

The Syro-Malabar Catholic Church is a Major Archiepiscopal Church in full communion with the Apostolic See of Rome. The Church is headed by the Major Archbishop of Ernakulam-Angamaly, Mar George Cardinal Alencherry. It is one of the 23 sui iuris (autonomous) Eastern Catholic Churches in the Catholic communion. It is the second largest Eastern Catholic Church, the largest being the Ukrainian Catholic Church. The Syro-Malabar Church follows the East-Syrian liturgy which dates back to 3rd century.

Known for its deep-rooted spirituality and high rate of vocations to the priesthood and religious life, the Syro-Malabar Church is perhaps the most vibrant Catholic Church in the world, with over four million believers and a rich and fascinating history.

Syro-Malabar Catholics, also called “St. Thomas Christians”, trace their origins and faith to the missionary efforts of St. Thomas the Apostle, who landed at Kodungallur in Kerala, India, in 52 AD. St. Thomas was martyred at Mylapur, Chennai, India, in 72 AD, after preaching and establishing Christian communities in different parts of India.

Until the late 16th century, Bishops were appointed and sent by the Patriarch of the East Syrian Church, who governed the St. Thomas Christians. However, the arrival of the Portuguese in India marked a new era in the life of the Church. Hierarchically they were brought under the rule of the Latin Bishops after the Synod of Diamper.

In 1653 in the infamous ‘Coonan Cross Oath’ at Mattancherry, many St. Thomas Christians vowed to disobey the Latin hierarchy. Thus began a rift among St. Thomas Christians, who were one Church until that time. Eventually, some returned to the jurisdiction of the Latin rule to be in communion with the Pope, while others stood firm in their stand of opposition to the Portuguese.

Those who continued under the Latin rule formed the community that became the Syro-Malabar Church. Those who remained opposing the Portuguese encountered the Jacobite Patriarch and eventually became Jacobites, of which a fraction reunited with the Catholic Communion in 1930; they are now known as the Syro-Malankara Church.

Finally, after 230 years of Latin governance, the Syro-Malabar Church hierarchy was established in India, in 1923.

Since then it has grown rapidly, and in 1992 Pope John Paul II elevated it to the status of a Major Archiepiscopal Sui iuris Church with the title of Ernakulam-Angamaly. It is one of the four Major Archiepiscopal Churches, the other three being the Syro-Malankara Church, Ukrainian Church and the Romanian Church.

The contribution of the religious, charitable and educational institutions managed by the different dioceses of the Church, to the welfare of Kerala and other states of India, is immense. The widespread diaspora of the Indian community outside the continent has also seen the Syro-Malabar faithful spread to regions outside Kerala, and it has a large presence in Australia.

On 23 December 2013 Holy Father Francis established The Syro-Malabar Eparchy of St Thomas the Apostle, Melbourne for Australia, the second Eparchy outside the territory after Chicago, USA. Pope Francis appointed Bishop Bosco Puthur, then Curia Bishop of Major Archiepiscopal Curia, Kerala, as the first Bishop/Eparch of the new Eparchy. Bishop Bosco Puthur was installed on 25 March, 2014 in Melbourne.

On 20th November, the Feast of Christ the King, the day of Conclusion of the Year of Mercy, by the decree given by Bishop Bosco Puthoor from the Chancery of the Eparchy of Melbourne, St Euphrasia Syro-Malabar Parish was established. Our patroness is St Euphrasia (Evuprassiamma) and ours is the first parish to be established in her name.

From the humble beginnings, a decade ago with a few occasional family congregations we progressed to become the first Syro-Malabar parish in South Australia. Rev Dr Biju John Chulayillaplackal became the first Vicar of the new Parish. Our parish stands out among similar Syro-Malabar parishes in the diocese for the Christian Love among the parish families. We consider each other as members of their extended family. Let us pray that this sense of love, fellowship and sharing continue in our parish as we grow together and go further in our journey of faith.

Phone: +61 470151749

Email: steuphrasiaadelaide@gmail.com

Post Box 1035, Elizabethvale, South Australia-5112