

By the Grace of God, by the approval of Holy See and of the Holy Episcopal Synod of the Syro-Malankara Catholic Church, Thomas Mar Eusebius, Bishop of the St. Mary, Queen of Peace Syro-Malankara Catholic Eparchy in the USA and Canada extends cordial greetings to all the priests, religious and faithful of the Eparchy.

Prot. No. EPL 1/2016

Praise be to the Most Holy Trinity.

Dear Reverend Fathers, Sisters and Lay faithful,

The establishment of the ‘St. Mary, Queen of Peace Syro-Malankara Catholic Eparchy in USA and Canada’ marked a very important milestone in our ecclesial journey. Since the first moment of the establishment of our communities in this great continent, one of our greatest dreams has been to have an Eparchy of our own. It is this dream that is realized now, providentially in the birth centenary year of the great prelate of our Church who officially inaugurated the Malankara Catholic missions in this continent, namely, Archbishop Benedict Mar Gregorios of Happy Memory. Let us raise our hearts in profound gratitude to God for the loving providence that we, as a Church experience so abundantly.

Besides the grace of God, the good will, dedication and prayers of so many people have gone into the making of this Eparchy. We gratefully acknowledge the love and care extended to us so generously by the Holy Father and the Congregation for the Oriental Churches. We are thankful to the Holy See for the confidence that is placed in us through this decision. The Holy Episcopal Synod of the Syro-Malankara Catholic Church has played a key role in making this dream of ours come true. The Papal Nuncios in the US and Canada with both the Bishops’ Conferences have been very supportive of our cause. In a very special way, we are indebted to His Excellency the Most Rev. William Murphy, Bishop of the Diocese of Rockville Center. This Eparchy would not have been a reality so fast without the generous support of His Excellency and the Diocese.

All those who served our Church in North America in the past need to be acknowledged with gratitude. Our Apostolic Visitors, our Coordinators, Reverend Fathers, Reverend Sisters and our lay leaders have contributed greatly to the growth of our Church and the new Eparchy is the fruit of their hard toil as well. The commendable pastoral service that our Reverend Fathers and Reverend Sisters are providing presently in our parishes and in our Church is of great value. All their sacrifices are remembered with gratitude. We thank God also for the valuable vocations that we have from this soil, which is another sign of God’s great mercy towards us.

One major blessing of our Church is undoubtedly the ecclesial commitment of our Faithful. For the ecclesial growth that we have been able to achieve, which has resulted in the establishment of an Eparchy, you, my dear Faithful, have to be appreciated. Your profound faith, your love for the Church, the fine family values that you so courageously uphold, your readiness to take up sacrifice for the Church, your care for your priests and religious, all these are exemplary. The enthusiasm

that our youth and children show in the life of the Church is a tremendous source of hope for the future of the Church.

Our celebration on January 23, of the inauguration of the new Eparchy and my installation as the first bishop of the Eparchy was graceful, in spite of the inclement weather. I wish to thank all of you who participated in the event and many more of you, who really wanted to participate but were forbidden by the weather. You had taken genuine interest in it and you had invested so much for the same. May God continue to bless you for all that you do in His name for our Church. As I am chosen to serve the new Eparchy as its first bishop, I feel humbled before God by the confidence placed on me through the Holy See and our own Holy Episcopal Synod. I feel blessed by the abundance of love and support extended to me by each of you and I count on your continued support and love in the exercise of this ministry.

The new Eparchy offers us new possibilities and also new challenges. The establishment of the Eparchy is an acknowledgement of the ecclesial growth and maturity we have achieved. We are challenged to live up to the ecclesial maturity expected of us. The geographical region of our Eparchy is immensely vast. But we are glad that our communities in Canada have attained a stable canonical stature with this new provision. We are called to live our Christian vocation in this vast continent as an ecclesial community come of age. Being rooted deeply in our faith and ecclesial tradition and being open to the positive values and culture of this great continent, we can aspire to fulfill the mission that the Lord has entrusted to us as a Church.

Today, we are starting the season of the Great Lent. As we know, it is an important time in our spiritual journey. Primarily, it is a time for spiritual renewal. Our average life is often marked by habitual failures which would render our life cold and monotonous, lacking in Christian dynamism. The Lent would enable us to regain the warmth of being close to the Lord, through more ardent prayers, acts of penance and acts of mercy, which are essential aspects of the Lenten observances in our tradition. Moreover, this year's Lent is illumined by our special reflections on God's mercy, as we are going through the Year of Mercy. Our focus is not so much on our own weaknesses, but on the infinite mercy of the God the Father. God's steadfast love surpasses all human weaknesses. Genuine experiences of God's Mercy, which is part of our everyday life, would enable us to overcome our own failures and be sources of mercy to our brothers and sisters. May this Lent be a truly transforming experience for all of us. May St. Mary, the Queen of Peace, the Patroness of our Eparchy be our support in our spiritual journey.

Yours lovingly in our Lord,

+ Eusebius

+ Thomas Mar Eusebius

February 2, 2016
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This circular is to be read in all our churches on Sunday, February 7, 2016