



BY THE GRACE OF GOD

Ignatius Zakka I Iwas
Patriarch of Antioch and All the East
Supreme Head of the Universal Syrian Orthodox Church

No.E206/10



05-December-2010

Apostolic benediction to our beloved Metropolitan: His Eminence Mor Theethose Yeldho - our Patriarchal Vicar and to our beloved spiritual children: the Reverend Clergy and faithful of our Malankara Archdiocese of the Syriac Orthodox Church in North America.

After wishing you all a blessed Christmas in advance, we would inform you the following. As you know, earlier this year there was a request from our Regional Episcopal Synod in India recommending us to divide our Malankara Archdiocese in North America. Though we initially had agreed to that proposal, since that Archdiocese is directly under us, later, we decided to make the final decision after consulting with the Holy Synod here in September. Thus, though we have had issued the bull No.E72/10, we directed His Eminence Mor Theethose Yeldho Metropolitan to keep the said bull in abeyance and a revised bull No. E76/10, dated, 18th-April-2010 was issued.

The Holy Synod, met in September 2010, made the decision to retain the Malankara Archdiocese as it is and with its current Archbishop. This does not mean that there is any break in the relation with our Church in Malankara (India). In this connection we would like to remind you that the Malankara Archdiocese in North America is directly under our Jurisdiction and control and our beloved brother in Christ: His Beatitude the Catholicos or the Metropolitans from India can visit that Archdiocese with our prior permission.

We remind you all that, it is for the Malankara Archdiocese in North America that we have consecrated our beloved Archbishop Mor Theethose Yeldho. Hence, all matters relating to that Archdiocese - such as appointing, transferring or removing Vicars, and all other rights and privileges including taking necessary disciplinary actions are within his authority. Therefore, it is just and proper that you pay due respect and canonical obedience to His Eminence the Archbishop, in the matters connected with the administration of our Archdiocese there.

We remind you that we had earlier advised you in 1999 through the bull No. E245/99 that: "If you have any grievances, you should first present it before your

Archbishop. He shall take a decision on that matter and you shall abide by it. But, if you are aggrieved by his decision, you may submit an appeal to us and we will look into it and do the needful. This is absolutely necessary to maintain order and discipline in the Church”.

We are authorizing our beloved Archbishop His Eminence Mor Theethose Yeldho, to call the Delegates Meeting preferably in January to make necessary steps and arrangements for the overall welfare and growth of the Archdiocese and proper order and discipline. You may include the regular business such as passing of Annual Report and Accounts and the election of new office bearers also in the said Meeting. We advise all of you to work with the Archbishop for the smooth functioning of the Delegates Meeting.

Dearly beloved,

We are aware of some unwanted activities among some of the clergy and lay people that make the situation confusing. Such actions are detrimental to the growth and stability of our Archdiocese. We advise you all with fatherly affection to accept and obey the direction of the Holy Synod, conveyed to you through our Apostolic bull No.E161/10, dated, 20th-September-2010 and not to create any problems by holding group meetings or unauthorised celebration of Qurbana without the permission of your Archbishop. We are aggrieved to advise you that the Holy Qurbano is not to be taken as a tool to demonstrate the power of a group of people. We hereby direct all of you to refrain from such activities which make our church a mocking stalk among the public.

Further, with the purpose to maintain a peaceful atmosphere in that Archdiocese, we are appointing a sub-committee consisting of His Eminence Mor Clemis Eugene Kaplan - Metropolitan, Patriarchal Vicar of the Western USA, His Eminence Mor Cyril Ephrem Karim - Metropolitan, Patriarchal Vicar of the Eastern USA, and Their Eminences the Metropolitans: Mor Gregorios Joseph and Mor Athanasius Geevargis, from our church in India to work with His Eminence Mor Theethose Yeldho, to study the situation in our Malankara Archdiocese in USA and to report to us, in order to make a suitable decision about the issues there.

We urge you all to cooperate with the Metropolitan sub-committee to work out an appropriate solution for the unity, stability and growth of our Malankara Archdiocese there. We extend our paternal blessings to you. May the Grace of God be with you all. **الله ورحمته وسلامه**

- Copies to: 1) H.E. Mor Clemis Eugene Kaplan, Patriarchal Vicar of the Western USA,
2) H.E. Mor Cyril Ephrem Karim, Patriarchal Vicar of the Eastern USA,
3) H.E. Mor Gregorios Joseph, Metropolitan of Kochi Diocese,
4) H.E. Mor Athanasius Geevargis, Assistant Metropolitan of Simhasana Churches.