

# **GENERAL STATUTES**

of

## **The Syro-Malankara Catholic Eparchy in the United States of America & Canada**



The Syro-Malankara Catholic Eparchy  
in the United States of America & Canada

1500 DePaul Street, Elmont, NY 11003

# **The General Statutes of the Syro-Malankara Catholic Eparchy in the United States of America and Canada**

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Promulgated on  
October 28, 2018

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## St. Mary, Queen of Peace Syro-Malankara Catholic Eparchy in the USA and Canada

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Dr. Philipos Mar Stephanos Thottathil

Bishop of the Syro-Malankara Catholic Eparchy of the USA and Canada

### Statutes Promulgation

Dear Reverend Fathers, Sisters and Faithful of the Syro-Malankara Catholic Eparchy in the USA and Canada.

Cordial greetings to you all in the name of the Triune God!

By the providence of God, the Syro-Malankara Catholic Eparchy in the USA and Canada was established on December 18, 2017 by Holy Father Pope Francis and His Excellency Thomas Mar Eusebius was appointed its first Bishop. This Eparchy has been following the General Statutes the Syro-Malankara Catholic Exarchate promulgated on October 23, 2014. However, there emerged a need to reprint these statutes with necessary changes. Therefore, by trusting in God and in accordance with the authority bestowed on me by CCEO, c. 191, I hereby promulgate the revised General Statutes of the Syro-Malankara Catholic Eparchy in the USA and Canada for all the parishes and missions of the Eparchy. These statutes will have the force of law and will come into effect from November 1, 2018. I firmly exhort all our priests, religious and lay faithful to observe its provisions with sincerity and faithfulness for the good of the entire Eparchy and the Glory of God.

May St. Mary, Queen of Peace, the heavenly patroness of our Eparchy be a model and inspiration to us in following these Statutes!

Given on this 28<sup>th</sup> Day of October 2018

At the Syro-Malankara Catholic Eparchial Chancery,

1500 De Paul Street, Elmont, NY 11003

+Philipos Mar Stephanos

Bishop of the Syro-Malankara Catholic Eparchy in the USA and Canada

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## PREAMBLE AND ECCLESIASTICAL STATUS

- A. The Syro-Malankara Catholic Church, an Eastern Catholic Church in the Universal Catholic Communion presided over by the Bishop of Rome, is the ancient Apostolic Church in India founded by the preaching of St. Thomas, the Apostle (The Code of Particular Canons of the Syro Malankara Catholic Church - CPCSMCC, cc. 14, 15).
- B. The Syro-Malankara Catholic Church is a Major Archiepiscopal *Suiiris* Church (CCEO c. 151). This Church has its liturgical, theological, spiritual and disciplinary patrimony inherited from the Antiochene tradition, as lived in the Indian culture and in its historical vicissitudes (CPCSMCC c. 14). The present official title of the Head of this Church is Major Archbishop-Catholicos (CPCSMCC cc. 18, 20).
- C. The Syro-Malankara Catholic Eparchy in the USA and Canada is established to protect and promote the ecclesial life of the Syro-Malankara Catholic faithful in the USA and Canada, basing itself on the Antiochene spiritual tradition, drawing largely from the Indian cultural patrimony and witnessing to the positive values of the North American society.
- D. The Malankara Catholic Mission of North America was officially inaugurated on August 24, 1984 in a meeting held at the Fordham University, New York, by His Grace the Most Rev. Benedict Mar Gregorios, the late Metropolitan Archbishop of the Syro-Malankara Catholic Church. In the meeting, His Eminence John Cardinal O'Connor, the late Archbishop of New York, gave the keynote address.

- E. The Malankara Catholic Missions in North America were guided by Reverend Fathers appointed by the Metropolitan Archbishops, who took special interest in the formation and growth of our Church here in this country. Thus, from 1984 until 2001, Rt. Rev. John Melamparambil, Rt. Rev. John Kalloor (at present, Most. Rev. Yoohanon Mar Chrysostom) Rt. Rev. Geevarghese Mannikarott Corepiscopo and Very Rev. Msgr. Peter Kochery served the Syro-Malankara Catholic Community in North America as priests-in-charge and coordinators. In establishing the Syro-Malankara Catholic Church in North America, the dedication, love for the Church and the concerted efforts of our priests, nuns and laity should be specially mentioned and appreciated.
- F. The appointment of the Apostolic Visitors by the Holy Father Pope John Paul II was an important milestone in the growth of the Malankara Catholic Community in North America. His Ex. the Most Rev. Isaac Mar Cleemis (the present Major Archbishop-Catholicos) was appointed the Visitor on June 18, 2001. His Ex. the Most Rev. Joseph Mar Thomas succeeded as the Visitor from 5 Jan. 2005.
- G. The Holy Father Pope Benedict XVI erected the Apostolic Exarchate in the USA for the Syro-Malankara Catholics on July 14, 2010 and appointed His Ex. the Most. Rev. Thomas Mar Eusebius as its first Bishop. The official inauguration of the Exarchate in the USA and the installation ceremony of the first Bishop were held on October 3, 2010 at Bishop Kellenberg Memorial High School, New York, officiated by the Major Archbishop-Catholicos in the presence of many other dignitaries.

- H. On December 18, 2015 His Holiness Pope Francis elevated the Exarchate to the status of an Eparchy and extended its territory to include the region of Canada also. His Excellency the Most Rev. Dr. Thomas Mar Eusebius was appointed the first bishop of the Eparchy. On January 23, the new Eparchy was officially inaugurated and His Excellency the Most Rev. Dr. Thomas Mar Eusebius was installed as the first Bishop of the Eparchy at the Cathedral of the Eparchy in Elmont, New York.
- I. His Excellency the Most Rev. Dr. Philipos Mar Stephanos was installed as the second bishop of the Eparchy on October 28, 2017. His Beatitude Moran Mor Baselios Cardinal Cleemis, the Major Archbishop-Catholicos of the Syro-Malankara Catholic Church presided over the ceremony in the presence of several dignitaries.
- J. This *Statutes* concerns the Syro-Malankara Catholics in the Eparchy in the United States and Canada. With the entry into force of this *Statutes*, all other norms and customs contrary to it are abrogated (CCEO c.1502 §1), unless they are promulgated or approved by the Roman Pontiff.
- K. This *Statutes* neither abrogates nor derogates the canons of *Codex Canonum Ecclesiarum Orientalium* (CCEO), common for all the Eastern Catholic Churches, and those of the Code of Particular Canons of the Syro-Malankara Catholic Church (CPCSMCC).
- L. The right to authentically interpret and amend this *Statutes* is vested in the Bishop of the Eparchy, without prejudice to the right and authority of the Apostolic See.

## TITLE 1

### MEMBERSHIP

1. According to the law of the Church any person who receives baptism in (CCEO c. 29, ff.), received into (CCEO cc. 35, 898 §3), or married into (CCEO c. 33) the Syro-Malankara Catholic Church is a member of the same.
2. Change of ascription to another Church *sui iuris* can take place in any one of the following ways.
  - i) With the permission from Apostolic See. In light of CCEO c. 32 §2 and CIC c. 112 §1,1°, this permission is presumed when both the Bishop of the Eparchy and any other Eparchial/ Diocesan Bishop consent to the transfer in writing.
  - ii) A woman can transfer to the Church *sui iuris* of her husband at the time of or during the marriage. When the marriage bond ceases, she can freely return to her original Church *sui iuris* (CCEO c. 33).
  - iii) If the parents transfer to another Church *sui iuris*, the children under the age fourteen are also transferred to that Church *sui iuris*. However, when they complete their fourteenth year of age, they can return to the original Church *sui iuris* (CCEO c. 34).
3. Every transfer of ascription is to be recorded in the baptismal register of the Parish where the baptism was celebrated (CCEO c.37).
4. Even if a Syro-Malankara Catholic faithful is committed to the pastoral care of a Hierarchy / Ordinary or Pastor of another Church *sui iuris*, he/she remains ascribed to the Syro-

Malankara Catholic Church (CCEO c. 38). This is because ascription to a Church *sui iuris* is definitive; it belongs to the status of the person. Consequently, affiliation is understood as belonging to the constitutive law and not merely to disciplinary law.

## TITLE 2

### ADMINISTRATION

#### 2.1. Parish and Missions

5. Any definite community of the Syro-Malankara Catholic faithful, established on a stable basis anywhere in the United States and committed to the Pastoral care of a Pastor is a Parish in the Eparchy (CCEO c. 279).
6. Only the Bishop of the Eparchy shall have the right to establish, modify or suppress a Parish, in consultation with the presbyteral council (CCEO c. 280 §2).
7. The territorial circumference of the Parish shall be stipulated in the decree of erection or modification itself.
8. Any legitimately established Parish is by virtue of law itself a juridic person (CCEO c. 279 §3).
9. A mission is a community of the Syro-Malankara faithful, which is not erected as a Parish, because of special circumstances, and is entrusted to the Pastoral care of a presbyter-in-charge.

10. What is said in the law concerning Parishes and Pastors applies also to missions and presbyters-in-charge, unless it is expressly provided otherwise in the law and/or by the Bishop of the Eparchy or is evident from the nature of the matter.

## **2.2. Pastor:**

11. The Pastor of every Parish is officially appointed by the Bishop of the Eparchy (CCEO c. 284 §1).
12. A Pastor is generally appointed in a Parish for a period of three years (CCEO c. 284 §3, 4<sup>o</sup>). However, this term of office can be extended or shortened according to the discretion of the Bishop of the Eparchy.
13. In all juridical affairs, the Pastor represents the Parish (CCEO c. 290 §1). His signature with Parish seal is required for all documents regarding legal and canonical matters of the Parish (CCEO c. 296 §3).
14. A presbyter, during his Pastoral ministry in the Parish / mission / Eparchial-office, shall be under the authority of the Bishop of the Eparchy (CCEO cc. 315 §2, 370).
15. A Pastor begins to exercise all the rights and duties attached to his office when he takes canonical possession of the Parish in accordance with the canonical provision given by the Bishop of the Eparchy (CCEO c. 288).
16. When a Pastor takes canonical possession of the Parish,
  - i) the letter of appointment by the Bishop of the Eparchy must be publicly read.

- ii) all the registers of the Parish, which have been already signed by the outgoing Pastor, must be signed by the new Pastor, after due verification.
17. In case of any irregularities in the registers, the new Pastor shall refer the matter to the Bishop and the Finance Officer of the Eparchy within one month after taking canonical possession of the Parish.
  18. When a presbyter is appointed Pastor in a Parish, he is appointed to represent the Bishop of the Eparchy in that particular Parish (CCEO c. 281 §1, 371 §2).
  19. The Pastor is obligated to ensure that the Parish grows according to the mind of the Church. Therefore, it is the responsibility of the Pastor to read publicly all the Pastoral letters, circulars and official information from the Roman Pontiff, Major Archbishop-Catholicos and Eparchial Bishop, during the Sunday Holy Mass or at times stipulated by them (CCEO cc. 82 §1, §2, 596, 604, 605, CPCSMCC c. 133).
  20. The Pastor must ensure that the spiritual life of the faithful in his Parish receives his prime concern. He must consider all his Pastoral activities such as celebration of the Holy Qurbano and other sacraments, supervision of catechism, promotion of youth activities, house visiting, visiting the sick, prayer meetings, etc. as vital parts of his priestly ministry rather than as signs of charity towards his Parishioners (CCEO cc. 16, 289, 293, 294).
  21. The Pastor must be cared, loved and respected by the Parishioners as a father in the family. Likewise, he must listen, respect, love and encourage the Parishioners (CCEO cc. 381 §3).

22. The Pastor shall be the director of all associations in the Parish.
23. The Pastor shall convene and preside over all General Body and Parish Council meetings (CPCSMCC c. 169), with due regard for c. 42 and c. 50 of the present *Statutes*.
24. The Pastor shall preserve proper records and registers of the Parish (CCEO c. 296 §1).
25. The Pastor is entitled to an annual vacation for three weeks, and the substitute arrangement should be made by the Pastor himself in consultation with the Bishop of the Eparchy. With regard to the time of his vacation, however, he shall get prior approval from the Bishop (CPCSMCC c.299).
26. Unless otherwise directed by the Bishop of the Eparchy, when a Pastor loses his office as Pastor:
  - i) He shall sign all the Parish registers.
  - ii) With the approval of the Parish Council, the hitherto account, which has not yet been presented to the General Body, shall be presented for its approval.
  - iii) The Secretary and Treasurer shall sign the accounts, which shall be countersigned by the outgoing Pastor.
27. If there is any serious allegation against the Pastor in discharging his duties as Pastor, written complaint must be given to the Bishop.

### **2.3. General Body Meeting (*Pothuyogam*):**

28. According to the legitimate traditions and the laws of the Syro-Malankara Catholic Church *sui iuris*, the General Body meeting has the duty and responsibility of the overall development of the Parish (CCEO c. 11; CPCSMCC c. 142).

**2.3.1. Members:**

29. In order to be a member of the General Body, a person shall
  - i) have completed 18 years of age (CCEO c. 910).
  - ii) not be under any ecclesiastical censure or penalties.
  - iii) regularly contribute towards the sustenance of the Syro-Malankara Catholic Parish and Eparchy (CCEO c.1011).

**2.3.2. Functions:**

30. The General Body shall deliberate, decide and monitor the overall development of the Parish (CPCSMCC c. 142).
31. It is the competence of the General Body to elect the office bearers such as the Secretary, Treasurer, Auditor, etc. and the members of the Parish Council.
32. The General Body elects the Parish representatives to the Pastoral Council of the Eparchy and the representatives for special events and ministries as and when needed.
33. The General Body shall approve the annual report and accounts. The approved annual report, accounts and contribution list of Eparchy collections, duly signed by the Secretary, Treasurer and countersigned by the Pastor, shall be sent to the Bishop by the Secretary.
34. After verifying the accounts and report, the Bishop shall send them back to the Parish along with his remarks, if any. The remarks shall be communicated to the Parishioners, in the manner prescribed by the Bishop.

35. It is up to the General Body to make long term plans, at least for a period of five years. The successive Pastors and Parish Councils are obliged to work for the realization of such plans.
36. The whole Parish community, especially the General Body, must be solicitous for the needs of the entire Eparchy.
37. It is the sacred duty of all members of the Parish, especially the General Body, to promote vocations to Presbyterate, religious life and other sacred ministries in the Church (CCEO c. 329).
38. If there is a serious allegation against a Parishioner, the General Body has the right to inform it to the Bishop of the Eparchy in writing. However, neither the General Body nor the Parish Council has the right to impose any penal sanction on any member.

### **2.3.3. Meetings:**

39. At least twice a year, the Pastor should convene the General Body to discuss and evaluate the progress of the Parish.
40. The Pastor shall convene the General Body in the following instances also (CPCSMCC c. 145):
  - i) whenever the Parish Council judges it necessary to decide on major pastoral and economic matters with due regard for this *Statutes*;
  - ii) whenever matters are to be decided upon, which belong to the exclusive competence of the General Body;
  - iii) at least one third of the members request it for a given matter with due regard for the rights of the persons.

41. Time and date of the General Body meeting has to be announced at least two previous consecutive Sundays. No such prior notification is needed for an immediate and urgent meeting to discuss matters of emergency according to the discretion of the Pastor (CPCSMCC cc. 148, 149, 150).
42. The Pastor shall preside over all the General Body meetings. If the Bishop of the Eparchy or his representative is present for a particular purpose, he shall preside over the General Body meeting.
43. Absolute majority (50% +1) of the votes of the members present is needed to get a decision approved.
44. The Bishop of the Eparchy has the right to add to or modify or annul a resolution passed at the meetings of the General Body, and his decision shall be final.
45. The Bishop of the Eparchy can, for grave reasons, suspend the General Body until further orders from him.

#### **2.4. Parish Council:**

46. The Parish Council is a vital component of each Parish. The Pastor shall be the President of the Parish Council. It is constituted of elected and ex-officio members of the Parish who form one body with the Pastor in fulfilling the ministry of the Parish (CCEO c. 295).
47. The minimum number of elected members is to be 5 and the maximum can be 9 including the Secretary and Treasurer; and at least one of them shall be a woman, and another must be a member of the youth (CPCSMCC c. 161).

48. The ex-officio members of the Parish Council are the Pastoral Council Members from the Parish, the Sunday School Principal, and the Presidents of MCYM, MCA and Mothers Forum (*Mâthruvçdi*). Any presbyter other than the Pastor, duly appointed by the Bishop for the same Parish, shall also be included in the Council.
49. Youth representatives in the Parish Council, both the elected and ex-officio, must have completed eighteen years of age.
50. The Pastor shall preside over all the meetings of the Parish Council. If the Bishop of the Eparchy or his representative is present for a particular purpose, he shall preside over the Parish Council.
51. The Parish Council is to be convened:
  - i) at least once in three months;
  - ii) whenever matters are to be decided which require the consultation and cooperation of the Parish Council, according to the discretion of the Pastor;
  - iii) if the majority of the members asks for it with a written request (CPCSMCC c. 171).
52. The Parish Council under the leadership of the Pastor must positively encourage fellowship and unity among the Parishioners. This must be taken as a personal as well as collective responsibility of each member of the Parish Council (CPCSMCC c. 159).
53. The cooperation of both the Pastor and the members of the Council is necessary for the Council to be effective. The

- presiding role of the Pastor has to be seen within the context of the process of decision-making, which involves many stages. This role can neither be surrendered nor diminished nor should authority be viewed as personal power, but rather as genuine service to the Christian faithful exercised in a collegial way.
54. For the sake of accountability to the Bishop of the Eparchy, whom the Pastor represents and to the people of God whom he serves, the recommendations of the Parish Council are to be implemented only after they are ratified by the Pastor.
  55. The Parish Council shall not endorse proposals, which would be contrary to Universal Church Law, Particular Laws and Traditions of the Syro-Malankara Catholic Church, Statutes of the Syro-Malankara Catholic Eparchy in USA and Canada or Civil Law (CCEO cc. 1502 §2, 1504).
  56. The Pastor shall send the list of the office bearers and the new members of the Parish Council to the Bishop. The approval of the Bishop is necessary before the Parish Council takes charge.
  57. Along with the list of Parish Council for approval, annual report, financial statement and contribution list of the Eparchy collections must be submitted by the Secretary.
  58. The new Parish Council members and the office bearers shall take charge of the office in the context of a Sunday Holy Mass, by making public oath in the prescribed form. On the day of taking charge, all the members of the Parish Council must receive Holy Communion.

59. Any ministry attached to the administration of the Parish should be considered as a stewardship. It should never be viewed as something to rule over the people. The ministry must be seen as a divine call to serve the community and promote deep faith and unity among its members (CCEO c. 936 §1).
60. The fiscal year of the Parish shall be from January 1<sup>st</sup> to December 31<sup>st</sup>.
61. The duration of the Parish Council including the Secretary and Treasurer is one year. The same person shall not hold the office of Secretary or Treasurer for more than three consecutive terms (CPCSMCC c.168).
62. The Parish Council must be elected by the end of November. The annual report and the audited account must be presented in the General Body Meeting held on or before the third Sunday of January.
63. The Parish Council shall take charge by the first Sunday of February.
64. The Parish Council is accountable to the Bishop of the Eparchy and to the General Body in everything related to the administration of the Parish.
65. The Parish Council shall carry out the administrative matters of the Parish under the leadership of the Pastor. It shall never act contrary to the decisions made by the General Body.
66. The Pastor can invite others like Sacristan, Auditor etc. to participate in the Parish Council, as and when the need arises. However, they shall not be members of the Parish Council.

67. The Bishop of the Eparchy has the right to add to or modify or annul a resolution passed at the meetings of the Parish Council, and his decision shall be final.
68. If a member of the Parish Council is absent for three consecutive Council meetings without getting any legitimate exemption from the President, he/she loses the membership automatically.
69. The Pastor has the power to accept the resignation of any member of the Parish Council, without prejudice to c.70. But, if the whole Parish Council resigns, it has to be accepted by the Bishop. Then the Bishop shall appoint an *ad hoc* Parish Council until the next election.
70. If the Secretary or Treasurer resigns, the resignation shall come into effect only with the approval of the Bishop of the Eparchy, in which case, the Bishop shall appoint another Secretary or Treasurer.
71. The vacancy of any or all the members of the Parish Council should be duly filled in within four weeks. If under any circumstances this cannot be done, the matter has to be referred to the Bishop.
72. Only with the approval of the Parish Council, the annual report and account prepared by the Secretary and Treasurer respectively can be presented for the approval of the General Body.
73. Should there arise any serious allegation against any member of the Parish Council in the execution of his/her duties, the Pastor has the right and obligation to present and discuss the

matter in the Parish Council. To remove him/her from office, two-third majority vote of the total members of the Parish Council is needed.

74. If the allegation is against the Secretary or Treasurer, the matter should be discussed in the Parish Council in order to take appropriate action to remedy the situation. To remove either of them from the Parish Council, two-third majority vote of the Parish Council is needed. The prior permission of the Bishop is needed for such voting.
75. The Bishop of the Eparchy can, for grave reasons, suspend the Parish Council until further orders from him and make alternate arrangements according to his discretion for the administration of the Parish.

## **2.5. Secretary:**

76. The Secretary shall be elected in the General Body.
77. The Secretary shall, in general, perform all the duties attached to the office of Secretary, keep the minutes of the meetings of the Parish Council and of the General Body, and such other duties as may from time to time be assigned by the Pastor and the Parish Council. He has to take care of the temporal goods of the Parish, with due regard for the authority of the Pastor.
78. It is the duty of the Secretary to keep an inventory of the Parish assets.
79. The Secretary and the Treasurer are conjointly accountable to the Parish Council and to the General Body regarding all the matters entrusted to them, especially the income and expenditure of the Parish.

80. The Secretary shall send the annual report, accounts and contribution list of Eparchy collection to the Bishop in accordance with c. 33
81. Copies of the accounts and report should be kept in Eparchy office and Parish archives.

## **2.6. Treasurer:**

82. The Treasurer shall be elected in the General Body.
83. The Treasurer shall, in general, perform all the duties attached to the office of Treasurer.
84. Under the direction of the Pastor, the Treasurer shall take care of the Parish account.
85. The bank accounts shall be in the name of the Parish and shall be operated jointly by the Pastor and Treasurer.
86. The Treasurer shall deposit in the bank all the income of the parish each week, after the verification by the Pastor.
87. The members of the Parish have the right to know the account of the Parish. Therefore, the Treasurer shall distribute a copy of the audited account during the General Body meeting to all who are present in the General Body.
88. The Treasurer, after consulting the Parish Council, shall present a budget to the General Body at the beginning of the fiscal year.
89. It is the responsibility of the Treasurer, in consultation with the Pastor and the Parish Council to collect the contributions and special collections to the Eparchy and send them to the Eparchy Center along with the lists of contributors in accordance with c. 125.

90. Receipts must be provided for all financial contributions.
91. A financial statement of every family-contribution, prepared by the Treasurer and signed by the Pastor, shall be given to every family at the end of the year.
92. Account shall be kept in a professional way.

### **2.7. Auditor:**

93. The General Body shall elect one or two Auditors for evaluating the accounts for a term of one year. A person cannot be re-elected to this office for more than two consecutive years.
94. Without the approval of the Auditor/s, the account shall not be presented for the approval of the Parish Council.

### **2.8. Elections:**

95. In order to exercise the administrative functions in a Syro-Malankara Catholic Parish, a member should be (CCEO c. 408 §2):
  - i) a member of the General Body in accordance with c. 29.
  - ii) a practicing Syro-Malankara Catholic member (CCEO c. 12 §2).
  - iii) actively involved in the local Syro-Malankara Catholic Parish.

96. In order to participate in the election of any forum in the Syro-Malankara Catholic Eparchy, apart from the obligations stipulated in c. 95, a member should have paid off all the dues to one's own parish and to the Eparchy and have given a positive response to the extra-ordinary collections requested by the Eparchy.
97. The election of the officials and members of the Parish Council takes place in the General Body meeting.
98. Time and date of the election shall be announced on at least two previous consecutive Sundays.
99. When electing the members of the Parish Council, it is good to ensure the representative nature of all the members of the parish community.
100. Election shall be done by secret vote or voice vote, unless a particular mode is stipulated by the law for a particular office (CPCSMCC c. 154).
101. For the offices of the Secretary and Treasurer, the General Body shall prepare by voice vote a panel of at least three candidates each, from whom the same General Body elects one each through secret ballot. Relative majority would suffice for a member to be elected.
102. Parishes with families up to fifty can elect two members to the Pastoral Council. If the number of families goes above fifty and up to hundred, three members, and if the number is hundred or above, four members can be elected to the Pastoral Council.

103. For the election of the Pastoral Council Members, c. 101 should be followed, with the exception that there must be at least two more candidates in the panel than the actual number of members to be elected.
104. The term of office of the Pastoral Council Members shall be three years, unless the Bishop of the Eparchy determines otherwise.
105. Other members of the Parish Council shall be elected by voice vote.
106. For the members to be elected through voice vote, a member present in the General Body meeting has the right to propose only one candidate, which should be supported by another member.
107. Absolute majority (50+1) of the members present is needed for a member to be elected. In case of ballot voting, CCEO c. 956 §1 must be followed.
108. The term of office shall end only at the swearing in ceremony of the newly elected officials.
109. If either Secretary or Treasurer becomes impeded to fulfill the term of office, the Parish Council shall elect another member from the Council who shall discharge the duties until he/she resumes his/her service.

### TITLE 3

## TEMPORAL ADMINISTRATIONS

110. Normally, administration of the Parish is carried out by the office bearers under the authority of the Pastor who are accountable to the Parish Council, which in turn is responsible to the General Body and to the Bishop of the Eparchy.
111. A written permission of the Eparchy Bishop is required to incur any debt more than \$10,000.00. So also, written permission is required for any expenditure beyond \$20,000.00 by the Parish, without prejudice to can.113.
111. In extraordinary situation, the Pastor can utilize a maximum amount of \$1000.00, but not more than \$500.00 at a time, in a fiscal year for the good of the community, without any previous information to the Parish Council or General Body. However, this matter should be presented at the subsequent Parish Council meeting.
112. In extraordinary situations, the Parish Council can utilize under the authority of the Pastor up to \$5000.00 in a fiscal year without any previous approval of the General Body. However, this matter should be presented in the subsequent General Body meeting.
113. Any transaction of property or construction, alteration, demolition or rentals of buildings must be done with prior written permission of the Bishop of the Eparchy.
114. Permission must be sought from the Bishop to accommodate anyone for more than one month in the rectory.

115. Any request for permission from the Bishop should be done in writing, and the same shall be in effect only after obtaining the written permission from the Bishop.

## **TITLE 4**

### **CERTAIN PRINCIPLES TO FOLLOW**

116. A Church or Parish community must be a spiritual community. All the celebrations of the Sacraments, other spiritual activities and temporal arrangements are to help the faithful attain a deep spiritual communion with God and His people (CCEO c. 13). Family prayer must be considered an essential factor in all our families.
117. Liturgical life must be very important to all our Parishes. Celebration of the Holy Qurbano and other Sacraments must be done with a deep sense of faith, devotion and reverence to the Sacred Mysteries. Utmost care must be taken to participate in the Holy Qurbano on all Sundays and days of obligation.
118. Taking seriously into account the presence of our youth and children, there shall be Holy Qurbano in English at least on two Sundays in a month in all our Parishes.
119. Each Parish is obliged to have regular catechism classes on Sundays. There must be a Principal in each Parish, duly appointed by the Pastor, to coordinate the catechism classes and other activities of the students. The activities of Malankara Catholic Children League (MCCL) shall be incorporated with the program of the parish.

120. Each Parish shall have a unit of the Malankara Catholic Youth Movement (MCYM), and there shall be at least one meeting in a month. The members of the MCYM shall be the youth of the Parish between the age of 15 and 35 (CPCSMCC c. 406)
121. There shall be the units of Malankara Catholic Association and Mothers Forum (*Mâthruvçdi*) in all our Parishes. The Parishioners of above 35 years of age shall be the members of MCA.
122. Every Parish shall have a safe place to keep the archival matters (history, official correspondence, completed registers, other important documents etc.), which should be controlled by the Pastor who should hand them over to his successor. Parish registers are handled only by the Pastor.
123. In principle, it is the duty of the Parish having 35 or more families to take care of the total maintenance of its Pastor. Considering the present circumstances, such Parishes shall contribute a minimum of \$1000.00 towards the maintenance of its Pastor. Other Parishes shall contribute a minimum of \$500.00. However, any change in the existing monthly allowance of the Pastor shall come into effect only in consultation with the Bishop of the Eparchy.
124. The Parish shall provide flight charge to the newly appointed Pastor as he comes to take charge of the Parish
125. A Pastor may get reimbursement from the Parish for the airfare he incurs to attend the common official functions of the Eparchy, not more than three times a fiscal year.

126. Towards the maintenance of the Eparchy, each Parish must make a contribution to the Eparchy. This contribution shall be determined by the Bishop of the Eparchy in consultation with the Pastoral Council.
127. It is the responsibility of the Treasurer, in consultation with the Pastor and Parish Council, to see that this amount is sent to the Eparchial Chancery as a one-time payment or in two or three installments (April / September / December).
128. Each family shall give a donation to the Parish during the marriage celebrations, and the half of this amount shall be sent by the Treasurer to the Eparchial Center for the training of the seminarians.
129. All the families have the responsibility to participate in the common collections taken at the interest of the Parish or the Eparchy as the respective body suggests. The Parishioners should not consider their contribution to the welfare of the Church as charity, rather as part of their obligation towards the building up of the Kingdom of God.
130. The members of the various bodies in the Church have the right and obligation to participate in the meetings convened by the respective authorities. Half of the travel allowance must be given by the respective Parish to the elected and ex-officio members for the meetings convened by the Bishop, if they request for the same.

131. Under the authority of the Bishop of the Eparchy, the Finance Officer of the Eparchy has the power to administer the temporal goods of the Eparchy, to oversee the administration of ecclesiastical goods throughout the Eparchy, to provide for their preservation, safety, increase, to supply for the negligence of local administrators and to administer the goods that lack an administrator designated by law (CCEO c. 262 §3).
132. Disputes and complaints, if any, with regard to the conduct, proceedings, resolutions, decisions and actions taken by the General Body or Parish Council shall be referred by the aggrieved person/s to the Administrative Tribunal of the Eparchy constituted for that purpose. The Tribunal shall dispose off the dispute or complaint within 30 days. Recourses against the decisions of the Tribunal shall be made to the Bishop of the Eparchy within 15 days of such decision of the Tribunal. The Bishop shall dispose off the recourse as expeditiously as possible, and his decision shall be final.
133. No one shall challenge the provisions of this *Statutes* or matters arising thereof in any legal proceeding than have recourse to ecclesiastical authorities.

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