liturgy and hymns in the early centuries and who founded the monastic movement.
5. Finally we also remember the saints of Malankara Church.

Now let us learn about each of them in detail. All of these Church Fathers had been "illustrious, divine and holy."

## **The Lesson**

### **A. Church Fathers before the Great Council of Nicea**

(Read the remaining part of the Diptych in the class)

**1. St. James, Brother of Jesus Christ (+62 AD):** St. James of Jerusalem, known as brother of Jesus Christ, became martyr AD 62. The fifth Diptych describes him as "venerable St. James, the first Archbishop of Jerusalem, apostle and martyr." He presided over the Council of Jerusalem described in Acts of the Apostles (Chapter 15) and along with St. Peter and St. John were known as 'Pillars of Jerusalem' (Galatians 1:19). Eventhough we commemorate other apostles in the fourth Diptych we commemorate St. James in the fifth Diptych, because he is a Doctor of the Church. The famous liturgy of St. James is known after him.

**2. St. Ignatius of Antioch (AD 35-107):** This Apostolic Father was a bishop of Antioch. St. Peter had founded the Christian church in Antioch. Antioch is renowned as the cradle of Christianity during the missionary journeys of St. Paul. Eventhough

Apostles and Apostolic Fathers like St. Paul, St. John, St. Barnabas and St. Simon worked in this church (Acts 13:1), St. Ignatius is the much revered among the Oriental Church Fathers. It is said that he was the child whom Christ set in the midst of the disciples as an example of humility. As a result he was often described as 'Theophorus' (God bearer) and 'Fire-branded.' In his letters, St. Ignatius speaks about the three fold ministry of Episcopa, Presbyter and Deacon in the Church and the greatness of the Holy Eucharist. Seven letters written by him to various churches are available. These letters were written while he was being taken to Rome to be killed. St. Ignatius became a martyr in AD 107 when he was thrown to lions in Rome.

**3. St. Clement of Rome:** St. Clement was the disciple and successor of St. Peter. He became the bishop of Rome at the turn of first century AD. His epistles speak about priesthood and the holy sacraments. His first epistle written to the Corinthians is well known.

**4. St. Dionysius of Alexandria (+264 AD):** He was the head of the catechetical school of Alexandria, which had been a great centre in the early Church. Later he was raised as bishop and led his See for seventeen years. When plague broke out in Alexandria in AD 252 he looked after the afflicted and the dying with the support of priests and deacons. He was an avid reader. His works are known for the interpretations of the gospels of St. Luke and St. John as well as of the Book of Revelation.

## **B. Church Fathers of the Fourth Century**

Most of the Church Fathers commemorated in the fifth Diptych belong to the fourth, fifth and sixth centuries. This is because it was during this period that the Church faced a lot of heresies and hence consolidated the articles proclamations of faith. The writings of these fathers laid the foundation of faith proclaimed through the Great Councils of Nicea, Constantinople and Ephesus and 'the Creed of the Church' formulated in the Great Councils (known as the Nicene Creed). Let us look at these Church Fathers in detail.

**1. St. Athanasius of Alexandria (296-373 AD):** St. Athanasius was born in Alexandria, a port city of Egypt. He became a deacon in AD 318 and participated in the Synod of Nicea as the secretary of St. Alexander, bishop of Alexandria. When Arian Heresy shook the church, it was this young theologian and scholar who fought for the sake of true faith. He was a disciple of St. Antony, the Father of Monasticism. In AD 328 he was raised to the position of a bishop. He was exiled five times. His theological writings are treasured in the Church. They include 'On the Incarnation', 'On the Holy Spirit' and 'Life of Antony.' He died in AD 373.

**2. St. Julius of Rome (+352 AD):** St. Julius who died in 352 AD was the bishop of Rome, one of the important centres of the undivided Church. He was the good friend of St. Athanasius of Alexandria and strongly opposed the heresy of Arius. He also

composed a liturgy which bears his name. It was this Church Father who separated the two Feasts-Christmas and the Epiphany, which were earlier celebrated together.

**3. St. Basil of Caesarea (AD 330-379):** St. Basil was the bishop of Caesarea and one of the famous theologians of the fourth century. He was one of the Cappadocean fathers. He studied at Caesarea and Constantinople and went for higher studies in Athens where he met St. Gregory Nazianzen. It was a friendship that was to last all their lives. He became the bishop of Caesarea in AD 370. His theological treatises are for all times. He composed Rules for monastic life. He founded monasteries and hostels as well as hospitals for the poor. His book, 'On the Holy Spirit' is even today a seminal reference book on the topic. His teachings led to the triumph of the doctrine of the Holy Trinity. He is referred to as St. Basil the Great.

**4. St. Gregory of Nyssa (AD 330-335):** St. Gregory of Nyssa was the brother of St. Basil the Great. St. Gregory had another brother St. Peter of Pontus and a sister St. Macrina. He became the bishop of Nyssa in AD 371. He participated in the Council of Constantinople and was the prominent theologian who represented the Eastern Churches. His 'Address on Religious Instruction' contains authoritative statements regarding the Holy Trinity, Incarnation of Jesus Christ, the Holy Baptism and the Holy Eucharist. His famous works include, besides the treatise on the Divinity of Holy Spirit, the 'Life of Moses', 'Lord's Prayer', 'Life of Macrina' as well as interpretation of biblical books like 'Song of Songs.' St. Gregory was perhaps the greatest philosopher and theologian of the Christian Church.

**5. St. John Chrysostom (AD 347-407):** He lived in the same period of the Church Fathers mentioned above. But his name is commemorated in the Fifth Diptych after giving the names of four fathers who lived in the next century. He was a good friend of the Cappadocean Fathers and was a great preacher who adopted the method of Greek rhetoric in his speeches. Hence he was known as the 'golden-tongued' (Chrysostom). His sermons based on the Book of Genesis, the Gospels of St. Matthew and St. John, and the epistles of St. Paul are widely accepted. In AD 398 he was elected as the Patriarch of Constantinople.

## Hymn

(Ishtarkkai Jeevan Vachu...)

Let us be ever invited-To the Feast of Jesus who  
Sacrificed His Person for-Beloved mankind whom He loved.  
In order to tend His flock-That has freed from taints of sin.  
Twelve in number Apostles-And messengers seventy two.  
And three hundred and eighteen-Church Fathers were delegated.  
Including the Great Fathers-St. Basil and St. Gregory.

.....  
**Let Us pray**

*O Saintly Church Fathers, who fought for True Faith and who were persecuted, kindly pray for us. O Lord Jesus Christ, enable them and us to praise You for ever. Help us to hold on to the Orthodox faith taught by our Church Fathers. Amen.*

.....

**Resolution**

*We will listen carefully at the reading the Diptychs and will try to learn more about their life and contributions.*

**Let Us Think**

1. Explain the terms ‘Apostolic Fathers’ and ‘Cappadocean Fathers.’
2. What is the meaning of the name ‘Chrysostom?’ Why was St. John called Chrysostom? Do you like to call someone you know by this name?
3. Who all are referred to as ‘Gregory’ in the Fifth Diptych?
4. What are the description given to St. James in the fifth Diptych?
5. Who were known as ‘the pillars of Jerusalem’?
6. What are the meanings of the words ‘Theophorus’ and ‘Noorono’?
7. Complete the following verse. “Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom...?” (St. Mark 10:15)

**Further Reading**

<b>Day</b>	<b>Morning</b>	<b>Evening</b>
Sunday	*	Hebrews 11:1-6
Monday	St. John 5:19-29	Hebrews 11:7-12
Tuesday	St. John 5:30-36	Hebrews 11:13-19
Wednesday	1 Peter 1:3-25	Hebrews 11:20-29
Thursday	Ephesians 2:11-22	Hebrews 11:30-40
Friday	Ephesians 4:1-7	Hebrews 12:1-6
Saturday	St. Matthew 5:3-12	*

## Chapter 21

# Fathers and Doctors of the Church Commemorated in the Fifth Diptych

(continued...)

### Part 2

## Church Fathers after the Fourth Century

**Learning Objectives:** To understand the Church Fathers who lived after the fourth century AD and who are commemorated in the fifth Diptych.

**Verse to be Memorized:** “Remember your leaders, those who spoke the word of God to you; consider the outcome of their way of life, and imitate their faith” (Hebrews 13:7).

**Learning Aid:** The Book of Holy Eucharist

### Introduction

Let us learn about the Church Fathers who lived after the Fourth century AD. An important event that happened in the Church in the fifth century was the council of Chalcedon. Hence we would categorize the later Church Fathers into ‘Fathers at the time of the council of Chalcedon’ and ‘Fathers after the council.’ We should also study about the poets and great ascetics of the ancient Church. Since the saints of Malankara are familiar to us they are not discussed in detail. We would learn about St. Gregorios of Parumala and St. Dionysius of Vattasseril at length in the tenth standard.

### The Lesson

#### C. Church Fathers at the time of the Synod of Chalcedon

The heresies which arose in the fifth century AD were advocated by Eunomius and Apollonarius. They spread heresies following the footsteps of Nestorian teachings. The controversy was regarding how the divine and the human natures were commingled in Jesus Christ. The Council of Chalcedon was convened in AD 451 to consider these controversies. The three Church Fathers who represented the faith of the church in this council are the important sentinels of faith during this period. Let us study more about them.

**1. St. Cyril of Alexandria (AD 376-444):** St. Cyril of Alexandria was the strong defender of orthodoxy against the heresies mentioned above. He was consecrated Patriarch of Alexandria in AD 429 and he presided over the council of Ephesus. He opposed the heresy of Nestorios, the Patriarch of Constantinople.

The Church split into two factions at the council of Chalcedon because of the differences in interpreting the formula of faith and the differences in language used by the two factions at the council. The Chalcedonian definition is a diophysite declaration of the two natures of Jesus Christ, adopted at the council of Chalcedon in AD 451. Non-Chalcedonian are the group of Churches that do not accept the confession of Chalcedon. The most substantial Non-Chalcedonian tradition is known as Oriental Orthodoxy. The Coptic Orthodox Church, the Syrian Orthodox Church of Antioch, the Armenian Apostolic Church, the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church, The Eritrean Orthodox Tewahedo Church and the Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church are the members of Oriental Orthodox Churches.

The Non-Chalcedonian definition about two person of Christ is that the divine and human nature united without separation, without mixture, without confusion and without alteration. Jesus Christ is perfect man and perfect God. This Non-Chalcedonian definition about the person of Jesus Christ is known as miaphysite Christology. The Oriental Orthodox Church follow this miaphysite Christology. In the fifth Diptych St. Cyril is described as the ‘exalted and veritable tower of knowledge who expounded the doctrine of the Incarnation of God the Word, our Lord Jesus Christ declaring and showing clearly that He became incarnate.’ The Alexandrian Fathers argued that the ‘two natures are wonderfully joined, but not mixed in Jesus Christ. However the Chalcedon party, led by Rome and Constantinople emphasized ‘two-natures’; and condensed those who appeared them as ‘Monophysites.’

**2. St. Dioscoros of Alexandria (+454 AD):** St. Dioscoros succeeded St. Cyril as Patriarch of Alexandria in AD 444. He was the nephew of his predecessor. He presided over the Great Council of Ephesus of 447 AD and participated in the council of Chalcedon. However the Patriarchs of Rome and Constantinople conspired together against him in the council of Chalcedon and Pope Leo of Rome imposed his two nature theory of Jesus Christ (Tome of Leo) in the Council of Chalcedon. Dioscoros was condensed and was exiled to Gangra, an the islands in the Aegean sea.

**3. St. Timothy of Alexandria (+477 AD):** Like his predecessors, St. Timothy also fought against the ‘two nature’ theory of Jesus Christ. He was the disciple of St. Cyril of Alexandria and a strong defender of Orthodoxy. He headed a counter council against the doctrines of the council of Chalcedon and suffered persecutions for defending the Orthodox faith. He held fast to spiritual rigors like fasts, prayer and abstinence. He died in AD 497.

#### **D. Church Fathers after the Council of Chalcedon**

The Church got divided in the council of Chalcedon. The present day western churches (Roman Catholic and Protestant) and the Byzantine churches (Eg. Russian, Greek, Romanian etc.) became known as Chalcedonian believers whereas the Fathers

of the Oriental Orthodox Churches were wrongly branded as 'Monophysites'. The ecumenical dialogues between the two factions after 1500 years (that is after 1964) could almost resolve the dispute. The Chalcedonian and Non-Chalcedonian believers have acknowledged that both of them had expounded the faith of St. Cyril of Alexandria at the Council of Chalcedon. However the fundamentals of our faith are derived from Church Fathers who had been Non-Chalcedonian believers.

**1. St. Philexenos of Mabbug (440-523):** He was ordained the Metropolitan of Mabbug in AD 485. He was a great scholar, teacher, philosopher, theologian and an expert in Canon Law. He became a martyr in AD 523. His interpretations of the Holy Bible are scholarly. His works include interpretations of the gospels of St. Matthew, St. Luke and St. John, the books on 'the Holy Trinity', 'the Incarnation of Jesus Christ' and 'On Morality.' All his works composed in the Syriac language, are invaluable contributions to our church and to theology.

**2. St. Antimus:** He was an ideal ascetic. He was consecrated the Patriarch of Constantinople in AD 535. Many 'Ekbos' used in our liturgy are known after him. He was the disciple of the famous singer Nexenthios.

**3. St. Severus, Patriarch of Antioch (465-538 AD):** St. Severus was a great theological teacher who defended orthodoxy against the Chalcedonian believers. In AD 512 he was consecrated Patriarch of Antioch. He was a great scholar and the 'Maniso' (Anthem) composed by him is sung at the beginning of the public celebration of the Holy Eucharist ('By Thy Mother's earnest prayers...'). This hymn expounds Orthodox theology. That is why St. Severus is praised lavishly in the fifth Diptych. He is described as "the crown of the Syrians, the eloquent mouth, the pillar and the doctor of the Holy Church of God as a whole, the meadow abounding in blossom, who preached all the time that Mary was undoubtedly the God-bearer."

**4. Mar Jacob Baradaeus (500-578 AD):** Mar Jacob Baradaeus was the leader of Non-Chalcedonian believers. He always wore a coarse dress made from tattered pieces of cloth. That is why he is called Baradaeus or "one who wears rags." During persecutions, he moved about in the oriental lands organizing the believers and ordaining priests and bishops. It was by virtue of his efforts that the faith of our Church Fathers who were condemned as 'followers of one nature theory' could survive over the ages. Those who followed the teachings of Mar Jacob Baradaeus were often mockingly called 'Jacobites.' Jacob was consecrated Bishop of Edessa by Pope Theodosius I of Alexandria in Constantinople in 543 AD. He ordained about twenty bishops and thousands of priests and deacons while living in hiding in Egypt, Syria and Persia. He overcame the cruel persecutions of the opposing factions which had great political influence. Jacob ordained Sergius of Tella as Patriarch of Antioch in 544 in the place of Ephraim Patriarch of Antioch, who supported Chalcedonians

and persecuted the non-Chalcedonians. After Sergius of Tella's death in 547, Jacob ordained Paul as the Patriarch of Antioch in 550.

### **E. The Great Poets and Ascetics of Ancient Church**

We have seen that the names of Church Fathers are not listed in the chronological order in the fifth Diptych. The eight fathers listed after Mar Jacob Baradaeus lived from the fourth to the seventh centuries.

**1. St. Ephrem of Nisibis (AD 306-373):** St. Ephrem was a great saint poet in the Syrian Orient. He has written a lot of interpretations of Biblical Passages and has composed hundreds of hymns ('Memras'). As a young ascetic he had attended the Great Council of Nicea along with the metropolitan of Nisibis. He was a teacher at the ecclesiastical school at Nisibis for about thirty eight years. This great poet is often described as 'the Sun of Syrians and the Column of the Church', 'the Harp of the Holy Spirit' and 'the Prophet of Syrians.' These 'names' reveal the renowned position of St. Ephrem with Church. He was an ideal ascetic and is known as the architect of Syriac hymnody.

**2. Mar Jacob of Sarug (451-521 AD):** The Syrian church has several Church Fathers who bear the name Jacob. Mar Jacob of Nisibis known as 'the Moses of Mesopotamia' had participated in the Great Council of Nicea. St. Jacob of Edessa (AD 649-708) also was a great scholar, historian and interpreter of the Bible. Mar Jacob of Sarug was a great ascetic who composed several hymns and devotional songs. He has written about 800 'memras' (anthems) and 'Bovoothos.' Among his 95 extant sermons 'The Passion of Christ', 'Faith and Fortune' and 'Purgatory' are well known.

**3. St. Isaac of Nineveh (+AD 461):** Mar Isaac, the disciple of St. Ephrem, led an ascetic life in a mountain peak in Edessa. His writings on monastic life have been translated into Greek, Arabic and Ethiopian languages and are used by Oriental churches. He died in AD 461.

**4. Mar Balai (fifth century):** He was a composer of 'Bovoothos' used in our liturgy. His name is remembered along with those of Mar Jacob and Mar Ephrem. He has written a lot of hymns expounding Orthodox faith. His other famous works include 'The History of St. Joseph' and 'Farewell to Moses and Aaron.' He was first raised as a Cor-Episcopa and was later consecrated a bishop.

**5. Mar Barsauma:** This Church Father was the representative of ascetics at the second Council of Ephesus (AD 449) and the Council of Chalcedon (AD 451). He led a life of ascetic discipline. He used to stand and pray day and night. Because of the rigors of his fasts he was called 'Barsauma' or the 'Son of Fasting.' He was persecuted after the synod of Chalcedon and he died in AD 458. This Church Father is renowned for his miracles. He was a defender of Orthodox faith, an ideal ascetic and a saint.



**6. Simeon the Stylite (AD 390-459)** Simeon the Stylite was a detached ascetic. He stood and prayed continuously on a pillar and hence is known as 'Stylite.' He raised his pillar for meditation near Aleppo in Syria and lived in prayer and spiritual rigour for forty years. When people who assembled at the foot of the pillar and distracted him, the height of the pillar had to be raised.

**7. Mar Abahai:** Emperor Theodosius who ruled over the Roman Empire from AD 401 to AD 450 appointed Mar Abahai as the bishop of Nicea. He led the church for thirty two years and distributed his paternal wealth among the poor and healed the sick through miracles. He lived in a monastery near Merdina and died at the age of 110.

## **F. Church Fathers of the Modern Age**

The three Church Fathers proclaimed saints by Malankara Church in the twentieth century are commemorated at the end of the fifth Diptych.

**1. Yeldo Mar Baselius (+1685 AD):** He was born in Kudaid Village in Mesopotamia and was consecrated Maphrian of the East in 1662 AD. He visited Malankara Church in 1685 AD and reached Kothamangalam. This Church Father was a very old man when he reached Malankara. He passed away on the thirteenth day of his arrival. His mortal remains are entombed in Mar Thomman Cheriya Palli Kothamangalam. He is a saint of miraculous powers and several people in this region give the names 'Yeldo' or 'Basil' to their children in commemoration of this saint. He was canonized on November 2, 1947 by the Malankara Orthodox Church.

**2. St. Geevarghese Mar Gregorios of Parumala (1848-1902):** He is the first official canonized saint in the Malankara Church. He was born in Chathuruthy family of Mulanthuruthy. Later he was consecrated metropolitan of Niranam, Thumpamon and Kollam dioceses at a very young age. Hence he was known as 'Kochu thirumeni of Malankara.' He was canonized saint in 1947 along with Yeldo Mar Baselius.

**3. St. Geevarghese Mar Dionysius of Vattasseril (1858-1934):** He was born in Vattasseril family in Mallappally and was a disciple of St. Gregorios of Parumala. He had versatile in church history, Syriac language and doctrines of faith. His book 'The Essence of Religious Instruction' makes a comprehensive description of the faith of our church. This Church Father could liberate Malankara Church from the yoke of Syrian Orthodox Church of Antioch. St. Dionysius is the architect of the Malankara Catholicate and the Church Constitution (1934). He is laid to rest in the Old Seminary, Kottayam. He was canonized in 2003.

In short, the Church Fathers commemorated in the Fifth Diptych belongs to Universal Christian Church and they are architects of faith of the Church. Some of the great Church Fathers who are not included in this list are Moses Bar Kepha and Dionysius Bar Sleebi As we commemorate these Church Fathers let us try to emulate

their life they “maintained and delivered and entrusted to us the one Apostolic and uncorrupt faith.”

### Hymn

(Orthodukso vishvasam....)

Come and let us celebrate  
For the holy Fathers, feast;  
Who the limits did define  
Of the faith that's orthodox:-  
Fiery Saint Ignatius  
Theologos, sea of knowledge great,  
Cyril, Saint of fountain sweet  
Chrysostom Ivanius  
And Baselius  
The exalted Gregory  
Dioscorus and Clement  
Philoxenos and gracious good (Thomas)

.....

### Let Us Pray

*O Lord Jesus Christ, bless us to commemorate the saintly church Fathers who labored to preserve the Orthodox faith taught by You. Help us to tread through the paths they have taught and shown us in their lives. Amen.*

.....

### Resolution

*We would remain steadfast in the Orthodox faith taught by our Church Fathers in braving great odds and persecutions.*

### Let Us Think

1. Who are the foremost defenders of Orthodox faith during the time of the synod of Chalcedon?
2. Bring out the implications of the explanation used to describe St. Cyril of Alexandria in the fifth Diptych.
3. What is meant by 'Oriental Orthodox Churches'?
4. List the books authored by St. Philoxenos of Mabbug.
5. Read the description of St. Severus of Antioch given in the fifth Diptych and conduct a discussion in the class.
6. What is meaning of the surname 'Baradeus'?

7. Find out a hymn composed by St. Antimus.
8. What are the five appellations of Mar Ephrem

**Activities**

1. Write the first lines of a ‘memra’ and ‘Bovootho’ written by Mar Ephrem.  
 Memra.....  
 Bovootho.....
3. Find out two hymns written by Mar Balai from the Liturgical Book of the Holy Eucharist (Write only the first lines)  
 .....  
 .....
4. Write the meaning of the words ‘Barsauma’ and ‘Stylite.’

**Further Reading**

<b>Day</b>	<b>Morning</b>	<b>Evening</b>
Sunday	*	St. John 11:23-27
Monday	St. Matthew 10:16-23	Revelation 7:10-17
Tuesday	St. Matthew 10:24-33	James 5:13-18
Wednesday	St. Matthew 10:34-39	Hebrews 12:22-28
Thursday	St. Matthew 10:40-42	2 Corinthians 5:1-10
Friday	St. Mark 9:2-8	Romans 8:18-25
Saturday	Romans 8:26-30	*

## UNIT 6

# DOGMAS OF OUR FAITH

## Chapter 22

### The Creed of the Church-God the Father

**Learning Objectives:** To understand the meaning and significance of the Creed of the Church, and confirm our faith in the Holy Trinity. To learn to recite the Creed of the Church during all our prayers and conserve the faith of the Church.

**Verse to be Memorized:** “But even if we or an angel from heaven should proclaim to you a gospel contrary to what we proclaimed to you, let that one be accursed!” (Galatians 1:8).

**Learning Aids:** A chart containing the qualities of God the Father, a picture portraying the concept of the Holy Trinity (Eg: Picture of Christ’s Baptism), the Holy Bible, the Liturgical Book of the Holy Eucharist, and the Book of common Prayer.

#### Introduction

We are going to learn about the Creed of the Church. It begins with the sentence “We believe in One True God. The Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth.” This is a prayer that affirms our faith in Father, Son and the Holy Spirit as well as in the Church. We end prayers of all Canonical Hours and the Holy Sacraments with the recital of the Creed of the Church. In the Holy Eucharist the priest says the Creed of the Church after blessing the censor and after censuring the congregation. We are learning the origin, significance and meaning of this Nicene Creed.

#### The Lesson

The Nicene Creed is recited during the prayers of Canonical hours, the Holy Eucharist and the Holy Sacraments. Eventhough it is called the Nicene Creed, this creed of the Church was recognized by the Church in its present form at the Great Council of Constantinople.

The Creed of the Church is a synopsis of the essentials of Christian faith. Here we proclaim our faith in the Triune God comprising of God the Father, God the Son and the Holy Spirit, the Holy Church, in one baptism, in the resurrection of the dead and in the new life in the world to come.

## The Great Council of Nicea

There had been heresies in the Church since the New Testament period. Most of these heresies were centered around Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ is fully God and fully human at the same time. Some heretics condemned or belittled either of these Natures.

During the fourth century AD the heresy of Arius created great commotion in the Church. Arius was a priest of Alexandria. He was a scholar and an orator. Arius tried to interpret the concepts of Father, Son and the Holy Spirit in the light of his monotheistic faith. He argued that God the Father alone is the One eternal God; and that Son and the Holy Spirit are less in age and eternity when compared with the Father. Arius taught that biblical passages which state that the Son was born out of Father ages before and the Holy Spirit has proceeded from the Father are evidences that both these persons are not equal to Father.

Arius logically stated that “If the Son is born out of Father, the Son has a beginning and there was an age in which the Son was non-existent.” When the differences between the followers of Arianism and those who opposed it become sharp, Emperor Constantine convened a General Council in Nicea in AD 325 in order to resolve the dispute. Nicea was a place in the neighbourhood of Istanbul (old name Constantinople), the capital of present day Turkey. About 318 Church Fathers from various provinces of the Roman Empire participated in the council.

The chief advocate of orthodoxy against Arianism was Deacon Athanasius, the secretary of Bishop Alexander of Alexandria. Athanasius argued that the Son is equal to God the Father in divinity, eternity and substance (essence). Athanasius took the initiative to include the word ‘Homo Ousios’ which means “of the same substance (essence)” in the creed of the Church. The followers of Arius was led by Bishop Eusebius of Nicomedeia. Bishop Eusebius also argued to include the word ‘Homo Ousios’ or “of the same substance with the Father” in the creed. This was because this word was acceptable to a faction of the followers of Arius. They interpreted that the word “of the same substance with the Father” implies that the Son is not equal to Father.

The first two paragraphs of the creed were drafted in the Council of Nicea. These two paragraphs speak about God the Father and God the Son. Since the main issues of debate in Nicea were centred around the Son’s divinity and equality with Father, the second paragraph of the creed dealing with Lord Jesus Christ is the longest.

In the first paragraph the faith in God the Father, the One True God is affirmed. God the Father is the source of the Holy Trinity “We believe in One True God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth and of all things visible and invisible.”

By proclaiming the faith in one True God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth and of all things visible and invisible, the Church is affirming its faith in one God. Father is the source of the three persons in the Holy Trinity and the basis

of their unity. By pronouncing the name 'Father', the proclamation of faith regarding the other persons in the Holy Trinity is also made.

There are only three descriptions of God the Father given in the creed of the Church. Father is called 'The Father Almighty', 'Maker' and 'One True God.' This is because God the Father is beyond human intellect and human words. However in prayers like the 'Promeyon' of the Pentecost, several epithets are attributed to God the Father. The following description of God the Father is given in the 'Promeyon' of the first service of the Feast of The Pentecost. "We praise the invisible Lord who is beyond all human comprehension, thought and consciousness. He is self-originated, self-aware and self sufficient. He is the Maker and Preserver of all things visible and invisible. He is self originated without beginning or end and inscrutable. He is of one Nature comprising of the Father, Son and the Holy Spirit and is One True God with single authority and single mind."

The goal of these epithets is not to provide a cognitive knowledge regarding God. They indicate that God is beyond our intellect and thought and is invisible. These epithets exhort us to worship God realizing his invisible and exalted state. When we state that we believe in One True God (in the first paragraph of the creed) we confess that we are standing before the invisible and omnipotent God. When we confess that God is Father, we recognize that all people are children of God and hence our brothers and sisters. Our faith in 'One True God, the Father Almighty' becomes meaningful only when we take care of and help other people.

### Hymn

Three in one and One the three  
Triune God is Holy One  
Father, Son and Holy Ghost  
One True Lord, praise unto Thee!

.....

### Let Us Pray

(This is the first part of the 'prayer for the church' given along with special prayers in the Book of Common Prayer)

*O omnipotent, merciful, kindhearted, patient and compassionate God, You have sent your only Son to this world for the salvation of Your Church. Your tender mercy and unbounded love have compelled You to do so. O God, hear and answer our prayers. We are sinful and weak and are saved by the sacred blood of Your only Son. Kindly remove all divisions, schisms, quarrels and disputes caused by Satan, the adversary of all justice and goodness, in Your church. Seal the doors of the Church with Your Holy Cross, so that the evil schemes and designs of Satan and his hosts shall be kept out of it. Amen.*

.....

## **Resolution**

*We believe in the Holy Trinity. We would recite the creed of the Church in all our prayers; and understand its meaning. We are proud of the great tradition of the Orthodox Church.*

### **Let Us Think**

1. What are the fundamental dogmas contained in the creed of the Church?
2. Describe briefly the circumstances that led to the Great Council of Nicea.
3. What were the arguments of Athanasius against the heresy of Arius?
4. Read the 'Promeyon-Sedra' prayers of the First service of the Feast of the Pentecost. Find out five epithets used to describe God the Father and write them.
5. How can we practically express our belief in one God in our Spiritual life?
6. What was the heresy of Arius?
7. In which year was the Great Council of Nicea convened?
8. Name the Church Father who argued against Arius.
9. Which parts of the creed of the church were formulated in the Council of Nicea?
10. What are the epithets used to describe God the Father?

### **Activities**

1. Write the descriptions of God the Father given in the creed of the Church on a card.
2. Imagine that you participated in the Great Council of Nicea. Describe the proceedings of the council in your own words.
3. Role play the debate between Arius and St. Athanasius in the class.

### **Further Reading**

<b>Day</b>	<b>Morning</b>	<b>Evening</b>
Sunday	*	2 Corinthians 1:1-17
Monday	St. John 14:1-9	St. John 14:10-21
Tuesday	St. John 10:29-39	St. John 4:1-26
Wednesday	St. John 6:53-59	St. John 3:13-21
Thursday	St. Matthew 5:43-48	St. Luke 22:39-46
Friday	St. Matthew 6:16-18	Ephesians 4:1-10
Saturday	St. Matthew 10:24-33	*

## Chapter 23

# The Creed of the Church – Lord Jesus, the Only Begotten Son of God

**Learning Objectives:** To understand the meaning and significance of the second paragraph of the creed of the Church. Let us understand the greatness of Lord Jesus Christ, the second person of the Holy Trinity and affirm our faith in Him. Let us recite the Creed of the Church comprehending its meaning during all our prayers.

**Verse to be Memorized:** “Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession” (Hebrews 4:14).

**Learning Aids:** A chart containing the adjectives that describe Lord Jesus Christ, Pictures of various incidents in the life of Jesus Christ, The Holy Bible, The Liturgical Book of the Holy Eucharist, The Book of Common Prayer.

### Introduction

We learned about the first part of the Creed of the church in the previous chapter. Now look at the pictures shown by your teacher. What do you see? These are incidents from the birth of Jesus Christ till His Crucifixion. Narrate what you know about Jesus Christ in the class. We had been alienated from God because of our sins. Jesus Christ Incarnated and suffered crucifixion in order to redeem us and make us children of God. Today we learn about our faith regarding Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

### The Lesson

The second paragraph of the Creed is the reply of the church to the heresies regarding Jesus Christ. The Church has encountered such heresies since the Apostolic times (Judas Verse 4). The New Testament teaches that Jesus Christ is God and man at the same time. But some people who believed that Christ was God but did not believe that he was human. They thought that God was too exalted to take a completely human form. The heresy of Arius was different from this. Arius denied the Holy Trinity by stating that God the Father alone is the True God; that Son has an origin and hence is not equal to Father and Son’s position is inferior to that of Father.

The second paragraph of the creed is written as a reply to the heresy of Arius. Four important statements regarding Jesus Christ are made here.

1. Jesus Christ is the only-begotten Son of God. He was begotten of the Father before all worlds, in a manner incomprehensible to human intellect. There was no time in which the Son was non-existent. The Son is not created. He is equal in divinity (essence) to the Father.



2. Son of God is the Creator of everything. God the Father created everything through His Son.
3. Jesus Christ incarnated for the salvation of human beings according to His will. He was incarnate of Holy Virgin Mary. He was crucified and buried during the reign of Pontis Pilate. He got resurrected on the third day. The name of Pontis Pilate is mentioned in the Creed in order to show that Jesus Christ's death and Resurrection are historical truths. The statement that Christ suffered and died shows that he was truly human in Nature. On the other hand, the statement that he resurrected and ascended to heaven shows that he was truly God.
4. Jesus Christ will come again at the end of the world for the Last judgement. His kingdom is eternal. Here we confess our faith in the Last Judgement and eternal life.

After Arius, a person named Appolinarius of Laodocia (present Turkey) taught that even though Jesus Christ was fully God, He was not fully a human being. Though Jesus Christ took the human form He did not possess a human soul. Instead, the Word of God (Logos) resided in him. The Great Council convened in Constantinople in 381 AD declared that the teaching of Appolinarius was a heresy. In order to show that Jesus Christ had a fully human form, the statement that 'He became Human' was added to the Creed.

Even though the Creed of the Church is known as the Nicene Creed, it is an adapted and modified form of the creed which had been in use in the church of Jerusalem. Those who received baptism in Jerusalem used to confess a similar creed at the time of baptism. The creed formulated at Nicea contained only the first two paragraphs of the present creed. It ended with the statement "We also believe in the Holy Spirit." This was followed by four sentences confounding the heresy of Arius (Eg, the Holy Church confounds those who say that there was an age when the Son was non-existent and that the Son is different from the Father in Nature and Essence). But in later ages when the Creed of the Church began to be used in the liturgy, the Church avoided the confounding words.

The practice of reciting the Creed in the Holy Eucharist was introduced by Patriarch Peter the Fuller (+488) of the Syrian Church of Antioch. After the council of Chalcedon (451 AD) there was a sharp division in the Eastern churches. Churches like the Byzantine and the Latin churches supported the council. Whereas Egyptian (Coptic) and Syrian Churches opposed it. Later the Ethiopian, Armenian and Malankara Churches also rejected this council. Churches including the Malankara Church reject this council because its decisions were contrary to the proclamations of faith made in the three Ecumenical Councils of Nicea (AD 325), Constantinople (AD 381) and Ephesus (AD 431). Patriarch Peter the Fuller suggested that the creed of the church should be recited in the Holy Eucharist in order to show that the Church clings on to the Nicene Creed. Later the Byzantine and Latin Churches emulated this model.

## Hymn

This hymn is recited during the Holy Eucharist on Danaha  
(Christ's baptism - January 6)

(Scaria Thanayan - Yoohanon...)

St. John, son of Zachariah  
Stood upon the river bank  
Came there for His baptism  
Almighty Lord - of Angels  
Arrived St. John to witness  
And Christ for His baptism  
Came in sky God the Father  
To proclaim Him, "Beloved Son"  
Praise to Father, formless God  
And to Son the Baptizant  
And to Holy Spirit who  
As dove hovered over-head

.....

## Let Us Pray

*O omnipotent, merciful, compassionate, patient and kind hearted God, remember the incarnation, passion, blood and crucifixion of Your only begotten Son and realize peace, unity and reconciliation in Your holy Church. Wipe off all those who try to annihilate the faith, rituals, practices and laws of the Church. Destroy all those who try to shatter the greatness, brightness and beauty of Your Church and create divisions, debates and schisms in it. Let Your Church be exalted and let Your Gospel reign in all its corners. Enrich all the heads and authorities of Your Church with wisdom and strength. Let gentiles believe in Your only begotten Son and assemble in Your Church for worship. Amen.*

.....

## Resolution

*We have learned the declaration of faith regarding God the Son given in the Creed of the Church. We would conserve this faith all our lives. We would earnestly confess this faith in our prayers.*

## Let Us Think

1. Explain the circumstances that led to the formulation of the Creed of the Church.
2. Summarise in four sentences the description of Jesus Christ in the creed.
3. What are the qualities attributed to Father and Son in the Creed of the Church?

4. Explain the circumstances that led to the inclusion of the Creed of the Church in the Holy Eucharist.
5. Bring out the points of difference between the Oriental Orthodox churches and the Byzantine churches.
6. List the churches that supported and opposed the council of Chalcedon.
7. Why do oriented churches oppose the council of Chalcedon?
8. What was the heresy of Arius regarding the Son of God?
9. State four cardinal truths of our faith regarding Jesus Christ.

### **Activities**

1. Prepare a chart of the descriptions of Jesus Christ given in the Creed of the Church.
2. The Council of Nicea was a milestone in the history of the early Church. Collect more information about this council from history and from scholars and write a mini project report.
3. Recite the first two paragraphs of the Creed of the Church by heart in the class.

### **Further Reading**

<b>Day</b>	<b>Morning</b>	<b>Evening</b>
Sunday	*	Colossians 1:1-14
Monday	Colossians 1:15-29	Colossians 2
Tuesday	Colossians 3	Colossians 4
Wednesday	1 Thessalonians 1	1 Thessalonians 2
Thursday	1 Thessalonians 3	1 Thessalonians 4
Friday	1 Thessalonians 5	2 Thessalonians 1, 2
Saturday	2 Thessalonians 3	*

## Chapter 24

# The Creed of the Church – Holy Spirit, the Life-Giver

**Learning Objectives:** To understand the meaning and significance of the third and fourth paragraphs of the Creed of the Church. To understand the greatness of the Holy Spirit, the third person of the Holy Trinity and confirm ourselves in Orthodox Faith. Let us recite the Creed of the Church understanding its meaning.

**Verse to be Memorized:** “God added his testimony by signs and wonders and various miracles, and by gifts of the Holy Spirit, distributed according to his will” (Hebrews 2:4).

**Learning Aids:** A chart containing descriptions of the Holy Spirit, a picture of the tongues of fire on the day of the Pentecost, the Holy Bible, the Liturgical Book of the Holy Eucharist, and the Book of Common Prayer.

### Introduction

We learned about the first two parts of the creed of the church in the previous lessons. What do you know about the Holy Spirit? The Holy Spirit leads us in all truth. Today we learn about our faith in God the Holy Spirit and the Holy Church.

### The Lesson

The third paragraph of the Creed proclaims our faith in the Holy Spirit and in the Holy Church. The creed formulated in Nicea concluded with the statement “We believe in the Holy Spirit” after the first two paragraphs. The parts related to the Holy Spirit and the Holy Church were added in the Council of Constantinople in AD 381. Macedonius, the Patriarch of Constantinople, taught that the Holy Spirit was a creation of Father and hence not equal to Father. According to him the Holy Spirit was lower in status than the Father and the Son. The Great Council of AD 381 was convened to proclaim the Apostolic faith against this heresy. The following resolutions regarding the Holy Spirit were taken at the Council.

“The Holy Spirit is the Lord and the Giver of Life to everything. That means He is the Creator, the True God and equal to Father and Son. Hence He is worthy of being adored along with Father and Son. He proceeds from the Father (St. John 15:26) and takes from the Son. He has provided divine revelations through prophets and apostles, that is, through the Old Testament and the New Testament.

The creed states that the Holy Spirit “proceeds from the Father and is worshipped and glorified along with the Father and the Son.” However in the sixth century AD the Roman Catholic (Latin) Church altered it as “proceeds from Father and the

Son.” In Latin language the word for “from the Son” is ‘Filioque.’ The Orthodox churches opposed the inclusion of this word in the creed. This is known as ‘Filioque controversy.’ One of the reasons why the Byzantine (Greek) Orthodox churches severed its fellowship in the Holy Eucharist with the Roman Catholic Church in AD 1054 is the inclusion of this word in the creed of the Church.

No one has the right to delete or add anything to the Nicene Creed, which remains the sum and substance of the apostolic faith of the Church. If we say that the Holy Spirit also proceeds from the Son, it will create misunderstanding regarding the Holy Trinity. People might think that there are two sources of Origin in the Holy Trinity and would think that the Holy Spirit is inferior to Father and Son. Moreover in the gospels Jesus Christ describes the Holy Spirit as the “Spirit of truth, which proceeds from the Father” (St. John 15:26). Hence the word ‘Filioque’ is contrary to the gospels and the teachings of the Church Fathers. However the Roman Catholic Church uses this word in the creed on certain occasions.

The praise ‘Glory to Father, Son and the Holy Spirit’ used in our liturgy is a very meaningful and significant. This praise of the Holy Trinity is a reply to Arius, Macedonius and other heretics who challenge the faith in Holy Trinity. Through these words of adoration the Church proclaims that the Father, Son and the Holy Spirit are equal in essence and Persons with equal divinity. A Bible passage which proclaims that the Father, Son and the Holy Spirit are one is seen in 1 John 5:8 : “There are three that testify in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit, and these three are one.” In the beginning and end of our prayers and in the Holy Baptism we pronounce the name of the three Persons of the Holy Trinity. By doing so we are confessing their equality and oneness.

Adoring the Father, Son and the Holy Ghost is a tradition that exists from the New Testament times. The community that praises in this manner is called ‘Orthodox.’ This Greek word means “praising God in the right manner.” The Holy Spirit makes human beings good and makes them claimants for the kingdom of God. We receive the Holy Spirit through the anointment of Holy Chrism (Mooron) during the Holy Baptism. The Holy Spirit purifies us and resides in us through the Holy Eucharist and sacraments. The fruit of the spirit is visible in those in whom the Holy Spirit resides (Galatians 5:22-23).

### **The Holy Church**

In the third paragraph of the creed we confess that “We believe in One Holy Universal Apostolic Church.” The Holy Church is the community of believers who have joined with Jesus Christ through the Holy Baptism. In order to indicate the depth of relationship between the Church and Jesus Christ, the New Testament describes the Holy Church as the ‘body of Christ’, and ‘the bride of Christ’. The Church is also described as the ‘people of God’ and the ‘New Israel.’ During the Old Testament period

God chose the Israelites to proclaim His love and mercy to the world. God founded the Scriptures, offerings, practices of worship and priesthood for their sake. These institutions were founded to worship God and live according to His will. But when the Old Israel failed in that mission, God chose the Holy Church that is the 'New Israel' to realize His purpose.

There are four descriptions given to the Church in the Creed. The Church is Catholic (universal), Apostolic, One and Holy. The word 'Catholic' originates from the Greek word 'Catholike'. It means "with reference to the whole" and 'comprehensive.' The Church has spread to all continents and all tribes. Only the Orthodox Church has the comprehensiveness and authenticity of faith. That is why it is known as the Catholic (universal) Church. 'Apostolic Church' means the Church that preserves the faith and tradition of the Apostles. Ours is the church founded by Apostle St. Thomas. We follow the faith and tradition received from him. 'One' church refers to the Church founded by Jesus Christ. Those who follow heresies are not members of the One Church. God alone is holy. The Church is called 'holy church' because it is the body of Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit resides in it.

### **One Baptism and Eternal Life**

We confess that "We acknowledge one baptism for the remission of sins." This means that baptism cannot be repeated. All apostolic churches acknowledge the holy baptism in the name of the Holy Trinity. But the Church teaches that the baptism administered by heretics and Reformist communities is incomplete. Those who are baptized in those churches are received into the Orthodox fold only after anointing them with the Holy Chrism. Orthodox church admits those who are born and got baptized in Marthoma, CSI and Anglican churches as members in to the Orthodox Church only after anointing them with the Holy Chrism. The Christian life does not end with death. Resurrection and eternal life are fundamental principles of our faith. The Creed of the church ends with the proclamation of that hope.

### **Hymn**

(This hymn is recited during the Evening prayers of Easter season worship)

(Modikka visudha sabhe...)

Rejoice, ye holy Church! rejoice; our Lord  
On the third day-came to life-and a rose from the tomb  
Sin,-He killed-by His murder; death by His death  
Cherub's lance he effaced by-lance that He suffered  
Tomb's perdition removed by His  
Tomb; gave life by Resurrection  
He suffered all-and effaced all our transgressions

.....

## Let Us Pray

(This is the special prayer for church and its priests  
given in the Book of Prayer)

*O, One True God comprising of Father, Son and the Holy Spirit. Bless all metropolitans and priests of our Church who pray for us and instruct us in the word of God. Enable all their words and actions to glorify Your name. Let You be adored from all churches, monasteries and other sacred places as well as from the homes of all the faithful and by the faithful individually. Let You, Son and the Holy Spirit be praised and worshipped for ever incessantly. Amen.*

.....

## Resolution

*We have learned the Creed of the Church; we firmly believe in the Holy Trinity. We would recite the creed comprehending its meaning during our prayers.*

## Let Us Think

1. What changes were brought about in the Creed of the Church during the Great Council of Constantinople?
2. Describe the 'Filioque' controversy briefly.
3. What are the four descriptions of the Church in the Creed?
4. Explain the meaning of the word 'Catholic.'
5. Why do we anoint members of some other churches with Holy Chrism before receiving them as members of our church?
6. What was the heresy regarding the Holy Spirit?
7. What is the Orthodox teaching regarding the Holy Spirit?
8. How can we prove that the Holy Trinity is the One True God?

## Activities

1. Prepare a chart of the descriptions of the Holy Spirit and the Holy Church given in the creed of the church.
2. Write the descriptions of the church on cards and keep them in your folio.
3. Learn the creed of the church by heart and recite it in the class.
4. Recite the creed during prayers understanding its meaning.

## Further Reading

<b>Day</b>	<b>Morning</b>	<b>Evening</b>
Sunday	*	1 Timothy 1
Monday	1 Timothy 2	1 Timothy 3
Tuesday	1 Timothy 4	1 Timothy 5:1-16
Wednesday	1 Timothy 5:17-25	1 Timothy 6:1-10
Thursday	1 Timothy 6:11-22	2 Timothy 1
Friday	2 Timothy 2:1-13	2 Timothy 2, 3
Saturday	2 Timothy 4	*



# UNIT 7

## GREAT MEN OF GOD

### Chapter 25

## His Grace Alvariz Mar Yulios

**Learning Objectives:** To read a brief biography of Alvariz Mar Yulios. Let us try to emulate his good examples in our lives.

**Verse to be Memorized:** “For he has graciously granted you the privilege not only of believing in Christ, but of suffering for him as well- since you are having the same struggle that you saw I had and now hear that I still have” (Philippians 1:29).

**Learning Aids:** A biography of Alvariz Mar Yulios, Church Encyclopaedia, the Holy Bible, the Liturgical Book of the Holy Eucharist, and the Book of Common Prayer.

### Introduction

Almost all of the metropolitans consecrated in the Malankara Church till date have been Malayalees born and brought up in this Church. But we have a Metropolitan of our Church, who was not a Malayali. He is Alvariz Mar Yulios. He is a saintly Father of our church. Today we are to learn about him.

### The Lesson

Alvariz Mar Yulios was born in an elite Roman Catholic family at Verna in Goa on April 29, 1836. His original name was Antonio Francis Xavier Alvariz. The family was very religious. Alvariz showed sympathy and kind-heartedness to the suffering people. He wanted to become a priest and studied in the Roman Catholic Seminary of Goa. Later he went to Bombay and was ordained priest in 1862 by the bishop of Bombay, Walter Eistein. The priests of the Roman Catholic Church are often called ‘Padre.’ Padre Alvariz returned to Goa and carried on his ministry at Panchim, Goa. Along with parish ministry he also focused on charity, education and journalism.

### From Roman Catholicism to Orthodoxy

Today several people in western countries, especially Europe and America, join the Orthodox Church. However such a trend is not seen in India. Padre Alvariz was strongly opposed to two practices he saw around him. Firstly he was opposed to the mechanical insistence of the Roman Catholics on rituals and practices. Secondly he disliked the Portuguese government’s support to the Roman Catholic Church and its opposition to everything indigenous to India. He wanted to follow right spirituality

and right nationalism. His purity of life and sense of justice prompted him to drift away from the Roman Catholic Church and embrace Oriental Orthodox Spirituality. Thus he became a member of the Orthodox Church.

### **Consecration as Metropolitan**

St. Gregorios of Parumala who came to know about the spirituality and rigorous life of Padre Alvariz professed him a 'Ramban' (a monastic priest). Ramban Alvariz was consecrated Metropolitan under the title Alvariz Mar Yulios on July 29, 1889 at Old Seminary, Kottayam. His consecration was officiated by Mar Dionysius II of Pulikkottil, St. Gregorios of Parumala, Paulos Mar Ivanios (Later the first Catholicos Paulos I) and Paulos Mar Athanasius of Kadavil. He was put in charge of the newly created outside Kerala Diocese. In those days there were not many Malankara Christians residing outside Kerala.

### **The Opposition of Roman Catholic Church**

The Roman Catholic Church did not like a Roman Catholic joining the Orthodox Church and becoming a Metropolitan there. Moreover they did not allow him to live and work in Goa. He had to leave Goa and he went to a place called Brahmavar in the Kanara region of Karnataka. There he worked together with his friend Fr. Nuro. About five thousand families left Roman Catholic Church and joined the Malankara Orthodox Church. However the Malankara Orthodox Church could not take care of them well and majority of these families returned to the Roman Catholic fold. However there are about 1000 families still remaining in the Malankara Orthodox Church in this region. They are permitted to retain their language (Konkini) and other practices except in matters of faith. Today our church has a diocese called Brahmavar based on the church founded by Alvariz Mar Yulios.

### **The Ministry of Alvariz Mar Yulios**

Eventhough Alvariz Mar Yulios had to shift to Brahmavar because of the opposition of the Roman Catholics, he did not leave his relationship with Goa and Panchim. He opposed colonial rule and argued for the independence of the country. He fought for Indian nationalism and independence through newspapers like the 'Times of Goa.' Along with that he carried on social and charity work. He became the apostle of the poor and stood for the weak and the suffering sections of society. He had to suffer contempt from others. He literally begged on behalf of the poor. Once he went to a merchant for alms. The merchant contemptuously spat into his begging bowl. He replied calmly, "Dear friend, I take the spit as my share. Now give something for the sake of the destitute." This incident brought a great change in the merchant. He became a supporter of the Metropolitan. Like Jesus Christ, the Metropolitan led a simple life and underwent a lot of suffering. His biographer Dr. Carmo Azevedo, who was convinced of his patriotism and renunciation gave the title 'Patriot and Saint' to his biography.

The Roman Catholic Church and the Portuguese government persecuted him because of his work. They prohibited him from wearing a Metropolitan's vestments. He was physically tortured and put in jail several times. Like the martyrs of the Early Church, he suffered a lot physically and mentally. But he remained firm in his work and was never tired.

He never forsook the Malankara Orthodox Church which he had joined, with a lot of conviction. The Roman Catholics had calculated that persecutions would bring him back of the Roman Catholic fold. But their designs didn't succeed. However because of the circumstances prevailing in those days, the Church in Kerala could not offer him much support. He passed away on September 23, 1923. Even though the Roman Catholic Church discarded him, the general public didn't neglect his contributions. His funeral at St. Ines Cemetery of Panchim municipality was attended by elites like the representative of Governor General, and Chief Justice.

### **From Oblivion to the Lime Light**

Alvariz Mar Yulios was not remembered by many for about 44 years from 1923 to 1967. In 1967 Mathews Mar Athanasius, Metropolitan of outside Kerala Diocese (Later Catholicos Mathews I) visited his tomb and tried to reclaim his relic. These efforts bore fruit. On October 5, 1979 his relics were removed to a newly built church at Ribandar. St. Mary's Church, Panchim, Ribandar was proclaimed a pilgrim centre. Every year on September 23, the Commemoration Feast of this Metropolitan is observed. Hundreds of pilgrims come to his tomb seeking his intercession.

If we are asked to name a Church Father who has been persecuted for the sake of Malankara Church, the first name that comes to our mind is that of the saintly Alvariz Mar Yulios. After the Coonen Cross oath in 1653, Malankara Church was administrated by Marthoma Metropolitans. Among them Marthoma V face many persecutions from Dutch. Alvariz Mar Yulios suffered for the sake persecutions of Orthodoxy, for destitutes and for the freedom of the nation. Indeed he parttook of the passion of our Lord Jesus Christ. Hence he would live in those who love Jesus Christ.

### **Hymn**

(This hymn is recited after the Evangelion during the Holy Eucharist on the day of commemorating the saints)  
(Mar Yulios Siddha Bhagyam...)

Alvariz Mar Yulios -"Bliss to You" -says the Church,  
"You will attain heavenly bliss-Jesus has promised"  
Bliss since you have-eschewed the mortal world  
Bliss since you have-embraced Lord Jesus  
Blessed is the hour when-Lord Jesus calls us  
"Come and inherit the world-of Eternal Life"  
Haleluiah-Let your prayer guard us.

.....

### Let Us Pray

(This prayer is recited along with the Matins on the Sunday commemorating the priests)

*O Lord Jesus Christ, our priests have borne Your yoke, loved truth and laboured all their lives in the Holy of Holies when they had been alive. Let these priests have their faces illuminated on the Day of Resurrection and let them rejoice with You in Your bridal chamber. Barekmor.*

.....

### Resolution

*We would emulate in our lives the good examples Mar Yulios has shown us. We would try to lead a simple life of renunciation.*

### Let Us Think

1. What were the areas where Alvariz Mar Yulios worked?
2. Point out an example of his suffering for the sake of the poor.
3. Why was he persecuted?
4. What did Malankara Orthodox Church do to retain his sacred memory?
5. What was his original name?
6. How does he differ in background from other Metropolitans of Malankara?
7. What are the fields in which he worked along with his parish ministry?
8. Why did Padre Alvariz join the Orthodox Church?
9. Who professed him Ramban?
10. Where was he consecrated a Metropolitan? Who officiated in his consecration?

### Activities

1. Prepare a small project on the life and work of Alvariz Mar Yulios. Collect information about him from scholars and the biographical sketches of Church Fathers.
2. Collect pictures of Alvariz Mar Yulios.
3. Prepare a chart based on the life line of Alvariz Mar Yulios.

### Further Reading

Day	Morning	Evening
Sunday	*	Titus 1:1-5
Monday	Titus 1:6-9	Titus 1:10-16
Tuesday	Titus 2:1-11	Titus 2:12-15
Wednesday	Titus 3	Philemon 1-25
Thursday	Hebrews 1	Hebrews 2
Friday	Hebrews 3	Hebrews 4,5
Saturday	Hebrews 6,7	*

## Chapter 26

# His Grace Pathrose Mar Osthathios

**Learning Objectives:** There are different ways in we can bear witness to Christ. To about our saintly Father Pathrose Mar Osthathios who worked for the liberation of the downtrodden sections in the society. Learn to emulate the good examples set by him and seek refuge in his intercession.

**Verse to be Memorized:** “Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me” (St. Matthew 25:40).

**Learning Aids:** Malankara Church Encyclopedia, *The Church Fathers of Malankara* (Dr. Samuel Chandanappally), The biographies of Pathrose Mar Osthathios (P. P. Varkey and K. V. Mammen), the Holy Bible, the Liturgical Book of the Holy Eucharist, and the Book of Common Prayer.

### Introduction

Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church is the National Church of India. However it was counted as a high caste within the caste system of India. Hence it had great respect in the society but failed to evangelise the lower sections of the society. But the Gospel exhort us to make all disciples of Jesus Christ. One of our Church Fathers came forward to evangelise the lower castes and improve their social conditions. Today we are learning about this Church Father -Pathrose Mar Osthathios who lived and died serving the poorest of the poor.

### The Lesson

Pathrose Mar Osthathios was born at Mookkancherry house, Thrippunithura on June 20, 1886. His original name was M. P. Peter. He was very bright in his studies and passed matriculation exam with high rank. He observed and understood about the society around him even when he was a student. It was a period when untouchability of lower castes was in practice. Young M.P. Peter opposed the social system that discriminated people on the basis of caste. He used to visit the huts of lower castes in his neighbourhood, communicated with them, loved and cared for them. It was a revolutionary move as none among the higher castes in those days would do so. After his graduation and Teacher Training course, he proceeded to Serampore College for graduate studies in theology. He was ordained deacon by St. Geevarghese Mar Dionysius. He wrote an article against untouchability in ‘Malayala Manorama’ newspaper.

During these days Deacon Peter was appointed to a post which no one in Malankara Church had held earlier. The king of Kochi appointed him as the special officer of a project for the upliftment of lower castes. A Christian deacon was appointed

to this post because his interest and sincerity in this field had been acknowledged. He worked with the high officials of the government. As a result several children from the lower castes joined schools for their education. The deacon tried hard to create awareness against untouchability through his letters and speeches. The deacon also joined the famous Vaikom Sathyagraha and took the leadership of the movement. There had been very few priests who worked for the general public in this manner.

### **As a Priest and a Metropolitan**

The first students conference held at Balikamadom School, Thiruvalla in 1908 changed the course of his life. The devotional took on 'God's calling' by Fr. Gomes moved M. P. Peter to tears. He decided to become an ascetic and serve the church and society. He was ordained priest in 1926. In 1947 he was professed a 'Ramban' and on May 15, 1953 he was consecrated a Metropolitan. He was a missionary bishop in the true sense of the term. He became the first metropolitan of the vast and underdeveloped diocese of Malabar. He went with his message of the Gospel not only to Malabar but to various corners of the country. His eventful life came to an end at the age of 82. He passed away on February 2, 1968. His mortal remains were interred in Carmel Dayara, Mulanthuruthy, the headquarters of Servants of the Cross Society he had founded.

### **Servants of the Cross**

In 1924 Deacon Peter founded the missionary society called 'Servants of the Cross.' His evangelical work was unique and quite different from those of the western missionaries. Like Lord Jesus Christ he empathized with people and their social circumstances especially with those living in the lower strata of the society. The lower classes lived in darkness in those days. They were illiterate, and lived in huts amidst a lot of superstitions and evil practices. He travelled around in public transport vehicles and on foot. People collected money to buy him a car, but he spent it on the missionary work. He used scrolls containing bible stories, wick-lantern, and metal-clapper for his evangelical work. He disregarded rain and cold, went from hut to hut of the poor, sat on the bamboo mats laid on the floor and talked about Jesus Christ and His gospels. His simple life of renunciation was in itself a great witness.

Through him, about 22700 people joined the church. All of them belonged to lower caste. Unfortunately the other members of our Church could not see them as brothers. Caste divisions were manifested even within the Church. Hence majority of these new converts relapsed to their former faith. Others continue as members of our Church even today. The 'Servants of the Cross' Society founded by H. G. Pathrose Mar Osthathios functions even today looking after the spiritual and social welfare of the depressed classes. Mar Osthathios has given us a perfect model of evangelical work to be carried out in India, especially to the Dalits and the oppressed. Such a style of functioning can be adopted only by those who practice renunciation in life. We cannot see another Church leader in the history of Malankara church who has done so much for the poor.

## Liturgical Language

He insisted that the liturgical language should be Malayalam. However those in the Church leadership were not willing to give up Syriac which had been our liturgical language for centuries. (The Syriac language belonged to the family of Aramic, the language spoken by Jesus Christ and we had inherited it from our relationship with Oriental Churches.) Mar Osthathios overcame the opposition of the church leaders and got the liturgy of Holy Eucharist and other sacraments translated into Malayalam. When times changed all became convinced that his conviction was right.

## The Architect of the Malabar Diocese

Malabar had a lot of migration from South Kerala. The migrants had to struggle against nature and wild animals and depended entirely on agriculture for their livelihood. Most of the churches were made of bamboo stalkes and were thatched with grass. This good shepherd walked to even remote villages in search of his migrant flock there. His Diocese extended to all regions covered by the present dioceses of Malabar, Bathery and Brahmavar. The foundation laid by him was later built upon by his successor H. G. Thomas Mar Thimotheos (Later H. H. Catholicos Didimos I) who raised the diocese of Malabar to its present heights.

## Hymn

(Bah'may Bar'vo...)

Resplendent both in heav'n and earth  
Is Mar Osthathios memory  
Celestial hosts behold in joy  
Sons of men on earth rejoice;  
At thy fight the Lord hath joy  
Seeing thee in trial great-  
"O good soldier", sayeth He  
Come, possess the Kingdom true  
Which passeth not, nor fadeth.

.....

## Let Us Pray

*O Father Pathrose Mar Osthathios, intercede for us. Pray to enable us to follow your example. We seek refuge in your prayers. Grant us your help. Inspire us with the spirit of a missionary. Amen.*

.....

## Resolution

*We respect the mission work of Mar Osthathios. We would follow his good example and seek his intercession.*

## Let Us Think

1. What was the social vision of Pathrose Mar Osthathios from his young days?
2. What were his contributions to mission of the Malankara Orthodox Church?
3. What did he do to make Malayalam the language of liturgy?
4. What welfare activities did he undertake as the architect of the Diocese of Malabar?
5. Explain the unique mission style of H. G. Pathrose Mar Osthathios.
6. What was the original name of H. G. Pathrose Mar Osthathios?
7. Where was he born?
8. What do you understand by untouchability?
9. What was the special post to which Deacon Peter was appointed?
10. What kind of social work did he do in this capacity?
11. Which incident can be considered a turning point in his life?
12. Summarize his life as a priest and metropolitan.
13. Where is the tomb of H. G. Pathrose Mar Osthathios located?
14. Who founded the Servants of the Cross society?
15. What is the style of evangelism practiced by Mar Osthathios?
16. Give examples of the Metropolitan's life of simplicity.

## Activities

1. Collect more information about Servants of the Cross society and prepare a diary.
2. In a map of Kerala, mark the areas where the Metropolitan worked and converted several people to Christianity.
3. Discuss in the class how we can make use of the mission model of the Mar Osthathios.
4. Pray seeking the intercession of the saintly Mar Osthathios.

## Further Reading

Day	Morning	Evening
Sunday	*	St. Matthew 25:31-46
Monday	Hebrews 8	Hebrews 9:1-10
Tuesday	Hebrews 9:11-22	Hebrews 9:23-38
Wednesday	Hebrews 10:1-8	Hebrews 10:19-39
Thursday	Hebrews 11:1-16	Hebrews 11:17-40
Friday	Hebrews 12:1-13	Hebrews 12, 13
Saturday	Hebrews 14	*



## Chapter 27

# His Grace Dr. Geevarghee Mar Osthathios – “The Jewel of the Malankara Church”

**Learning Objectives:** To appreciate the life and works of the Jewel of the church, Dr. Geevarghese Mar Osthathios and follow the good examples he has shown us. Let us also appreciate the charitable works of the Metropolitan and develop social commitment.

**Verse to the Memorized:** “Remember your leaders, those who spoke the word of God to you; consider the outcome of their way of life, and imitate their faith” (Hebrews 13:7).

**Learning Aids:** A picture of H. G. Dr. Geevarghese Mar Osthathios, pictures showing various incidents of his life and the institutions he founded, the Holy Bible, the liturgical Book of the Holy Eucharist and the Book of Common Prayer.

### Introduction

H. G. Dr. Geevarghese Mar Osthathios, Metropolitan of Niranam diocese who passed away in 2012. He is laid to eternal rest in St. Paul’s Mission Centre, Mavelikkara founded by him. The church has honoured him by adorning him with the title ‘Jewel of the Church’. Today we are going to learn about him.

### The Lesson

Even though the Malankara Orthodox church is two thousand years old, the title ‘Jewel of the Church’ is not given to anyone other than H. G. Dr. Geevarghese Mar Osthathios. This title was given so him to that the coming generations would appreciate his contributions. He was a Church Father who never desired any awards or recognition.

### A Short Biographical Sketch

He was born on December 9, 1918 as the second son of Kochu Itty of Munduvayalil house, Cherukol, Mavelikkara and Mariamma of Iezhakkadavil. His original name was Georgekutty. He was a member of St. John’s Orthodox Church, Pathichira. After his primary education in Cherukol and Pathichira he completed his High School education from Bishop Hodges School Mavelikkara. He passed Teacher Training course and had a short stint as a teacher.

He was not born in a rich family. But his mother used to help the poor and needy in the neighbourhood despite their meagre resources. Little Georgekutty learned

the primary lessons of love for God and human from her. He learned the gospel of caring for the poor from the experiences of his life much before he could assimilate them intellectually.

It was a period when the influence of spiritual awakening had spread from missionary and Reformist churches to the Orthodox Church. Eventhough there were several Reformist practices unacceptable to our true faith, there were certain good and acceptable aspects as well. One was the personal experience of Jesus Christ and the earnest desire to confess Christ. During his young days, Georgekutty had an experience of dedicating himself to Lord Jesus Christ. This personal dedication became the foundation of his life. On the other hand the turning point of his life came when he got the opportunity to undergo his education in USA. He took his degree in theology (Bachelor of Divinity) from Leonard Theological Seminary, Jabalpur. Then he took MA degree from Drue University, New Jersey and STM from Union Seminary, New York. He was ordained deacon in 1948 just before he left for the USA. When he returned after his studies, he was ordained a priest on May 10, 1956. Moreover he was appointed a teacher at Orthodox Theological Seminary, Kottayam.

When he went for his studies the Theological Seminary had been functioning at M. D. Seminary Kottayam. In the years that followed he was given the administrative responsibility of certain churches. During this period he was a fiery speaker at Bible conventions. He was elected to be a bishop in 1965, but the consecration didn't take place. He was reelected in 1974 and was consecrated Metropolitan in 1975. In 1976 he assumed office as the Metropolitan of Niranam diocese. In 2005 he abdicated as Metropolitan of the diocese of Niranam. He had been active till a few days before his demise. He spent his days in prayer, writing and reading. He passed away on February 16, 2012 and was laid to eternal rest at St. Paul's Chapel, Mavelikkara.

We shall describe the eventful life of this Father briefly under three heads.

**1. Orthodox Theological Seminary and Theological Reflections:** He taught in the Theological Seminary for fifty six years from 1952 to 2008. Most of the Metropolitans of the Malankara Church including H.H. Baselios Marthoma Mathews III Catholicos are his disciples. His tenure as a teacher at Orthodox Theological Seminary raised him to the level of eminent theologians of his time. He authored several books which were acknowledged internationally. They include 'Theology of a Classless Society', 'The Sin of being Rich in a Poor World', 'Sharing God and a Sharing World' and 'One Religion of Love.' He developed a world view based on the concept that 'God is love.' He found out that all varieties and differences can be bridged through love. He dreamed of a world of equality founded on love of God and justice. He tried his best to fulfil this dream through his prayers and activities. He observed that poverty is the best manifestation of sin. All those who try to remove poverty try to please God. At the same time he stood against opposing sin with sin.

He participated in several international conferences organized by World Council of Churches, Faith and Order, and International Association for Mission Studies and shared his ideas with others.

**2. St. Paul's Mission Centre:** During his studies in the USA, he was often invited to preach in the churches there. He used the honorarium got from these places to buy the land for St. Paul's mission centre in 1953. But about a decade before that, in 1943, the mission centre had started functioning in a rented building. Several people have attended the summer school run at this mission centre during summer vacation. They give leadership to the church in different parts of the world in various capacities as priests, metropolitans and lay preachers. This mission centre was a second home to the metropolitan and he spent majority of his days at this centre. It is at this centre that the Metropolitan was laid to eternal rest.

In 1979, this centre was declared as the Mission Training Centre of the Orthodox Church. This also functions as the central office of Mission society founded in 1952 and as the headquarters of the Mission board of the Church. In 1984 an association for Mission Studies was founded here-National Association for Mission studies (NAMS). Even though these movements created a stir of mission in the Malankara Church, the dreams of the metropolitan are yet to be fully realized.

Like the priests giving leadership to church services, the lay evangelists should reside in the region of their mission and carry on the mission work. He used to say that our mission work should reach all villages of India. He desired for the development of a mission oriented Orthodox Community which would serve the poor, the lepers, the Aids victims, the illiterate, the addicts, the destitutes and the orphans. Even though the missionaries who got their training have started activities in various places, the dreams of the Metropolitan are not fully realized. We should all pray, support and volunteer for a generation bearing his dreams to rise up in our Church.

**3. Puthuppady Children's Home and St. Paul's Monastery:** The Metropolitan founded a children's home at Puthuppady, It was the first project to realise his dreams. Once Father M. V. George was moved to see a child's corpse being pecked at by crows. He decided that orphaned children should not be let to sleep in the streets. He thought of a remedy and God showed him the way. Manalel family of Puthuppady donated 25 acres of land to him and the Children's Home started functioning here. It was in a way the beginning of the organised mission and charity work of Malankara Orthodox Church. It can undoubtedly be stated that the Children's Home of Puthuppady was the inspiration for the all the works of charity that have been founded in Malankara in the subsequent decades. He got two disciples Fr. V. M. Thomas and Fr. K. I. Philip from Theological Seminary to assist him in his work. Fr. Thomas lived in Puthuppady and looked after the

children whereas Fr. Philip extended the areas of activity. Both of them were professed Rambans later. Ramban Thomas died even before the metropolitan passed away. Ramban Philip continued with his work and passed away in September 7, 2020. Later a monastery and a convent were established in Puthuppady. The inmates of these institutions Metropolitans, a group of dedicated priests and ascetic priests. All of them are today rendering to praiseworthy service in various fields of the Church.

Other new institutions followed. A girl's home and convent were established in Puthuppady itself. Then Children's Homes were established at Panayampala, and Haripad within the Niranam diocese. This was followed by Thiruvananthapuram Guidance Centre, Rest House, St. Thomas Children's Home, Neyyattinkara, St. George Girl's Convent Pune, Children's Village, Snehabhavan and Dayabhavan, Bangalore in Karnataka. Also the Children's Village in Itarsi and Children's Home, Kottayam were founded by Mar Osthathios.

The metropolitan also gave leadership to the rehabilitation projects following the Tsunami, earthquake and famine in places like Orissa, Lathur, Kerala, Madras, Andamans and Ethiopia. The goal of all his activities was to spread the gospel of love to all suffering people despite their differences in terms of caste, religion or language. He started various projects for people suffering from diseases and heart problems, poverty and destitution. It was under his initiative that the Sunday coming after July 3 is observed as Mission Sunday. The donations collected on that day is spent on missionary activities. The itinerant mission organ of the church "Message of Love" is also a brain child of the metropolitan.

Mar Osthathios was an excellent preacher, prophet of social justice, writer, theologian, apostle of the poor, a person who led a life of simplicity, social reformer, ardent lover of the church, one who suffered for the sake of Gospel, and a Church Father who loved children. He could realize all these because he held Jesus Christ the greatest joy of his life. He could reconcile incessant prayer and a life of action. His life shall be a great example for future generations.

.....

### Let Us Pray

(This prayer is recited along with the Vespers on the Sunday commemorating the priests)

*O Jesus Christ, grant good remembrance to Your priests in heavenly Jerusalem since they have observed Your commandments and earned Your affection above everything. Let them parttake of the Feast of Your kingdom. Since they have entrusted their souls with You during their lives and hour of death, adore them with glory on the day of your Second Coming. Amen.*

.....

## Resolution

*We would follow the good examples set by Mar Osthathios. We would participate in the mission and charity projects of the church.*

### Let Us Think

1. Describe briefly the childhood of H. G. Geevarghese Mar Osthathios.
2. What were the social works under taken by Mar Osthathios?
3. What are the institutions founded by Mar Osthathios?
4. What is the life's message of Mar Osthathios?
5. What are the circumstances that led to the founding St. Paul's Mission centre, Mavelikkara? Describe the various stages of its development.
6. What are the institutions founded by the Metropolitan outside Kerala? Describe them briefly.
7. What are the factors that prompted the Metropolitan to give leadership to a number of social service projects?
8. Name the parents of H. G. Gheevarghese Mar Osthathios.
9. Where did the Metropolitan have his primary education from?
10. What were the circumstances that made him a lover of humanity?
11. What are the important contributions of the Mar Osthathios as a teacher at the Orthodox Theological Seminary, Kottayam?
12. Explain the circumstances that led to the establishment of St. Paul's Mission Centre.
13. How did the mission centre become the headquarters of missionary activities of the church?

### Activities

1. Collects pictures of H. G. Geevarghese Mar Osthathios and the institutions that he founded. Prepare an album using the collected pictures.
2. Prepare a chart of the epithets that can be attributed to the metropolitan.
3. Write a diary entry on the topic: "Geevarghese Mar Osthathios: The Prophet of Social Justice."
4. Visit St. Paul's Mission Centre, Mavelikkara. Participate in the summer camp there during vacation.
5. Participate in mission activities of the Church.

## Further Reading

<b>Day</b>	<b>Morning</b>	<b>Evening</b>
Sunday	*	St. James 1:1-18
Monday	St. James 1:19-27	St. James 2:1-13
Tuesday	St. James 2:14-26	St. James 3
Wednesday	St. James 4	St. James 5
Thursday	1 Peter 1:1-12	1 Peter 1:13-25
Friday	1 Peter 2	1 Peter 3
Saturday	1 Peter 4, 5	*

# UNIT 8

## GOOD HABITS

### Chapter 28

### We too are Farmers

**Learning Objectives:** To develop a love for agriculture and interest in farming. To evaluate the role of nature in sustaining the equilibrium of life. To resolve to love and protect nature.

**Verse to be Memorized:** “The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to till it and keep it” (Genesis 2:15).

**Learning Aids:** Pictures of farm products and a paddy field, the Holy Bible, the liturgical Book of the Holy Eucharist, and the Book of Common Prayer.

#### Introduction

God has given us plants and fruit bearing trees. They contain seeds. By cultivating these seeds and raising the plants and seeds once again, we are participating in God’s creation. Let us look at the importance of agriculture and the joy it generates.

#### The Lesson

Haven’t you seen farm lands? How pleasing is it to see the farms teem full of crops! Once upon a time agriculture was the only means of livelihood for human beings. We have people like teachers, doctors, engineers, clerks, self employed businessmen and farmers. Today people are reluctant to take up agriculture. They think that working in fields and farms is demeaning. Moreover farming is no longer a profitable job in many parts of the world. Hence most people today aim at salaried jobs rather than going for farming. But farm produces are essential for us to meet our food requirements. Today most of us purchase food grains and vegetables produced in various places at a high price. One of the reasons for this situation is people’s lack of interest in physical labour.

#### The Importance of Agriculture in the Holy Bible

References to agriculture are many in the Holy Bible. Figurative usages connected with agriculture are used to describe theological ideas. Hosea 10:12 says “Sow for

yourselves righteousness; reap steadfast love”. Prophet Isaiah compares the manner in which God nurtured Israel, to that of a vineyard (Isaiah 5:1-7). The wealth of patriarchal fathers was accounted in terms of the number of bulls and donkeys they possessed. Abraham had herds of cattle and sheep, donkeys, male and female servants, and camels. Job had 7000 sheep, 3000 camels, 500 Oxen, 500 female donkeys and lot of servants.

Lord Jesus Christ has taken several images from agriculture for his parables. Examples are the parable of the sower and the parable of the mustard seed (St. Matthew 13:1-9, 13:31). Jesus Christ used the image of grape wine to describe the relationship between God the Father, Jesus Christ and the disciples of Jesus Christ (St. John 15:1-11). Look at the description made by St. Paul “I have planted. Apollos watered; but God gave the increase” (1 Corinthians 3:6).

### **Agriculture in History**

In olden days our ancestors lived in an agricultural background. Most Christian homes had farmlands and most of them raised paddy for their need. Similarly Cassava, Yam, Pepper, Sugarcane, Coconut and plantain were also cultivated. Rubber cultivation was not known in India in those days. The wealth of a family was assessed on the basis of their agricultural wealth. The criteria used to assess wealth are the quantity of rice produced or the number of coconuts produced. Do you like agriculture as a way of life? We need to appreciate and support the labour of agriculturists and farmers.

**1. Respect for our Forefathers:** Since our forefathers were farmers, farming is part of our culture. We who so we need to have an affinity for agriculture.

**2. It is a Means of Exercise:** But physical labour involved in farming is really enjoyable. When we till land, or irrigate the plants, we not only get exercise but mental pleasure as well.

**3. It Provides Clean Food:** We know that several crops grown for sale are polluted with excessive use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides. If we maintain a kitchen garden we can produce unadulterated food materials.

**4. It Enables Us to Enjoy God’s Love and Beauty:** When we see a flower we do see and appreciate the beauty of God’s creation. The fragrance of flowers, the music of the first rains and the smell of earth enable us to praise God. When the plants bear fruit, let us praise God for his wonderful creations.

**5. Laying the Land Fallow is Sin:** We should make good use of God-given resources us. When several people suffer from hunger and poverty, laying the farm land fallow is a sin before God.



**6. It Provides an Experience of Fellowship:** Agriculture provides an experience in fellowship. When all the members of a family work together in the farmland, it will strengthen family bonds. The sight of father tilling the land, mother removing the weeds and the children irrigating the plants is a beautiful sight. Eventhough the farm lands are large, the members of a family can help labourers in farm activities. Sharing the agricultural produces is another experience of fellowship. For example if we have horticultural crops in our farm, we can give a portion of vegetables to our neighbours. Thus we can share a portion of our farm products with our neighbours or dependants. This experience of sharing gives a lot of Divine joy.

**7. “You will get in the same measure as you give”:** We can give your farm products to the poor. The poor people who come to our door step seeking alms can be given a portion of the farm yield God has given us. If we do so, God will give us greater rewards.

**8. It Enables us to Submit the First Fruits to the Church:** Every church celebrates the Feast of First Fruits. The joy of giving a portion of our own farm products as first fruits like rice, yam, cassava, coconut, plantain or pepper is beyond words. We need to cultivate our farms.

**9. Trees Provide Us Fresh Air:** Trees take in the carbon dioxide we exhale and give out life giving oxygen. When we raise trees and plants in our courtyard, the air around us will be clean.

**10. We are Part of the Earth:** God created us from earth. Our food comes entirely from soil. After our death we return to the earth. When the trumpets of the Last Judgment are heard we would rise up from the earth and stand before God. Hence our life is always connected with earth. Hence we need to develop a natural affinity with the earth.

Hereafter our farmlands should not be laid fallow. As children you should create awareness among our friends and family members about this. When your parents go for farm work you shall also join them. You could find time along with your studies for worship and for doing agricultural work. Children can raise a vegetable garden in the courtyard of your house. Vegetables can be cultivated on terraces of houses, flower pots and plastic bags. We too are farmers, children of farmers and are part of the earth. Let us learn to love the earth and agriculture. All these are the creation of God.

.....

## Let Us Pray

(This prayer is recited while we sow seeds.

It is given in the 'Prayer Book of Syrian Christians' or 'Pampakuda Namaskaram')

*O God, who blessed the farms of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and gave them thirty sixty and hundred fold yield, bless the seeds we sow today. Fill them with your blessings. Let them germinate and grow without any diseases and fill our granaries with their yield after a joyful harvest. Enable us to submit to You, Lord of everything, our offerings, and tithes from them. Amen.*

.....

## Resolution

*We would raise crops and prompt others to do so; for we too are farmers.*

## Let Us Think

1. Why are people today reluctant to engage in agriculture?
2. Find out the references to agriculture in the Holy Bible.
3. Quote verses from the New Testament to substantiate that Jesus Christ gave importance to agriculture.
4. 'We should love agriculture'. Why?
5. Is it right to lay the land fallow. Why?
6. How do we strengthen our relation with nature through farming?
7. Explain in the importance of agriculture?
8. Pick out the references to agriculture given in the Holy Bible.
9. What types of crops were cultivated in olden days in your country?
10. Why we should love agriculture?
11. Why do we say that we should love agriculture?
12. What is the meaning of that we are part of the earth?
13. What can you do as children to strengthen our bonds with the earth?

## Activities

1. Develop a small farm in your courtyard.
2. Love and appreciate farming.
3. Conduct a discussion in the class on the importance of agriculture.
4. Inspire your friends to love and undertake farming.

## Further Reading

<b>Day</b>	<b>Morning</b>	<b>Evening</b>
Sunday	*	2 Peter 1:1-11
Monday	2 Peter 1:12-21	2 Peter 2
Tuesday	2 Peter 3	1 John 1
Wednesday	1 John 2	1 John 3
Thursday	1 John 4	1 John 5
Friday	2 John	3 John
Saturday	The epistle of Judas	*

## Chapter 29

# Responsible Use of the Media

**Learning Objectives:** To understand the good and bad effects of the media. Also to understand the dangers and traps hidden in the media especially the television. Let us use the media responsibly.

**Verse to be Memorized:** “May integrity and uprightness preserve me, for I wait for you” (Psalm 25:21).

**Learning Aids:** A Newspaper, pictures of Radio, and Television, the Holy Bible, the Book of the Holy Eucharist, and the Book of Common Prayer.

### Introduction

The media has become an indispensable part of modern life. Media is capable reaching out everywhere beyond the limits imposed by time and space. Media reflects the society. But media can mislead. Hence proper awareness of the media is essential now a days. Today we are going learn us as well how to use the media responsibly and profitably.

### The Lesson

Today media plays an important role in our lives. Many people find it difficult to begin a day without reading the newspaper. There are different types of media. Newspapers, magazines and other periodicals are known as print media. Radio, TV, Computer, and Internet are electronic media. Newspapers and magazines have opened up a new world of reading. Later the radio became helpful in giving information and entertainment. Then movies became a popular medium. Television gave priority to information, education and entertainment. The growth in the number of television channels provided the means to watch whatever we wish for. Computer and internet opened up the treasure house of knowledge and communication. At the same time they also threw up an unhealthy world to the viewers.

### The Need to Discern Right and Wrong

The media are eternal sources of knowledge. They are a blessing to knowledge seekers. But we need to use them carefully. Newspapers, magazines, Internet and the television help us a lot in acquiring proficiency in mother tongue and in foreign languages. Media contribute to the cultural development of the people by reporting the cultural programmes that happen in various parts of the world. It provides us with news from the world.

Media also contributes to the development of various art forms. Visual media provide the window to various art forms of the world. In this age of information

technology, the internet is an important part of our life. Internet provides us with information and incidents from various parts of the world. We cannot ignore this medium today. But we should not let our emotions conquer our reasoning. We require a strong will power to discriminate between good and evil in the media. Those who don't have will power will fall into the trap of evil easily. Jesus Christ warns us "Enter through the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the road is easy that leads to destruction, and there are many who take it. For the gate is narrow and the road is hard that leads to life, and there are few who find it" (St. Matthew 7:13, 14).

In the new world opened up by the media, there are a lot of hidden dangers of immoral suggestions. We should be on our guard against them. Our resolve to tread the path of goodness shall see us through. We require earnest prayer and training for this. Let us pray along with King David. "For your name's sake, O Lord, pardon my guilt, for it is great" (Psalm 25:11).

### **Ill Effects of the Media**

**1. It Disturbs the Family Atmosphere:** Reports and 'spicy' stories that appear in contemporary newspapers, magazines and social media give a distorted picture of life. Television programmes and social media often disturb the family routine. People often find it difficult to assemble for prayer. Television programmes and webseries dictate the time and duration of prayer and study. There are three fundamental principles that sustain family. They are prayer, love and fellowship. When these three dry up, problems will crop up in the family. The family shall fix its priorities and execute them.

**2. It Affects Children's Learning Adversely:** Children who learn for five hours at school need to study on equal stint of time at home. Good students would learn their lessons for a day that day itself. There shall be a planning for study at home. But how can one find time for study if one watches all the programmes on the television and play mobile and internet games all the time? We shall choose certain good programmes including the news and show a sense of discrimination in selection of programmes.

**3. Children become Addicts to Sports, Movies and Games:** Is it right to spend most part of a day watching programmes? Games and arts are for rest and relaxation in between serious work. Usually, they becomes the main topic of discussion in offices and schools. Addiction that neglects responsibilities is detrimental even to life and progress. If we participate in sports, it is beneficial to the body and the mind. Instead if we sit glued to electronic screens it will distort our body and mind.

**4. It Promotes a Counter Culture in the Name of Entertainment:** We get entertainment along with information from the media. But today we witness subversion of social values in the name of entertainment. When visuals of suicide, murder and betrayal are repeatedly displayed on the screen, the young generation assimilate them as natural to life. In most films and serials there are scenes of drinking

and drug abuse. This promotes a culture of alcohol and drug consumption. Solomon, the wise, warns us that “Do not look at wine when it is red, when it sparkles in the cup and goes down smoothly” (Proverbs 23:31).

Women are represented as sex symbols in the media. The culture of looking upon women as commodity is being promoted in the media. When media violates the value system, the youth should become vigilant and be on their guard.

**5. Advertisements and Consumerism:** The financial back up of all media is the income got from advertisements. Advertisements are necessary to sell off products. Certain advertisements really impress us. When we hear lies repeatedly, we tend to believe them. Advertisers know this secret. Several advertisements are unrealistic. We fall a prey to their influence unknowingly. Advertisements have made fast food items and energy drinks favourite food for children. Everyone can easily be influenced. What our favorite heroes tell us impress us a lot. In all these cases marketing techniques are used and people who buy accordingly will fall into a debt trap. It is indiscriminate consumerism and expenditure beyond the means that lead atleast some people to suicide. Only simple life and high thinking will give us satisfaction. If we want to avoid the vicious circle of consumerism, we require firm faith and spiritual rigours. King David teaches us “You have put gladness in my hear more than when their grain and wine abound. I will both lie down and sleep in peace; for you alone, O Lord, make me lie down in safety” (Psalms 4:7-8).

**6. The Use of Mobile Phones:** Everyone uses mobile phones now a days. It is the most convenient means of communication as we can use it even while we are travelling. Mobile phones can store information as well. We should handle this capability of mobile phones carefully. Otherwise it will create a lot of ill effects in the society. It will create unnecessary relationships and through excessive use of mobile phones our valuable time will be lost. Not only that modern mobile phone can give access to a lot of immorality as well. You should pledge that you would use it with discernment and alertness. You will find the mobile phone useful when you go on a tour or on a journey. No one shall use it during the hour of prayer or worship. Let us recognize that the media are very useful to us. but if we don't use them properly and with discrimination they are dangerous too.

.....  
**Let Us Pray**

This prayer is part of the “Prayer for Students” given in the Book of Common Prayer.

*O Lord Jesus Christ, who summoned children to You and blessed them affectionately, turn Your love upon us and bless us. Send Your Holy Spirit upon us and provide us with wisdom and sense of discrimination. Enable us to be God - fearing and acquiescent to Your Will. Help us to learn and disseminate true knowledge. Remove from us all bad habits that hamper useful learning. Amen.*

.....

## Resolution

*We would use mobile phone, internet and other media only for useful purposes. We would watch only educational and infortainment programmes on the television. We would try to make the right use of media and encourage others to follow our example.*

### Let Us Think

1. Trace the development history of the media.
2. Write an note on the benefits and drawbacks of the media.
3. Explain how we can make use of the media proper and useful manner.
4. What are the uses of the internet?
5. Explain the use and abuse of the mobile and the internet.
6. What are the benefits provided by the media?
7. How can we use the media in a proper manner?
8. How do the media affect us adversely?
9. How can we overcome the ill effects of the media.

### Activities

1. Find out the proper and improper of the media and prepare a table.
2. Conduct a discussion in the class on the topic, “The Proper Use of the Media.”
3. Conduct a survey among ten students in your locality who posses mobile phones; and collect information from them regarding “The use of mobile phones in learning” and prepare a report.

### Further Reading

Day	Morning	Evening
Sunday	*	Acts 1
Monday	Acts 2	Acts 3
Tuesday	Acts 4	Acts 5
Wednesday	Acts 6	Acts 7
Thursday	Acts 8	Acts 9
Friday	Acts 10	Acts 11, 12
Saturday	Acts 13, 14	*

## Chapter 30

# Teenage: The Spring Season of Life

**Learning Objectives:** To component the physical, mental, emotional, social and spiritual changes that adolescent children experience. To help them to make this period the most joyful period in life; and to hold on to our faith in God.

**Verse to be Memorized:** “Rejoice, young man, while you are young, and let your heart cheer you in the days of your youth. Follow the inclination of your heart and the desire of your eyes, but know that for all these things God will bring you into judgment” (Ecclesiastes 11:9).

**Learning Aids:** A chart showing the various stages of development of child into an adult, a chart containing the characteristics of adolescence, the Holy Bible, the liturgical Book of the Holy Eucharist, and the Book of Common Prayer.

### Introduction

The age between twelve and nineteen is known as the teenage. There are various stages in human life. They are infancy, child hood, adolescence, youthhood and old age. Teenage is a changes in stage of life. It is called teenage because the numerals thirteen to nineteen end in the suffix ‘teen.’ If we don’t understand the physical, mental, social and emotional changes taking place in children of this age group, we are likely to conferred and anxious anxieties. Today we are going to learn about changes during teenage.

### The Lesson

The biblical statement “Remember your Creator in the days of your youth” (Ecclesiastes 12:1) is significant. What we learn in youthhood will be retained throughout our lives. Teenage and youthhood are turning points in one’s life. Adolescence is a period of creativity, exciting experiences and idealism. It is a stage of ideals, about freedom, social justice and vision. Let us see changes happen to us when we move on from childhood to adolescence.

**1. Physical Growth:** There is fast physical growth and development during this stage. Physical health gives us courage to undertake any work. It is a period of physical well being. If we have work hard during this period we can acheive many great things in life.

**2. Intellectual Development:** This is an age in which children attain mental development along with physical growth. The develop an improved ability to understand. Thoughts and knowledge grow into a world wider than that of childhood stories. They become trained in science and technology and learn how operate



computer, social media and internet. Thus they are capable of leaping into the world of knowledge independently. In olden days we had only books in place of computer and internet. However, books are important during this stage too. Hence intelligent children enter the world of knowledge through wide reading and discriminate use of the media. Good reading habit is an indicator of great and successful youthhood.

**3. Emotional Development:** Children's emotional development has to be acknowledged and monitored. Children are often led by their own likes and dislikes. When children move on to adolescence they need to learn to control their emotions. Those who haven't attained emotional maturity will still be at the level of children. This condition will change if their personality develops in the right direction. They will learn to analyse their emotions rationally. As they slowly attain emotional maturity, they learn to respond reasonably to external stimuli.

**4. Social Development:** The world of children will mostly be limited within one's family. Their social relationships are mostly limited to their family. As they enter into a larger society when they go to school, their socialization begins. Teenagers would notice differences of religion, caste, faith, financial status and class status. They would start thinking about establishing healthy social relationships. Teenagers will neither try to stay away from society nor dissolve their identity in the society around. They will realize their identity and will try to develop healthy social relationships, as they grow up.

**5. Spiritual Development:** Spirituality which had hitherto been confined to stories and emotions assume a wider meaning during this period. Till then religious observances had been, mostly following the elders. But when children enter the adolescent stage, they will start analyzing critically what they learned as a child. They will start questioning things. Thus they also affirming their convictions. They are able to move from subjectivity to objectivity and then their spirituality will attain more authenticity. All great teachers, saints and wisemen developed their convictions and decided to dedicate their lives for the world and the society during this stage. Lord Jesus Christ began his public ministry at the age of thirty. Some people consider the age of Thirty as the end of youthhood.

**6. Development of Imagination:** It is said that while old people reflect upon their past, teenagers and youth look towards the future. Teenage is an age of vision and imagination. Teenagers develop a lot of expectations and desires. Everything in nature including flowers, plants, rivers, moonlight, hills and seas kindle their imagination. Their intense imagination often decides their future. They dream of becoming poets, writers, scientists, administrators, ascetics, scholars, saints or rich men.

### **The Problems of Teenage**

Even though teenage is the spring season of life, it is not without problems. All should be aware of these developmental problems. When physical growth takes place

at a rapid rate, it has mental and emotional consequences. Physical growth takes place at a rapid rate when sexual hormones become active in the body. Then the teenagers will become conscious of their physical looks. Those who think that they are beautiful will try to attract the attention of others by appearing foppish. Those who think that they are not beautiful will develop inferiority complex and will try to keep away from others. Teenagers should try to acknowledge fully what they are and develop self esteem.

Another problem with teenagers is comparison. They would compare themselves with others in terms of beauty, ability, smartness or money and would start worrying. One should try to be what one is. Unnecessary comparisons may do a lot of harm in emotional and personality development.

Another problem faced by the young world is the mutual attraction of young men and women. Love affairs, reading pornographic literature and seeing pornographic pictures, and premarital sexual relationships are likely to happen during this age. Here Christian values should guide the youth. We should not think that feeling attracted towards opposite sex or having sexual thoughts is unhealthy sin. Excessive guilt feelings in this regard are not needed. But if we seek to derive more pleasure from all these, we will not be able to develop the talents given by God properly. The youth should develop the maturity to renounce temporary pleasures for the sake of a prosperous future.

Bad friendships during this period might, lead a teenager to liquor and drugs. So the teenagers should be careful while selecting friends.

Even though we need not show hatred to anyone, the teenagers should follow the advice of the Psalmist “Happy are those who do not follow the advice of the wicked, or take the path that sinners tread, or sit in the seat of scoffers;but their delight is in the law of the Lord, and on his law they meditate day and night” (Psalm 1:1-2). The bad messages given by media like TV and the internet are posing great challenges to the world of youth today.

The youth will become strong enough to resist the temptations of evil if they have firm reliance in God, a family atmosphere of love, disciplined spiritual habits, good reading and good friends. Besides they should always try to do good to others. Then the teenage would indeed be felt as the spring season of life.

### **Hymn**

(Enne thanne sannididhiyil...)

Kindly O Lord have mercy  
To submit myself to you in faith  
As an offering to you.  
And incense that pleases you

Lord let me offer my mind  
Body and soul all to you  
As lamps shining full of light  
And illumine, all around

.....

### **Let Us Pray**

*O Lord, have mercy upon me. O merciful Father, O Truthful Son and O Respected Holy spirit, kindly help me. O good Lord, who Created and conserved me, forgive me my sins and bless me. Kindly turn me towards you. Enlighten me, support me in my weaknesses. Make me worthy of Your love Amen.*

.....

### **Resolution**

*We have understood that the various mental conflicts and emotional tensions during teenage are useful in the growth process. We will not fall into sin. Instead we would rely on God. We would obey and respect parents, teachers and elders. We would follow the good examples shown by greatness.*

### **Let Us Think**

1. Describe the 'pain of growing up' during adolescence.
2. Explain the various growth and developmental changes that happen during teenage.
3. "Teenage is the spring season of life." Substantiate.
4. Suggest certain ways to face the anxieties and confusions of teenage.
5. What are the characteristics of adolescence?
6. What physical changes which happen during teenage?
7. Explain the intellectual development taking place during teenage?
8. What are the emotional changes taking place at this stage?Pause and Reflect
9. What are social changes taking place during the teenage period?
10. Explain the spiritual development during adolescence?
11. Why do we say that teenage is one of imagination?

### **Activities**

1. Conduct a discussion on the "problems faced by teenagers."
2. Prepare a chart of the various changes and characteristics of teenage in the format given below.

**Sl. No. Changes**

1. Physical
2. Intellectual
3. Emotional
4. Social
5. Spiritual
6. Imaginative

**Characteristics****Further Reading****Day**

Sunday

Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

Saturday

**Morning**

\*

Acts 16

Acts 18

Acts 20

Acts 22

Acts 24

Acts 27, 28

**Evening**

Acts 15

Acts 17

Acts 19

Acts 21

Acts 23

Acts 25, 26