

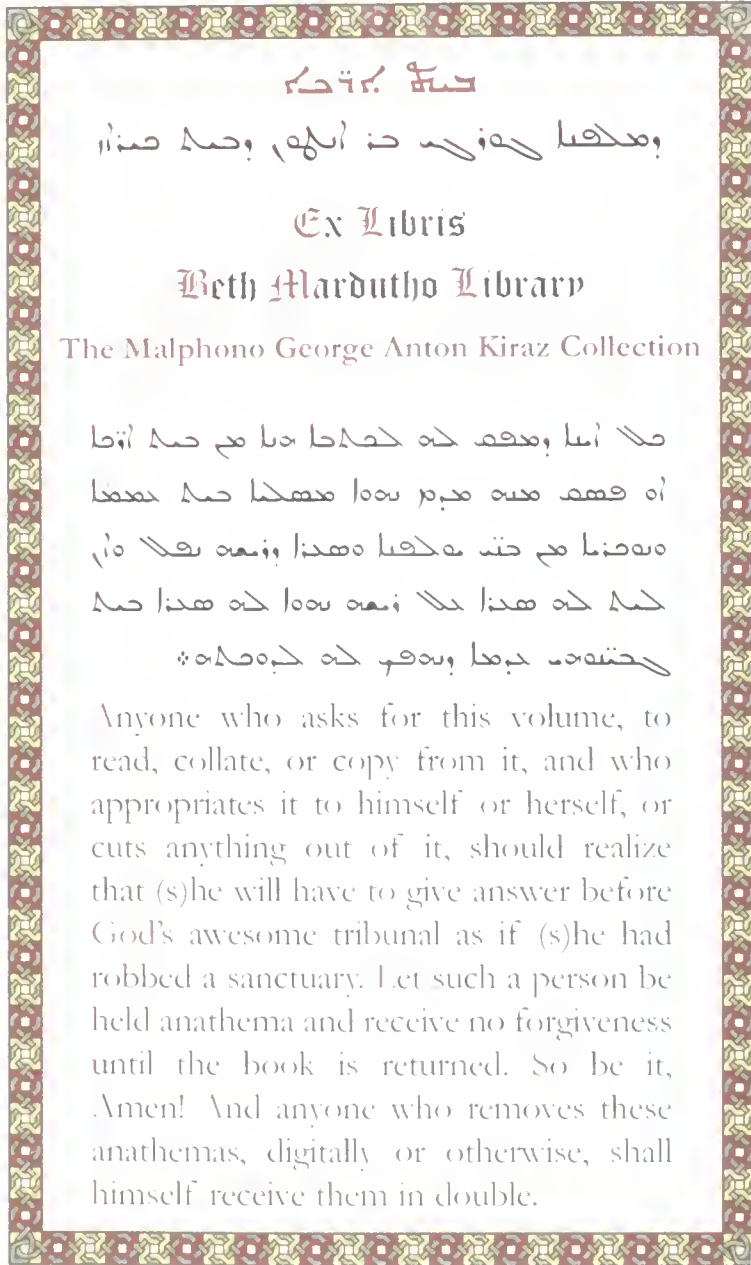
PATRIARCH MAR DINKHA IV





PATRIARCH MAR DINKHA IV
THE MAN AND HIS MESSAGE

Trichur, India
2004



ܘܟܠܟܘܢ ܕܘܨܘܒܘܬܐ

ܘܟܠܟܘܢ ܕܘܨܘܒܘܬܐ ܕܘܨܘܒܘܬܐ ܘܟܠܟܘܢ ܕܘܨܘܒܘܬܐ

Ex Libris

Beth Mardutho Library

The Malphono George Anton Kiraz Collection

ܘܟܠܟܘܢ ܕܘܨܘܒܘܬܐ ܕܘܨܘܒܘܬܐ ܕܘܨܘܒܘܬܐ ܘܟܠܟܘܢ ܕܘܨܘܒܘܬܐ
ܘܟܠܟܘܢ ܕܘܨܘܒܘܬܐ ܕܘܨܘܒܘܬܐ ܕܘܨܘܒܘܬܐ ܘܟܠܟܘܢ ܕܘܨܘܒܘܬܐ
ܘܟܠܟܘܢ ܕܘܨܘܒܘܬܐ ܕܘܨܘܒܘܬܐ ܕܘܨܘܒܘܬܐ ܘܟܠܟܘܢ ܕܘܨܘܒܘܬܐ
ܘܟܠܟܘܢ ܕܘܨܘܒܘܬܐ ܕܘܨܘܒܘܬܐ ܕܘܨܘܒܘܬܐ ܘܟܠܟܘܢ ܕܘܨܘܒܘܬܐ
ܘܟܠܟܘܢ ܕܘܨܘܒܘܬܐ ܕܘܨܘܒܘܬܐ ܕܘܨܘܒܘܬܐ ܘܟܠܟܘܢ ܕܘܨܘܒܘܬܐ

Anyone who asks for this volume, to read, collate, or copy from it, and who appropriates it to himself or herself, or cuts anything out of it, should realize that (s)he will have to give answer before God's awesome tribunal as if (s)he had robbed a sanctuary. Let such a person be held anathema and receive no forgiveness until the book is returned. So be it, Amen! And anyone who removes these anathemas, digitally or otherwise, shall himself receive them in double.

ܘܟܠܟܘܢ ܕܘܨܘܒܘܬܐ
Biographies: Patriarchs
Beth Mardutho Library

PATRIARCH MAR DINKHA IV
THE MAN AND HIS MESSAGE

By

Most Rev. Dr. Mar Aprem B.D., M.Th., S.T.M., D.Th., Ph.D.

Mar Narsai Press
Trichur, Kerala, India
2004

Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV

(Biography - English)

Author:

Most. Rev. Dr. Mar Aprem B.D., M.Th., S.T.M., D.Th., Ph.D

Metropolitan Palace,

Trichur 680001, Kerala, India

Phone 91-487- 2420978

E mail: aprem@vsnl.com

Copyright: Author

Date of publication: June 2004

Number of copies: 1000

Number of pages: 352

Printed at Mar Narsai Press,
High Road, Thrissur 680001

Published by
Mar Narsai Publications,
Thrissur-680001

DTP: Digitech Designs, Koratty 680 308

Graphics by : Paul. T.D.

Price Rs. 250/- India
\$15 (Outside India)

ISBN : 81-902205-0-0

CONTENTS

Foreword by Archbishop Mar Joseph Powathil	8
Chapter 1 INTRODUCTION	11
Chapter 2 EARLY YOUTH & PRIEST	19
2.1 Childhood	
2.2 As a Priest	
Chapter 3 AS A BISHOP	27
3.1. Rev. Khanania to become bishop	
3. 2. Bishop Mar Dinkha travels to USA	
3. 3. Patriarchal Deputy to India	
3. 4. Visits to Lebanon & Iraq 1968, 1970, 1973	
3. 5. Chairman of the 3-member Episcopal Council 1973	
3. 6. Visit to Australia in Nov. 1973	
Chapter 4 FIRST DECADE (Oct. 1976 - Oct. 1986)	45
4.1 Consecration as Patriarch	
4.2. First Synod in London (Oct. 1976)	
4.3 Visits to Baghdad, (1977 & 1978)	
4.4 Progress in Australia	
4.5 Visit to Kiev, USSR, 1982	
4.6 WCC Assembly 1983	
4.7 Fourth Visit to American Diocese 1984	
4.8 Visit to Rome 1984 November 7 - 9	
4.9 Visit to Iraq, Nov-Dec 1985	
4.10 Visit to New Britain, June 1986	
Chapter 5 SECOND DECADE (1986 – 1996)	68
5.1 Mart Mariam Church, London, England (Aug 1987)	
5.2 Establishment of Patriarchal Library, Oct 1987	
5.3 Visit to Russia, 1988	
5.4 Saint Hurmizd Church, Sydney	
5.5 Unity Move with the Chaldeans, 1990	
5.6 Visit to India 1991	

- 5.7 Reception in Chicago, April 1992
- 5.8 The Common Christological Declaration, Nov.1994
- 5.9 Unity in India, Nov. 1995
- 5.10 Cardinal's Visit, August 1996
- 5.11 Contact with World Leaders, Sept. 1996

Chapter 6 **THIRD DECADE (1996-2006)** 97

- 6.1 Governor Receives The Patriarch, Nov 26, 1996
- 6.2 The Assyrian – Chaldean Dialogue, 1997
- 6.3 Pro-Oriente, Chicago, July 1997
- 6.4 The Middle East Council of Churches (MECC), 1997
- 6.5 Symposium on the Revision of the Assyrian NT, 1998
- 6.6 Visit to Iran, Lebanon & Russia, 1998
- 6.7 Episcopal Consecrations in Syria and Iraq, Oct 1999
- 6.8 Apostolic Visit to India, January 2000
 - a. Sermon dated January 23, 2000
 - b. Sermon dated January 30, 2000
 - c. Patriarchal Address
 - d. Messages
- 6.9 Millennium Celebrations in Iraq, October 2000
- 6.10 Assisi Prayer Day, Jan.2001
- 6.11 Patriarchal Consecration Silver Jubilee, Oct. 2001
- 6.12 Visit to Australia, May- June 2002
- 6.13 Heart Surgery, Sept. 2002
- 6.14 26th Patriarchal Anniversary and Assyrian NT, Oct. 2002
- 6.15 27th Patriarchal anniversary in Chicago, Oct 19, 2003
- 6.16 Statement on Sacramental Life

Chapter 7 **CONCLUSION** 189

- 7.1 Patriarch of Unity
- 7.2 Patriarch of ecumenical Dialogue
- 7.3 Patriarch of Reconstruction
- 7.4 Patriarch of 21st Century
- 7.5 Patriarch of the Holy Synods
- 7.6 An Educator
- 7.7 A Song Writer

- A. Bishops Consecrated by H. H. Mar Dinkha IV, (1976-2003)
- B. Clergy Ordained by H. H. Mar Dinkha IV, (1975-2003)
- C. Churches Dedicated by H. H. Mar Dinkha IV, (1962-2000)
- D. Eight Holy Synods (1976 - 2001)
- E. Decrees of the Fifth Holy Synod, 1994
- F. Felicitation Address, January 2000
- G. The Easter Patriarchal Epistle, 2001
- H. The Easter Patriarchal Epistle, 2003
- I. The Christmas Epistle, 2002
- J. The Christmas Epistle, 2003
- K. The List of 120 Patriarchs
- L. Chronology of Events
- M. Vatican Documents

Index	289-293
Books by Mar Aprem	294, 295
About the Author	296
List of Photographs	297-304
Photographs	305-352

FOREWORD

The Assyrian Church of the East has always fascinated the historians down through the centuries. It is not known exactly when Christianity first took root in upper Mesopotamia, but a Christian presence had certainly been established there by the mid 2nd century, believed to be by the preaching of the disciples of Apostle St. Thomas. It is also true that the Church of the East was always a minority in the largely Zoroastrian Persia. However it flourished for many centuries, with its rich, scholarly activity centered on the school of Nisibis. In the 5th century, the Assyrian Church of the East gravitated towards the radical Antiochene form of Christology that had been articulated by Theodore of Mopsuestia and Nestorius and fell out of communion with the Church in the Roman Empire. The Church in fact was full of missionary enthusiasm and therefore, it expanded missionary activity in to areas as far as away Tibet, China and Mongolia. The missionary activities continued, according to the historians, even after the Muslim Arabs conquered the Mesopotamian homeland in the 7th century. By 1318 there were some thirty metropolitan sees and 200 suffragan dioceses. Therefore, the Church of the East was often called a ‘Church on Fire’.

The St. Thomas Christians in India were in communion with the Assyrian Church of the East, which in early centuries had regularly sent bishops to India, at the request of their leader ‘Archdeacon of All India’, to ordain priests and deacons and administer other sacraments. This contact continued until the 16th century, until the arrival of the western missionaries to India. The Assyrian Church of the East in India with its headquarters in Trichur, Kerala under the leadership of Metropolitan Mar Aprem is a relevant relic of this contact.

This Catholic Church has made rapid progress in its dialogue with the ancient Assyrian Church of the East during the period of Mar Dinkha IV i.e., since 1976. After many centuries of isolation, relations between these Churches began to improve in the 1980’s.

Mar Dinkha IV visited Pope John Paul II in Rome in 1984 and participated in the day of prayer for peace at Assisi in 1986. Not only has there been a clear agreement on Christology, but also agreements have been reached on the sacraments and on the Anaphora of Addai and Mari. And this with a Church that was kept out of any communion of the Catholic – Orthodox Churches for over sixteen centuries! I am happy that Very Rev. Fr. Mathew Vellanickal from our Archdiocese is in the Commission for Catholic-Assyrian Dialogue. And he is the only member in the commission from among the Indian Catholics. It may be also said that the ground for the official dialogue was cleared by the Pro Oriente Foundation.

The Christological Agreement between our two Churches signed on 1 November 1994 has been an epoch making event. And Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV played a crucial role in arriving at this consensus. As Archbishop Walter Kasper (later Cardinal) wrote in 2000 “the Christological Declaration was a real turning point in the relation between our Churches” (message sent to Mar Dinkha (July 2000). Pope John Paul II is aware of the good will and understanding Mar Dinkha shared in this case.

The rapprochement between the two Churches has found concrete expression in increased contacts and cooperation between the Assyrian Church of the East and its Catholic counterpart, the Chaldean Catholic Church. Mar Dinkha IV and Chaldean Patriarch Raphael Bidavid met in Detroit, Michigan, USA and on 29 November 1996, and issued a joint Patriarchal statement. The two Patriarchs pledged to work for the reunification of their Churches, by forming a joint commission for unity that was to elaborate a common catechism, oversee the foundation of a seminary in the United States for both Churches, and develop common pastoral programmes. Later in 1997, both these Patriarchs ratified a joint Synodal decree for promoting unity that had been signed by the members of both holy synods. They declared that each side recognized the apostolic succession, sacrament and Christian witness of the other.

In November 1984 His Holiness, 'Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV' stated while addressing Pope John Paul II "Through love and understanding we will overcome our differences and then we can again tie together the scattered rings of the chain of the Christian Churches. And then the Lord of the Church will be satisfied with us, that we are fulfilling our duty to humanity". Indeed, he was always committed to the unity of Christians through love and understanding with the other Churches. I also remember this friendliness and cordiality while we were together for the Pro Oriente Syriac consultation held in Chicago in July 1997.

This book, '**Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV**', is the biography of the Catholicos Patriarch of the Assyrian Church of the East, who took lead in all these ecumenical endeavors. For the last twenty-eight years he has been heroically fulfilling his duties as the principal dispenser of the mysteries of God following the example of the Good Shepherd. The enormous developments in the Assyrian Church of the East in the relationship with other Christian Churches are a proof of his energetic and enlightening leadership. Besides he is trying his best to bring unity and reconciliation in the Assyrian Church itself.

Metropolitan Mar Aprem, the author of the book is a well-known writer of Church History, Travelogues and humor books. He has done a very useful service by writing a biography of an eminent religious leader and the champion of ecumenism by systematically collecting and presenting the documents. This book will certainly be a great help for the students of history and ecumenism around the globe. I congratulate His Grace, Mar Aprem and pray that may the Almighty God continue to bless him so that he may go on enlightening many more minds.

Joseph Powathil
Metropolitan Archbishop of Chenganacherry

20 April 2004

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The Assyrian Church of the East is in the news these days especially after the fall of the regime of Saddam Hussein. The people would like to know more about this great Church known as the Assyrian Church of the East. Although something has been written about the Catholicos Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV in the Assyrian language not much is available in English.

When Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV celebrated the silver Jubilee of his Patriarchal Consecration in October 2001 a need was felt to know an accurate biography in English. It would be useful to know the man and the message of Catholicos Patriarch. There were some publications in Assyrian language. In our Church in India most of our people do not know the Assyrian language. Many people in other Churches also need to know the Catholicos Patriarch of this ancient community. Therefore I felt the need for writing such a book of this nature in English.

The Catholicos Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV does not require any introduction. He is well known in many circles inside and outside of his Church and in many ecumenical gatherings. His pleasing personality makes him acceptable in such universal assemblies whether in Russia, America or the Middle East.

Personally I had written biographies of my three predecessors in India. Mar Abdisho Thondanat Metropolitan who died in Trichur in November 1900, Mar Abimalek Timotheus Metropolitan who died in Trichur on 30 April 1945 and Mar Thoma Darmo who died in Baghdad on 7 September 1969. The biography of Mar Abimalek Timotheus Metropolitan was

appreciated by many. Later an Assyrian translation appeared in Chicago and a Malayalam translation in Kerala, India. The original book has a few copies but the two translations were sold out.

When I decided to write this biography of the Catholicos Patriarch, I was busy completing my Ph.D. dissertation, which I defended only in May 2002. Then after I heard that I passed the Ph.D., which was my second doctorate, I spent time to proof-read the printing of the thesis: **The History of the Assyrian Church of the East in the Twentieth Century**, for publication.

The writing of this biography was not easy. I am not an Assyrian by birth. I am an Indian, born in this Church like my forefathers. I love this Church and I serve this Church. I was involved in the process of making unity in this Church in India. Even for the worldwide Assyrian Church I played the role of a peacemaker with all sincerity. Alas, it has yet to find fruition.

I knew Mar Dinkha IV before he became the Catholicos Patriarch. I had publicly spoken in the reception meeting for him in Yonkers, New York in 1967 that Mar Dinkha, the young Bishop of Iran, is our hope to be the next Patriarch. Since there was no heir in the hereditary family of Mar Shimon we have to put our hope in the young and brilliant Bishop. My prediction came sooner than I thought. I think that I was the first Indian to meet Mar Dinkha when he was a Bishop.

In 1962 I took a visa from the Iranian Consulate in England for the purpose of meeting Bishop Mar Dinkha. I was returning after my studies in England via Iraq. When I reached Iraq I told Metropolitan Mar Yosip Khananisho about my intention of visiting our Church in Teheran and Urmiya and also visiting the new bishop. I was only 22 years old, a young deacon. Yet I

was daring to travel to Iran. But politically the border between Iraq and Iran was not peaceful. Therefore the Metropolitan advised me not to attempt to take the trip to cross the border from Iraq to Iran. Thus my plan to meet the Bishop of Iran was dropped.

In that trip I attempted to visit Kirkuk in northern Iraq. Deacon Gewargis Benjamin of Ashitha who was a Malpan of my Syriac teachers wanted to take me to show the Syriac Printing Press owned by his brother Shamasha David. Deacon Gewargis who was working in Iraq Petroleum Company (I.P.C. Ltd) in Ain Zala came to his house in Mosul where I had reached by train from Damascus. There was a railway line close to the Turkish border, which I understand is no more in operation.

In Mosul Deacon Gewargis Benjamin told me that it is better to apply for a permit to go to Kirkuk especially because I was a foreigner. Kirkuk was a problem area of Kurds. When we went to the government office in Mosul, the officer looked at me and told me, "You have to take permission not from us, but from Mulla Musthafa Barzani". He was the leader of the Kurds at that time demanding a Kurdish nation with territories from Northern Iraq and across the border with Iran.

At that time Abdul Karim Kassim, the dictator who was assassinated in 1963, ruled Iraq. Mulla Musthafa Barzani was the father of the present Masoud Barzani, who is a leader of the one of the two factions of the Kurds today.

Anyhow I was happy that I got a chance to meet the same bishop in 1967 not in Iran, but in Yonkers, New York. I remember that evening very vividly. I went to Yonkers for the reception. I could not find the YWCA where the dinner reception was to be held. I asked a man where the YWCA was. He queried "the

Y.W. or the Y.M.?” I replied the “YWCA” He looked at me and said with a smile, “Oh, the YWCA is over there. But you need a shave up there.” He said it that way because the YWCA stands for Young Women’s Christian Association. I smiled back enjoying the joke.

I had to cross the road. I think there were three lanes in one direction and another three lanes in the opposite direction. It was near a traffic light. I was not familiar with the traffic lights. In my hometown in Kerala there were no traffic lights. I looked at the red, green and yellow lights flashing one after another. Watching the heavy traffic I looked at the light. Soon the traffic stopped. I did not know when will the cars start moving again.

When the red light turned yellow I looked at the cars. They were standing where they were. Then I started moving from one side. Suddenly yellow lights turned green. The cars on both sides started moving and suddenly stopped again when the drivers applied brakes. They looked at me. Here was a young priest wearing cassock. They must have thought that I was a nut to cross the road after the green signal had appeared for them to pass. Perhaps there was red signal staring at me. I did not look properly. I had one goal. I must see the young bishop from Iran. I had no idea about the colour system of traffic lights.

God preserved me to write the biography of the bishop I went to meet that evening. When I reached the reception hall the organizers told me that they have no priest in Yonkers. They invited me to sit at the head table along with the bishop who was the chief guest. The convener of the reception committee Miss Lily Jacobs told me that I have to make a speech on the occasion.

On October 17, 1976 when the prelates of the Assyrian Church

of the East were gathered in England in Holy Synod under the presidency of Mar Timotheus Metropolitan of Malabar & India to elect their leader they never had to think twice about the obvious choice. Bishop Mar Dinkha was the only bishop from the time prior to the split and calendar change of 1964. Of course Mar Yosip Khananisho Metropolitan was alive living in Baghdad. But he was about 84 and was not able to travel to England to attend the Holy Synod.

The new Patriarch started his career in right earnest. The highest rank did not keep him away from the ordinary people. As a good shepherd he was close to the people. Even before he became the Catholicos Patriarch he had been to Iraq, Iran, India, England, USA, Canada, Australia etc. He was a widely traveled bishop. God had groomed him to the highest office in our Church.

It was the custom of Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV to meet all the members in a reception personally. He remembered many of them. He was born in Iraq. He worked in Iran. Now he lives in Chicago. He has visited all parts of our Church in Iran, Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, Germany, Sweden, London, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and Russia. His ability to remember the persons he meets is praiseworthy.

Here is a shepherd who knows his flock personally. Whenever he meets bishops from different countries, he enquires about the priests and lay leaders of that distant land. He must have met them only once or twice. I was pleasantly surprised when he looked at the photos of 70 clergy of the Church in India in **Voice of the East** magazine published from India and asked me; ‘Where is the priest who puts a toupe on his head?’ I myself had not known that my priest had no hair. He was bald. But with his toupe he had plenty of hair. How did the Patriarch know that this priest was without hair? Maybe he judged from

the texture of his artificial hair. Yes, here is a patriarch who remembers the appearance of a person just by seeing him once or twice even in a distant land. I told him that priest (Fr. T.P. Daniel) had passed away.

Patriarch's knowledge of Church history of the Assyrian Church is commendable. He can narrate many events of the past with the year of the events. It is not the academic degrees that matter. It is the knowledge one acquires by reading extensively. His speeches are pieces of evidence of his depth of knowledge in Church history. He quotes the dates of his predecessors with precision.

In spite of the fact that he has some difficulty in conversation in English, he manages conversation with non-Assyrians very well. In our conversation if the Patriarch thinks that I am talking something, which is difficult to comprehend, he will call somebody and clarify the difficult points.

Patriarch Mar Dinkha is very democratic in his decisions in Holy Synods. In certain meetings after some issues are discussed the Chair may say that there is some agreement between us. But in the Holy Synod our Patriarch does not hurry to do that way. He will ask each prelate in the Holy Synod to express his opinion clearly. Therefore there was no chance for a bishop in future to excuse himself by saying that I did not understand the discussion that was going on. The Patriarch encourages us to express our opinions fearlessly. He is willing to wait till afternoon or the next day if we need time to articulate all what we want to say on a particular issue or on a controversial topic. The Patriarch believes in the collective wisdom of the Archbishops and Bishops.

I have used extensively **Voice From the East**, Chicago, a

magazine Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV founded in 1982. Without that publication it would have been impossible to gather much information about the visits of the Patriarch to different places. I have also quoted the Patriarchal consecration anniversary speeches of the Patriarch reported in this magazine. The Assyrian section of this magazine is also used.

I have also used the news and other items that appeared in Voice of the East published from Trichur, India. My conversations with the Patriarch provided some additional information required for completing his biography. I have talked with other Assyrians too for gathering the material for writing this biography. All these sources, I hope, provided enough information in my attempt to tell his story cogently.

I have not made any sensational revelations in this book. I have to put in writing some important events, which posterity should know about this Patriarch. Mar Dinkha IV had made a lot of progress in the ecumenical relations with the Vatican and he is a Patriarch to be remembered and commended. He is a Patriarch crafted for the 21st century.

By the grace of God he has completed 27 years on October 17, 2003 as the Catholicos Patriarch of the Assyrian Church of the East. Out of the 120 Patriarchs of this Church only 20 persons have ruled the Church for more than 27 years. We pray that our Merciful God bestow on the present Patriarch, many more years.

I have followed a chronological order in this biography rather than a topical treatment of the various aspects of Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV. It is my experience that chronological order is easier for readers to comprehend although there are items and issues that overlap. Still I hope that the readers, not only educated persons, but also ordinary believers of the Assyrian Church of

the East who knew the Patriarch personally, will benefit from this biography.

I admit that my inabilities may not bring out the many sterling qualities of the head and heart of this beloved Patriarch in this short book. I know that there are biographies, which have 4000 pages. I did not attempt even one tenth of it. Still I feel that by reading this biography written in simple style, the readers can see the smiling face of a Holy Father who cared for his Church and his people. People outside his Church too can learn much about the historical events in the life of the man and his times, the captain who steered the unfortunate much-persecuted Assyrians to the 21st century with hope and determination, with devotion and perseverance, always with a smile on his face.

I am grateful to all those who assisted me in this work. My heartfelt gratitude to Dr. Alexander V. Alex. a retired Professor of Economics living in Orlando, Florida. This is my 62nd book.

It was very kind of Archbishop Joseph Powathil. who wrote a fitting Foreword to this book. He had made personal acquaintance of Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV in July 1997 during the Pro Oriente meetings in Chicago. Archbishop Powathil was then the President of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of India.

My respects and regards to the holy man revealed through the following pages of this book. My respectful *Shlame* to the Catholicos Patriarch of the Church of the East on the 42nd anniversary of his Episcopal consecration..

Trichur, India

11 February 2004

Mar Aprem Metropolitan

CHAPTER 2

EARLY YOUTH & PRIEST

2.1. Childhood

The late Rev. Benyamin, son of Rev. Soro, was a famous priest in Iraq who lived for more than a hundred years. He was born in 1856 and died in ripe old age in 1961. He is from the family of the Martyr Mar Dinkha, Bishop of Urmī, Iran who was shot dead in February 1915 during the World War I.

Qasha Benyamin's son was Andrews. He married a pious lady named Panna, daughter of Kaku. She was also from the same family in the tribe of Nochea. This devout woman was highly respected for her faith, pure Christianity and humanitarian ideals.

The St. Koryakos church, in the village Derbandoki in the historical Sub-District of Hareer, where this devout family of Andrews and Panna lived was a famous church. Here Christianity had flourished in the past. The relics of the-fourth-century churches like Mar Odisho and Mar Bawai still stand here. Both Christians and Moslems believe in the sanctity of Derbandoki relics particularly in the medicinal water spring where from they use water for curing their chronic diseases or ailments. They consider the water sacred, springing from under

a hill on the top of which the relics of an old Assyrian Monastery can be seen. Here in the church of Martyr Mar Koryakus this baby was christened and named KHANANIA meaning Mercy of God on 25 October 1935.

Khanania was born on 15 September 1935. His father was Andrews and mother Panna. Andrews was the son of Qasha Benyamin in the family of Mar Dinkha which had supplied about 17 bishops to the Assyrian Church of the East. The last of these bishops in the family of Mar Dinkha was martyred in February 1915 near Urmia.

When Khanania was born in 1935 nobody predicted that he was going to be a bishop or later a Catholicos Patriarch. Yet his mother Panna abstained from eating meat when she was pregnant with her firstborn. Later she delivered one more son Ezaria who is now in San Jose, California and a daughter named Victoria who lives in Teheran with her family and grand children. His mother Panna died in 1968 and was buried in Teheran. His father Andrews died in San Jose, California on 25 December 1999. Patriarch's younger brother Ezaria became a deacon and serves in the church of St. Joseph in San Jose, California where he lives with his wife.

Darbandoki is the village near Arbil in Northern Iraq where the future Patriarch was born. Arbil is a famous town being the home for Mar Oudisho and Mar Qardagh, the martyr. He gained his elementary education under the wise tutorship of his grandfather, Rev. Benyamin Soro. In 1947, at the age of twelve, he was entrusted to the care of His Beatitude, the late Mar Yosip Khananisho, Metropolitan and the Patriarchal representative for all of Iraq.

After two years of very strict study, he gathered the basic

knowledge in theology to qualify him to undertake an active role in the service of the church. Thus, on September 12, 1949, he was ordained deacon by the second highest-ranking ecclesiastic of the Assyrian Church of the East. Eight years later, on August 15, 1957, deacon Khanania was ordained to priesthood, once again, by no other than his mentor and religious scholar Mar Yosip Khananisho.

During the political upheavals during and after World War I, a large number of the clergy lost their lives. The Church was on the threshold of disintegrating for lack of viable church organization or priesthood. His Beatitude Mar Yosip Khananisho was aware of the dire circumstances prevalent in that country. This deplorable situation was on his mind when he carefully selected young priest Khanania and trained him for the difficult task ahead as he was assigned as a priest in Teheran, Iran, in 1957.

2.2. As a Priest

This was troubled times. It was not a comfortable situation for the Assyrians in Iraq at that time. It was in August 1933 the notorious massacre of the Assyrians took place in Simale, Iraq. Within few days Mar Eshai Shimun, the 25-year-old Patriarch of the Assyrian Church of the East was exiled from Iraq to Cyprus. This Patriarch was able to return to Iraq only in 1970. That too was for a short visit. He made one more visit to Iraq in 1971 when he consecrated Mar Timotheus Metropolitan of Malabar & India on 10th October. Mar Yosip Khananisho was the Patriarchal Representative in Iraq all these years. Finally he became the acting Patriarch from August 16, 1973 when Patriarch Eshai Shimun resigned till the present Patriarch Mar Dinkha was consecrated on October 17, 1976.

Soon after the World War I Simko Agha, a Kurd in Salamas near Urmiah, treacherously killed Patriarch Mar Benjamin Shimun and several of his followers. That murdered Patriarch was young about 31 years old having ascended to the Patriarchate of his uncle in 1903 at the young age of just 16. Perhaps he was the youngest Patriarch up to that time. Of course his record was broken in 1920 when his nephew became patriarch at the age of 12. Perhaps these were the only two teenagers who became Patriarchs in this Church.

The Church was on the threshold of disintegrating for lack of viable church organization or priesthood in Iran. His Beatitude Mar Yosip Khananisho was aware of the dire circumstances prevalent in that country. This deplorable situation was on his mind when he carefully selected Qasha Philipos of Ruwanduz, a well experienced priest and consecrated him Episcopa by the name of Mar Yohannan Philipos for the diocese of Rizaieh (Urmia) and all Iran. This bishop did not get visa to go from Iraq to Iran. Politically these countries were not friendly. At that time Iraq was ruled by a King and Iran was ruled by Shah Pahalvi.

Burdened by the absence of a bishop in Iran Mar Yosip Khananisho Metropolitan planned to send a priest and gradually groomed him to be a bishop in Iran. That was the only possibility to find a bishop in Iran.

Iran did not have enough priests. Because there was no bishop to ordain priests in Iran. In 1939 a senior scholar Reuel Arsanis came to India. Mar Abimalek Timotheus Metropolitan ordained him a deacon in Trichur. After a few weeks he raised him to the rank of a priest. As the World War II was about to start Rev. Reuvel Arsanis rushed to Iran where he served the church for a long time.

In 1951 Patriarch Mar Eshai Shimun gave permission for our clergy in Iran to be ordained by Mar Yohannan, an Assyrian bishop consecrated in the Rumanian Orthodox Church. Rev. Ruwel Arsanis, ordained by Mar Abimalek Timotheus in India in 1939 was very old. His beard was white even at the time of ordination in 1939. He gave a short course of Seminary training for some people. Mr. Samuel Kelaita, Visitor General, assisted.¹

On 6 August 1951 on the festival of *Gilyana* (transfiguration) the following three priests and three deacons were ordained.

1. Qasisha Pere bar Yonan Karam from Chamakiye, near Urmiah for the Church of Marth Mariam.
2. Qashisha Shmouel bar Yosip beth Kulya of Gugtapa² to be priest of Mar Zaya, Gugtapa.
3. Qashisha Giwargis bar Mikhail, of the village of Chira Charai, of Diz in Kurdistan to be priest in Abadan.
4. Haidon Bawad of Chira Charai, Diz to be deacon for Teheran.
5. Simon Mar Yosip, of the village of Khajig of Berwar (Qudshanis) to be deacon in Teheran.
6. Eshai bar Yonan Rando of Alsan, Jilu to be deacon in Teheran.

This ordination of three priests and three deacons was a great help to solve the shortage of clergy in the Church in Iran.

In 1952 *Light From the East* magazine, Chicago, published a "Raziah (URMI) Issue" in February – March, Vol. 5, No. 2. Patriarch Mar Eshai Shimun refers to the visit of Mr. Samuel

¹ *Light From The East*

² The grandson of Qasha Shmoel bar Joseph Beth Kulia is the present Assyrian representative to the Iranian Parliament. (*Majlis*)

D'beth Kelaita who visited Rezaiah in Northern Iran in 1951 (The report is dated 1951 Kanon Kdeem 28 of the Easterners. It could be December 28, 1951 or rather January 10, 1952, as the Church of the East was following only the Julian Calendar till 1964). Patriarch Mar Eshai Shimun writes: ³

The importance of this trip lies in the fact that it is the first time in last thirty four years, that a representative of the Patriarch has visited Riziah, and that we have received first hand information regarding the situation of the Holy Apostolic and Catholic Church of the East in that historic part of Iran.

“Thirty four years” refers to us back to 1917 A.D. or 1918 A.D. Patriarch Mar Benjamin Shimun was shot in Salamas near Riziah (Urmi) in February 1918. Bishop Mar Dinkha of Urmia was shot in February 1915, i.e. 36 years prior to the visit of Mr. Shmouel Kellaita.

The Patriarch appealed to the members of the Church of the East along with the sons of the Assyrian nation living in the various countries of the world, to help for the establishment of fifteen and eventually thirty village schools in which Syriac will be taught, along with the faith of the Holy Apostolic Church of our forefathers.

The Church in Iran needed more priests and above all a bishop. The Assyrian Church cannot hire bishops of the Rumanian Orthodox Church as we did in 1951. With vision and courage Mar Yosip Khananisho Metropolitan chose the 22- year- old priest Khanania and trained him for the difficult task ahead as he was assigned as a priest in Iran in 1957.

³ Ibid.

On December 25, 1957 he went to Abadan, Iran. He celebrated Holy Qurbana for Christmas on 7th January 1958. On 25th January 1958 Rev. Khanania moved from Abadan to Teheran, capital city of Iran.

Rev. Khanania was a tireless worker. He built the Mar Gewargis Church in Teheran and started a school there. He organized the Assyrians in Teheran. The Assyrians in Iran were happy because although they had no bishop in Iran for 43 years here was a young celibate priest who was a hard working clergyman. Though the priest was only 23 years old he demonstrated the ability and maturity of an experienced priest. His name spread outside the country of Iran or Asia.

In April 1958 Mar Yosip Khananisho Metropolitan made an official visit from Iraq to Iran. The Church under the leadership of Rev. Khanania and other leaders received the Metropolitan, the rare honour of a visit of a prelate of the Assyrian Church to Teheran.

As Patriarchal Representative of Patriarch Mar Eshai Shimun Mar Yosip appointed Rev. Khanania, the 23 -year young priest as the Administrator of the Church in Iran.

For the 65-year-old Yosip Khananisho Metropolitan it was an important visit. Iran is a place where his illustrious uncle Mar Isaac Khananishu Metropolitan of Shamashdin was buried in Karmansha when the Assyrians returned to Iraq after the First World War in 1918 AD. This Mar Isaac Metropolitan had consecrated two Patriarchs, Mar Benjamin Shimun in 1903 and Mar Poulouse Shimun in 1918. Mar Yosip Khananisho Metropolitan encouraged his favourite priest Qasha Khanania to continue with his efforts to build the Mar Gewargis Church in Teheran. This Mar Gewargis Church is the Cathedral situated

at No. 65, Saed Agha Balazadeh St, South Karagar Avenue, Teheran 13337, Iran. Now there are two priests in that Cathedral namely Qasha Yousif Rashidi, Qasha Ashur Tamras. Metropolitan Mar Yosip Khnanishu had a vision that the Patriarch would consecrate this young priest of 23 years of age as the bishop for Iran within a few years.

Patriarch Mar Eshai Shimun dedicated the first Church building of the Assyrian Church on Friday February 9, 1962. He did it because he needed a Church of our own faith in order to consecrate a bishop. So when he consecrated bishop Mar Dinkha two days later, the new bishop had a Cathedral, a Church he built with the co-operation of the first *Motwa* (council) which he formed.

As a bishop he was able to construct the Mart Mariam Church in Urmiah. This is on the place of the old Church where it is believed that one of the three magi (wise men) who visited baby Jesus in Bethlehem was buried in the first century. This Church has been renovated again.

Bishop Mar Dinkha gave leadership to build a second church in the city of Teheran. That is the Mart Mariam Church at No. 121 , Babakhanloo Brothers Avenue, Sepa Square.. The bishop was able to get the co-operation and assistance of senior priests like Qasha Malchiesdiq Kochaly, Fr. Ivan, and Qasha Beth Kolia and others.

CHAPTER 3

AS A BISHOP

3.1. Rev.Khanania to become bishop

The Catholicos Patriarch of the Assyrian Church Mar Eshai Shimun heard about his sterling qualities from Mar Khananisho Metropolitan. Thus Rev. Khanania was chosen to be bishop. Patriarch Mar Eshai Shimun had not seen this young priest. He had been exiled from Iraq two years before the young priest was born. As his uncle and consecrator Mar Yosip Khananisho had strongly recommended him, the Patriarch did not have to think twice. Patriarch Mar Eshai Shimun went to Teheran on his return journey from India. The Patriarch consecrated Rev. Khanania as a bishop on Sunday February 11, 1962 in the Church of martyr Mar Gewargis.

Qasha Benyamin, grandfather of Qasha Khanania was alive when the grandson was doing great work in Teheran. The grandfather would have rejoiced to see his grandson priest to become a bishop. But a few months before Mar Dinkha became

a bishop, the old priest Qasha Benyamin died in Iraq. He was 105 years old when he passed away. It took a long time for the grandson to hear the sad news of the death of his grandfather. There was not much communication between Iran and Iraq at that time.

The Church in Iran was without a Bishop after the First World War.¹ The missionary activities of the Church of England in Urmia, Iran had ended. The Persian government prohibited in 1928 the Bible in the schools. The Persian government took over all schools in the forties. In 1934 the government of Iran asked all the “foreigners” to evacuate Azerbaijan.

As soon as Mar Yosip Khananisho heard the good news of the consecration of his favourite priest Khanania becoming bishop in Teheran he penned a letter of appreciation along with two poems. The first one is about the responsibility of a bishop. The second is about the name of Dinkha. The letter was written in Aramaic or the old language in the beautiful handwriting of the Metropolitan.²

**An Epistle of the late Mar Yosip
Hnanisho Metropolitan,
to Mar Dinkha in 1962**

In the country of Iraq: we pray that let God, out of His Grace dispense tranquility and peace in the world confounded with the sins of its inhabitants and save the children of the holy Church from all

¹ The last bishop of Iran was Mar Dinkha Episcopa of Urmia who was shot dead in Feb. 1915, as mentioned in the letter of Rev. Y.M. Neesan dated 27 Feb., 1915, quoted from Yosip Yacob, *The Assyrian Question*, Chicago, Alpha Graphics, 1986, p.65.

² I am grateful to Rev.P.K.Varghese B.A.B.D, former Vicar Genral in Trichur, who translated this letter from Aramaic to English for the purpose of this book

troubles visible and invisible.

I write the following epistle to our beloved brother His Excellency Mar Dinkha, Bishop for all the country of Iran and his See situated in the royal city of Teheran. He in his childhood was under our care and we brought him up. We ordained him a deacon (in the year 1949) and elevated his rank to that of a priest in 1957 and sent him to Iran in the same year.

In a casual meeting with His Holiness Mar Patriarch in the royal city of Teheran His Holiness consecrated him a bishop for all the country of Iran. Let God give him bodily health, protection of the soul, wisdom of mind and enlightenment of impulses in order that he may tender and lead the congregation entrusted to him by the instigation of the Holy Spirit.

At the same time I am weak in body and in eyes by the burden of years which have been reached the length that reminded by the prophet in Psalms No. 90: "The years of our lives are three-score and ten". But because of our affection towards him, I do not attempt to take back his request. And I annex for chants, I have composed one of which is about his name and another about the name of Teheran and Iran.

**Hymns, which are sung at the consecration of bishops,
composed by the weak writer Yosip Hnanisho
Metropolitan.**

Christ our God and our Lord and our King and our
hope and our pride

Out of His Grace, He dressed our body and fought
with our enemy
Out of His yoke He freed us and He called us
invitees to his Kingdom,
Do elect your servant that he may save his comrades
to be the shepherd and the leader
To your pasture that in the country of Iran and in
the big city of Teheran!
That he may tender the flock scattered in cities and
countries
God, bestow on him strength and gift of your Holy
Spirit,
That he may ordain priests in the towns and villages
as need be
And on the day you come for the judgement, you
resurrect him into our soil.
Make all the children of our generation worthy to
be their abode with you.

Another. Concerning the name Dinkha

Our saviour Lord Christ who descended from
heaven in magnificence
And dressed human body with the power of the
spirit from the daughter of blessed David
Give heed to your servant whose name is Dinkha
make him light and salt
And save him from the troublemaker, the wicked
adversary
To be meek and calm and guide and famous
So that he shall tender his flock leisurely in unity in
love cheerfully
And when your majesty is being celebrated coming
from highest in glory

Show him the path and the way, which lead, towards
the place of rest

And resurrect and quicken all the children of the
dust with your grace

God is blessed forever: let his holy name be praised
forever and ever.

Let your festival be blessed

Let the festival be blessed for all the children of
your Diocese especially for the Priests and deacons
and for the entire Church congregation and for the
children of our tribe – our peace for all.

Your brother

Baghdad

Yosip Hnanisho Metropolitan

14 April 1962

3.2. Bishop Mar Dinkha travels to USA

In 1966 Bishop Mar Dinkha went to visit the parishes in the USA. In Chicago he spent some time. In Chicago the young bishop met with Qasha Aprim de Baz and many lay leaders. The Assyrians in the USA were very happy to meet the new bishop of Iran about whose activities they had heard a lot. It was the first visit of Bishop Mar Dinkha to the Patriarch who consecrated him.

Bishop Mar Dinkha was able to meet some old friends who were with him in Iraq. He could also meet with the relatives of the Assyrians in Iran whom he was serving as a priest and since February 11, 1962 as a bishop. It was an opportunity for him to get a inside view of the Assyrian communities in the new land of opportunities to which several Assyrians from Iraq and Iran were migrating or planning to migrate.

In this trip he went to Yonkers near New York city in January

1967 and lead the ground breaking ceremony for the new church of Mar Mari Shleeha at 129 Beuna Vista Avenue in Yonkers. The congregation of Mar Mari Shleeha gave him a supper reception at the YWCA Hall in Yonkers. The present writer spoke on the occasion felicitating the young bishop of Teheran and wishing him all the best in the future.

3.3. Patriarchal Deputy to India

Patriarch Mar Eshai Shimun was planning to make alternate arrangements for the Church in India ever since he sent the order dated 10 January 1964 suspending Mar Thoma Darmo Metropolitan. He thought of sending the young bishop of Iran. At the same time the Patriarch realised that the bishop should be able to speak English.

Finally in February 1967 Patriarch Mar Eshai Shimun deputed Mar Dinkha, Bishop of Iran to be his Apostolic Delegate to India. Patriarch Mar Shimun also sent Rev. Isaac (Is'haq) Rehana to be of help to Bishop Mar Dinkha.

Patriarch Mar Eshai Shimun knew very well that Bishop Mar Dinkha of Iran was the most suitable person to go to India in the time of crisis. Patriarch sent Rev. Is'haq Rehana who knew the Aramaic language and the canon law of the Church to assist the young bishop in this difficult mission. Patriarch must have foreseen stiff opposition from Mar Thoma Darmo Metropolitan who had support from the majority of clergy and laity of the Church in India.

Bishop Mar Dinkha and Fr. Is'haq Rehana arrived in Trichur on 22nd February 1967. Fr. Antony Chakola (the Administrator appointed by Patriarch Mar Eshai Shimun), received the visiting Bishop. In the official photograph taken on that day Mr. M. O. Thomakutty, Athletha O.T. Inasu, F.C. George, Rev. P.T.

Yokhannan, Rev.M.O.Varghese, Rev.M.T.Joseph, Deacon K.J. Lonappen, Deacon M.I.David, O.T.Vareed, M.O.Varoo, M.V.Paul, E.C.Kunjuvareed, Paul Padavan, O.P.Kaku, K.J.Vareed, A.V.Kadavi, P.A.Raphael, E.P.Kunjuvareed and C.I.John are seen with Bishop Mar Dinkha and Rev.Rehana. Only one of the above-mentioned persons is alive today.

The visiting dignitaries stayed in the house of Mr. M. O. Thomakutty. Bishop Mar Dinkha had planned to conduct ordination service for four young people trained to become deacons. Although there were four priests with the Administrator there were only two deacons in that group.

The majority of the priests and deacons were supporting Mar Thoma Darmo Metropolitan. The supporters of Patriarch had four churches with them. They arranged that an ordination would be conducted in Mar Augin Thuvana Church, West Fort, Trichur belonging to the side of the Administrator. Four young people were prepared for the ordination as deacons.

Two laymen on the side of Mar Thoma Darmo Metropolitan namely N.E.Pyloth and O.P. Joseph filed Original Suit 20/ 67 in the Subordinate Court in Trichur seeking an injunction suit against Bishop Mar Dinkha. They quoted many canons that no bishop should interfere in the diocese of another bishop. They also argued that since the bishop was on a tourist visa he should not conduct an ordination or interfere in the administration.

The Christian lawyers on the side of Mar Thoma Darmo Metropolitan quoted many canon laws. The Hindu advocates arguing for Bishop Mar Dinkha brought several counter arguments. They strongly argued that the visiting bishop is not interfering in the affairs of another bishop. He came here as the official delegate of the Patriarch Mar Eshai Shimun. The Muslim

Judge gave a verdict in favour of the petitioners restricting the visiting bishop from conducting any ordination in India.

The Subordinate Judge of Trichur, Mr. K. M. Mohamed Ali gave a temporary injunction on 25th February 1967, one day before the proposed ordination of 26th February. After hearing an appeal on March 8th the Subordinate Judge on 13th March 1967 made the injunction of 25th February absolute. The Judge clarified his order by stating, “ I want to make it clear that the scope of the order is to restrain the defendant from conducting any ordination inside India which is the prayer in the plaint and it will not in any manner affect his rights in conducting ordinations elsewhere.”

Bishop Mar Dinkha returned to his diocese in Iran in March 1967. Without wasting time he made arrangements to ordain these four deacons in Teheran. It took more than one year to make arrangements, visa, ticket etc.

Bishop Mar Dinkha decided to conduct ordination in Iran. As soon as he returned to Iran in March 1967 he began to make arrangements for the four young students to travel to Iran. On 1st October 1967 Bishop Mar Dinkha wrote to Rev. M.O.Varghese, *Pro –Tem* Administrator of the Church of the East in Trichur as follows:

Beloved son in Christ Qashisha Varghese,

When I visited you in that country as an Apostolic delegate of His Holiness Mar Eshai Shimun XXIII, Catholicos Patriarch of the East, I accepted your request to accept four young students from the Church in India for refresher course in our Patriarchal Seminary in Teheran.

You then promised to pay their expenses as far as Korramshaher, Iran and I undertook the rest of their expenses, namely their return passage to India, and their trip from Korramshaher to Teheran and back, and also the expenses of their stay in Teheran.

This is to inform you that we have now made all the necessary arrangements for their reception on this side and will await to hear from you the time of their departure and arrival of these students in Iran.

Praying for God's blessing upon you and all your co-workers.

Mar Khanania Dinkha,

sd/-

Bishop of the Assyrian Church of the East, Teheran,
IRAN

A few days earlier Rev. M.O. Varghese received a letter from Rev. David H. David, Chaplain to the Patriarchate of the East, 554 Arballo Drive, San Francisco 27, California, USA. In a letter dated September 20, 1967 Rev. David writes as follows.

My dear Qashisha Varghese,

Your two letters both dated September 5, 1967, one addressed to His Holiness the Catholicos Patriarch of the East and the other to myself have both reached the Patriarchate. His Holiness is glad to hear that the Munsiff has decided in favour of the Church in the equal right to use the cathedral Church of Mart

Mariam, though the decision falls short of the canons of the Holy Church which in this case the civil courts should take into consideration. His Holiness, however, regrets the decision against Mar Dinkha caused apparently by his late answer to charges made by the adversary.

With regard to the four ordinands to be sent to Teheran, His Holiness will instruct Mar Dinkha to without delay send the necessary invitation inviting the ordinands for the training course and guaranteeing their return expenses including their return train trip from the port to Teheran. Mar Dinkha informed His Holiness that you have undertaken to pay for their forward passage to Iran.

His Holiness sends his Apostolic blessings to all the clergy and the faithful of the Holy Church.

Your brother in *Maran Eshoo Mshikha*,

Sd/-

Rev. Qashisha David H. David
Chaplain to the Patriarchate of the East.

Although the arrangements could not be completed to send the four young people in 1967 Rev. M.O. Varghese succeeded in getting visa for four ordinands in April 1968. By July 1968 the young people could travel to Teheran as seen in the following correspondence.

IMPERIAL EMBASSY
Of IRAN
New Delhi

Ref: No. 345

April 15, 1968.

Rev. M.O. Varghese, ,
Pro Tem Administrator,
Chaldean Syrian Church of the East,
Trichur 5 (South India)

Dear Sir,

With reference to your letter No. 27/68 dated the 10th April 1968 please find herewith-enclosed four Indian passports Nos. I 561348, I 561346, I 561347 and I 561345 duly visaed. Kindly acknowledge the receipt of the same.

Yours faithfully

Sd/-

M.T. PISHBIN

INCHARGE: CONSULAR AFFAIRS

Encl. Four Indian Passports and Four Health Cards.

MAR DINKHA

Representative of His Holiness Patriarch,
Bishop of the Assyrian Church of the East Iran,
North Nawab (Kennedy) Ave, West Forsat No. 7,
Teheran – Iran:

No. Date 14-7-1968. TEL. 952670

Our Son Rev. Qashisha M.O. Varghese,

I have received your letter No. 61/68 regarding the introduction of the four ordinands. I am so happy to inform you that they were ordained at 9 A.M. on July 14, 1968 at the Church of Mar Geeverghese with the presence of a huge crowd, here in Teheran.

Later the Church Council gave a breakfast in their honour at the Church school. The Indian Church was remembered at the ceremony and we prayed that it would flourish through Lord's teachings.

I do appreciate the effort of the treasurer of Women's Society for his outstanding work in collecting the Air Travel Expenses. I will pray that he will soon recover and be on his feet again.

I hope that you will receive the \$400.00 sent to you by His Holiness, however, I will inform His Holiness in due course.

I am sorry we were not able to keep the deacons here longer. The visas were expired and I had to prepare to leave for Beirut where I will meet His Holiness.

The ordination certificates were handed to the deacons and some photographs were taken during the ceremony, which we expect will be ready for the deacons to take with them, otherwise I will mail them to you later.

May Lord be with you, your beloveds, all clergies and our Community in India.

Mar K. DINKHA

Sd/-

Bishop of the Assyrian Church
Of the East in Teheran, Iran.

The Indian Church kept contact with Bishop Mar Dinkha because the people in the Indian Church came to know him personally in February- March 1967. The clergy in the Indian Church corresponded with him regarding the Church affairs. They liked the personality of this young bishop from Iran. The Church was grateful to Bishop Mar Dinkha for ordaining four deacons for India. As there was no bishop for the group under the Patriarch Mar Eshai Shimun in India, the Indian Church had to look to him for Episcopal supervision such as ordaining more clergy in India.

When the Indian Church heard that the old calendar people under Mar Thoma Darmo had taken all the Assyrian Churches from Mar Yosip Khananisho, Rev. M. O. Varghese, the *pro tem* administrator, wrote to Bishop Mar Dinkha enquiring and ascertaining the truth behind all such news. Some propagated that it was just the propaganda of Darmoist group. But Bishop Mar Dinkha gave an honest reply.

MAR DINKHA

Bishop of the Assyrian Church of the East, Iran.
North Nawab (Kennedy) Ave.,
West Forest No. 7, Teheran-Iran. Tel. 952670

Dear Qashisha Varghese,

I have received your letter of 65 / 68 in which you had enclosed a pamphlet on the events in Iraq. The fact is that all our churches throughout Iraq have been taken away from our people by the Iraqi troops and turned over to Darmo. He has, under heavy army protection ordained a few priests and assigned to the said churches.

The reception was only a show put up by the Iraqi government and its agents. More than 80 per cent of the Assyrian population is on our side and only a bunch of crooked people working as servants for the government are backing Darmo.

It is quite evident the political motives are behind the whole thing. I have issued a strong letter of objection to the Iraqi Ambassador with copies to all other Embassies including the Indian Embassy condemning such an act of aggression and interference of the government of Iraq in our religious matters. I have also reported the case to His Holiness but have not received a reply yet. We are prepared to do everything possible to clear the situation. In the pamphlet, they said something about doing the same in Iran. There is not a single soul on that side and I wish they would try it.

Well we are earnestly looking forward to the future development. God bless you all.

MAR DINKHA

Sd' -

3.4. Visits to Lebanon and Iraq, 1968, 1970, 1973

Within few days after the ordination of the four Indian deacons, Bishop Mar Dinkha had to go to Beirut, Lebanon to assist Patriarch Mar Eshai Shimun in consecrating two bishops, Mar Yohannan Avraham as Bishop of Syria³ and Mar Narsai de Baz as bishop in Beirut. The consecration was on July 28, 1968.

In April 1970 Bishop Mar Dinkha went to Baghdad, Iraq to be present for the historic visit of Patriarch Mar Eshai Shimun to Iraq after an exile of nearly 37 years since August 1933. It was the first visit of Bishop Mar Dinkha to his native country, Iraq after 12 and a half years.

In 1973 Bishop Mar Dinkha went again to Iraq. It was to plan for the future of the universal Assyrian Church as Patriarch Mar Eshai Shimun had announced his desire to be relieved from the responsibility of the head of this church, a burden he was carrying on since his boyhood in 1920. As co-consecrator Bishop Mar Dinkha assisted Mar Yosip Khananisho Metropolitan in consecrating Mar Aprim Khamis⁴ and Mar Daniel Yakob⁵ in Iraq on March 2, 1973 as bishops. Bishop Mar Dinkha consulted regularly with his seniors, namely Mar Yosip Khananisho Metropolitan of Iraq, Mar Timotheus Metropolitan of India, Mar Yohannan Philipose Episcopa of

³ Bishop Mar Yohannan died on April 14, 1985

⁴ Bishop Mar Aprim Khamis is now Bishop in Arizona, USA

⁵ Bishop Mar Daniel Yakob is not active owing to ill health. He is living in California, USA

Diana, Mar Andrews Yabhalaha of Berwar and his junior Mar Narsai de Baz episcopa of Lebanon. A photograph of these prelates appears at the end of my Ph.D. thesis.

The consecration of 1968 and 1973 are the only two consecrations where Bishop Mar Dinkha was a co-consecrator. Since October 1976, Patriarch Mar Dinkha was the chief consecrator for all Episcopal consecrations.

3.5. Chairman of the 3-member bishops' Council. Aug.1973 – Oct. 1976

In August 1973 Patriarch Mar Eshai Shimun's resignation came into effect. It was a sad period in the affairs of the Assyrian Church universally. Nevertheless the prelates of the Church decided to act wisely and immediately to avoid the embarrassment created by the resignation by the Patriarch. The senior most Metropolitan Mar Yosip Khnanisho became the acting Patriarch. He was the consecrator of Patriarch Mar Eshai Shimun in 1920.

For the past 600 years, the Patriarchate was in the one family of Mar Shimun in Qudshanis in Kurdistan. Mar Eshai Shimun who was consecrated Patriarch at the age of 12 in 1920 was the nephew of the Patriarch Mar Poulouse Shimun who had ruled the universal Assyrian Church from 1918 to 1920. He was the younger brother of Mar Benymain Shimun who had served the Church from 1903-1918. A Kurd named Simco Agha treacherously murdered him after the First World War.

Mar Benjamin Shimun was the nephew of Mar Auraham Shimun who died in 1903.

After 600 years when there were no nephews for Patriarch Eshai Shimun to succeed him it was a serious problem for the Church

to choose a worthy successor. Mar Eshai Shimun had given notice to all the prelates that he would retire from this burden he was carrying for 53 years since the age of 12. But the prelates could not find a successor. It was obvious that the custom of the hereditary Episcopal families should end.

Metropolitan Mar Yosip Khananisho had passed 80 years of age at that time. Therefore it was not easy for him to carry out the rigorous responsibilities of the head of a universal Church and to travel extensively. Therefore a committee of three bishops was appointed to do the duties of the Patriarch on behalf of Mar Khananisho Metropolitan and to travel to many countries where Patriarchal visits were essential.

Bishop Mar Dinkha was appointed the Chairman of this 3-member Episcopal Council. He acted efficiently and visited different parts of our Church. The other two bishops could be Bishop Andrews Yawallaha of Berwar and Bishop Narsai de Baz of Lebanon. Bishop Andrews Yabhalaha died young on 17 June 1973, about two months before the resignation of Patriarch Mar Eshai Shimun came into effect. Therefore Bishop Aprim Khamis consecrated by Mar Yosip Khananisho as episcopa on March 2, 1973 was the obvious choice to be a member of the 3-member- episcopal Council. The young bishop shifted his residence from Iraq to the U.S.A.

3.6. Visit to Australia, November 1973.

His Grace Khanania Mar Dinkha, bishop of Iran along with Bishop Narsai de Baz, arrived in Australia on 7 November 1973 and remained in Australia for ten days. They departed for the USA on 16 November 1973. Attached also is a press cutting from one of the local papers, THE CHRONICLE of Tuesday 4 December 1973.

The Assyrians continued their search to find a land to live. Many migrated to the USA, Europe etc. It was not easy to find job for all Assyrians who had lost their ancestral lands. Some Assyrians went to Australia after 1960. These early Assyrians requested their Patriarch Mar Eshai Shimun XXIII to send a priest to meet their spiritual needs in Australia. Towards the end of 1969 the office of the Patriarchate in San Francisco, California informed them that the Patriarch would send an Assyrian priest to Australia.

In May 1970 Rev. Kiwarkis Yonan from Lebanon, aged 44, arrived in Sydney, Australia and did his first Qurbana in Australia in June 1970. The land for St. Mary's Church was purchased in Polding Street, Smithfield, near Sydney, New South Wales in 1972.

During his visit Bishop Mar Dinkha made arrangements for the construction of Mart Mariam Church in Polding Street in Sydney. It was the first church the Assyrians were building in Australia. There was no bishop for Australia at that time. The first bishop of Australia was appointed later in 1985 when Patriarch Mar Dinkha appointed Mar Meelis Zaia, who is still the incumbent.

His Grace Bishop Mar Dinkha made a special journey from Iran for the opening and consecration of the new Church. Mr. Eric Bedford, the local Member of State Parliament on Saturday 21 December 1974, officially opened the Church. Bishop Mar Dinkha consecrated the new Mart Mariam Church the following day, Sunday 22 December 1974 with close to 750 people attending Holy Communion.

CHAPTER 4

THE FIRST DECADE (1976 - 1986)

4.1. Consecration as Patriarch

After the assassination of Mar Eshai Shimun on November 6, 1975 the prelates of the Church of the East convened in London to elect a new Catholicos Patriarch on 14 October 1976. At this historic meeting, the unanimous choice of all the prelates in session was Bishop Mar Dinkha as the most qualified candidate to fill the sublime post. After his consecration, His Holiness Mar Dinkha IV became the 120th successor in this line to the Apostolic See of Seleucia-Ctesiphon.

On 17 October 1976 Bishop Mar Dinkha was consecrated as the Patriarch of the universal Assyrian Church of the East. He immediately held a Holy synod under his presidentship and held discussions with the prelates about many topics including the question of the unity of the followers of the Julian and Gregorian Calendars.

Ever since Mar Dinkha IV was enthroned as the 120th Catholicos Patriarch on the See of Seleucia Ctesiphon of the Assyrian Church of the East, His Holiness turned his attention to end the division of our church into old or Julian Calendar and the new Gregorian Calendar. He requested Mar Timotheus Metropolitan of Malabar & India to go to Iraq and meet with His Holiness Mar Addai II and all prelates. Metropolitan Mar Timotheus met with Patriarch Mar Addai II of the Julian Calendar and Metropolitan Mar Narsai of Kirkuk. Still there was no sign of unity, especially because these prelates of the Julian Calendar were opposed to each other. It was that sad situation, which the present writer faced when he visited them in Baghdad in June 1977.

Mar Timotheus Metropolitan returned to his home town Trichur and met with the prelates of the Julian Calendar, namely Mar Aprem Metropolitan and Mar Poulose Episcopa as per the instruction of Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV. The desired unity did not come instantly. After deep divisions of more than a decade, delay was bound to be there. Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV had a vision for the Church of the East, which for long had suffered heavily in the past owing to various reasons such as the assassination of his maternal grandfather Kaku's cousin Bishop Mar Dinkha in February 1915.

The statement signed by the prelates of the Assyrian Church of the East regarding the election and consecration of Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV is given below.

THE ASSYRIAN CHURCH OF THE EAST

We, by divine permission, Bishops of the Assyrian Church of the East, do hereby make known by the tenor of these presents that on the Fourteenth Day of October in the year of our Lord

Thousand Nine Hundred and Seventy Six at Alton Abbey, Hampshire, in the United Kingdom His Holiness Mar Dinkha IV, Catholicos Patriarch of the Apostolic Catholic Church of the East, was canonically elected and appointed to the said office, and on the Seventeenth Day of October in the same year of our Lord was duly consecrated to the same in the Church of St. Barnabas, Ealing, London, in the United Kingdom according to the rites and ceremonies of the said church.

Whereunto we witness by our hand:

.....
Mar Timotheus, Metropolitan of India

.....
Mar Narsai, Metropolitan of Lebanon

.....
Mar Youkhanan Abraham, Bishop of Syria

.....
Mar Aprim, Bishop of U.S.A. and Canada

.....
Mar Claudio Vettorazzo, Bishop of Italy

.....
Mar Youkhanan Basciu, Bishop of Sardinia

.....
Reverend Yonan Youel, Secretary of the Synod and the Representative of Mar Daniel, Bishop of Kirkuk, Iraq.

Given this day the Twenty Sixth of October in The Year of our Lord the Thousand Nine Hundred and Seventy-Six at Alton Abbey, Hampshire, in the United Kingdom.

4.2. First Synod in England (October 1976)

Soon after Mar Dinkha IV ascended the Patriarchal throne of the Assyrian Church of the East he held the Holy Synod, the first one to be presided over by him. The new Patriarch believed in an active Holy Synod of all prelates of the Church to consult on important issues and choosing bishops for various dioceses etc.

The first Synod was held from 17 to 21 at St.Pauls's Priory, in Alton, England. Actually the Holy Synod had commenced on 14th October. But the proceedings under the Patriarchate of His Holiness Mar Dinkha IV begin from October 17th the day of his consecration. All the prelates present for the Patriarchal Consecration were present for this Holy Synod also. The members present were as follows as per the seniority of their rank.

1. H. H. Mar Dinkha IV, Catholicos Patriarch
2. His Grace Mar Timotheus, Metropolitan of India
3. His Grace Mar Narsai de Baz, Metropolitan of Athor
4. His Lordship Mar Yokhanan, Abraham of Syria.
5. His Lordship Mar Aprim Khamis, USA and Canada
6. His Lordship Mar Claudio Veterezzo, Aquelia, Italy
7. His Lordship Mar Giovanni Biscu, Italy

The senior most Metropolitan Mar Yosip Khananisho could not travel to England from Iraq owing to his old age. He was 83 years old at that time. He died the following year on July 3, 1977.

Mar Yosip Sargis, the young bishop of Jelu tribe in Iraq (aged 26), also did not come from Iraq to attend this Holy Synod. Later he gave his consent to the election and consecration of Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV.

Many important issues were discussed and decided at this gathering of the prelates of the Church of the East. This Holy Synod also decided to make efforts to unite the brethren in the old calendar group of the Church of the East. The Patriarch deputed Mar Timotheus Metropolitan of India to meet the prelates in Iraq and India in order to bring peace and unity in this ancient and much-persecuted Church.

4.3. Visits to Baghdad (1977 and 1978)

The Catholicos Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV was temporarily living in Iran where he had gone from Iraq in 1957. The majority of the Assyrian people were living in Iraq than the other countries. Even today it is believed that Iraq has more members of our Church than any other countries in the world. It is also true that the number of our Church members in Iraq has dwindled as a result of immigration to other countries.

The new Patriarch was warmly welcomed in Iraq in June 1977. After August 1933 Iraq was without the regular presence of a Patriarch. Mar Eshai Shimun had visited Iraq two times after his exile from that country in 1933. That was in 1970 and 1971.

The venerable leader of two generations Mar Yosip Khananisho passed away on July 3, 1977. He was a bishop from August 10, 1914 and a Metropolitan from 1918. The history of the Assyrian Church in the 20th century cannot be recorded without the frequent mention of that venerable prelate. It was in such a

background the new Patriarch visited Iraq. The primary purpose of this visit to Iraq was to hold a Holy Synod and make necessary arrangements for the administration of the archdiocese of Iraq.

The 2nd Holy Synod was convened in Baghdad from 11 to 22 April 1978. The prelates present in the Holy Synod were the following

1. H. H. Mar Khanania Dinkha IV, Catholicos Patriarch.
2. His Grace Mar Timotheus, Metropolitan of India.
3. His Grace Mar Narsai de Baz, Metropolitan of Ator.
4. His Lordship Mar Aprim Khamis, USA.
5. His Lordship Mar Claudio Veterreso, Aquelia, Italy.

Several important decisions were made. Mar Yohannan Abraham, bishop of Syria (who was present in the 1st and later 3rd Holy Synod) could not come from Syria to attend this Holy Synod.

4.4. Progress in Australia

In 1979, the Melbourne Parish was established. A Church building in Reservoir, close to Melbourne was purchased to serve the needs of the congregation. The late Archdeacon Younan Towana served as the first Parish priest. In 1981, Rev. Gewargis Haroon (now Cor Episcopa) was appointed as the Parish Priest. At present Rev Gevarghese K. Thoma who originally belonged to the old calendar group is the vicar of this parish.

In 1982, a plot (5.5 acres) of land was purchased in the City of Fairfield initially to build a large Church on it. In 1984, the Holy Synod of the Church assembled in Chicago, USA, decreed to establish Diocesan administration for Australia. His Grace

Bishop Mar Meelis Zaia was appointed to the Diocese and he arrived in Australia in March 1985.

In 1986, Rev. Romeo A. Oraham was ordained Priest for the Parish of St. Mary's in Polding Street, Fairfield. In the same year the Synod of the Church decreed a new Constitution for Australian Diocese.

4.5. Visit to Kiev, USSR, 1982

His Holiness Mar Dinkha IV, Catholicos Patriarch of the Assyrian Church of the East in Chicago, on Monday the 17th of May, 1982, after a visit to his flock in the State of California which lasted for almost 3 months, where many Church functions were performed, such as, the formation of a youth society in every diocese of our church there. The aim of these societies is to give the church committees a helping hand everywhere and be a strong pillar in the preservation and spreading of our faith.

During this visit, Shamasha Yousep Zia was ordained a priest for the diocese of the church of Mar Yousep at San Jose on Feb 28th, 1982. Soon after His Holiness' arrival in Chicago, he conferred with members of the Central Committee of Churches in America and Canada, which was convened in the Church of Mar Gewargis from 28th to 31st of May.

After officiating a Holy Mass in both the churches in Chicago, i.e., the Church of Mar Gewarges and Mar Sargis, His Holiness left for London on his way to the Soviet Union to attend a conference to be held by the Eastern Orthodox Churches on June 22-30, 1982 in the city of Kiev. His Holiness was officially invited by His Holiness Patriarch of the Russian Orthodox Church and was accompanied by Shamasha Aziz Neesan as his secretary. At the end of the conference His Holiness flew to

Australia to pay a visit to the sons and daughters of our churches in the cities of Sydney, Fairfield and Melbourne. He returned to the United States of America in the first week of August that year, to participate with His Grace Mar Aprim and other clergy of America and Canada in a conference for a revision of church rites. The conference began in August in the city of Turlock, California, and lasted for a week.

It may be noted that an Ecclesiastical conference was held in July 1980 in Mar Sargis Church, Chicago.

4.6. World Council of Churches Assembly, 1983

After becoming Catholicos Patriarch of the Church of the East Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV kept contact with the Roman Catholic Church. At the same time His Holiness did keep the contacts of this Church with the non-Catholic Churches. One such contact was his interest in the World Council of Churches based in Geneva.

The World Council of Churches was formed bringing together the Protestant and Orthodox Churches and holding the first assembly in Amsterdam, Holland in 1948. Although some Orthodox Churches such as the Russian Orthodox Church joined the World Council of Churches only in the 3rd assembly held in New Delhi, India in 1961 the Assyrian Church of the East was in the World Council of Churches from the very beginning. The headquarters of the World Council of Churches is in Geneva, Switzerland.

Patriarch Mar Eshai Shimun was present in the 3rd assembly of WCC held in New Delhi in November 1961. Mar Thoma Darmo Metropolitan from Trichur went to New Delhi to attend this assembly as an observer. After New Delhi the next assembly

met in Uppsala, Sweden in 1968. The 5th assembly was in Nairobi in 1975.

The sixth assembly of the World Council of Churches was held in Vancouver, Canada, from July 24 to August 10, 1983. Delegations representing three hundred and four different Christian denominations, from among Orthodox and Evangelical Churches, from some one hundred countries throughout the world, participated in this historical meeting.

The Vancouver gathering was the first assembly of the World Council of Churches taking place after the election of Bishop Mar Dinkha as the Catholicos Patriarch in 1976 in England. The new Patriarch decided to pursue the same policy followed by his predecessor Mar Eshai Shimun in ecumenical relations. He had the vision to realize that a small persecuted and scattered community like the Assyrian Church cannot stand alone without the goodwill and co-operation of other churches. Especially in the question of the refugee settlement and such other activities the World Council of Churches had done pioneering and commendable work. It is not as much as we wished and we required.

As a member of this organization, the Assyrian Church of the East was likewise invited to attend and simultaneously to take an active part in the proceedings of this ecumenical assembly in Vancouver. His Grace Mar Aprim Khamis, Bishop of U.S.A and Canada, and Deacon Lawrence Namato represented our universal Church from Chicago parish, which shared in the scheduled programme of the entire session.

Under a colossal tent, specially erected for this occasion, some four thousand prelates, clergy and lay representatives, congregated to pray for the success of this convention and for

Divine help to bring closer all the Christian Churches to work in harmony for the greater glory of God until the prime objective of this council, complete unity, has been achieved.

The plenary sessions were conducted under the theme “Jesus Christ – Life of the Universe”, which was displayed on large banners hung everywhere. Many delegates made speeches on this subject affirming their unequivocal faith in Christ the Lord.

Other meetings were held in smaller groups of twenty-five members each to deliberate at length on the points raised in the lectures presented in the general assembly (plenary sessions). This usually followed after preliminary introductions of the individual delegates and rendering reports on the activities of their respective Churches. At the conclusion of these discussions, these small groups, acting as preparatory committees, submitted their agreed upon viewpoints on the subject matter for consideration and possible adoption, rejection or amendment by the Council’s Administrative Body.

4.7. Fourth Visit to American Diocese 1984

The Chicago parish hosted a grand testimonial dinner in honour of His Holiness’ fourth patriarchal visit to North American Diocese. Close to a thousand enthusiastic guests attended this memorable event held on Sunday, August the 26th, 1984, at the elegant O’Hare Mariotte Hotel.

At approximately 7:15 p.m. Mr. Shimshon Rasho, the former President of the Chicago parish Executive Committee, as Master of ceremonies for the night and moderator of the program, welcomed the large audience on behalf of the Executive Committee.

At 7.30. p.m. His Holiness was ushered into the grandiose banquet hall followed by the other distinguished members of the dais. As the Holy father made his entrance, proceeding through the center aisle with all the dignitaries in line behind him, he was greeted with an extra ordinary welcome manifested by a stentorian round of applause and a standing ovation that lasted for more than twenty minutes. The attendance showed a rare demonstration of uninhibited emotions of love, respect and adoration for their devoted and patriotic spiritual leader.

As soon as the sensational ovation came to an end, the Assyrian Amvets post No. 5 presented the ceremonial posting of colours bearing both the United States and Church Flags. While Amvets stood in a saluting position facing the raised platform, Mr. Lincoln Tamras, a former national commander of US Amvets, was called upon to recite the Pledge of Allegiance. Then the American National Anthem was splendidly rendered by the golden voiced soprano Shamiran Iratu followed by the Chicago parish choir who performed a melodious chorale specially composed to conform with the solemnity and reverence of this notable occasion.

When the opening ceremonies were over His Holiness was asked to give an invocation. All the guests present bowed their heads in prayer as our beloved Patriarch beseeched Lord Almighty to bless this great assembly of the faithful and crown this event with success and be an omen of peace and tranquility for the years to come.

Just as the dinner was about to be served, the Moderator, Mr. Shimshon Rasho went on to recognize all the honored guests. At this point it was worth mentioning that the introduction of every member of the dais, whose names are shown hereunder in accordance with seating arrangements, was executed in a

most admirable fashion

Honored guests (from left to right)

1. Mr. Wilson A. Jacob, President of the Executive Committee of Chicago Parish.
2. Rev. Sempad Dermeksian, Pastor of the Armenian All Saints Apostolic Church.
3. Rev. Ashur Soro, Pastor of St. Mary's Church, Toronto, Canada.
4. Rev. Samuel Dinkha, Pastor Mar Gewargis Church of Chicago.
5. Mr. Paul Newey, Attorney at law.
6. Mr. Richard Kreiger, U.S. Coordinator of Refugee Affairs.
7. Monsignor Edward Bikoma. Pastor of Mar Ephrem Church, Chicago.
8. Rev. Aprim Elias, Pastor of Mar Sargis Church, Chicago.
9. His Beatitude Mar Narsai, Metropolitan of Ator, Assyrian Church of the East, Lebanon.
10. His Holiness Mar Dinkha IV, Catholicos Patriarch of the Assyrian Church of the East, worldwide.
11. His Grace Mar Aprim Khamis, Bishop of U.S.A. and Canada, Assyrian Church of the East.

12. His Grace Nevin W. Hayes, Bishop, Chicago Archdiocese, Roman Catholic Church.
13. The Very Rev. Archdeacon Kako Lazar, Chicago, Chicago Parish, Assyrian Church of the East.
14. Rev. Sadok Beth Mar Shimon, Pastor of St. John's Church.
15. Rev. Hurmis Azoo, Mar Aprim Church, Chaldean Church of Chicago
16. Mr. Shishon Rasho, Master of ceremonies.

When the dinner was served, His Beatitude Mar Narsai Metropolitan of Ator gave the Benediction. The first speaker of the night was His Grace Mar Aprim Khamis, Bishop of USA and Canada, who presented a welcoming address in honor of the Supreme head of the Apostolic Catholic Assyrian Church of the East, His Holiness Mar Dinkha IV, the Catholicos Patriarch, on behalf of all the ecclesiastics and laity of the diocese. His Grace also gave a brief sketch in English on the history of our Holy Church for the benefit of our invited guests from other denominations. The speech concluded amidst a thunderous applause from the audience.

Following the Bishop's praiseworthy address the impressive choral group once again fell in an orderly formation, displaying a colorful spectacle of incredible beauty and sang two very well composed and melodious songs befitting this grand celebration.

At this time, the Master of Ceremonies, Mr. Shimshon Rasho, introduced the next speaker, Mr. Richard Kreiger, the United States Coordinator of Refugee Affairs. This important civil servant representing Secretary of State George Shultz, gave an

objective analysis of the existing colossal world refugee problem and what the American government was doing to help in the alleviation of the miseries suffered by the escapees from the tyrannical regimes throughout the world.

After thanking Mr. Kreiger for a well prepared statement on the status of the unfortunate displaced persons in the world the moderator called upon His Grace Bishop Hayes to present his address on behalf of His Eminence Joseph Cardinal Bernardine and his archdiocese. Bishop Hayes greeted His Holiness, the hierarchy, the ecclesiastics and the guests in Assyrian from the short vocabulary he had just picked up from a good tutor who happened to be seated next to him at the head table. The rest of his speech in English dwelt upon his church's efforts under the direction and advice of His Holiness Pope John Paul in keenly pursuing a policy of closer cooperation and understanding between all Christian denominations. The ultimate goal, the Bishop said would be that a sound unity may be created in the near future fostering good relations, harmony and coexistence between all Christians to serve their common cause and their Lord and Master Jesus Christ. The audience showed their deep appreciation and agreement to the encouraging address delivered by giving a spontaneous rousing applause to the esteemed speaker.

4.8. Visit to Rome, November 1984

In November 6-10, 1984 His Holiness Mar Dinkha IV made a historic visit to Rome to meet with Pope John Paul II. Bishop Mar Bawai Soro of the diocese of Western USA and Fraidon Darmono of the parish in England accompanied the Patriarch in this ecumenical journey.

Bishop Mar Bawai Soro was the new bishop consecrated on

14th October in Mar Gewargis Cathedral in Chicago. This 30-year-old bishop proved his ability in the last 19 years in building up good relations with the Catholic Church. Bishop Mar Bawai Soro later stayed and studied in Rome and earned a doctorate from Rome. He also helped the patriarch in obtaining scholarships for five priests of our Church now studying in Rome.

The Speech of the Holy Father Pope John Paul II

Your Holiness,

The love, which united all the Disciples of Christ, has urged you to visit the Church of Rome and its Pastor. I have not forgotten that you were also present at the inaugural Mass of my ministry as Bishop of Rome. I thank you for this new expression today and I bid you a heartfelt welcome.

After long centuries of separation our churches are drawing near again, for “ the Lord of ages wisely and patiently follows out the plan of grace on behalf of us sinners. In recent times He has begun to bestow more generously upon divided Christians’ remorse over their divisions and a longing for unity” (*Unitatis Redintegratio*, No.1) It is in Him, the only Lord of all that we put our hope of one day establishing full communion between us. Your Church, founded in ancient Mesopotamia, took root in Biblical revelation and counted among the most ancient Churches of the East. The treasures of faith that we have in common are such that what unites us is already stronger and greater than what still separates us. But it is necessary to clarify the misunderstandings and eventually to resolve the differences, which might still remain between us. By doing this, we can reach towards full communion and work that by fervent prayer and fraternal dialogue we may be able to respond to the aspiration of Christ who prayed “that they may all be one ... so

that the world may believe.” (Jn 17:21)

I know that in many places the clergy and the faithful of our Churches are living in friendly harmony, and trying in conditions that are sometimes difficult to bear witness together to the Gospel of Christ. And you also have in common with Catholicos of the Chaldean Patriarchate a prestigious missionary history, the witness and teaching of numerous saints, the courageous example of many martyrs, and a rich theological, liturgical and spiritual patrimony. My wish is that a heritage such as this may be for all a continual invitation to pray and to work so that the visible unity of the Body of Christ may be re-established. In order to contribute to this purpose, the pastors and the faithful are called to a constant conversion of heart, so that each Church may bring the strength of its charity and the wealth of its own patrimony to the building up of the one Church of God.

Your Holiness comes from a region where a terrible war was plunged, the people suffering and mourning for many years. I do not cease to be pre-occupied by this tragedy and I assure you that the Apostolic See is using all the means at its disposal in order to contribute to a rapid re-establishment of peace. With you I ask the Lord to raise up among the faithful of our Churches and among people of good will artisans of peace, so that everywhere in the world humanity may be able to live in peace and dignity.

I pray to the Apostle Peter and Paul, whom you may come to venerate in Rome, that through their intercession the Lord may shower His abundant blessings on you and on all the people whom He has entrusted to your pastoral care.

From the Vatican, 8 November 1984

Joannes Paulus II

The speech of His Holiness Mar Dinkha IV, 1984

Your Holiness,

We are grateful to Your Holiness for your kindness in welcoming us as brothers in Christ for the second time.

We are glad and thankful to God who has protected Your Holiness and granted you good health.

The fruit of your hard work, since you have carried this apostolic responsibility for the last six years, has been very useful both to Christianity and to humanity.

Your speeches and advice as a spiritual father have encouraged and strengthened faith in Christ and have also encouraged many churches toward ecumenism and unity.

Just as, at the time of the Council of Nicea, 325 A.D. when all Christians shared one faith and church, so also today we all believe in one God, the Father of all, and in the mystery of the Holy Trinity: Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and in one Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, as mentioned in 1 John 5:5: "Who is it that overcomes the world but he that believes that Jesus is Son of God?" And also in 1 John 4:14-15: "And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent his Son and the Saviour of the world. Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him and he in God." For this we are all bound with Jesus Christ, Son of living God.

It is important to fulfill and obey the commandment of our Lord Jesus Christ as in John 15: 12-13: "This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. Greater love has no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends."

We can bring about love and peace among us by frequent meetings and gatherings as brothers, especially when these are organized as dialogues and consultations. As faithful Christians we should communicate with each other and recognize ourselves as members of one, holy, apostolic church under the lordship of our master Jesus Christ.

Through love and understanding and we will overcome our differences and then we can again tie together the scattered rings of the chain of the Christian Churches. And the Lord of the Church will be satisfied with us, that we are fulfilling our duty to humanity.

Your Holiness has followed this path of peace and unity. We pray for you always and your aims toward unity and love among all people in the world.

And we sincerely ask your Holiness to pray for an immediate and everlasting peace in the Middle East, especially between Iran and Iraq.

In conclusion, we ask your Holiness to remember in your prayers the Assyrian Church and Nation that is scattered all over the world.

4. 9. Visit to Iraq, Nov-Dec 1985

H.H. Mar Dinkha visited Iraq from October 31 to December 9, 1985. On his way to Baghdad the Patriarch stopped in London from October 22 to 31 and celebrated Qurbana in Ealing, London.

Before his departure there was a ceremonial dinner hosted by Chicago Parish Committee (MOTWA), and served by the

daughters on Sunday October 20, 1985 at 5 p.m. in the premises of Mar Gewargis Church. This was in honour of the ninth anniversary of the consecration of His Holiness Mar Dinkha IV, as Catholicos Patriarch. The 500 faithful guests were surprised and overjoyed to hear His Holiness announce his forthcoming visit to Iraq. Then, on Tuesday, October 22, 1985 he left Chicago and arrived in London the same day, where he stayed for a week and celebrated Mass for his diocese there.

On Wednesday, October 31, 1985 he left London for Iraq accompanied by Rev. Fr. Barkho, and arrived at the international airport at 11.00 p.m. There His Grace Mar Gewargis, the Metropolitan of Iraq, His Grace Mar Sargis, the Bishop of Baghdad, many priests and deacons from various Christian denominations, a representative from the ministry of Endowments, (AWQAF), and a large number of Assyrian men and women greeted him. While he was having a short rest in VIP Hall, he was suddenly informed that he was the official guest of the government. After a few minutes, he was driven to Hotel Al-Rasheed, where he stayed until his departure before Christmas.

On the second day in Baghdad he was visited by His brother Patriarch, Mar Poulos Sheikho of the Chaldean Catholic Church (See of Babel), accompanied by a number of clergy and notables of his people. Visitors from all walks of life came to him daily, among whom were many acquaintances.

During his 40 days sojourn in Baghdad, His Holiness celebrated Mass for various diocese of his church, two Sundays in St. Mary's Church at Na'aeiah, once in Mar Mari's Church at Ameen Al-Thani, another Sunday in Mar Qardagh at Gailani Camp, twice in Mar Gewargis Church at Daura, and likewise in Mar Odisho's Church at Tel-Mohammed. The number of men and women attending the services for receiving blessings and Qurbana

Qaddisha (Holy Communion) was very great. His words in all the sermons he delivered were: “I command you to obey and observe the rules and regulations of the country you live in, and be loyal subjects thereto.” In his conversations with ministers and high dignitaries, he assured them that the Assyrians, in general, abide by the rules of the country they live in. We, therefore, as honest and loyal subjects, have no political ambitions other than the recognition of our human rights, and these are,

- 1) Our Christian Faith,
- 2) Our Assyrian language. In essence, we are Christians in religion and Assyrians in ethnicity. Teaching it wherever we are we must safeguard our language. These two concepts are precious to us and should not be denied.

Being an official guest of the Iraqi government, His Holiness did not wish to remain in Baghdad during the Christmas Holiday. Thus, on Monday, December 9, 1985 he was escorted to the Airport by His Beatitude Mar Gewargis, the Metropolitan of Iraq and His Grace Mar Sargis, the Bishop of Baghdad, and a number of clergy and laymen, and was seen off on his way to the United States of America, arriving in Chicago on Monday, December 16, 1985.

In another banquet held in his honour on December 22, 1985 in which, as usual the daughters of the church bore the burden of preparing and serving the meals, His Holiness said: “God willing, we will be returning to Iraq very shortly. I will be a visitor here rather than a resident.” In hearing this, the audience turned a sad face, as their Patriarch would no longer live among them in Chicago. The Patriarch further said that in his meetings with Mr. Saadoon Shakir, the Minister of Interior and Mr. Abdullah Fadhil, Minister of Endowments (AWQAF), it was agreed that his Patriarchate will be established in Iraq as it had

been in Seleucia Cetusphon centuries ago.

The banquet was made more enjoyable by the church's mixed choir arranged under the patronage of Mrs. Juan Yousif. Three chorales were sung, welcoming the Patriarch to his Chicago Diocese.

At this happy occasion, everyone rose up and went to front desk, shook hands with him and asked his blessings, and went out cheerfully.

4.10. VISIT TO NEW BRITAIN, JUNE 1986

In America the present headquarters is in Chicago. But he traveled to the parishes in the East such as Yonkers, New York and New Britain, Connecticut. In the West he visited the various parishes in California such as San Jose, San Francisco, Modesto, Turlock, Los Angeles etc. The following is a report of the visit of the Patriarch to the New Britain parish in Connecticut published in the Voice From the East, published from Chicago.

On June 27, 1986 His Holiness Mar Dinkha IV Catholicos Patriarch visited St. Thomas parish in New Britain, Connecticut, USA. The same evening His Holiness was the guest of honor at a dinner hosted by the Executive Committee and members in the Farmington Marriott Hotel. The dinner was attended by the parish priest Rev. Isaac Rehana¹ and the Executive Board of the Daughters of St. Thomas.

Sunday, His Holiness Mar Dinkha IV celebrated "Qurbana Qaddisha" at 9 A.M. Following the "Raza" a breakfast was served in the premises of the church. The Sunday School children, along with the teachers, stood in guard formation in

¹ He is the same priest who had accompanied Bishop Mar Dinkha to India in February 1967.

the church, where His Holiness Mar Dinkha was able to meet with the children. They then followed him into breakfast.

The same evening, at 5 P.M., in the premises of St. Thomas Church, a dinner was held in honour of His Holiness the Patriarch. As he was escorted into the Church by Rev. Rehana, the President of the Executive Committee, Sam Baba, Deacon George Younadim, sub-deacon Robert Baba and Gabriel Brakhia,² the parish stood up and welcomed our Beloved Patriarch with hearty applause. The head table consisted of His Holiness in the center, on his left and right were 2 priests, deacon and sub-deacons and President of the Executive Committee.

After dinner, Sam Baba welcomed our beloved Patriarch. He spoke of the weekend as a happy occasion not only for him and Tom George as they had the pleasure of personally escorting His Holiness for the entire weekend, but for the parish as well. The evening was then turned over to the master of ceremonies Robert Baba.

The first speaker following Sam Baba was a visiting priest Kasha Athanasis who spoke briefly about our Holy Church, our Patriarch, and our heritage. The following speaker was Deacon Younadim who had written some very beautiful verses related to His Holiness Mar Dinkha. These were very much enjoyed and received many rounds of applause several times when they were read.

Rev. Rehana introduced our Beloved Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV who spoke in detail of our Church worldwide and the conditions of our people as well. He spoke of his visitations throughout the eastern world and of His works during these visits. Also, he

² Robert Baba is now deacon and Gabriel Brakia is the priest of that parish.

stressed as he so often has, to us all to have love and respect for each other and to obey the laws of the country in which we reside and to be excellent citizens. His Holiness ended his speech in prayer.

Many pictures were taken with our beloved Patriarch, with many being very anxious to greet him personally.

CHAPTER 5

SECOND DECADE (1986 – 1996)

5.1. Mart Mariam Church, London, England. August 1987

On Saturday the 15th August 1987 at 9:30 AM His Holiness Mar Dinkha IV, Catholicos Patriarch arrived at Heathrow Airport from Chicago, for the consecration of the newly purchased Church at Westminster Road, Hanwell W.7. Archdeacon Yonan Youil accompanied by a number of distinguished members of the Church, welcomed His Holiness on arrival, and was presented with a bouquet of flowers.

The opening ceremony attended by Journalists from the local papers, took place on Saturday the 15th August 1987 at 5:30 PM, where His Holiness Mar Dinkha IV cut the ribbon, blessed and declared the Church open for evening prayer. A large number of members of the Church were present and took part in the evening prayer conducted by His Holiness. Afterwards most of the congregation attended *Dokhrana D'Mart Mariam*

(Virgin Mary) at Greenford Town Hall, which is celebrated annually on 15th August by the church.

On Sunday the 16th August 1987, His Holiness Mar Dinkha assisted by Archdeacon Yonan Youil the Parish Priest, and Deacons, Baway De Matran and Havil Michael, began the consecration ceremony at 8:30 A.M., which lasted for about an hour, followed by *Qurbana Qaddisha* (Holy Communion). The Church was packed to its full capacity and many of the worshippers stood outside under a Marquee specially erected in the Church yard for this purpose. His Holiness Mar Dinkha spoke from the pulpit and said that we as true Christians, should love, respect and honour each other and all mankind, no matter what the color of their skin, black, red, yellow etc. As true Christians we should not partake in the Holy Communion if we are not in good terms with our friends, neighbors etc., we should reconcile our differences and then partake of the Holy Communion. These are the true qualities of a Christian, as preached by our Savior Jesus Christ.

His Holiness congratulated Archdeacon Yonan Youil, committee Members, and all the members of the Church, on the purchase, repair and refurbishment of this beautiful Mart Mariam Church.

After the completion of the consecration ceremony and Holy Communion, the entire congregation moved to the Assyrian House, Temple Road, Ealing, where breakfast was served.

After breakfast, the Chairman of the Church committee, Mr. Edward Nimrud Khamo, spoke welcoming His Holiness Mar Dinkha. He also said had it not been for the donation of 104,000-00 British Pound made by about 187 devoted members of the Church, which began in October 1985, in this house, it would

have been impossible to buy the Church, which cost 131,000-00 British Pound. Further it cost an additional sum of 71000-00 British Pound to have it repaired and refurbished.

The Chairman read a telegram received from Clergy and Members of Mar Gewargis Church in Chicago, congratulating Archdeacon Yonan Youel Yonan and the church committee members on the purchase and consecration of the Church. The telegram also stated that Mar Gewargis Church members and Janet Shamasha Elisha donated a sum of \$5,000-00 each from America for the purchase of the Church.

The Chairman spoke at length on the help and co-operation received from most of the Church members morally and financially, and expressed his thanks and appreciation to all and especially to Archdeacon Yonan Youel Yonan and the members of the Church Committee who were then each presented with a plaque by His Holiness Mar Dinkha IV.

5.2. Establishment of Library 1987

His Holiness Mar Dinkha IV decided to start “The Mar Shimon Patriarchal Library” in 1987. He made detailed consultations with people and formed a committee. The details are available in the official letter. His Holiness wrote to the faithful dated October 8th 1987. The letter is reproduced below.

“Our beloved children in Maran Esho M’Shikha, the clergy and the laity of the Holy Apostolic Assyrian Catholic Church of the East, the peace of our Lord be with you.

On Friday, May 22, 1987 at a joint meeting of the two North American dioceses of the Church of the East, Shamasha David H. Jolly of the Seattle parish made a presentation suggesting

the establishment of a library and research center dedicated to the accumulation and preservation of all books and literature relating to the liturgy, history and tradition of the Church, in order to revive and strengthen the faith of its adherents. The library shall also serve, as a medium for spiritual guidance, a dissipation of knowledge to meet the ecclesiastical and cultural needs of the Assyrians, and English-speaking members of the Church throughout the world. The library shall be established as a non-profit corporation under the laws of the State of Washington in the organizational structure of the Church of the East, and it shall be a part of the Patriarchal offices (refer to the organizational chart approved at the joint meeting of the two dioceses).

In commemoration of the Holy Fathers who held the sublime office of the Catholicos Patriarch of the Holy Apostolic Assyrian Catholic Church of the East in the past, it is appropriate that the library be named "The Mar Shimun Patriarchal Library".

We have instructed that the following library organizational structure be implemented and have appointed the following persons to fill positions of leadership:-

Board of Directors

His Grace Mar Aprim Khamis, Bishop of the Eastern United States and Canada.

His Grace Mar Bawai, Bishop of the Western United States of America.

Chorepiscopus Michael, J. Birnie, Pastor of the Seattle Parish.

Directional Committee

Chairman, Chorepiscopus Birnie

Fr. Charles Klutz
Sh. Richard Holberg
Sh. Ronald Hanson
Sh. Michael Hertel
Sh. Michael Baker
Sh. David Jolly
Patricia Birnie

Library Director

Sh. David H. Jolly

We have approved the following objectives proposed by the Directional Committee and recommended by the Board of Directors for Procedural action.

First: The library will collect books, literature and publications on theology, history, tradition and practice of the Church in whatever language they are found, and maintain them in one place. It is intended, with the blessings of the Almighty God, that this collection will, one day, become the library of the seminary of the Church of the East in the United States of America.

Second: A research in this Center will be done to develop and publish a comprehensive and accurate statement about the liturgy and traditions of the Church in English language. In addition, the library will try to provide publications, video and audiotapes and Seminars, to assist parishes in their educational programs. These services will be provided at fees set to cover costs and provide for further library operations. Parishes blessed with greater financial resources should support the library budget with their donations, in order to enable the library to fulfill its obligations.

Donations to the library should be forwarded through the office of His Grace Mar Aprim Khamis. All services, publications and materials, etc., will be reviewed by the proper Church authority, and shall carry the Patriarchal sanction.

Third: the Library will take steps to disseminate the said statement among the parishes of the Church to broaden the knowledge of the clergy, parish leadership, Sunday school teachers and the faithful. The enlightenment of our people with the faith, liturgy and tradition of our Church is imperative for the spiritual health and well being of our great Church.

Fourth: The library will take an active part in providing the necessary books and other materials for the education of the clergy in the Seminary.

To facilitate services and communications between the library and the parishes, each parish priest shall select one parish committee member to represent the library needs and services to the parish committee. Priests and representatives should also provide the library Director, Sh. David, H. Jolly, with information as to the needs and services desired by the parishes. Such needs and requests for services will be coordinated with the needs of other parishes by the Directional Committee and within the resource limitations of the library, and every effort will be made to meet them. Within the budgetary constraints of each, the library and parishes shall support one another in the overall goal (of the preservation and revival of our faith). It is therefore important that the library parish committee representatives and parish priests share the enthusiasm of this Holy Office and of the Bishops for this project. Parish committee representatives should notify Sh. David H. Jolly, the Library Director, of their appointment and provide him with their address at P.O. Box 670, Fall City, WA. 98024.

In conclusion, we ask all our beloved children in Christ, to join us in prayer that this may be only the beginning of a great work for the preservation and revival of the Holy Apostolic Assyrian Catholic Church of the East.

Sd/-

KHANANIA MAR DINKHA IV

Catholicos Patriarch

Of the Assyrian Church of the East.

Written this day of October 8, 1987
in the Patriarchal Cell,
Chicago, Illinois, USA.

5.3. Visit to Russia 1988

For the first millennium of the introduction of Christianity in Russia many church heads were gathered in Moscow in June 1988. In a very important function held in Bolshoi Theatre in Moscow Patriarch Mar Dinkha was seated between the Syrian Orthodox Patriarch Mar Zaka Iwas and the Archbishop of Canterbury (See photo in page 2 of Voice From the East of Assyrian section of July-September 1988).

Several photographs published about the millennium celebrations show the prominent place held by our Patriarch in the company of Patriarchs and Archbishops of the world Church. Although our Church is very small compared to the Russian Orthodox Church or the Coptic Church in the number of followers, Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV by his pleasing personality was able to impress the people about this great Church. Many fellow Patriarchs held him in great esteem.

Our Patriarch met with the Assyrian people in the Soviet Union

and organized our people, which later developed into a congregation. In 1992 Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV sent Bishop Mar Aprim Khamis from America to Russia to explore the possibility of starting our Church activities in Russia for the scattered people who had been a part of Russia for several decades.

5. 4. Saint Hurmizd's Parish, Sydney

In 1987, the Diocesan administration in Australia was formally established. The Church membership continued to grow during the late eighties and in 1990, the Diocese fulfilled the need for another priest by ordaining Rev. Ashur Lazar.

In the middle of 1987, a decision was taken to find suitable land for a new Church building. By late March 1988 contracts were signed for the purchase of this site at a cost of \$273,000.

On 10th April 1988 a decision was made to establish the Rabban Hurmizd Parish. Land was acquired at 5-9 Greenfield Road, Greenfield Park. The construction commenced in 1989.

In April 1988 His Grace Mar Meelis Zaia, Bishop of Australian Diocese, invited members of the Church to a fund raising meeting which was attended by over 750 members and within a few months a total of \$570,000 was pledged.

Since the Church embarked on the St. Hurmizd's Cathedral project, the 5.5-acre land at Bulls Road has been earmarked for a possible primary school development in the future. Also at this meeting H. G. Mar Meelis Zaia announced that the new church was to be named "St. Hurmizd" after the fifth century Saint of this Church.

On 26th February 1989 the visiting Bishop Mar Narsai Debaz held a ceremony for the laying of the foundation stone. The generous contributions and voluntary labour and time of the congregation helped to complete the project in time.

After the official opening on 16th December 1990 the Cathedral was consecrated on 23rd December 1990 and services to the congregation commenced on Christmas Day 1990.

A dispute arose between the old and new calendarians in the St. Mary's Parish, Polding Street, Fairfield, a suburb of Sydney. The final decision was made in 1989 in the Supreme Court in Sydney in favour of Bishop Mar Meelis Zaia. Those who lost the civil suit went and built Mar Zaia Cathedral near Sydney itself and they are known as old calendarians.¹

¹ In August 1987 Patriarch Mar Addai II of Baghdad and Mar Aprem of India visited Sydney and Melbourne in Australia. Supporters of old Calendar group arranged Patriarch Mar Addai II to celebrate Holy Qurbana in St. Mary's Church, Polding Street. Archdeacon Kiwarkis Yonan did not officially assist at the service, but made the necessary arrangements and was personally present in the church. The parishioners of the St. Mary's Church, Polding Street recognizing Mar Addai II as the Patriarch, passed a resolution on 25 September 1988. Since that time Bishop Mar Meelis Zaia began to conduct Qurbana at St. Johns High School Hall in Greenfield Park in Fairfield.

In April 1989 the Supreme Court of New South Wales in Sydney commenced the trial of the dispute. In addition to the local bishop Mar Meelis Zaia and Archdeacon Yonan Kiwarkis, witnesses were brought from abroad. Mar Aprem Metropolitan from India, Bishop Mar Aprim Khamis of Chicago and Archdeacon Yonan Youel Yonan from London, England were examined in the Supreme Court in Sydney. Judgment of the Supreme Court was in favour of Bishop Mar Meelis Zaia. The supporters of Patriarch Mar Addai II refused to hand over the St. Mary's Church to Bishop Mar Meelis Zaia. Finally, they were forced to vacate the St. Mary's Church and build another church.

As a result of this split of the Assyrian Church of the East in this diocese since 1987, the old calendar now has three congregations in this diocesan area under Patriarch Mar Addai II. They are at Sydney, Melbourne and Wellington. It is hoped that the Assyrians in Australia and New Zealand will work together forgetting the bitter hatred of the 1987-89 that dragged this community to the Supreme Court in Sydney.

In 1992 Bishop Mar Meelis Zaia appointed Fr. Toma K. Toma priest for New Zealand. He lives in Wellington and conducts Holy Qurbana on the first three Sundays there. On the last Sundays he travels to Auckland and conducts Holy Qurbana there. These are the two cities where the Assyrians live in New Zealand. The Assyrians increase in these two cities as they come as immigrants from Syria, Lebanon, Iran and Iraq. The Assyrians do not have any Church buildings in New Zealand. The Anglicans as well as the Catholics allow their Church buildings to be used by these Christians who have immigrated to New Zealand. It is our prayer that the Assyrians in Auckland and Wellington will prosper and build their own Churches. The old Calendarians have one priest (Qasha Aprim) living in Wellington.

In July 1994 the Holy Synod of the Church of the East was held in Sydney. Rev. Romeo A. Oraham, who was ordained in 1989 for Fairfield parish and had undergone theological training in England, was consecrated Bishop and was sent to Sweden as Bishop of Europe.

In June 2000 the *Symposium Syriacum* of the Scholars of Syriac language in the World met for the first time in Australia. Although it was held in the University of Sydney the Assyrian Church of the East in Sydney took active interest in hosting this symposium. Bishop Mar Meelis Zaia of the diocese of Australia and New Zealand worked with the organizer of the Symposium, Professor Riffat Ebied of the Department of the Semitic Studies of the University of Sydney in making the 8th International Congress for Syriac Studies a success.

Not only scholars but also other Assyrians were involved in the events of this scholarly gathering. Young members of the Assyrian Church worked as volunteers under the organization

called The Assyrian Australian Academic Society (TAAAS). The reception dinner given at the Edessa Hall of the St. Hormizd Church was an occasion for Syriac scholars all over the world to know more about this “prosperous” Assyrian community.

The Assyrian Choir under Rabbi Shoura Michalian, well known violinist trained in Russia, performed on that occasion was an expression of the talents of the Assyrian community. Nothing much was known to the world about their musical talents as they were fleeing from the mountains of the Hakkari region in Mesopotamia in the second decade of the twentieth century.

5. 5. Unity Move with the Chaldean Catholics, 1990

On March 16, 1990 John W. Fountain wrote in *Chicago Tribune* an article about the unity move between the Assyrians and the Chaldeans. I am not totally reproducing the said article. Certain sentences are given here as a record of the interest shown by both Chaldeans and the Assyrians in Chicago in 1990. It is not exactly the same today.

For Assyrians and Chaldeans, unity became a centuries old illusion.

They spoke the same language and worshipped the same God. Ancestrally, they had the same father.

Still, the mending of their severed religious bond escaped like Biblical David, fleeing swiftly from the wrath of a tormented king Saul.

But a spirit of oneness and vision of a brighter future could soon bring healing to these two sects torn

more than 400 years ago by their religious differences.

That movement toward reunification was marked here recently by the first ever meeting in the United States between the Patriarch of the Holy Apostolic Catholic Church of the East, and the Chaldean Catholic Patriarch.

Mar Raphael I Bidawid, patriarch of the Chaldean Rite, and Mar Dinkha IV who heads the Church of the East, met earlier this month to a teary, joyful crowd of believers.

More than 1,000 Chicago-area worshipers, including numerous community leaders, turned out for a joint evening prayer at Mart Mariam Church, 2849 W. Chase Ave. Later hundreds attended a banquet held at the North Shore Holiday Inn, 5300 W. Touhy Ave., Skokie.

“It’s something that we have all been dreaming about.” Said Mona Khoshaba, 21, who sang with her Assyrian church choir at the banquet, which was filled with tears and emotion. “It’s becoming a reality. It’s great.” The crowd stood applauded their leaders, dressed in traditional robes, as they led a flock of top aides and honor guards to a platform.

One of those honor guards was 14-year-old Bawel Daniel, who wore a lilac garment trimmed with gold shingles, and a purple sequined hat.

“It’s an honour to serve the Patriarchs,” Bawel said later, his voice crackling with excitement. “It was special. This is like coming together.”

The banquet was more than a symbolic gesture of the leaders’ efforts to reunite the Churches according to Guiliana Younan, who helped organize the event. “It became not only a meeting, but almost a celebration of what is going on” Younan said.

The patriarchs are attempting to reunite the two churches that split in the 16th century.

The Churches originally comprised the Church of the East, whose monks spread the gospel throughout Asia between the 7th and 13th centuries.

In 1552, a segment of the Church united with Rome. The result was the formation of the Chaldean Catholic Church.

Those who remained separate became known as the Assyrian Church of the East, although their doctrines remained closely aligned, and their kinship unchanged.

Chaldeans and Assyrians are descendants of the ancient inhabitants of Mesopotamia, which is today’s Iraq. Their mother tongue is Syriac, which at one time was the dominant language in the Middle East.

Still, their religious differences became a clear dividing line between them. “They (Assyrians and Chaldeans) realize now that by dividing the nation.”

Younan said, "The two men (patriarchs) can really heal a nation."

Why now? "The time is right," Younan said, noting the recent changes in East Germany and South Africa.

Both Mar Bidawid and Mar Dinkha IV have appointed committees to help resolve the issue of reunification, and plan to continue their dialogue after Easter in Baghdad.

5. 6. Visit to India in 1991

H.H. Mar Dinkha IV visited India for the first time after becoming the Catholicos Patriarch. He had visited India in February –March 1967 when he was bishop of Iran, as a special delegate of the Patriarch Mar Eshai Shimun to settle disputes in India. This Patriarchal visit was from January 9 to 21, 1991.

His Holiness first set foot on Indian soil for this visit at Bombay in the afternoon on 9th January 1991. His Lordship Mar Meelis Zaia, Bishop of Australia, accompanied him. The faithful of the Church of the East in Bombay were there to receive them. His Holiness was accorded a reception by the children of the Church. Then he flew to Cochin, on the 10th January. Rev P.K. Varghese and Managing Trustee Mr. O. L. Chacko along with H.L. Mar Meelis accompanied His Holiness on this Journey.

A huge crowd of people comprising the Clergy, Church officials, the young and the old was at hand to receive His Holiness at Cochin airport. Although the plane was due in morning, it did not get in till early afternoon but still the people waited at the airport itself. When the aircraft arrived, His Grace Mar

Timotheus, our Metropolitan and Very Rev. Cor Episcopa Raphael Vattakuzhy went out onto the Tarmac to receive His Holiness from the aircraft itself.

After a short rest at the airport, His Holiness was taken by Motorcade to Mar Sleeva Church at Cochin for prayers and a reception by the congregation.

On the 11th January, His Holiness was taken by Motorcade from Cochin to Trichur, a distance of 70 kilometers; a number of cars and motorcycles escorted him on this journey. On the outskirts of Trichur, His Holiness was given a reception by a welcoming committee comprising the Municipal Chairman, his councilors and other prominent citizens of the town. From there a large Motorcade of more than 50 cars and numerous motorcycles escorted His Holiness in a procession to the Ramanilayam (The Government Rest House) for a short rest before the Grand public reception. On his way to the Guest House, His Holiness was accorded a welcome by both the main Devaswams (Hindu) of the town.

The public reception was held at Mar Timotheus Nagar, so called in memory of the late Metropolitan, at the Chaldean Syrian High School grounds. Thousands of people attended this function which was inaugurated by Mr. C. Achuta Menon, ex Chief Minister of Kerala, and was graced by the presence of Mar Baselius Poulouse II, Catholicos of the Syrian Orthodox Church under Patriarch Zachai Iwas of Damascus, H.G. Mathews Mar Koorilos, Catholicos Elect (present Catholicos) of the Orthodox Syrian Church, H.E. Mar Joseph Kundukulam, Catholic Bishop of Trichur, Sri. Lonappan Nambadan, Honourable Minister of Kerala, Sri. K. Karunakaran, Leader of Opposition, Kerala Legislative Assembly and Sri. Joy Kavalakat, Trichur Municipal Chairman.

Saturday, the 12th of January, was a day of rest for His Holiness.

On Sunday the 13th Holy Qurbana was celebrated at 7.30 a.m. at the same Auditorium as the public reception. His Grace Mar Timotheus and His Lordship Mar Meelis and other clergy assisted His Holiness during the Holy mass. In the middle of Holy Qurbana His Holiness gave a gift of the Cross to H.G. Mar Timotheus saying that it is given for his profound respect for his service to the Church.

In the evening of the same day, His Holiness was taken by a procession of cars and motorcycles to the outskirts of Trichur where he inaugurated the Mar Timotheus Charitable Hospital. During this function, His Lordship Mar Meelis unveiled a life size portrait of Late Mar Abimalek Timotheus Metropolitan. This function was followed by a banquet in honour of His Holiness.

His Holiness Mar Dinkha IV visited many parishes of the Church of the East in and around Trichur, which owed allegiance to him.

A list of the Churches visited and other programmes attended and accorded to His Holiness are given below.

14th January 8.00 a.m. Mar Timotheus Chapel Nellikunnu, His Holiness inaugurated the vicarage and attached Hall during his visit.

14-1-91 5.30 p.m. Mar Geevarghese Sahda Church, Cheroor,
A permanent stage has been erected in commemoration of the visit of His Holiness to this Parish.

- 15-1-91 Mar Augin Thuvana Church, West Fort.
- 15-1-91 Mar Kuriakose Sahda Church, Kallur.
- 16-1-91 5.00 p.m. His Holiness met the elderly (over 70 yrs old) and the sick of the Church at Mar Shimun Chapel.
- 17-1-91 8.00 a.m. Mar Yonan Church, Thiroor.
- 17-1-91 5.30 p.m. Mar Oudeesho Church, Kuriachira
- 18-1-91 8.00 a.m His Holiness met with the congregation of the Big Church parish, East Fort Church parish at Mar Shimun Chapel.
- 18-1-91 5.00 p.m. Meeting with the congregation of the Nellangara parish and Pattikad parish.
- 19-1-91 4.00 p.m. His Holiness met with the Clergy Council at Mar Shimun Chapel
- 20-1-91 7.30 a.m. Holy Qurbana was celebrated at Mar Shimun Chapel. His Holiness was again helped by H.G. Mar Timotheus and H.L. Mar Meelis.

In the Middle of Holy Qurbana His Holiness gave crosses to 3 Priests who had completed 25 years of service to the church as Clergy:-

- 1) Cor Episcopa Raphael
- 2) Rev. P.K. Varghese
- 3) Rev. M.I. David

20-1-91 3.00 p.m. His Holiness met with Sabha Council and Central Trustees of the Church at Mar Shimon Chapel

20-1-91 4.00 p.m. His Holiness was the Honored Guest at the prize distribution ceremony of the Sunday School. Other prizes were also given on this occasion. A cross was given to Rev M.I. David for distinguished services for the Hospital, a memento to Mr. T.J. Antony for getting his name in the Guinness Book of World records for designing the largest temporary stadium. Other gifts were also awarded for services rendered to the Sunday School, Reception Committee etc.

Cardinal Edward Idris Cassidy sent a message to Indian Church on the occasion of this patriarchal visit.

Pontificium Consilium
AD Christianorum Unitatem Fovendam
Prot.N. 5521/90/b

E Civitate Vaticana,
die 4th December 1990

Dear Mr. Thomas,

You have recently written to His Holiness Pope John Paul II regarding the forthcoming visit to India of His Holiness Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV.

As President of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, I am happy to express deep satisfaction at the visit that His Holiness Mar Dinkha IV will be making to India. As you will know, this Pontifical Council encourages every effort on behalf of the unity of the Assyrian Church of the East.

With prayers that the visit of His Holiness Patriarch Mar Dinkha to your country will be an occasion of many blessings, I assure you of my cordial good wishes in Jesus Christ our Lord.

+ Edward Idris Cassidy
Tit. Archbishop of Amantia
President.

On Monday the 21st, H.G. Mar Timotheus, Central Trustees, security personnel etc. escorted His Holiness to Cochin, where he boarded the plane to Bombay on the first leg of his journey back to Australia, then to the United States of America.

5. 7. Reception in Chicago April 1992

A ceremonial dinner was hosted by the Executive Committee of St. Mary's Church on Sunday the 26th April 1992 at 6.00 PM in Ted's Golden Fawn Banquets, in honour of His Holiness Mar Dinkha IV Catholicos Patriarch on the Seleucia Ctesiphon See of the Assyrian Church of the East. A crowd of 400 men and women gathered in this Hall.

As His Holiness was courteously escorted in the Hall followed by a number of distinguished guests, the church choir under the able guidance of Mrs. Joann Yousif chanted the well-known song of welcome — "*Slothakh Awoon*".... Before taking their seats on the head-table, the National Anthem was sung and after that came the song of "*Atha D'ettee*" (the insignia of the Holy Apostolic and Catholic Assyrian Church of the East), by the church Choir again.

Upon this, the Master of ceremony Zechariah Zechariah,

introduced the guests of honour, and after which, Mar Aprim Khamis, Bishop of Eastern United States parishes, gave his welcome address in brief.

At the interval, two other songs were chanted by the Church Choir in honour of His Holiness the Patriarch, and money were donated every now and then, towards the building of a Church in the name of St. Mary the Virgin and a Seminary as well. A sum of \$16,000-00 was raised in this evening. May God the omni-present, bless the faithful donors and reward them a hundredfold.

His Holiness Mar Dinkha IV Catholicos Patriarch being the Keynote speaker on this special occasion was respectfully called to deliver a speech. Thus, he rose up and went to the podium. Here, he gave a long and well-defined speech, touching mainly on the building of St. Mary's Church for his flock who, particularly, live in the suburbs. He also laid great stress on building an annex to the Church, a Seminary, and urged the parents to send their children for theological studies there. He, like wise, touched in an advisory manner, on a good number of important spiritual and temporal subjects, cautioning his sons and daughters in Christ, saying: you ought to keep away from dissensions, hatred, wrath, selfishness and pride. And, as Assyrians, get together in the love of Christ our Lord, and live in peace with one another, and always keep in mind our Lord's precious commandment "Love one another as I have loved you". He concluded his speech with a prayer.

5. 8. The Common Christological Declaration, November 1994

On November 11, 1994 Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV and Pope John Paul II signed the document known as Common Christological

Declaration in Vatican. It was hailed by many as an ecumenical document of historic importance. Metropolitan Mar Narsai of Lebanon, Syria and Europe along with Bishop Mar Bawai Soro, Convener of the Council of Inter Church Relations and Education and Development and Bishop Mar Meelis Zaia, Secretary to the Holy Synod had accompanied the Patriarch at this ceremonial signing in the Vatican.

As a result of this ecumenical relation with the Vatican Patriarch requested the Pope to arrange for some clergy of the Assyrian Church of the East to study in Rome for higher theological training with financial assistance. As a result Bishop Mar Bawai Soro took a doctorate from Angelicum in Rome in January 2002. Five Assyrians priests from Iran, Iraq and America are at different stages of their studies in Rome.

The Common Christological Declaration was the result of a series of ecumenical contacts with the Vatican. In 1978 Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV attended the installation of Pope John Paul II in Vatican. On November 7 to 9, 1984 Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV made an official visit to Vatican. As a result it was decided to have official dialogue with the Vatican. There were five meetings in the following ten years. As a result Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV and Pope John Paul II signed the Common Christological Declaration. It was important ecumenical news welcomed by many churches. There were similar agreements between the Vatican and the Coptic Orthodox Church in 1973, Syrian Orthodox Church in 1984 and Malankara Syrian Orthodox Church in 1990. The Pope and the Patriarch concluded their Common Christological Declaration with the following practical and positive note.²

² Full text of the Common Christological Declaration is given as Appendix 2 in the Ph.D. dissertation of the writer of this biography..

Living by this faith and these sacraments, it follows as a consequence that the particular Catholic churches and the particular Assyrian churches can recognize each other as sister Churches. To be full and entire, communion presupposes the unanimity concerning the content of the faith, the sacraments and the constitution of the Church. Since this unanimity for which we aim has not yet been attained, we cannot unfortunately celebrate together the Eucharist, which is the sign of the ecclesial communion already fully restored.

Nevertheless, the deep spiritual communion in the faith and the mutual trust already existing between our Churches entitle us from now on to consider witnessing together to the Gospel message and co-operating in particular pastoral situations, including especially the areas of catechesis and the formation of future priests.

In thanking God for having made us rediscover what already unites us in the faith and the sacraments, we pledge ourselves to do every thing possible to dispel the obstacles of the past which still prevent the attainment of full communion between our two Churches, so that we can better respond to the Lord's call for the unity of his own, a unity which has of course to be expressed visibly. To overcome these obstacles, we now establish a Mixed Committee for theological dialogue between the Catholic and the Assyrian Church of the East.

As a result of the signing of the Common Christological Declaration a Mixed Committee for Theological Dialogue was

appointed by the two Churches. The JCTD has met 9 times from 1995 to 2003. In the meeting of October 2000 the name of Mixed Committee for Theological Dialogue (MCTD) was changed into Joint Committee for Theological Dialogue (JCTD).

5.9. The Unity in India, 1995

Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV visited India at the invitation of his followers in January 1991. He made use of this opportunity to negotiate peace with the Indian prelates of the Mar Thoma Darmo group namely, Mar Aprem Metropolitan and Poulouse Mar Poulouse Episcopa. They made their minimum demand that the suspension of Mar Thoma Darmo dated 10 January 1964 should be cancelled and all ordinations conducted by him should be recognized by those under Mar Dinkha IV. The followers of Patriarch Mar Dinkha were not willing and their Patriarch returned without unity.

In July 1994 the Holy Synod of Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV met in Sydney, Australia. Although Patriarch Mar Addai II went to Sydney to visit his followers there, no progress was made in unity negotiation. Later in March 1995, Mar Bawai Soro of new calendar group met Mar Aprem Metropolitan of India at a Pro Oriente consultation in Vienna. They discussed between themselves the terms and conditions for a possible reconciliation in India if such a reconciliation is impossible at a universal level. It was felt that there were some tribal and clannish considerations of the Assyrians, which make reconciliation delayed beyond reasonable time. The Synod held in Baghdad in March 1990 had authorized the Indian Church to proceed with unity if there was delay for the universal Church to unite.

The Vienna proposals suggested that two prelates of the group under Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV should visit India and negotiate

unity similar to the proposals discussed by the Patriarch himself in India in January 1991. Thus two prelates namely Mar Narsai Metropolitan of Lebanon and Mar Meelis Zaia, Episcopa of Australia and New Zealand who was also secretary of the Holy Synod visited Trichur in November 1995 and started negotiation with Mar Aprem Metropolitan and Mar Poulouse Episcopa.

Mar Timotheus Metropolitan of the Patriarchal group also was involved in the negotiation. The central trustees (four on each side) of both groups participated. On 13th November 1995 the prelates of the Indian Church and the Central Trustees signed the agreement on the unity of two groups.³ An Episcopal council was proposed for a period of two years in which Mar Timotheus Metropolitan would be the Chairman and Poulouse Mar Poulouse Episcopa will be the secretary.

Mar Aprem will do the duties of the Head of the Church and preside over the Representative council of the church. The church in India would frame a constitution as soon as possible and would implement it after Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV gave his approval.

The news of the reconciliation in India was an exciting news to Christians and non-Christians alike. On Friday November 17th Mar Narsai Metropolitan celebrated holy Qurbana in the Mart Mariam Cathedral. Many members of the church who were keeping away from this church after the split in January 1964 were entering this church after a span of 31 years. There was great joy all around. The public meeting was an expression of

³ The minimum demand for the cancellation of the suspension order of Mar Thoma Darmo Metropolitan by the Patriarch Mar Eshai Shimun was not fully met. Nevertheless it was assured that this matter would be sympathetically considered in the following Holy Synod. But all ordinations and consecrations conducted by Mar Thoma Darmo Metropolitan after his suspension on 10 January, 1964 till his death were recognized with immediate effect. Later in the Holy Synod held in Chicago in June 1997, the suspension order of 10 January 1964 was cancelled.

the truth that unity would go down in history as an historic event. It was also hoped that the branches of the Church of the East in other countries would follow this good example in the spirit of love of Christ.

5. 10. CARDINAL'S VISIT (August 1996)

The Holy Father Mar Dinkha IV Catholicos Patriarch extended a supper invitation, following the Festival of Pentecost, to the late Joseph Cardinal Bernardine. The invitation, which His Holiness extended, was for His Eminence and his coterie to participate at the table of hospitality. The late Cardinal responded by stating his personal delight in participating in an ideal Assyrian Supper. The date was established for supper.

Tuesday, August 27th, 1996, the late Cardinal met in the Patriarchal Residence in Morton Grove near Chicago to enjoy the gift of the Christian fellowship and love extant within the Assyrian community. The late Cardinal had attended with his associates and they together enjoyed the delights in Assyrian cuisine.

Little did we realize that shortly thereafter the Cardinal would be called to lay his labors aside. His Holiness had been requested by the Cardinal to be assigned a place of prominence during the Solemn Pontifical Funeral Mass in the Roman Catholic Church. The commemorative Holy Mass was celebrated in The Cathedral of Holy Names, Chicago, Illinois, on Wednesday November 20, 1996.

5.11. Contact with World Leaders, September 1996

The Holy Father Mar Dinkha IV Catholicos Patriarch of the East has repeatedly demonstrated an active interest in pursuing

peace within The Holy Church, seeking to establish the spirit of unity and cooperation and good will among the whole of humankind.

With a recent enactment of sanctions against the Republic of Iraq, His Holiness has taken charge of the situation within the scope of a spiritual Advisor and counselor by advising in writing, and, establishing an active communication line with various leaders of the world, His Holiness has actively corresponded with the Honorable President of the USA, Mr. William "Bill" Clinton, The Honourable Prime Minister Mr. John Major of England, His Excellency the Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany Helmut Kohl, and of course the Honourable Secretary General Butros Butros-Ghali of the United Nations. Copies of these important letters and communiqués have been presented to the proper authorities of the Republic of Iraq for the United Nations, the delegation resides in New York.

His Holiness Mar Dinkha IV Catholicos Patriarch of the East has received replies and responses from these honorable leaders. They have shown an interest in the suffering plight of the Iraqi citizens and hopefully will consider a further resolve in the near future.

KHANANIA MAR DINKHA IV,
CATHOLICOS PATRIARCH OF THE ASSYRIAN CHURCH
OF THE EAST,
8908 BIRCH AVENUE,
MORTON GROVE, ILLINOIS 60053, U.S.A.

PROTOCOL: 96-01213

His Excellency Butros Butros-Ghali
United Nations Secretary General,
United Nations Organization, New York, N.Y. 10017.

As the Catholicos Patriarch of the Assyrian Church of the East, this epistle of protocol is sent for the purpose of bringing your attention to the distressful plight of our faithful in Northern Iraq. In addition to the terrible plight of those being affected throughout Iraq, our constituents have recently suffered in the following manner:

- 1) A serious concern is the murder and martyrdom of one of our priests and deacons in the recent fighting between rival Kurd factions in Northern Iraq.
- 2) Of great concern is the unwarranted interruption of foodstuffs and medical assistance in exchange for oil; particularly since this punishment severely inflicts irreparable injury to women, children, infants and the sick and infirm. We are especially mindful of the twenty-five thousand children dying each Year from malnutrition and illness because of this so-called punishment of the offenders. These tragic incidents have been occurring to the innocent victims since the end of the Gulf War and should cease.

The difficulties that are present in that troubled region are encumbered with a number of serious issues implicit in any conflict, but requiring humanitarian considerations. We, of course, are primarily concerned with all the Iraqi people who have had no part in this power struggle; particularly the defenseless ones caught in the crossfire. The Iraqis, in general, are not only suffering financially, but also their means of livelihood are abrogated or

terminated and their peace and tranquility has been destroyed in face of the recent upheaval of shelling, bombing, etc. This present situation directly contradicts the Divine Mandate that all the nations are to live together in harmony and tranquility for the greater glory of His name.

An earnest seeking safety and peaceful protection is requested for all Iraq and its good people regardless of their religious faith or ethnic origin. The greater majority of these precious human souls seek to live without fear and wishes to be loyal to the best interests of their native land while in accord with other nations throughout the world.

The intervention of your honorable and noble person bringing about stability and ending the fighting and strife in this ancient land of the forefathers of modern man will bring Blessings to all from the Almighty God. May our Lord take your hands and the hands of all good people of Iraq, and together we will all witness a new peace, with safety and harmony; while you are seeking to find an equitable solution to all the present day issues. And courage and power in your search for a peaceful resolve.

By Grace
Khanania Mar Dinkha IV
Catholicos Patriarch, Assyrian Church of the East

Issued from Morton Grove,
This 10th day of September 1996

THE SECRETARY- GENERAL

1 October 1996

Your Holiness,

I should like to thank you for your letter of 10 September 1996 in which you expressed concern at the predicament of those members of the Assyrian Church of the East who reside in Northern Iraq. Please accept my sincere condolence on the death last month of one of your priests and his deacon during shelling in the area.

I have repeatedly drawn the attention of the international community to the serious suffering of civilians in that region and assure you that I shall work to the best of my ability to relieve their plight, in particular within the framework of Security Council Resolution 986 (1995).

Please accept, Your Holiness, the assurances of my highest consideration,

Boutros Boutros-Ghali

His Holiness Khanania Mar Dinkha IV
Catholicos Patriarch
Assyrian Church of the East
Morton Grove, USA

CHAPTER 6

THIRD DECADE (1996 – 2006)

6.1. Governor Receives The Patriarch (November 1996)

The Governor's Special Assistant in charge of Ethnic Affairs/ Ethnic Media, Ms Pat Michalski, had learned that His Holiness Mar Dinkha IV, Catholicos Patriarch of the East was presently in the State of Illinois and had established under Synodical Decree the Administrative See within the State of Illinois. Interest had been generated within the Governor's staff and inquiry had been put out to determine how to reach The Holy Father.

The Special Assistant had a brief chance encounter on the occasion of the Jubilee Celebration of His Holiness in a local banquet facility. The special assistant to the Governor had been introduced to The Holy Father. She had made a specific request for an audience with him and extended an invitation to the Governor's office. His Holiness was pleased to respond favorably to her request, God willing.

The night of the Jubilee for the Holy Father Ms Pat Michalski spoke in behalf of the office of the Governor, warmly welcoming the Patriarch in Illinois. She expressed gratitude to the faithful of the Church and for their beneficent presence in Illinois. She addressed the Assyrian community of the Greater Chicago area expressing thanks to the various prominent leaders within the community and to those who are known in the region. She remarked that “We in Illinois need more people like you of the Assyrian Community, bringing with you your unique foods, and special customs and traditions”. She thanked the Assyrian Community for their contributions adding to the richness of Chicago and her cultural diversity.

During the month of November 1996 an invitation was presented to His Holiness Mar Dinkha IV, Catholicos Patriarch of the East and was accepted. Activities and preparations had been set about in order to attend to the “special invitation”. The Holy Father had requested that His Grace Bishop Mar Aprim Khamis from the Diocese of Eastern USA to accompany him. The Patriarchal Archdeacon Aprim de Baz and the Secretary Chancellor to the Bishop Fr. C. H. Klutz were invited to witness the historic occasion. Unfortunately, last minute changes were initiated as His Grace had fallen ill with a serious bout with the “flu, which is going about”.

The Catholicos Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV and his coterie arrived on November 26 at the State Building in downtown Chicago, Illinois, and were ushered into the reception room and were presented to the Governor where a most gracious and enlightening meeting ensued. The Governor had asked many things about the Holy Father and the (Assyrian) Church of the East. The Holy Father explained the long history of the Church from the Middle East and eventually how the Church entered into the USA. The Governor was emotionally moved as he

learned from His Holiness the historical development of the Church. He was, however, very saddened to learn of the continuing harassment and persecution which the Church encounters throughout the course of history.

Towards the end of the meeting, the Catholicos Patriarch and the Governor exchanged gifts. They conveyed best wishes among each other during the Thanksgiving season and the coming Holy Nativity of Our Lord Jesus. The Governor expressed his personal delight and Thanksgiving in the knowledge of God's gift to humankind and acknowledging Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.

6. 2. The Assyrian - Chaldean Dialogue, 1997

The Assyrian Church and the Chaldean Church were one and the same till 1553. Even after the time of Patriarch John Sulaqa (1553 –1555) there was rethinking in some circles whether they should remain separate or not. When the Common Christological Declaration was signed in Vatican the bishops of the Chaldean Church were in Rome.

It was felt that there should be a direct dialogue between the Chaldean Church and the Assyrian Church. They share common cultural and linguistic ties. They have same liturgy and the same liturgical tongue. Fr. Prof. Sarhad Jammo and Bishop Bawai Soro held initial talks. Later the two Patriarchs met in Southfield, Michigan on 29 November 1996.

The Holy Synod held in Chicago in June 1997 gave approval to the proposal to have closer cooperation between the Assyrian Church and the Chaldean Church. Bishop Mar Yosip Sargis of Baghdad expressed his doubts about the usefulness of such dialogue. The Holy Synod selected a committee in June 1997.

The Chaldean Patriarch also appointed a Committee for this purpose. The two committees met in Chicago on August 13 and 14, 1997. In this important meeting in August 1997 in Chicago the following prelates were present along with their Patriarchs.

Assyrians

1. H.E. Mar Gewargis Slewa, Archbishop of Iraq and Russia, (Member)
2. H.E. Poulouse Mar Poulouse, Bishop of Trichur, (Member)
3. H.E. Mar Aprim Khamis, Bishop of Eastern USA, (Member)
4. H.E. Mar Bawai Soro, Bishop of Seattle, General Secretary of Commission of Inter-Church Relations and Education Development, (Member)
5. H.E. Mar Emmanuel Emmanuel, Bishop of Canada, (Guest)

Two were absent

6. H.E. Mar Narsai Debaz, Archbishop of Lebanon, Syria & Europe, Patriarchal Vicar, (Member)
7. H.E. Mar Meelis Zaia, Bishop of Australia & New Zealand, Secretary for the Holy Synod, (Member)

Chaldeans

1. H.E. Mar Gewargis Garmo, Archbishop of Mosul, (Member)
2. H.E. Mar Ibrahim Ibrahim, Bishop of USA, (Member)
3. H.E. Mar Gabriel Kassab, Archbishop of Basra, (Guest)
4. Rt. Rev. Msgr. Zuhair Toma, Patriarchal Vicar in Australia, (Member)
5. Rt. Rev. Father Sarhad Jammo, Vicar General of the Chaldean Diocese in the USA, (Member)

One was absent

6. H.E. Mar Emmanuel Delly, Patriarchal Auxiliary, (Member).

Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV and Patriarch Mar Raphael Bidawid issued a joint statement. They jointly consecrated the new church of Mart Mariam in Rosalle, Chicago on August 15, 1997. The 1997 meeting framed byelaws for the Joint Committee for Unity. The joint Synodal Decree signed on 15 August 1997 by Patriarch Raphael Bidawid and Patriarch Mar Khanania Dinkha IV exhorts the believers as follows: ¹

We sincerely hope that the “Church of the East”, restored to its historic fullness in faithfulness to the Lord, shall be an instrument for spiritual renewal, social harmony and cultural renaissance among her faithful, prompting them, once again, to bring the Good News of the Gospel to the four corners of the world for the glory of God’s name.

Therefore, we call upon all of our sons and daughters to raise fervent prayers for the purpose of achieving our full ecclesiastical unity, through the patronage of the Virgin Mary, Mother of our Lord Jesus Christ and our own blessed mother and the intercessions of the Apostles of the East, Mar Toma, Mar Addai and Mar Mari.

By the authority granted to us by the Holy Spirit,

¹ Full text of Joint Synodal Decree for Promoting Unity is given as Appendix 3 in the Ph.D. dissertation of the present writer.

we declare that this “Joint Synodal Decree for Promoting Unity” effective for both Churches from this date, the fifteenth day of August 1997, the Feast of the Blessed Virgin. As a confirmation to this historic occurrence, we list our names under the names and signatures of our two venerable Patriarchs.

Prelates of both churches in addition to their Patriarchs signed this document. The prelates had discussed the draft of this statement in detail in their respective Synods. The joint committee for Unity met again on 17 and 18 September 1998 at Dayr Sayyedat Al-beere in Beirut, Lebanon. This meeting appointed sub committees to meet separately. The common statement of the meeting of 1998 declared that,²

Members of the Commission offer thanksgivings to God for this opportunity and His other gifts and, at the same time, thank the people, churches and the government of Lebanon who honored them with an audience with the President of the Republic of Lebanon. They also thank all those who until now have labored to make this glorious dream come true which is a heartfelt beginning for the reunification of their Church, the historical Church of the East. The Church of the East that was established in the Lands-between-Two-Rivers (Mesopotamia), that extended to the lands of the Far East lifting high the torch of living faith which became manifested realistically in various cultures and societies for many centuries.

² The Common Statement signed by Patriarch Mar Raphael Bidavid and Patriarch Mar Khanania Dinkha IV after the meeting of 17 and 18 September 1998. Quoted from *Voice of the East*, Nov-Dec. 1998, Trichur, p.4

After framing the sub committees such as

1. Ecclesiastical Formation.
2. Catechism
3. Liturgy
4. Pastoral Collaboration
5. The Laity.

The future plans were made as follows.³

The participants in this meeting also decided to publish common liturgical text and compose new catechetical books based on the Sacred Scriptures and the tradition of the Church of the East. Likewise, they decreed to establish (i) the Feast of Saint Thomas as a special day of prayer for the unity of their churches, (ii) to celebrate together the Jubilee of Year 2000, (iii) to compose an Encyclopedia of the Church of the East that will present this church's history, culture, locations, literature, and discipline, and lastly, (iv) to establish a public foundation that will support these numerous Chaldean - Assyrian projects.

It is hoped that the next meeting of this committee will be held in Iraq in October 2000 following the Millennium celebrations planned to be held in Seleucia Ctesiphon, Iraq.

6. 3. Pro Oriente, Vienna, 1997

The Pro Oriente Foundation in Vienna held dialogues with the non-Chalcedonian Churches. In 1982 Pro Oriente officers had met Patriarch Mar Addai II of the ancient Assyrian Church

³ Ibid., p.5.

(following the old Julian Calendar) in Baghdad. In 1988 the Pro Oriente people met Catholicos Patriarch Mar Khanania Dinkha IV in Moscow.

Mar Aprem, Metropolitan of India, wrote letters to the Pro Oriente enquiring of the possibilities of dialogue with the Church of the East. Consequently Mar Aprem was invited to read a paper for a one day Symposium (No.59) in Vienna. **Was Nestorius a Nestorian?** was the title of the paper which Mar Aprem presented at the Symposium. Archbishop Mesrob K. Krikorian of the Armenian Church presided over the function.

The discussion that followed stressed the need for further dialogues. Mar Aprem was the first bishop of the Church of the East to visit Pro Oriente, declared President Albert Stirnemann. The participants, especially Alfred Stirnemann, Archbishop Krikorian and other leaders of the Pro Oriente, felt that it was imperative to have a dialogue with the Church of the East.

An Indian Regional Symposium was held in Kottayam, Kerala from September 30 to October 4, 1993. Alfred Stirnemann, Archbishop Mesrob K. Krikorian, Prof. Mons. Philipp Harnencourt of the University of Graz, Prof. Peter Hofrichter of Salzburg, Fr.Franz Bouven and other ecumenical leaders participated. About its impact Prof. Peter Hoffrichter wrote the following in p.11 of Booklet No.6: (Published in Vienna, 1995).⁴

Fr.Franz Bouven treated the reception of the Vienna Christological Formula in official agreements with the individual Orthodox Churches and the Roman Catholic Church. The discussion, which followed, was one of the highlights of the whole event. The

⁴ *The Vienna Dialogue*, Kerala Regional Symposium, Kottayam, October 1993, Booklet No. 6, Vienna, 1995, pp.11,12.

condemnation of the teachings of Nestorius in the Vienna Formula prompted Metropolitan Mar Aprem of the allegedly Nestorian Church of the East to take the floor and declare his complete agreement with the Vienna Formula, even though its condemnation of Nestorius was unjustified. This led to several people stressing the need for a dialogue with the so-called Nestorians and Catholicos Baselius Mar Thoma Mathews II spontaneously expressed his joy over Mar Aprem's declaration.

In January 31, 1994 Pro Oriente conducted its 69th Ecumenical Symposium in the House of the Diet of Lower Austria, Knights Hall in Vienna. Alfred Stirmemann referred to the Indian Regional Symposium of 1993. He spoke thus⁵

Something new for PRO ORIENTE was the participation of the so-called Nestorians. The bishop of the old calendarian jurisdiction Mar Aprem G. Mookan of Trichur who on the 18th of June 1990 had taken the floor at the 59th Symposium of PRO ORIENTE on the very interesting subject "Was Nestorius a Nestorian?" and the priests and lay people of the jurisdiction of the new calendarians were also present. Mar Aprem stated that the Christology of the Assyrian Church was neither pro nor anti-Chalcedonian, as its representatives could not attend the councils of the Roman Empire at Ephesus and Chalcedon, because there was a war between the Roman and the Persian Empires. He explained that he can fully accept the "Vienna Christological Formula". For the same reason he, however, deplored the confirmation of the Nestorian

⁵ Ibid., p. 226.

position in the same declaration.

Note: The word used in the above line is perhaps *condemnation* and not *confirmation*.

In June 1994 Pro Oriente held their first Syriac Dialogue in Vienna. They invited the representatives from the old calendar as well as the new calendar, the representatives of the Chaldean Catholic Church, Syrian Catholic Church, Maronite Catholic Church, Syrian Orthodox Church and the churches from India such as the Syro Malabar Church, Syro Malankara Church and the Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church.

The second Syriac Dialogue was held in February 1996 in Vienna. The 3rd Syriac Dialogue was held on 5—13 July 1997 in Chicago. Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV addressed this assembly. A Study Seminar of the same was held in Vienna on Feb 29 to 1 March 2000. The following was the communiqué of this meeting of Pro Oriente.⁶

The participants strongly encourage PRO ORIENTE to continue the most valuable initiative of a dialogue within the Syriac Tradition. For future consideration and study they suggest the following as possible topics:

- Rites, which are identified and listed differently as *raze/roze* by the individual Syriac Churches (Penance, Marriage, Anointing of the sick, Holy Leaven, Myron, Sign of the Cross),
- The interaction between the different liturgical traditions and their consequences,

⁶ *Communique of Pro Oriente*, dated March 2, 2000, Vienna.

- The theology and practice of mission in the Churches of the Syriac tradition in both historical and contemporary experience.
- Priesthood.

In conclusion, this was a unique and most useful opportunity, provided by PRO ORIENTE, for members of the different Churches of Syriac tradition to discuss and learn directly from each other about each other's understanding of the subject of the Study Seminar. It was extremely gratifying to discover the large amount of agreement between the traditions of the different Syriac Churches over essentials.

The non-official seminars conducted by the Pro-Oriente are helpful for other churches to understand the actual theological position of the Assyrian Church of the East. There is no other forum where the Syriac speaking churches of the Catholic, Oriental Orthodox and Assyrian churches (both calendarists) come around the same table for discussion of their common heritage and an appreciation of their theological differences

6. 4. The Middle East Council Of Churches (MECC) (1997)

The Middle East Council of Churches held its 4th general assembly in 1985 in Nicosia, Cyprus. The Assyrian Church of the East, which was already a member of the World Council of Churches, wanted to have membership in the Middle East Council of Churches.

In 1991 the MECC appointed a committee for dialogue with the

Assyrian Church. Two official dialogues were held. At the first meeting of Sept 5-6, 1991 the Christological issue was studied. At the second meeting of Sept 15-20, 1992 the person and teachings of Nestorius were discussed.

An understanding was reached to give full membership to the Assyrian Church of the East. Unfortunately for MECC assembly of 1999 the General Secretary of the MECC requested the Church of the East to send an observer indicating that this Church was not entitled to the membership of the MECC. The Patriarch of the Church wrote a strong letter making it clear that he was not prepared to send an observer. If any Church had claim to the full membership of the MECC it is the Assyrian Church, as it is the Church, which had shed maximum blood for the faith.

6. 5. Symposium on the Revision of the Assyrian New Testament, 1998

On October 25th, 1998, a Symposium on the Revision of the Assyrian New Testament was held at Mar Gewargis Church, Chicago. Many clergy participated. Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV made a speech there. That speech was very informative on the history of the revision of the Assyrian New Testament. Hence it is reproduced below;

“Honorable ecclesiastics, ladies and gentlemen,

I am very pleased to welcome in this house of worship so many learned scholars who are dedicated in the service of our Lord Jesus Christ by translating the Holy Book of the New Testament in various languages, but in particular, in Syriac (modern Aramaic), the language we, Assyrians are the

present inheritors. Our forefathers have preserved this, the oldest of the languages, for thousands of years and it is our sacred duty to pass it on to our future generations.

The New Testament has been translated to almost every language presently in use. If a sermon is not delivered in the language that is understood by a congregation, they will not derive any benefits nor learn the truth of the Godly mission of Christianity.

The Bible was translated in the Assyrian language in the 19th century with the help of certain western missionaries who came to Urmia, Iran as pseudo-evangelists with the pretext of converting non-Christians. Subsequently, this task was undertaken by the Near Eastern society for the Bible translation, which made revisions to the text, tried to minimize mistakes, and yet there are still other shortcomings.

Some years ago, we put an effort in Baghdad to bring forth a completely revised edition but we found out that it was a tremendous hard task for we needed people who are not only literate at the Syriac language but more so in Hebrew and Greek vocabulary as these three languages are the most essential and requisite elements to bring out an authentic translation. After it came to our knowledge that Rev. Talia and his associates had embarked upon this vital process with help of certain learned American Christian scholars, we were greatly elated and were looking forward with enthusiasm to the outcome of their efforts.

On many occasions, Dr. Talia and Mr. Homer Ashurian have met with me to exchange views on the real meaning of certain words. We have furthermore noticed that Dr. Talia has been in constant contact with many of the Assyrian clergy and others who have thorough knowledge of the Assyrian language and Church literature. It is of paramount importance that anyone who has background in this literary field ought to come forward and assist in the screening of the Holy Book of the New Testament, for this is not the book of Rev. Talia but that of every Assyrian irrespective of his or her denominational affiliation. It is absolutely necessary that this Holy Book should be found in every Assyrian home and at least one chapter to be read daily, for faith is strengthened by the reading and hearing of the holy words. When we read the New Testament, our Lord Jesus is in communion with us, teaches us what our actions should be as in one particular command he admonishes us to love one another as He loves us for there is no greater love than that one putting himself in peace of his fellow man.

We must, therefore, respect one another. If any member of our nation or that of the universal Christian church renders a meritorious service we ought to be pleased and appreciative. We, Assyrians, as a whole, must provide every assistance possible for the elaborate work undertaken by Dr. Talia in his tireless endeavors to screen the New Testament from erroneous transpositions contained in the previous translations. It is natural that opinions vary as to the correct versions to be

introduced but it is advisable that an ad hoc committee of grammarians and theologians be formed to study and debate the most appropriate vernacular to replace the inaccurate and foreign words. It is more important that the translation should be from the original script of the Aramaic (*Peshitta*) version. If grammatical errors occur, it is not so significant as that of the misinterpretation of the meanings that relate the true faith. Extreme precautions are to be taken not to misinterpret the authenticity of the original scriptures.

I take this opportunity to thank wholeheartedly all those who were and are still involved in this great enterprise of accomplishing this work that of publishing the holy book of New Testament void of any inappropriate or foreign (non-Assyrian) words. God bless you all.”

The symposium came to a pleasant conclusion with the following prayer from His Holiness.

In the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Our heavenly father make us deserving and help us in our weakness to stand before your Lordship, to make our language the key to knock at the door of your kindness, and beg that you open the treasures of Your goodness, sprinkle us with the dew of Your pleasant love, and implant in the hearts of all the members of our Church and Assyrian nation a desire to be united and be protected under the shadow of Your fatherly love.

O Savior, we ask You humbly to bless us and guide all the workers in the religious and national affairs to be able to be executors and propagators of faith, love and peace for our Assyrian Church and people that are scattered all over this globe, to speak the truth, to walk with honesty and meekness in unison according to Your goodwill. Amen.

6. 6. Visit to Iran, Lebanon and Russia in 1998

His Holiness Mar Dinkha undertook a tour in June till 6 October 1998. The Patriarch made a lengthy speech about his tour during 22nd Patriarchal anniversary dinner in Chicago. The speech delivered on the occasion in the Assyrian language was translated by Shimson Rasho and published in Voice From the East, August-December 1998 issue. The present writer was present at the Anniversary dinner to felicitate the Catholicos Patriarch on behalf of the Indian Church.

Mr. Shimshon Rasho's comment is accurate when he wrote, "That the highlight of this grand jubilation was the keynote address and eloquent oration delivered by His Holiness as the guest speaker." I am reproducing the speech below in its entirety because the speech is an example of his deep knowledge of Church history and his ecumenical contacts as well as his concern for the Assyrians expressed when he met leaders in Iraq, Lebanon, and Russia etc.

"Revered ecclesiastics, honorable representatives of our community organizations, sons and daughters of our Church and nation-greetings.

I am pleased to welcome you and to be with you on this occasion—the 22nd anniversary of our

consecration as Catholicos Patriarch of the Holy Apostolic Catholic Assyrian Church of the East. I do not consider this a personal festival in my honor but one that belongs to the entire membership of our worldwide Church.

I am profoundly elated to be with you again after an absence of three and a half months as the duties of my office required that I had to travel to our Diocese of Iran and Lebanon and to our parish in Moscow, Russia.

As you are aware, I still continue to oversee the affairs of our church in Iran until, with the grace of God, we have a bishop assigned for the diocese. My trip to Iran was at the invitation of the government of the Islamic Republic of Iran: thus, on my arrival at the airport, I was welcomed officially by high-ranking governmental dignitaries. Also to greet us were the Member of Parliament, Mr. Shimshon Maqsood, who represents the Assyrian community in Iran, the clergy, members of the Church Executive Committee, members of the Assyrian Council of Teheran and a large multitude of the sons and daughters of our Assyrian community in general and our Church in particular. I remained in Iran approximately for two months. During my stay there, I met with a number of prominent members of the Iranian administration among whom are; His Excellency Mohammed Khatami, the President of Iran; His excellency Natic Noori, the Speaker of Parliament; His excellency Yazdee, the Supreme Justice of Iran; and His Excellency Taskheri, Director of Interrelations

between Moslems and Christians.

I also had fruitful discussions with two cabinet ministers who have substantial influence in the formulation of a new policy to bring about closer relations between the two monotheistic religions in the country. Throughout, the discourse I had with all of the upper echelon governmental representatives were conducted with utmost mutual respect and in a spirit of understanding and it was often emphasized that it is imperative for us, we Christians of Middle East, to have greater contacts with our Moslem neighbours in order to create an atmosphere of genuine trust and goodwill between the religions believing in one God. These friendly contacts will enhance fraternal relations between us, which will promote love, respect and understanding and eliminate any cause for suspicion and animosity, the two basic elements that occasionally sully the good relations and peaceful coexistence between the two eastern religions that have lived side by side in this region for more than fourteen centuries.

For five days, I had the opportunity to visit our parishioners and the Assyrian community in the province of Urmia. I celebrated Holy Communion in the Church of Mart Mariam (St. Mary) in Urmia. I also ordained one deacon and two *heevpadyaqne* (sub deacons). In the City of Urmia and the surrounding villages, we have an Assyrian population of 12,000. In Tabriz, we have some fifty families. There are about 15,000 Assyrians residing in Teheran. The overall number of Assyrians now

remaining in Iran is about 50,000. Assyrians elect their own representative to the Iranian Parliament. The minorities in Iran have six seats in the National Assembly.

On August 8th, I left Teheran for London where I celebrated mass for our parishioners there. On September 2nd I left London for Beirut after an absence of 23 years. On arrival, I was led to the VIP hall where we were greeted by their Beatitudes Mar Narsai, Our Metropolitan; Mar Yosip Thomas of the Chaldean Church; and other clerics and a large number of Lebanese Assyrians. We drove to Mar Gewargis Church where we offered our prayers to God Almighty and our blessings to the congregation assembled to welcome us.

The following day, as scheduled beforehand, we paid an official visit to the President of the Lebanese Republic, His Excellency Elias Al Harawi, where we were received most hospitably. During our cordial discussions, His Excellency admonished us emphatically of the necessity for Christian unity within the Middle Eastern region. He also reiterated that centuries of futile and selfish interdenominational bickerings have alienated us one against the other. He also emphasized that it is high time to resolve our differences, which are minimal and establish a closer accord with each other, which will benefit all and be detrimental to none. He also articulated that if we Christians remain estranged with no recourse to multilateral amicable exchanges between ourselves, how would it be possible to coexist and have friendly relations

with our non-Christian countrymen.

On September 4th His Holiness Mar Nasrolla Patros Safir received us at the Maronite Patriarchate. Again, at this important meeting, the most sensitive subject of conversation was an absolute need for peace and love to replace hostility and animosity evidently characteristic of the predicament existing among the Lebanese Christians, who in recent past have caused a lot of bloodshed among themselves as a result of clannish jealousy.

On September 5th we met at the Armenian Patriarchate of Labanon and here, too, the principal subject was Christian rapprochement and affinity that could be achieved through regular exchanges of views between all segments of the Middle Eastern Christians.

Same day, we also paid our respects to His Holiness Patriarch Hakeem of the Roman Catholic Church. In the evening, His Beatitude Metropolitan George Saliba of the Syrian Orthodox Church called upon us at our Archbishopric and I was very glad to hear him speak perfectly in Assyrian.

On Sunday, September 6th, we celebrated Holy Communion at Mar Gewargis Church of Beirut. On September 8th, we were invited to appear on the Beirut TV station "Al Noor" operated by the Catholic Church. We were asked to deliver a discourse on: (1) The interdenominational rapprochement that lead eventually to the signing of "The Common Christological Declaration"

between the Roman Catholic Church and the Assyrian Church of the East on November 11, 1994, (2) On our efforts to bring about a reunion with the Chaldean Church which split from the Church of the East in 1553 not for dogmatic reasons but for personal ambitions, and (3) On our steadfast endeavors to achieve the realization of the ecumenical dream especially among the Christians of the Middle East. The interview was televised live in the form of questions and answers.

On 9th of September, we visited Sheik Shased Din, the leader of the Shiite Moslems of Lebanon. We discussed the establishment of interfaith contacts between Christians and Moslems in Lebanon to generate greater peace and tranquility for the benefit, progress and prosperity of all the people and country of Lebanon. His Eminence was greatly pleased with this meeting and showed full accord with our points of view.

On the same day, we made a courtesy call upon the following prelates in the City of Zahla as a first step towards future interdenominational communication:

- (1) Archbishop of Maronite church,
- (2) Archbishop of the Syrian Catholic Church,
- (3) Archbishop of the Rome Orthodox Church and
- (4) Leadership of the Presbyterian Church.

On the 10th of September, after our return to Beirut, we called upon the prelates:

- (1) Archbishop of the Syrian Orthodox Church and

(2) Patriarch of the Syrian Catholic Church.

On the 11th of September, the following personalities came to meet with us at our Bishopric in Beirut:

- (1) Very Rev. Archdeacon Gewargis of our Syrian Diocese, member of the Central Committee of Syria and
- (2) Mr. Zaia De Malik Ismayil.

At this meeting various subjects were discussed among them, the general affairs of the diocese and the completion of the Hassaka Church.

On the 12 of September, we drove to Kasra, a suburb of Zahla, where some eighty Assyrians families reside. Here our parish in Kasra has built a very beautiful Church with generous donations from the Church faithful throughout the world. We declared the church open under the name of Mar Zaya, one of our revered saints. There were many distinguished guests attending this opening ceremony, including a minister representing the President of Lebanon, the hierarchs and clergy of all Christian denominations of Lebanon, the Papal Nuncio, several members of parliament, high government officials and, of course all the prelates, clergy, deacons and parishioners of our Church. At the end of the religious part of the ceremony, the presidential delegate unveiled a large plaque depicting the grand opening of this magnificent edifice of worship.

The following day, being Sunday, consecration rites

were performed followed by mass. In the evening, a banquet was given at the Sheraton Hotel for more than 200 guests as a climax to this great event of which we were proud for such a wonderful achievement. Late in the night we retired to St. Albair Monastery in Beirut.

On the 14th, the Patriarchal synod began its first session with all of the eight prelates present attending. The synod lasted two full days in which the affairs of our universal church were studied at length and we concluded that the Church activities ought to be strengthened in the following areas:

- (a) Catechism is to be taught to all members,
- (b) Aramaic classes to be introduced in all parishes,
- (c) Teaching of modern Syriac to be extended to adults as well,
- (d) Clergy are to be instructed to preserve the originality of the ritual and the liturgy with no variation whatsoever,
- (e) Scriptures are to be read only in Aramaic,
- (f) We need to establish more seminars more to educate future generation clerics,
- (g) Services of learned educators with extensive knowledge in theology, philosophy and church doctrine are to be sought to teach in our seminaries and
- (h) To call for generous help in the establishment of such institutions.

On the 16th September, members of a joint Moslem/Christian Committee of Lebanon met with us in the monastery to discuss steps to be taken to unite the

people of Lebanon as one nation with no prejudices and free of sectarianism the only means that will bring stability to the country.

On the 17th, the members of the Patriarchal Synod met with their counterpart, the Chaldean prelates to evaluate the progress achieved and what else is needed to be done to expedite the realization of the anticipated union. As a result of this review, the following four committees were established to speed up the process.

- (1) The educational committee – Members: Mar Aprim Khamis, Assyrian Church of the East and Mar Avraham Avraham, Chaldean Church,
- (2) The Catechism Committee – Members: Mar Aprem Khamis and Mar Emmanuel, Dalli, Chaldean Church,
- (3) The Committee on dogma – Members: Mar Gewargis Sliwa, Assyrian Church of the East and Mar Jhac Iskhaq, Chaldean Church,
- (4) The clerical and Laity Committee –Members: Mar Bawai Soro and Mar Odisho, Assyrian Church of the East and Mar Yosip Thomas, Chaldean Church and
- (5) Secretaries:
Mar Avraham Avraham, Chaldean Church – USA
Mar Bawai Soro, Assyrian Church of the East – U.S.A.
Mar Gewargis Sliwa, Assyrian Church of the East – Iraq. and
Mar Gewargis Garmo, Chaldean Church – Iraq.

At the end of this historical conference, a declaration was issued by both Patriarchs – Mar Dinkha IV and Mar Raphael II and this was published in many newspapers and magazines.

Originally, these two churches were one before the split of some 400 years ago and were known as the Church of the East. During this span of four centuries, some revisions were introduced by the part, which joined the Roman Catholic Church as a *uniata* member. Therefore, it is not possible to bring about a complete reunion in the course of just a year or two. It is most encouraging that the first step in this direction has been embarked upon, thus we have hopes that this ultimate goal shall be reached eventually as we both bilaterally, have the intentions of working diligently to make our efforts a success.

The road we are about to retrace has been neglected for so long, thus, we have to move very cautiously to avoid the obstacles we will encounter. Our final destination is “unity” and with grace of God Almighty and our Savior Lord Jesus Christ we shall be there sooner or later. We are not only one Church but one nation. In 1403, the center of our universal Church was Alqosh under the leadership of one Patriarch.

We are delighted and heartened that the entire hierarchy of Chaldean Church acknowledge this fact and most zealous among them is my beloved brother, Mar Raphael, who has deep faith in his eastern roots and is greatly inspired by his nationalistic tendencies.

This latest conference in Lebanon elated our spirits and reinforced our conviction that there is no retreat from the righteous path we have chosen until one people and one Church are no longer divided but united as before. This will gladden the heart of Jesus who is the master of this, the most ancient of Christian Churches.

As it is prescribed in the gospel of Apostle Luke, the then unbelieving Hebrew leaders asked Jesus to silence the great crowds of his followers who were chanting “Praised be the Lord Almighty and blessed is the king who is coming in His name.” Jesus said unto them, that if these are silenced, the stones will cry out in their place affirming what has been prophesied. Thus, we are also reiterating to those who are telling us not to say we are Assyrians, we shall emphatically with vigour and pride that we are of one nation – Assyrians, Ninevites, descendants of the Assyrian race of Nineveh.

We shall not shut up, for if we do, stones and tablets from Ashurbanipal Library will loudly proclaim and testify on our behalf that we are true Assyrians. Also the people of Alqosh, Telkaif, Qaraqosh, Bartelli, Sapna, Aradin, Duhuk, Zakho and other communities of Bet Nahrain have always been our brethren in blood, of one brought up in one cradle of the Holy Apostolic Catholic Church of the East. There is no doubt, whatsoever, that we all belong to one Divine Church, one nationality speaking the language. We are hopeful that this undeniable fact will eventually enlighten the opinions and impress

upon the hearts of every Assyrian irrespective of where he or she may be standing on this issue.

On September 17, this monumental conference of the Two Hierarchies of the same Church came to an end. Immediately afterwards, we had a cordial meeting with the Prime Minister of Lebanon, Sheikh Rafiq Al Hariri. In the evening, all the prelates came together for a dinner given by Holiness Mar Raphael at his residence.

On 18th we returned back to the monastery to put down our signatures, Mar Raphael's and mine, to a joint declaration on the decisions undertaken at this meeting. The declaration was read to the members of both Patriarchal Councils present who had confidently given their unanimous consent to the same. We then, all of the seventeen conveners, went to the Presidential palace to offer our wholehearted thanks to His Excellency Elias Al Hariri and his administration for their hospitality and allowing us to conduct our meeting with complete freedom, comfort and security. We prayed for everlasting peace and prosperity to prevail in the charming country of Lebanon and for all its people.

On 19th I celebrated mass at our Church of Mar Khanania in Ashrafiya. The following day, we celebrated Holy Communion at Rabban Pityo Church in Haddad. I can tell you that Lebanon is a very beautiful country especially the eastern part where the Christians live.

On 24th I flew from London to Moscow

accompanied by Archdeacon Yonan and Mr. Fraidon Darmo. At the Russia's capital international airport, we were received by a special envoy of His Holiness Patriarch Alexi of all Russia. His Beatitude Mar Gewargis, Metropolitan of Iraq and Russia, Rev. Khamis, Rev. Odisho, Deacon Samano and a large numbers of members of the Church and community. After a brief rest at the VIP parlor, we were driven to the Orthodox Church guesthouse in Moscow as the invited guests of the Russian Patriarch.

On 25th, His Beatitude Metropolitan Younally invited us to the Archbishopric of Moscow. Metropolitan Younally is a great and respected person. We discussed about the possibility of some of our clergy to study in Russia with scholarship assistance. Metropolitan Youvanally promised to write to Patriarch Alexi of Moscow about it.

On Sunday September 27th we went to bless our church in the city of Moscow. His Beatitude Mar Gewargis Metropolitan of Iraq, Archdeacon Yonan Y. Yonan of England, Qashisha Khamis, Qashisha Odisho and Deacon Samano were with us. This Church in Moscow was dedicated in the name of Mart Mariam. This is the first church of the Assyrian Church of the East in Russia. The construction of this church is similar to the Church of Mar Gewargis in Daura, near Baghdad, Iraq.. There are about 800 members of this church. Each member contributed from 1000 dollars to one hundred thousand dollars.

On September 30th the church committee met at 3 p.m. One person donated 2000 dollars. In Russia we have two priests. One is Qasisha Khamis of Moscow. The other is Qashisha Odisho, son of Qashisha Ishai, son of late Qashisha Odisho of Sarsang, North Iraq. There is one shamasha Samano to help Qasha Khamis in Moscow.

They needed maintenance and so on and so forth. No payments are called for from those who are unable to do so due to their limited income – real democracy – ha! We believe there are more than 50,000 Assyrians spread through the federation and all are in need of spiritual services especially in Georgia and Armenia, but regrettably we cannot provide the same at this juncture.

On October 1st, we left Moscow for London. On 4th, we celebrated mass at our Mart Mariam Church there. We left London for Chicago on the 6th of October thus bringing to an end a well worth trip of three and a half months, not only fatherly visits to our dioceses and parishes in four countries but also meeting with several influential political and religious leaders which we anticipate our Church and Assyrian people will eventually benefit.

Old calendar, we have not forgotten them nor shall we ever do so, for they are an integral part of us and we have, in comparison, very minor differences. We are in constant contact with their leadership and with God's help and some goodwill everything will be smoothed out for the glory of our Master Jesus Christ and the goodness of our nation.

6.7. EPISCOPAL CONSECRATIONS IN SYRIA AND IRAQ, (October 1999)

In order to fill the vacancy created by the death of Bishop Mar Abraham Yohannan on 14th April 1985, Fr. Aprim Athniel was elected to fill the gap by the Holy Synod, which met in Chicago from April 19-27, 1999. He was raised to the rank of corepiscopa on June 18, 1999 by Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV in Mar Gewargis Cathedral in Chicago. Catholicos Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV consecrated Corepiscopa Aprim Athniel on October 10, 1999 at our Cathedral in Hassake, Syria as the Bishop of Syria by the name of Mar Aprim Athniel. The administrator of the diocese of Syria namely Archdeacon Gewargis Athniel (Father of the new Bishop) and the people gave Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV a rousing reception.

Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV travelled to Baghdad, Iraq for the next consecration. There was a proposal to conduct that consecration in North Iraq, Finally it was decided to do it in Baghdad itself, which is the capital of Iraq. Metropolitan Mar Gewargis Sliwa, Patriarchal Representative to Iraq, received the Patriarch with all respects and the security provided by the ministry of Awqaf of the Government of President Saddam Hussein.

On October 24, 1999 H. H. Mar Dinkha IV consecrated a new bishop for Northern Iraq and Russia, Bishop Mar Isaac Yosip was a priest in Moscow. He was 40 years old. He was interviewed along with Qasha Aprim Athniel of Syria by the Holy Synod, which met in Chicago in June 1999. He was from North Iraq. He had been raised to the rank of a cor -episcopa on June 18, 1999 at Mar Gewargis Patriarchal Cathedral in Chicago along with the proposed bishop for Syria Mar Aprim Athniel.

His consecration was a joyous occasion for the people of Iraq as it was the first Episcopal consecration in Iraq after 26 and a half years since the consecration of Mar Aprim Khamis and Mar Daniel Yakob on March 2, 1973. Although Mar Dinkha as Bishop had assisted Mar Yosip Khananisho Metropolitan during that Episcopal consecration service, this is the first time Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV was conducting a consecration service in Iraq, the land of his birth. Moreover the two bishops consecrated in 1973 are now living in America, this new bishop has gone to live in North Iraq.

Although this episcopal consecration was proposed to be held in Northern Iraq it was finally decided to be held in Baghdad, capital of Iraq. His Holiness had to travel from Syria to Iraq in order to perform this holy service. Thus exactly two weeks after the Bishop of Syria was consecrated in Hassake, Syria His Holiness consecrated in Baghdad the bishop of Nuhadra (Northern Iraq) and Russia.

It is first time in recent history an Episcopal consecration took place just two weeks after another consecration. It was appropriate that the bishop in Iraq was consecrated in Iraq rather than in Syria. Politically too Iraq was not friendly with Syria at that time. This is the last episcopal consecration, which the present Patriarch has conducted.

6. 8. APOSTOLIC VISIT TO INDIA, January 2000

In January 2000 His Holiness Mar Dinkha IV made an apostolic visit to India. His Beatitude Mar Narsai de Baz, Metropolitan of Lebanon, Syria and Europe accompanied the Patriarch in this journey. Rev. Dr. George Toma of Chicago was the personal

secretary and interpreter of the speeches of the Patriarch. His Holiness Mar Dinkha IV spoke always in the language of Jesus, Aramaic. Fr. George Toma interpreted it in English. Mar Aprem translated it into the local language, Malayalam.

It was the first visit after the unity brought about in the Church of the East in India in November 1995. But the Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV had visited India twice before, in February-March 1967 before he became a Patriarch and in January 1991 after he had become the Catholicos Patriarch. Since the Patriarch was coming to visit his flock after the unity there was great rejoicing in the Church in India.

The Indian Church made apostolic visit memorable. The Syro-Malabar (Catholic) Archbishop of Trichur Mar Jacob Thoomkuzhy accorded special warm reception to the Patriarch in the Lourdes Cathedral. The Catholicos of the East His Holiness Mar Thoma Mathews II of the Indian Orthodox Syrian Church came to meet Patriarch Mar Dinkha in Trichur and pay his respects. Many civic and religious communities participated in the various functions held in Trichur, Cochin, Kottayam and Coimbatore.

The Patriarchal Representative in India Mar Timotheus who was host to the Patriarch during the previous visit in January 1991 was not very well owing to his old age. He could not go to the airport to receive the Patriarch. Yet he was present in Trichur in some of the functions.

The Metropolitan in India Mar Aprem and all priests and Trustees made very elaborate arrangements for the reception of the Catholicos Patriarch. During the 12 days the Patriarch was in India the Church in India made it a big celebration befitting to a universal head of the Church. The Police jeep escorted the

Patriarch whenever he moved from place to place. The Trichur Municipality accorded a civic reception, which is a rare honour. The newspapers and television covered the events.

Upon his arrival in Trichur the Church Choir sang a welcome song in Malayalam and another Welcome song in English. The song in English, composed by the present writer is reproduced below.

“Come in Peace”

Come in peace our Holy Father
Maran Mar Dinkha Four
To the land of Hindustan
To the land of Mar Thoma Shleeha.

1. Patriarch of unity of the Church of the East
Father of our Fathers, head of all Assyrians
Make unity with others still in disunity
In history you will be known for unity.

(Come in peace)

2. Oh! Our Father of Millennium Third
This Indian visit of Your Holiness is the third
Bless this nation in the name of the Trinity
Oh, Catholicos Patriarch Maran Mar Dinkha Four.

(Come in peace)

3. Good Shepherd and our beloved primate
Catholicos Patriarch Maran Mar Dinkha Four
May God Almighty grant Your Holiness many years
We say Peace, Tranquility, Shlama and Namasthe.

(Come in peace)

SERMON

(Preached by Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV in Trichur, Kerala, India on 23 January 2000).

“Today January 23rd, year 2000, is the third Sunday of Epiphany.

We have celebrated the Holy Mystery of the Holy Offering (*Qurbana Qaddisha*) at the Church of Mart Mariam in Trichur.

Today’s Gospel from the Book of St. John 1: 29-43.

St. John says: “The next day John (John the Baptist) saw Jesus coming toward him and said Behold! The Lamb of God who takes the sin of the world! This is He of whom I said, “After me comes a man who is preferred before me, for He was before me.” (John 1: 29-31) John’ naming Jesus publicly as the Lamb of God recalls Isaiah’s “Servant of God” who dies for the transgressions of His people (Is 53: 4-12). Christ, the true Paschal Lamb, offers Himself for our deliverance from darkness and death (1 Pet. 1:18-19).

Yes, Jesus Christ was offered and sacrificed as a Paschal Lamb! So that the world will obtain joy and good hope. By the blood of Jesus the sins of the world will be cleansed, not the blood of animals. Jesus Christ is the bread which came down from the heaven to redeem the world and give life eternal to human kind.

Kindness and Good behaviour

We Christians from whatever denominations we are should take responsibility of maintaining our faith in Jesus Christ the son of God. The beauty of Christianity should be seen in our deeds. As one extended Christian Family we must love and respect one another in Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour. Jesus Christ says "As the Father loved me, I also have loved you, abide in my love. If you keep my commandments you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in His love. These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may remain in you and that your joy may be full. This is my command, that you love one another as I have loved you, greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends." (John 15: 9-14)

We are very happy to see you that the faithful children of our Church in India, have accepted this commandment of the Lord and listened to Him by bringing practical peace and unity in the Church in India, you have pleased the head of the Church our Lord Jesus Christ.

Because Jesus Christ loves you. He sent one of His 12 Apostles Mar Thoma 2000 years ago to preach to you the good news of Salvation. Mar Thoma was the first Apostle who evangelized this oriental region. Mar Thoma became a truthful friend of yours. You were called after his name. He loved you so much that he did not spare even his own life for your sake. Therefore you faithful children of

our beloved Church in India in your turn sacrifice and dedicate yourselves for the love Jesus Christ has shown you. Your sacrifice for Jesus Christ is to trust each other and have faith in each other so that as members of one body, the Church, be able to work together in love and peace.

The Church is the congregation of believers, members connected in one body. My request to you Oh faithful sons and daughters of our beloved Church in India and especially those of you who are active and holding responsibilities in the Church, such as Prelates, Deacons, Members of the Church Committees and Church Councils to work together faithfully and have love and respect for each other. If you O! faithful sons and daughters of the Holy Church work in harmony with each other, will pick up (gather) delicious fruits of your activities.

The goal of you all should be the prosperity and glory of the Holy Apostolic Catholic Church of the East in India.

Those of you who are active and holding responsibilities in the Church must set up good examples for the younger generation who are the future of the Church. Let the young generation see your good works. If you love and respect each other, your children as well, will work with each other in harmony in love respect and peace. The youth of today are the builders of the Church of Christ in near future.

Once again I am asking you O! Faithful Sons and daughters of our beloved Church in India, take all the possible considerations to keep maintain and strengthen this peace and unity of our Church in India. No one should ever try to bring about damage to the unity of our Church in India. God will never forgive if you try to destroy the unity of the Church.

Whoever has constructive suggestions and ideas, which are for the well being of the Church in India, has all freedom to submit them to the Church authorities here in India.

The Church authorities in India (Prelates, Priests, Members of the Church Council) will receive your suggestions in all happiness and will take necessary actions. It is not lawful for the members of the Church in India to bypass their Spiritual leaders by sending their complaints, suggestions and ideas to the Patriarchal office in United States of America. We from the United States cannot make my judgment regarding cases and problems of the faithful members of the Church in India.

Our direct contact is limited to Prelates who are members of the Holy Synod. Prelates as our representatives have complete authority and permission to inform us about the circumstances of our Church in India.

We also seek you strongly to be in harmony with your neighbours, whatever religion and denominations are they. Respect them so that you will also be respected by them. Do not ever despise

religions and worship style of the people whom you are living with.

Regarding our dialogue with other Churches: presently we are in dialogue with the Roman Catholic Church. In 1994 John Paul the Second, Bishop of Rome, and myself signed a Christological Declaration. This agreement removed a lot of obstacles and misunderstanding which separated for 15 centuries these two sister Churches. Now there is peace and respect between us. We are also in dialogue with some other Orthodox Churches. Any Christian Church which responds to our greetings of peace will make peace with her and develop dialogue activities with her.

Our only and lonely condition regarding making peace and dialogue with other Churches is: we do not want to accept any condition regarding bringing any change regarding our liturgy, sacraments, traditions and in the authority of Synodal Canons of our Church. Our Church has its own leadership, which is the Holy Synod. We do not ever allow to bring about change, even one "Yod" to our Liturgy and Sacraments of the Church. In other words there will be no compromise whatsoever. We will do everything possible to keep the authority and originality of the Church as we have received from the Holy Apostles.

In conclusion, I thank you all sons and daughters of our Church. and all Christians, Hindus (Authorities of Hindu religion) and Mayor, Civil authorities for your warm reception offered to us in

your blessed country, India. We pray that all of you sons and daughters of the blessed country, India, will work and live together in peace and tranquility, regardless of your religion and denomination. Because India is the home of all of you.

We are sorry greatly that one of the faithful and courageous member of the Holy Synod is not present with us (at least physically, spiritually! Believe he with us) His Lordship Mar Poulouse, Bishop of India. We are regretting his loss. The Church is still in the process of healing sufferings of his death. May God bless his soul and grant him a place in His heavenly Kingdom! And May God console and encourage the children of our Church in India and we express our condolences to his relatives, immediate family and friends.”

SERMON

(Preached on January 30, 2000 during Qurbana in a specially erected altar in the premises of the Mar Yohannan Mamdhana Church).

Today is the Fourth Sunday after the feast of Epiphany, January 30, 2000. We have celebrated the Holy Qurbana in the city of Trichur, Kerala in the land of India.

The gospel of today is from the book of St. John I: 43 – 2: 12. John the evangelist is writing, saying, “The following day Jesus wanted to go to Galilee, and He found Philip and said to him, “Follow me.” Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the city of Andrew

and Peter. Philip found Nathaniel and said to him, “We have found Him of whom Moses in the law, and also the prophets, wrote – Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph and Nathaniel said to him “Can anything come out of Nazareth?” Philip said to him “come and see”.

When Jesus saw Nathaniel coming toward Him, and said of him, “Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no deceit!” Nathaniel said to him, “How do you know me?” Jesus answered and said to him, “Before Philip called you., when you were under the Fig tree, I saw you.” Nathaniel answered and said to Him, “Rabbi, you are the son of God. You are the King of Israel!” Jesus answered and said to him, “Because I said to you, ‘I saw you under the Fig tree’, do you believe? You will see greater things than these.”

At the beginning of the Gospel of today I have read to you: as Philip found Nathaniel and said to him: We have found Him of whom Moses in the law, and also the Prophets, wrote – Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph. Thus Moses wrote about the advent of Jesus, and the prophets had prophesied in the Old Testament of coming of the savior. For this reason a portion of the Jewish people accepted and believed in Jesus Christ, the Son of the living God: St. Matthew, the evangelist also writes saying: “So all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying: “Behold the virgin shall be with child, and bear a son, and they call His name Immanuel, “which is translated, “God with us.” (Matthew 1: 22 – 24).

Prophet Isaiah prophesied and said “Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a son, and they shall call His name Immanuel, “which is translated, “God with us”. Yes the second person of the Holy Trinity God the Son, like the rays of the sun shone in that temple of human flesh, which was by the power of the Holy Spirit in the bosom (womb) of the Blessed Virgin Mary. The physical body of human flesh was anointed by divinity. Through the word of Christ (*Msheeha*) we confess that Jesus Christ is a perfect God and a perfect man. His divine nature and divine *qnuma* (person) and His human nature and Human *qnuma* (person) united eternally in one person of sonship. The Apostle Paul confirms and mentions this doctrine when he says: For there is one God and one Mediator between God and Men, the Man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself a ransom for us all.” (1 Timothy 2: 5)

In this Gospel that we have just read to you, the author confirms the divinity and humanity of the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus said to Nathaniel, “Before Philip called, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you”. Nathaniel was astonished by the word of Jesus. Nathaniel answered and said to Him, “ Rabbi, you are the son of God. You are the King of Israel.” Because being under the fig tree was a Mystery known only to his mother and to him (Nathaniel). Nathaniel was Jesus’ age, when Herod put to death all the male children who were in Bethlehem and in all its districts, from two years and under, in order to destroy the newborn king Jesus Christ, but an angel of the Lord had fetched Joseph and Mary to flee to Egypt. Nathaniel’s mother had hidden her

son Nathaniel under the fig tree. For this reason Jesus told Nathaniel, “Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you.”

With God there is nothing hidden. For this reason Jesus says before you ask my father, He knows what do you want. When we are praying to God we are talking with God, we are offering petition to him. Along with a petition there must be strong faith. Because if we have no faith our petition will not be accepted. A sinner, if he will not feel sorry for her mistakes (sins) and ask for forgiveness, he will not be forgiven. Jesus Christ was crucified and died for the forgiveness of our sins. By receiving the sacred body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, our sins are forgiven.

St. Matthew says Jesus took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to the disciples and said, “Take, eat, this is my body.” Then He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, drink from it, all of you. “For this is my blood of the new Covenant which is shed for many for the remission of sins.”(Matthew 26: 26- 29). For the love Jesus shown us, members of His church, how much necessary is that we also show our true and pure love towards our savior. We can show our love for Jesus Christ by obeying His commandments. Jesus says “A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another as I have loved you, that you also love one another by this all will know that you are my disciples, if you have Love for one another.” (John 13: 34-35).

These words of the Holy Bible which have been delivered to you O sons and daughters of our Church: do not solely hear them but rather implement them practically in your everyday life. (transform them into deeds) When you attend the church to participate in the solemn celebration of *Qurbana Qaddisha*. (Holy Offering) along with your priest it is important that you should believe the bread and wine after consecration is the real and actual body and blood of Jesus Christ; your hearts and minds, must be purified from hating, anger and enmity, so that you yourself are able to make your hearts a proper and a suitable dwelling place for the Lord to abide in as we purify our body and cloth, much more we should purify and clean our thoughts and our hearts – from everything that is bad.

I cordially ask you O beloved sons and daughters of our Holy Church in India, all of you to be in love, peace and reconciliation with one another. Forget the bitter past. Those days have already passed and are thrown in the disposal cases of history. At this present time faith, love and peace of Jesus Christ will bind you strongly to the body of His Holy Church be kind and humble towards one another. Never, ever pay evil for evil. Let the words of blessings always proceed out of your mouth. After the lovely words of honour and respect towards one another the Apostle Peter says "For He who would love life. and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil and his lips from speaking deceit." (1 Peter 3:10).

All of you O beloved, prelates, priests, deacons,

deaconesses, nun, Church council and all sub-committees who are taking responsibilities and are active in the Holy Apostolic Catholic Church of the East in India are bound to work with each other as connected members of one body of the Church just as each member of the body has different obligation than that of his friend, for example eye is for vision. Ear is for hearing and etc. Yet all are working in harmony, each doing his obligation in one united body. All are connected to one body after the same manner those you also are active in the Holy Church. Prelates have great responsibility towards the body of the Church. Priests and deacons have responsibility of priesthood towards the body of the church. So as the Church Council, Sub committees and Youths' Association have responsibility towards the Church. All should work together in faith, love, respect and listening so that you will be able to offer good fruits for the sons and daughters of our Church in India. It is obvious the Indian Church as well is connected with the mother Church. Their Graces Mar Timotheus and Mar Aprem are members of the Synodal Council of the Church of the East. In the Church there is no difference from ethnic background or nationality you are, from what country you are. Until the beginning of the 14th century the Church of the East had 80 million followers under one headship of one Patriarch whose Holy Patriarchal See was at first in Seleucia Ctesiphon, then moved to Baghdad.

Tomorrow Monday afternoon myself, His Grace Mar Narsai and Reverend Father Gewargis will leave you in peace. We are going back to our

countries of residence. We have been with you for twelve days. We have been able to celebrate the mystery of the Holy Qurbana (*Qurbana Qaddisha*) only for two Sundays. We have met with members of some parishes in their own church buildings. We have also met with priests, deacons, and church council members of sub committees and with you, O spiritual sons and daughters of our Holy Church. What has pleased me more in this visit of mine with you, is unity and peace of the Church in India as one body under one spiritual pastor (shepherd). Once again asking you all to keep this gift of unity you possess. May your unity be strengthened and bound in faith and true love.

I want to remind you again that Mar Timotheus Metropolitan is tired and not feeling well. He cannot be active for our Church in India any more as he used to be in the past. Mar Timotheus has been a faithful and a spiritual Metropolitan for almost 29 years. He was the only Metropolitan in my consecration as Catholicos Patriarch of the Church of East at London, England in October 17th 1976. In all the Holy Synods that he had participated, he was considered by all the prelates as a spiritual, humble and faithful person. For this reason I ask Mar Aprem Metropolitan, priests, deacons, Church council and all of you O children of our church in India to respect and take care of Mar Timotheus.

I want to remind you that the Church in India in near future is in need of prelates. Candidates must be prepared from the sons of our Church in India. There is election in the church. Therefore in order

to have election for episcopacy; the Church in India must prepare more than one person. These appointed persons, first must be taught the teachings of our Church, then be sent to higher universities to gain sufficient theological knowledge so that they will be capable captains who would lead the boat of our Church safely toward the port of peace.

We are all sons and daughters of our Church in the world, whom the See of one of the prelates is vacant, from the same diocese; somebody must be appointed and elected. That person should be chosen and recommended by the people of the diocese. The elected person should be faithful to Synodical canons, Liturgy and Sacraments of the Church of the East. He should hold good name among the sons and daughters of the church. He should be an intelligent and wise person so that he will not fall under the influence of the selfishness and based lay people. His age should not be less than 30 years. Must obtain a written report from his physician that he is physically and mentally healthy. He should also be humble and patient, receptive, obedient and forgiver, otherwise he will not be able to work for the church. Person with qualifications will be presented to Patriarch when Holy Synod convenes, Patriarch will ask the person proposed and chosen by people of the diocese to attend the Holy Synod in order to get the approval of the prelates, members of the Holy Synod as, if everything meets the satisfaction of the Holy Synod then this person will be ordained by the Catholicos Patriarch of the Church.

PATRIARCHAL ADDRESS

(Address of Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV in the public reception in Trichur, Kerala, India on the evening of Sunday 23rd January 2000. Mr.P. J. Joseph, Honourable Minister of the Government of Kerala was present)

“ Dear Bishops, Honourable Minister Joseph, other dignitaries, this is my third visit to India. The first time in 1967 I came as a Bishop. The second time in 1991 as Patriarch. During my first visit with the sons and daughters of the Church of the East, I felt the bitterness of split and separation of the Church. Since 1964 there was a misunderstanding between, God bless their souls, Late Mar Shimun Patriarch and Mar Thoma Darmo Metropolitan and this misunderstanding led to the split of our Church.

Now that I am the Patriarch I thought it is my responsibility to work hard for the sake of reuniting our Church in India. First we discussed this matter with His Grace Mar Timotheus Metropolitan and his clergy. We saw that all are pro-unity and peace of our Church in India.

Then we made arrangements to meet His Grace Mar Aprem Metropolitan and Mar Poulouse (Episcopa) Bishop and some of their faithful members. We have learned from them that they also were interested in the unity and peace of our Church in India. All had good intention towards unity of our Church, especially the youth of our Church were happy. All the preparations were made to bring about unity in the Church. Praying and offering

petitions to the head of the Church Our Lord Jesus Christ on behalf of unity contributed a great deal towards the achievement of our goal. The Lord heard our petition and commanded us not to cease walking through the bright path that leads towards unity.

In the year 1995 for the same purpose, we sent His Grace Mar Narsai Metropolitan of Lebanon and His Grace Mar Meelis, Bishop of Australia and New Zealand. They followed the way of peace and unity which was prepared for them – the hard work and sacrifice of both sides rendered delicious fruits of love and peace and unity to our Church in India in particular and the Holy Apostolic Catholic Church of the East in general. The Church in India from the first century of Christianity was blessed and established by the commandment of the head of the Church Jesus Christ. Our Lord sent one of this twelve Apostles to this blessed Indian country in order to preach to them and establish the Church in India.

The purpose of my visit is to see you from nearness that our Church in India after 30 years of split and separation has finally perfectly united. I am extremely happy that you were able to make the head of the Church our Lord Jesus Christ happy – seek to maintain this gracious gift of pious unity, which has been given to you O sons, and daughters of our Church in India by the lord Jesus Christ himself. That is a blessing to you.

I am very delighted to hear and see both prelates

His Grace Mar Timotheus Metropolitan, our representative and His Grace Mar Aprem Metropolitan of India together with all faithful members of the Church Council and committees along with sons and daughters of the Church, working together in peace, love and respect for the progress and prosperity of our Church here in India. I am very happy that we have in our Church in India 35 priests, 27 deacons, 5 sub deacons, 1 reader 2 deaconess and 1 nun. I am also pleased to see many new Church buildings and Church Halls were added to the already present properties of the Church. This is all, is the fruit of unity and peace of the Church.

The only thing that bothers me and makes me feel sad is the emptiness of the place of His Lordship Late Mar Poulose Episcopa (Bishop). Because His Lordship in the Synodical Council held at Chicago 1997 expressed his love and happiness, if I would visit the beloved sons and daughters of our united Church of India. I am sorry that he is not here with us now. The unexpected death of His Lordship Mar Poulose is the Loss not only for our Church, in India but as a matter of fact for the entire Church of the East in the world. We pray and offer petitions that Almighty God will grant His soul peace and rest in His heavenly Kingdom and give him share with all the righteous people in His Kingdom – We also express our condolences and encouragement to all our beloved sons and daughters of our Church in India in general and to all members of His Lordship's immediate family and relatives. Amen.

We can see His Grace Mar Timotheus Metropolitan is being tired of the burden of old age, therefore an urgent necessity that one of the sons of our Church in India be prepared as soon as possible and be consecrated (ordained) Bishop as assistant to His Grace Mar Aprem.

Because we see the great emptiness of the place of His Lordship Late Mar Poulouse here in India. We want the bishop to be one of the sons of our Church in India. The one who will be elected for episcopacy should be faithful, intelligent, have good behaviour and have good name among the sons and daughters of the Church. Please from this moment consider this matter.

I am very delighted to see that the prelates of our Church, clergy and sons and daughters of the Church have love, respect and good relationship with other Christian Churches and other religious communities. Because arriving at Trichur all warmly welcomed us. I also express my thanks to civil authorities and to the entire population of the state of Kerala and the city of Trichur, regardless to their religion and ethnic background. May Almighty God bless you all.

Our request is that all different religions and denominations that exist in this blessed country of India to be in love and peace with one another. As citizens of India they should work in harmony for the sake of building their country, because the prosperity of this country and maintaining peace and tranquility among all religions for the benefit

of all. All have rights to live in peace and maintain their faith and traditions.

Although our Church is one of the minorities in India yet her glorious history goes back to the first century. This Church was established and founded by St. Thomas (Mar Thoma) one of the twelve Apostles of Lord. Mar Thoma preached from Jerusalem on his way to India. He preached the good News of salvation to all the people whom he encountered. He preached to our people in Urmiah in IRAN. Up to this day his commemoration on July 3rd is observed (preserved) by sons and daughters of our Church in Urmiah, IRAN.

We thank the Civil authority and the Indian government for allowing the beloved sons and daughters of our Church as fellow Christians and citizens of this country enjoying all freedom to practice their religious convictions and are in peace with their neighbours.

This is 2000 years since the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ. Many Christian Churches are celebrating the advent of third millennium! We also as a Church that started 2000 years ago, are celebrating the commemoration 2000 years of the birth of the Lord. This celebration will take place in the city of Seleucia Ctesiphon near Baghdad of today. For this twin city was the First center of our Ancient Church. Until the seventh Century the Patriarchal See of the Church of the East was in Seleucia Ctesiphon then the See was moved to Baghdad.

For this reason we have decided in the Synodical Council held at Chicago, Illinois in 1999 that we would celebrate the commemoration of 2000 years of Christianity in Seleucia Ctesiphon.

The Catholic Chaldean Church and we will celebrate together. For till 1552 we were all one Church. In the year 1552 one portion of the Church of the East submitted to the spiritual headship of Vatican and were later known as Chaldeans, though they were ethnically Assyrians. Their Church is known to this day Chaldean Church. These celebrations will take place October 20th, 2000. We have established a preparatory committee for the purpose at Baghdad. We had met with official authorities of IRAQ Government and Minister of religious affairs. They promised that they would help us to have a successful celebration.

They promised to be helpful to the members of our Church and Chaldean Church (Catholic) regarding offering of entry visa to whoever wants to attend the celebration. We invite you O sons and daughters of our Church to attend the year 2000 jubilee, if it is possible.

In November 1999 we went to Syria: along with me was His Grace Mar Narsai, Metropolitan of Lebanon, Mar Meelis, Bishop of Australia and New Zealand and Mar Oudisho, Bishop of Europe. We were honourably welcomed by the Syrian Civil authorities and our Church congregation. On October 10th 1999 we consecrated Fr. Aprim Athaniel Bishop for the diocese of Syria, as Mar

Aprim. Mar Aprim studied philosophy and theology for 6 years in United States of America. Mar Aprim received M.A. degree in theology. He is 36 years old. From Syria we went to Baghdad, IRAQ. On Sunday October 24th 1999 we consecrated Fr. Khamis Bishop for our diocese in Dohuk, Northern part of IRAQ. Fr. Khamis was given the name Mar Isaac. Mar Isaac was priest in Moscow, Russia for 5 years. While he was in Russia he worked hard, as a consequence of his efforts the new Church of Mart Mariam (St. Mary) was built for the first time in Russia. On September 27, 1999 myself and Mar Gewargis Metropolitan of IRAQ went to Russia and consecrated this Church. The See of Mar Isaac is for the diocese of Dohuk.

Now we have 4 Metropolitans in our Church:
1. Mar Timotheus and 2. Mar Aprem for India 3. Mar Narsai for Lebanon 4. Mar Gewargis for IRAQ.

We have 8 bishops: 1. Mar Sargis for Baghdad 2. Mar Aprim Khamis for Arizona 3. Mar Bawai for California 4. Mar Meelis for Australia and New Zealand. 5. Mar Emmanuel for the diocese of Canada 6. Mar Audisho for Europe. 7. Mar Aprim Athaniel for Syria and 8. Mar Isaac Yosip for Dohuk. These are the prelates of our Church.

I want to take this opportunity to say few words about our dialogue with the Roman Catholic Church. In 1984 I personally met with His Holiness John Paul II (the second) Pope of the Catholic Church in Vatican. We spoke about the issue of dialogue and understanding each other as two

Churches, Church of the East and the Church of the West.

With great joy His Holiness Pope accepted my suggestion. We appointed two committees for this dialogue and for ten years those two committees met in love and respect and in a Christian spirit. They were able during this period of time to solve all the misunderstanding. That we had against one another regarding fundamental issues of our Christian faith for 15 centuries.

Without imposing any conditions upon each other, November 11th 1994 His Holiness John Paul II and myself were able to sign a Christological agreement. This agreement brought these two Churches, which were completely strangers to each other to a better relationship. Since then we both Churches have elected a mixed committee. Once a year this committee meets to discuss and expel the existing problems that yet exist and stand in way of unity. For many years His Grace Mar Narsai Metropolitan was the Chairperson of this committee from our side. Now His Grace Mar Aprem Metropolitan of India is heading this committee. With Chaldean Church (Catholic) also we have dialogue. Upto this day we have met three times. We have appointed a committee from our side Mar Narsai Metropolitan of Lebanon, Mar Giwargis Metropolitan of IRAQ and Mar Bawai, Secretary of the Committee of Inter-Church Relations and Education for Development, are the members of the committee. We also have dialogue with Syrian Orthodox Church.

In this visit is with me His Grace Mar Narsai Metropolitan of Lebanon because he played a great role in bringing unity within our Church in India. Mar Meelis has contributed a great deal towards achieving unity of our Church in India, but because he is too busy with our Church affairs in Australia, he could not accompany me in this visit. We brought with us Rev. Fr. Giwargis Toma who is one of the most learned, faithful and obedient priests that we have. Fr. Toma obtained Doctorate in Ministry. This is the reason why we brought him from New Britain to Chicago where we have four parishes to teach them Messianic teaching and Bible Study and Synodical canons of the Church, especially to our young people. We will stay here till Monday 31st of January 2000. We will say good-bye to you (Leave you in peace). Thank you all once again.”

His Holiness Catholicos Mar Thoma Mathews II was invited to inaugurate the public reception to the Patriarch, he could not be present as he was outside Kerala state on that day. He sent the following message. As soon as he returned to Kerala he came to Trichur to pay personal respects to our Catholicos Patriarch. He presented a gold chain to the Patriarch. He had come to the reception of the Patriarch in Trichur in January 1991, while he was Catholicos Designate to succeed Mar Thoma Mathews I. And recently in 2003 the 89 –year-old Catholicos visited our Patriarch in his residence in Morton Grove, near Chicago. The Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church members admit that until 1665 AD they were together with our Church of the East receiving bishops from the Patriarchs of the Church of the East of Seleucia - Ctesiphon near Baghdad.

Catholicos Mar Thoma Mathews II sent a message.

MESSAGE

Telegrams:Devalokam

Telephone 570569

578500

Fax (0481) 570569

The Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church
CATHOLICATE OF THE EAST

BASELIOS MARTHOMA
MATHEWS II, CATHOLICOS OF THE APOSTOLIC THRONE
OF ST. THOMAS AND
MALANKARA METROPOLITAN

Catholicate Palace
KOTTAYAM 686038
KERALA, INDIA.

I am very happy to know that His Holiness Moran Mar Dinkha IV, Catholicos Patriarch of the Church of the East is visiting India this month, which is of great significance especially when we are preparing for the celebrations of the Great Jubilee 2000.

We do appreciate the active part played by the Church of the East in all the forums aimed at promoting Christian co-operation and implementing Christ's good-will throughout the world, and also the priceless contribution made to the treasury of world culture.

Today the world is confronted with very difficult problems, conflicts of all kind, abuse over the divine creation and action, which led the human being away from his God and Creator.

We have to give necessary guidance and directions to the people to find the only right path which is Christ Who is "The Way, the Truth and the Life" and lead them to "live soberly, righteously and

godly” in this present world to produce a community lived in peace and praise of God. Let us strive for the implementation of the Christian ideals, which are also common to all mankind, ideals of peace on earth, renewal among nations and good will among men.

I am sure in our attempt for renewal and development of relationships between various Christian denominations’ an ecumenical portrait of visible unity will also emerge uniting all in Christ Jesus.

May God Almighty shower His blessings on His Holiness and grant him grace and strength for many more years of blessed service in this world.

With all best wishes and love.

BASELIOS MARTHOMA MATHEWS II

A message sent from Vatican by Cardinal Walter Kasper is given below.

MESSAGE

PONTIFICIUM CONSILIUM AD CHRISTIANORUM UNITATEM FOVENDAM

E Civitate Vaticana, die
23 February 2000

PROT. N. 839/00

Dear Fr. Thalokaran,

In a letter of December 1st 1999, addressed to H. H. Pope John Paul II, you asked for a message, to be published in the proposed souvenir book, prepared on the occasion of the visit of H. H. Mar Dinkha IV to his faithful in India. While expressing my congratulations for the success of this important pastoral visit, I am pleased to send you the following message. It can be published as a message of the Pontifical Council for promoting Christian Unity in the above-mentioned publication.

“On the occasion of the visit of H. H. Mar Dinkha IV, Catholicos-Patriarch of the Church of the East to India, the Pontifical Council for promoting Christian Unity gladly extends a fraternal greeting to all members of the Assyrian Church of the East living in India.

On November 11th 1994 H.H. Pope John Paul and H.H. Mar Dinkha IV signed together a ‘Common Christological Declaration between the Catholic Church and the Assyrian Church of the East’.

The Christological Declaration was a real turning point in the relation between our churches. In the last chapter of this document, both church leaders wrote: “In thanking God for having made us rediscover what already unites us in the Faith and the sacraments. We pledge ourselves to everything possible to dispel the obstacles of the past which still prevent the attainment of full communion between our churches, so that we can better respond to the Lord’s call for the unity of his own, a unity which has of course to be expressed visibly”. It is my sincere desire that our Churches may continue, with courage and faith, their ecumenical pilgrimage towards full reconciliation and communion. May the Lord grant us to accomplish what he prayed for: “that all may be one”.

May God abundantly bless the sacred ministers and the faithful of the Assyrian Church in India.”

With the expression of my esteem and most fraternal regards.

WALTER KASPER
SECRETARY⁷

6. 9. The Millennium Celebration in Iraq, October 2000

One of the important events in the life of the Christian Churches in Iraq was the millennium celebration held in Seleucia

⁷ Later Bishop Walter Kasper was nominated as Cardinal. Now he is the Prefect of this Council. His successor as secretary is now Cardinal in Canada. Now Bishop Brian Farrell is the secretary of this Council.

Ctesiphon as well as in Rabban Hurmizd monastery in Alkosh near Mosul in October 2000. There was enough co-operation among the different Christian denominations.

The Seleucia Ctesiphon celebration was presided over by His Holiness Mar Dinkha IV. Patriarch Raphael Bidawid of the Chaldean Catholic Church and Patriarch Mar Addai II of the ancient Church of the East were also present.

The celebrations in Iraq were concluded with the celebration presided over by Mar Raphael Bidawid. Patriarch Mar Dinkha and several of his bishops were present in Rabban Hormuzd monastery where many of the Patriarchs of the Church of the East have their tombs.

It was the first time the Catholicos Patriarch of the Church of the East entered the monastery of Rabban Hurmizd after the split of the Church into Church of the East and Chaldean Church at the time of John Sulaqa in 1552AD. Pope consecrated John Sulaqa in Rome in 1553 as the Patriarch of the Chaldeans.

His Holiness Mar Dinkha IV was given rousing receptions in Iraq during 16 to 31 October 2000. The Catholicos Patriarch returned to Chicago on 27th November.

Patriarchal Speech 2000

On the occasion of the second Christian millennium Jubilee His Holiness gave an address on Monday 23rd October, 2000 on the location of Kokhi (Seleucia Ctesiphon) in Iraq after a holy Mass in commemoration of Kokhi. Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV said:

“We are pleased to meet you on this site full of dear

memories. Our honourable guests, beloved children of our Church of the East, Christian brethren, and the children of our beloved country Iraq of all sects alike.

We extend our thanks to the Iraq leadership headed by President Saddam Hussein asking the Almighty God to help him in leading the ship of the Iraqi people to the shore of safety and peace. We have gathered hither today to celebrate together the second millennium commemoration of the birth of the first Church in Mesopotamia and the entire East. This Church which was nucleus of the Church of the East, and its remains are still in view to this day. In regard to the sublime place occupied by Kokhi in the hearts of adherents of the Church of the East, and its historical place, we have gathered here to celebrate and hold divine Mass in open air calling back the glorious past of our Church, and we seize the opportunity of these happy moments to give thanks to God who enabled us together here in our beloved country the cradle of our holy apostolic Church and in an atmosphere of freedom and security to perform our religious rituals and in commemoration of our holy fathers the apostles and patriarchs whose relics sanctified this soil; for the Church of Kokhi embraces the holy relics of more than 25 patriarchs starting with Mar Mari (82 AD) and ending with Mar Khnanisho II (779 AD).

When talking about the Church of the East, we mean by it the two sister Churches: the Assyrian and the Chaldean for we had been one Church under one headship until the 16th century, as you know. We

are celebrating together this historical occasion as the children of one church that is, the Church of the East. Let's pray together asking God the Almighty to help us in our endeavors to achieve the unity of our church.

The bones of our holy fathers the apostles and the patriarchs are embraced by the soil of Seleucia Ctesiphon as valuable treasures for the children of our Church. Blessed is this country and blessed are its children by the prayers of those saints. We pray to the Almighty God to support our dear Iraqi people in their historical steadfastness against the unjust embargo imposed on them for ten years. As we are celebrating the commemoration of Kokhi, we have to remember and remind the whole world of the tears of the bereft mothers who lost their beloved children because of the unjust embargo. We share with them their sorrows.

My beloved brothers, permit me to talk briefly about the history of the Church of the East.

Before the Ascension of the Lord Jesus Christ to Heaven, he said to his Apostles: "I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth. Go, then, to all peoples everywhere and make them my disciples: baptize them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and teach them to obey everything I have commanded you. And I will be with you always, to the end of the age" (Matthew 28: 18-20).

Hence, the Church of Christ is not the Church of

only one people, but it is the Church of the whole world. As such she is called the Catholic Church; the Church of all those who are united with one faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and His divine message. After the Descent of the grace of the Holy Spirit upon the apostles on the Pentecost, they started to carry out the commandments of the Lord Jesus Christ. So they set out from Jerusalem to the whole world preaching the Good News, the Gospel.

The first Apostles who set out to the East were: Simon "Peter" who wrote his catholic epistle from Babylon (1 Peter: 5:13), Mar Toma and Mar Bartholomew of the twelve; and Mar Addai,⁸ Mar Mari, and Mar Aggai of the Seventy. These apostles came around these regions and sowed the Christian faith and founded the Church of the East.

After the Ascension of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Divine Care inspired Mar Toma (Thomas) to choose Mar Addai and sent him to Urhai (Edessa). He started preaching the Gospel and performing miracles and his fame spread out in the city. The first to believe in Christ was King Abgar Oukama (The black), his family, and later the entire city. His mission reached a major part of the north of Mesopotamia, namely Miafarqin and Athur. He established many parishes and dioceses. He built many churches and ordained many priests and deacons. He confirmed the bishopric of Hidiab (Arbil), and Mar P'Qida occupied its See. Mar Toma, likewise, preached the Gospel in the eastern

⁸ There is another view that Mar Addai was Thaddeus, one of the 12 disciples of Jesus.

countries and crowned his mission with martyrdom in India. As for Mar Bartholomew, one of the Twelve, he preached for a long time in Mesopotamia and Armenia where he was crowned with martyrdom. Before his death, Mar Addai, ordained his disciple Mar Mari who was noted for his piety and virtues and then sent him to the East. He set out from Urhai and preached in Nisibis and Arzon, sowing in them the teachings of Christ. He built churches, monasteries, and schools. After Mar Mari rooted out the tree of seduction, he converted great multitude to Christianity through the wonders and miracles he achieved in the name of Jesus Christ. When Hidiab (Adiabene), the region between the two Zabs, D'rar, and Warden had embraced Christianity, Mar Mari moved to Seleucia-Ctesiphon.

In Seleucia-Ctesiphon, Mar Mari could not gain any disciples owing to their hard-heartedness and because paganism was deeply rooted in them. So he wrote a letter to his brothers the apostles in Urhai saying: "The land you sent me to is a land of sin and it is full of thorns. Its people are hard-hearted, rebels, and disobedient. There is no way to sow in their evil hearts the seeds of life. So permit me to come over to you or let me set out to another country." However, the apostles who were concerned in saving souls did not approve of his idea. As such, they wrote back to him saying: "You are not allowed to leave Babylon and come back to us, nor should you set out to another country, unless you climb those lofty mountains, dominate them, and sow seeds on their summits to reap good fruits."

In Seleucia there were three councils: the first was for the elders, the second for the youth, and the third for the younger boys. An idea occurred to him that made him join the council of the elders hoping to be the fisherman of souls. It occurred that the chief of the council of the elders fell ill, and Mar Mari seized that opportunity to pay him a visit. The illness of the chief grew worse. The saint laid his hand upon him and healed him on the spot.

After the chief of the board got up, pleased and happy, Mar Mari took advantage of the situation and talked to the chief about the Christian Religion. The chief was amazed and wondered if the saint had the intention of bringing a new god in this world. Then Mar Mari answered the chief that God is not a new being but sempiternal and that God has made the heaven, the earth, the seas, and every thing. Mar Mari added that God is beyond perception and He who is the beam of his Godhead, was sent to this world so that human beings may know the Father through the Son and the Holy spirit who spoke through the prophets, taught us the path of eternal salvation.

Mar Mari added that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are one God the Almighty, Creator of all things visible and invisible and the Judge of all human beings. Then he said to the chief that that was the Christian faith, and that by this Great God the Almighty we perform miracles, heal diseases, and drive away evil spirits. After God had illumined the chief's mind, he and his family were baptized in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy

Spirit by Mar Mari. Here Mar Mari sowed the first seed as the Lord Jesus Christ said, "The kingdom of heaven is like this: A man takes a mustard seed and sows it in his field. It is the smallest of all seeds, but when it grows up, it is the biggest of all plants. It becomes a tree, so that birds come and make their nests in its branches". (Matthew 13: 31-33). The seed that Mar Mari sowed in Seleucia-Ctesiphon became a big tree, high and with extending shade, and its roots reached the sea and its branches stretched to Tibet, China, Philippine, Japan, Siberia, Korea, India, and elsewhere.

After the chief of the council, the prince Afrahat of Seleucia, Artaban, and the prince of Ctesiphon embraced Christianity. After Mar Mari had built the Church of Kokhi, he set out to the country lying between Baghdad and Wasit.

He toured Kashgar and converted its people to Christianity and he built in it Churches. Then he left for Misan and converted its people to Christianity. Later, he went to Ahwaz, and Persia illuminating a great population with the Holy Gospel. Then he went back to Ctesiphon where he spent the rest of his life. Mar Mari issued a resolution, which made the holder of the See of Kokhi the archbishop of the entire East. Before his death, Mar Mari left Mada'in for Quny monastery where he called all his disciples. When all were gathered, he said to them: "I have enriched you with the Gospel's teachings and you have seen with your own eyes how my treatment and behaviour towards you were. So then you follow the same example

and keep the laws and rules issued by the apostles in Jerusalem. Perform your holy services properly and keep praying and do not mix with those who crucified Jesus Christ lest you should pay for His blood”. Then all the disciples answered saying: Christ, who has sent you to lead us on the right path through His teachings to the eternal life, stands a witness to our promise to you to work according to your advices and follow your example”. Then Mar Mari died and moved to eternal happiness. He was buried in Quni Monastery against the altar, on the 19th of July 82 AD.

Mar Abris succeeded Mar Mari on the See of the East. This Holy Father was a relative of Saint Joseph whom Virgin Mary was betrothed to. He was ordained by Mar Cleopa. After Mar Abris, Mar Abraham of Kashgar occupied the See of Kokhi. He was a relative of Saint Jacob called “the brother of the Lord”. He served on the See for 22 years. Mar Yacob I succeeded Mar Abraham on the See of Kokhi. He served on the See for 18 years and was succeeded by his disciple Mar Akhadaboi who handled the See for 40 years. He was buried in Kokhi. The last four Catholicoses were consecrated in Jerusalem. It is noteworthy to indicate to the consecration of Mar Akhadaboi which was as follows: Before his death, Mar Yacob had advised that two of his disciples should be sent to Antioch so that one of them would be consecrated a Catholicos to succeed him on the See of the East. After his death, his advice was carried out. Mar Qamisho and Akhadaboi were sent to Antioch. When they arrived in Antioch, the enemies

contacted the Roman ruler telling him that the Patriarch of Antioch had received two persons and that they were spies working for Persia. Accordingly, the Roman ruler crucified Qamisho with the Patriarch of Antioch at the gate of “The Apostles Church”. Akhadaboi, however, managed to escape to Jerusalem and there he was consecrated a Catholicos. Then he came back to Seleucia.

Mar Shakh'lupa succeeded Mar Akhadaboi. He was from Kashkar (Wasit). He was the first Catholicos to be consecrated according to the epistle of the western fathers. Aghabit the bishop of Elam carried out the procedures in a dignifying manner. Mar Shakh'lupa served on the See for 23 years. He was succeeded by Mar Papa. After he had served sincerely on the See for a long period he died and was buried in Kokhi.

Thus the See of the East had the complete authority over its flocks and to run its affairs independently following the example of the four Sees of: Ephesus, Rome, Antioch, and Alexandria. These Sees were cooperative and friendly to each other until the fifth century AD and precisely in 431 when the Council of Ephesus was held to the order of the Byzantine Emperor Theodosius to settle the dispute between Cyril, Patriarch of Alexandria and Mar Nestorius, Patriarch of Constantinople.

In this Council, Nestorius was unjustly excommunicated and the Church of the East refused to join in his excommunication when his case was brought to their notice. So the enemies of Nestorius

called the followers of the Church of the East Nestorians mistakenly, for the Church of the East existed in the first century and was founded directly by the apostles themselves, as formerly mentioned. Our Church still follows the liturgy of the Holy Communion as taught by Mar Toma, Mar Addai, and Mar Mari upto this day without any change.

Mar Eshoyab II *Gdalaya* was an Arab. He was elected and consecrated a Catholicos Patriarch in 625 AD. As the Catholicos Patriarch of Kokhi was often a mediation of peace between the Persians and the Byzantines, Eshoyab II fulfilled this mission as a messenger of peace between the Persians and the Byzantines, and between the Muslim Arabs and the Christians. He opened the gates for negotiation and understanding, while Mohammad the founder of Islam was spreading his teaching among the pagans concerning one Living God, the most gracious, the Good and the Just. Mar Eshoyab the second had sent him a letter of appreciation wishing him luck and victory over his enemies. After he had achieved victory, he sent back a nice replying letter to the patriarch showing that he would concern himself in keeping peace and security among the eastern Christians and the Moslems. Thus they lived in peace, love and respect, for both religions recognize only one God, Creator of everything visible and invisible.

Mar Eshoyab II died in 644 AD and was buried in Beth Garmai. After him twelve Catholicoses sat successively on the See of Kokhi till the year 774 AD when Mar Khnanisho was elected and

consecrated a Catholicos Patriarch. He occupied the See of Kokhi whence he sent missionaries to China, Mongolia, and Siberia. In his time, a written monument was erected in China in memory of the apostles of the Holy Catholic Apostolic Church of the East. This monument still exists to this day. The missionaries had built many Churches, monasteries, and schools to make way for trade between the Far East and the Near East. The whole Eastern Church was under the headship of the Catholicos Patriarch in Kokhi. The Church of the East numbered about 80 million Christians. Mar Khnanisho II had a strong relation with Al Mansour Caliph based on friendship and respect. For this reason, the See of the Patriarchate was moved from Seleucia - Ctesiphon to Baghdad in 774 AD. Mar Khnanisho died in 779 AD and was buried in Kokhi.

The Abbasid Caliphs regarded Patriarch of the Church of the East as the spiritual and temporal father and head for all Christians within their empire. In 780 AD Mar Timotheos (Timothy) I (the Great), was elected and consecrated a Catholicos Patriarch in Seleucia and Ctesiphon but his See was still in Baghdad since the time of Mar Khananisho II. In the days of Mar Timotheos, Mehdi became the Caliph of the Abbasids. He was a learned man. He liked and respected the Christians. There were many friendly and unbiased dialogues between Timotheos and Mehdi on Christianity in an atmosphere of freedom, for both had sufficient knowledge, faith in one God.

When the war broke out between the Muslims and

the Byzantines, the Christians (The Greek) bordering upon the north of Syria, were exposed to persecutions, whereas the Christians living in the territory of the Caliphate were enjoying peace and security. There were many Christian high officials in power exclusively in the times of the Caliphs: Haroon-el-Rashid, Amin, and Mamoon. The physicians of the Caliphs were Christians belonging to the Bakhtishs, namely: Gabriel, Gewargis, and others.

It's said that one day the Caliph Haroon-el-Rashid called Mar Timotheos and asked him: "Father of Christians: which one is the true faith?" The patriarch answered him wisely and rhetorically: "O Caliph" he said, "the religion whose laws and deeds are closer to the works of God in His creation". Mar Timotheos died in 820 AD and was buried in "Kleeleshu" in Baghdad.

The Patriarchate See remained in Baghdad from 774 to 1282 AD. Holagu the grandson of Jenqiskhan occupied Baghdad in 1256 and the Mongolians started bringing about destruction and corruption.

Mar Makikha was consecrated in Kokhi in 1257 AD. He died in 1265 and was buried in Baghdad. He was succeeded by the Metropolitan of Arbil as Mar Dinkha I on the Patriarchate See. He was consecrated in Baghdad in the same year. In his time, two monks from China came to Baghdad: the first one was called Soma from Khan Balik (Peking). He was ordained priest by Mar Gewargis the Metropolitan of Peking in 1278. He was

accompanied by Mark. As a divine care the latter was ordained a Metropolitan in Baghdad by Mar Dinkha I the Catholicos patriarch in 1280 AD. He was given the name Yabhalaha. Some received the blessing and he was known as a General Deputy. On the patriarch's order they intended to go back to their parish in (Cathay) and (Ung) in China but the conditions of wars impeded their way back. So they went and stayed in a monastery near Arbil.

Mar Dinkha I died in Baghdad in 1281AD, while Mar Yahbalaha was present in Baghdad to take part in the ceremonies of the burial. All the gathering clergy and the laity alike called in one voice demanding that Yahbalaha be their patriarch. He was taken to Seleucia Ctesiphon by Mar Na'man, Metropolitan of Gundishapur, the consecrator of the Patriarchs, together with six metropolitans, 15 bishops, a number of priests and deacons, and a group of Christian notables. He was consecrated Patriarch on the See of Mar Mari the apostle in 1281 AD. Then he went back to his headquarter in Baghdad.

Mar Yahbalaha was born in (Kaw-Shung) near Peking in 1244 AD. His family was the followers of the Eastern Church. His father Pinael was an Archdeacon in Kaw-shang. Mar Yahbalaha moved the Patriarchate See from Baghdad to Arbil, thence to Maragha in Adharbijan. He built a famous monastery in the name of Mar Yohannan near Maragha city. He served the Church for 36 years as Catholicos Patriarch through which he had ordained 75 metropolitans and bishops. He was

buried in the monastery of Mar Yohannan.

In 1318 AD Mar Timotheos II was consecrated successor to Yahbalaha in Arbil and in 1320 AD the See was transferred to Mosul owing to persecution and thence to Krimlis and finally to Alqosh in 1407 AD. But persecutions and tribulations did not come to an end. So, Mar Elija V, the Catholicos Patriarch was obliged to take refuge in the monastery of Rabban Hurmizd.

During the time of the Patriarch Mar Shimun Basidi and because of persecution the Patriarchate became hereditary. The bishops also adopted the same hereditary procedure. Thus this once a glorious Church whose followers numbered tens of millions as was mentioned above, was gradually reduced to a small remnant, dwelling in the only remaining places of safety, namely the region between Mosul, Ormia and the Lake Van in addition to a Metropolitan See in Malabar in South India.

The Patriarchate See of the Holy Catholic Apostolic Church of the East remained in Seleucia and Ctesiphon for 780 years, in Baghdad for 510 years, in Arbil for 38 years, in Maragha 87 years and in Al-Qosh it remained for 145, in peace and security.

In 1552 AD there was a split in the Church under the pretext of hereditary succession of the Patriarchate See. A number of bishops and their supporters chose the monk Yokhanna Solaqa sent him to Rome to be ordained patriarch by Pope of Rome Gregorius XIII, and he was sent back to Amad

(Diar Bakr). Thus the Patriarchate See of the Chaldeans came to existence.

We say again that the Church of the East was a unified Church since its foundation in Mesopotamia by the apostles of the Lord under the headship of Patriarch until 1552 AD, when some of its followers separated and became subjects to the Papal See in Rome.

The Church of the East is Catholic and it is not for a certain people. Though the fact that we are Assyrians wherever we live we are not ashamed of our history; for the clay tablets discovered in Mesopotamia testify to the glorious history of our nation.

Our Church lived under the power of the Persians, the Abbasids, the Mongols, and the Turks and so many times faced cruel persecutions. But today our Church particularly in Iraq where the roots are, regardless of the fact that its branches spread in every direction, is enjoying freedom. Here it is the cradle of our Church and for this very reason we are proud to support the government and the people of Iraq, and we pray to God to help this militant and patient people. We call upon the Security Council, to lift up the embargo and to raise the sanctions imposed on this people unjustly with no right justification. If there was no right found in the resolutions of UN Security Council, the Iraqi people will eventually have God's righteous judgment and mercy.

May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and his mercy be with all of us forever. Amen.”

Khanania Dinkha IV
The Catholicos Patriarch of the Church of the East.

6.10. Assisi Prayer Day, January 2001

Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV went to Rome on 21st January 2001, after celebrating holy Qurbana on the 20th January, 2001 in Mart Mariam Church, London, England. On Thursday 24th January 2001 he participated in the Prayer for World Peace held in the Saint Francis Convent, Assisi, in Italy. Pope John Paul II gave leadership to this prayer of Christians as well as non-Christians. Patriarch Mar Dinkha was seated as third on the right hand side of the Pope.

There are leaders from all religions come to Assisi Prayer day. It was a good opportunity for Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV to meet many ecumenical leaders and leaders from other religions. Religious tolerance is essential for human beings to survive.

On January 23rd Patriarch used this opportunity to sit in the open defense of the Doctoral dissertation of Bishop Mar Bawai Soro in Angelicum in Rome along with Cardinal Cassidy. On January 26th the Patriarch departed from Rome to London. On Friday February 1st he reached Chicago.

6.11. Patriarchal Consecration Silver Jubilee, October 2001

The Silver Anniversary of His Holiness Mar Dinkha IV, Catholicos Patriarch of the Assyrian Church of the East was held in the Banquet Hall of The Hanging Gardens, Chicago. It

was conducted on Sunday 21 October 2001 beginning at 4 P.M.

The guest of honour, of course, was His Holiness Mar Dinkha IV, Catholicos Patriarch. Those in attendance who had come to celebrate with His Holiness were members of various government agencies, together with Bishop Mar Bawai Soro of Northern California, Bishop Mar Emmanuel of Canada and Bishop Mar Emmanuel Elyah of Chicago of the Old Calendar. The Roman Catholic Cardinal Francis George sent his personal representative (he was in Rome), His Excellency Bishop Jabolowski. The activities were well attended by over 1,000 persons.

The Choir of St. George Cathedral, Chicago rendered a number of choir pieces of His Holiness. The special ensemble of strings from the Chicago Symphony offered several Middle Eastern (Assyrian) pieces for the benefit of those present. There were greetings extended to His Holiness from the governor of Illinois, the Mayor of Chicago, and other leaders. The Mayors of the Cities of Des Plaines, Morton Grove, and Niles were present to extend their personal greeting. The U.S. Representative from the Seventh Federal District was present to extend the greetings from the Congressional district, which she represents.

Many world personalities sent greetings and best wishes to Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV on the occasion of the Silver Jubilee of Patriarchal consecration. Some of them are reproduced below.

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

October 17, 2001

His Holiness Mar Dinkha IV
Catholicos Patriarch

Holy Apostolic Catholic
Assyrian Church of the East
8908 Birch Avenue
Morton Grove, Illinois 60053

Your Holiness:

Congratulations on celebrating the 25th anniversary of your Consecration as Catholicos Patriarch of the Holy Apostolic Catholic Assyrian Church of the East. This special milestone provides a wonderful opportunity for your family, friends and parishioners to recognize you for your accomplishments as the Supreme Head of the Church of the East.

I commend you for your hard work, devotion to duty, and leadership through the years. Our nation is a better place because of your dedication to sharing your wisdom, guidance, and faith with others. May your church community continue to grow in faith and friendship.

Laura joins me in sending best wishes on this special occasion.

Sincerely,

Sd/-

George W. Bush

To His Holiness
Mar Dinkha IV
Catholicos Patriarch
of the Assyrian Church of the East

“Through love and understanding we will overcome our

differences and then we can again tie together the scattered rings of the chain of the Christian Churches. And the Lord of the Church will be satisfied with us, that we are fulfilling our duty to humanity". I recall these words of your Holiness during your visit to Rome in November 1984. That visit was a follow-up to your gracious presence on 23 October 1978, the day on which I solemnly began my ministry in the See of Peter. Later, on 14 November 1994, we were able to restore an important link of the chain joining us together when we signed a fundamental Declaration in which, taking into account the different theological formulations, we professed together the true faith in Christ (cf. Encyclical Letter *Ut Unum Sint*, 62). With you I give thanks to the Lord for the good things that He has allowed us to accomplish for His Church in promoting the unified witness of all who belong to Christ.

On the day that your Holiness celebrates the 25th Anniversary of your enthronement I am united with the venerable Assyrian Church of the East, with its Bishops, Priests and faithful people, and I assure Your Holiness of my prayer that this joyful anniversary will be a source of strength to you in your ministry. I ask the Lord to continue to bestow upon you in abundance the light of his Spirit and ever fresh resolve to follow his paths of peace and unity.

With these sentiments, I repeat the words of the Apostle John: "Peace to you. The friends send their greetings, Greet the friends there, each by name" (3 *John* 15)

From the Vatican, 28 September 2001

Sd/-

Joannes Paulus II

Istanbul Rum Patrikligi
34220 Halic – Fener
Istanbul – Turkiye

September 22, 2001

To the most blessed Catholicos Patriarch of the Assyrian Church of the East, in Christ our most beloved and dear brother, Lord Mar Dinkha IV, grace be with Your Most blessedness and peace from God the Father and from our Lord Jesus Christ.

We are communicating with you our much beloved and learned Blessedness on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of your election to the Patriarchal Throne of the Assyrian Church of the East, an election which constituted a proper crowning of your rich and continuous offering to the fullness of Your Church, in order to congratulate You on this noteworthy anniversary, and to express our joy at our personal acquaintance over many years, as well as our mutual love as brothers in the Lord, and further to inform You that we have requested the Most Reverend Metropolitan Iakovos to convey these greetings of the Ecumenical Patriarchate in person to Your Love on this joyous anniversary.

To conclude, we fervently entreat the Lord to grant your revered Blessedness health and prosperity for many years, together with every blessing from above, and brotherly embracing you with deepest love and every respect, we remain.

Your Most Blessedness
Beloved brother in Christ

Sd/-
Bartholomaios of Constantinople

PATRIARCAT MARONITE D'ANTIOCHE
ET DE TOUT L'ORIENT
BKERKE – LIBAN

RE-A3 210/01

Bkerke, September 27, 2001

His Holiness Mar Dinkha IV
Catholicos Patriarch of the
Assyrian Church of the East
8908 Birch Avenue
Morton Grove, Illinois 60053
USA

Your Holiness,

I am writing to apologize for not being able to attend the historic event of the celebration of your twenty-fifth anniversary as Catholicos Patriarch of the Assyrian Church of the East. However, I will be joining Your Holiness and your flock, as well as, you dear ones, in spirit and prayer.

My prayer will be united to your prayer to thank God for all the graces He bestowed upon you and your Church. The efforts you deployed to lead your shepherding of the Faithful committed to your spiritual Paternity into new areas, as you promised and announced, on the occasion of your enthronement, the enriching and enhancing of the “wonders of the spiritual treasures” of your ancient Apostolic See and the ecumenical dialogue you tried to enter into are some of your accomplishments in your spiritual and administrative vocation, during the past twenty-five years, as the Supreme Head of your venerable and Apostolic Church.

Thus, with you, I elevate to God a thanksgiving prayer for the

precious contribution to the Church of the East on her pilgrim sojourn on earth. With you also, I ask Him to abide in you and your Church, to guide you and lead you to holiness and sanctity.

It is with these thoughts and with sincere wishes that I express my warm and prayerful congratulations, to Your Holiness and to Your Church, in this happy, memorable and historic event.

Ad multos annos! Many Happy returns!

+ Nasrallah-Piere Cardinal Sfeir

Sd/-

Patriarch of Antioch and All the East

Eparchy of St. Thomas the Apostle
Chaldean Catholic Diocese of the USA

September 19, 2001

His Holiness Mar Dinkha IV
Catholicos Patriarch of the
Assyrian Church of the East
8908 Birch Avenue
Morton Grove, Illinois 60053

Your Holiness:

I have received your cordial invitation to attend your 25th Anniversary Celebration on October 21, 2001. Unfortunately, I will not be able to attend.

I extend to you prayerful best wishes and sincere congratulations on this glorious occasion.

My prayers join yours in asking God for His guidance and grace to bless and to continue your leadership, and may you enjoy good health and many pleasant times as well.

The clergy, religious and faithful of the Chaldean Diocese in the United States join me in wishing you all the best, hoping that our Lord brings you every blessing and joy to you and to the people of God that you are serving.

With kind regards, I am

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Sd/-

Most Reverend Ibrahim N. Ibrahim
Bishop of St. Thomas the Apostle,
Chaldean Diocese of the United States.

ARCHDIOCESE OF CHICAGO

Office of the Archbishop
Post Office Box 1979
Chicago, Illinois 60690-1979

October 21, 2001

Your Holiness:

I offer my sincere congratulations to you on the 25th Anniversary

Celebration of your elevation to the sacred office as the Supreme Head of the Assyrian Church of the East. I deeply regret that I am unable to be with you at this historic event. I am attending the Holy Synod in Rome during the entire month of October. I am pleased that The Most Reverend Thad Jakubowski, Episcopal Vicar of the Archdiocese of Chicago, is representing me on this joyous occasion.

The relationship between our two Churches here in Chicago continues to grow through ecumenical celebrations and joint cooperation. I am pleased to have been able to assist you in the education of some of your priests at Mundelein Seminary. Your dialogue with the Apostolic traditions of the Churches in both East and West contributes greatly to our local, national and international relationships.

I will keep you in my prayers today and at all times; please keep me in yours.

Fraternally yours in Christ,

Sd/-

Francis Cardinal George, O.M.I.
Archbishop of Chicago

His Holiness Mar Dinkha IV
Catholicos Patriarch of the
Assyrian Church of the East
8908 Birch Avenue
Morton Grove, Illinois 60053

CARDINAL
DR. FRANZ KONIG

Vienna, 18th September 2001

Your Holiness Mar Dinkha IV, Catholicos Patriarch of the
Assyrian Church of the East,

It was with great pleasure that I learned that on 17th October
you will be celebrating the 25th anniversary of ascending your
throne, taking on the highest office in the Apostolic Catholic
Assyrian Church of the East. I am sorry that I personally as
Archbishop Emeritus of Vienna will not be able to attend the
great celebration on 21 October. For this reason, with these
lines I would like to convey to you my heartiest good wishes
and blessings and express my sincere thanks for the ecumenical
dialogue which Your Holiness opened with the Apostolic
Churches in the East and West.

I wish Your Holiness many blessed years leading and preserving
your great Church, so full of tradition, and send sincerest
greetings from Vienna.

Sd/-

Cardinal Konig

THE ARCHBISHOP OF UPPSALA
UPPSALA, SWEDEN

Dear Brother in Christ,

On the occasion of
the Twenty-fifth Anniversary Celebration of Your
Enthronement

I convey to you the greetings, good wishes and commitment
of the Church of
Sweden.

Together we share the mission of being servants of God in
our world today. We pray to the Lord that He will Bless You
yourself, your Church and your celebrations.

May God go by your side through life and service in the days
to come, as the
Prophet says:

Do not fear, for I have redeemed you;
I have called you by name, you are mine.
when you pass through the waters, I will be with you;
and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you;
when you walk through fire you shall not be burned,
and the flame shall not consume you.

For I am the Lord your God,
the Holy One of Israel, your Saviour.

Isaiah 43:1-3

Yours in Christ

Sd/-

KG Hammar
Archbishop of Uppsala

6.12. Visit to Australia, May – June, 2002

Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV made a visit to Australia to inaugurate the first Assyrian school outside the homeland. The Christian students in Diaspora wanted to study in the Assyrian School so that they would learn the language of their fathers. Bishop Mar Meelis Zaia worked hard and received donations from various sources to build the St. Hormuzd Assyrian School in August 11, 2001.

This is an elementary school that will become a high school as the present students get promoted. Patriarch has been to Sydney and Melbourne in previous visits. But this time he came with confidence that the Church in Sydney has been doing hard work. There was a lot of enthusiasm among the faithful in Australia to be loyal to the Church. The Patriarch has special interest in the Assyrian churches in Australia.

As a matter of fact the Patriarch was expected to arrive in Sydney and Melbourne in the previous year. When I was in Sydney in July 2000 I heard from the people that they were expecting His Holiness to arrive in Sydney to lay the foundation stone for this school. But the doctors did not allow him making a long journey. So the patriarch did not go to Australia to lay the foundation stone in 2000.

On 2002 May 3rd Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV went to Australia accompanied by Fr. Antwan Latchin of Chicago. Mar Narsai Metropolitan also was with the Patriarch in this tour. He was received by the Mayor of Fairfield Hon'ble Anwar Khoshaba, a member of our Church. The Choir of our congregation welcomed him with beautiful songs. On Sunday May 12th he celebrated Holy Qurbana in St. Hormizd Church. On Friday May 17th Patriarch opened the School and on Saturday May

18th he visited school and Sunday May 19th he celebrated Qurbana in Mart Mariam Church, Fairfield near Sydney. On 24th May Patriarch and Metropolitan Mar Narsai and Bishop Mar Meelis Zaia went to Melbourne. On 26th May Patriarch celebrated Holy Qurbana in the Church of Mar Gewargis in Melbourne.

May 31st Patriarch went to New Zealand, where Qasha Thoma Thoma and Qasha Aprim and Deacons and a large faithful received him. On Sunday June 2nd he celebrated Communion in Auckland, New Zealand. On Monday June 3rd Patriarch concluded his visit to Australia and New Zealand and returned via San Francisco where he was received by Bishop Mar Bawai Soro and Arch Deacon Ninos Michael and Qashisha Samuel Dinkha.

6. 13. Heart Surgery 2002

It was during a routine check up in August 2002 the doctors advised that it is essential to have an open-heart surgery to the Patriarch. It was unexpected. People around the world prayed for him.

He was admitted in the hospital for chest pain on September 16th. He was operated on September 18th. Bishop Mar Bawai Soro rushed from California to Chicago to visit the Patriarch in the Rush-Presbyterian North Shore Hospital in Chicago. He issued a message to the Church Leaders regarding the health of the Catholicos Patriarch. He writes;

Through this communication we wish to inform everyone that after some complaints of chest pain, on Monday September 16th, 2002, His Holiness Mar Dinkha IV, Catholicos Patriarch of the Assyrian

Church of the East was admitted to the Rush-Presbyterian North Shore Hospital in Skokie (a Suburb of Chicago). Two days later, on Wednesday, September 18th a seven and a half hour open-heart surgery was performed during which one of his heart valves and an artery were successfully replaced. Many thanks to Almighty God, this operation was successful and His Holiness is now in the process of recovery and will return home in a few days.

We would kindly ask all faithful of the Assyrian Church of the East and all other sisters and brothers in Christ to pray for His Holiness' well being, his fast recovery and return to his patriarchal ministry. On Sunday, September 22nd, 2002 all Assyrian Churches in the United States and every where will offer a special Holy Qurbana on the intention of His Holiness' speedy recovery from this major operation in thanksgiving to Almighty God for granting the Patriarch good and strong health.

Mar Bawai Soro

Sec. Gen, Commission on Inter-Church Relations.

He was discharged from the hospital within a few days. Although many friends advised him to take rest for some time His Holiness continued to work normally. It was a warm welcome for him when he came to attend the 26th Patriarchal consecration anniversary on October 20, 2002. About a thousand people who attended that anniversary dinner appreciated the speech delivered by the Patriarch. Some of us had hesitation that the Patriarch would return back from the hospital so soon.

By regular walks the Patriarch reduced his weight. The reduction of weight is the most important duty of a heart patient. Fortunately he is not diabetic. So His Holiness can eat from the cake he cuts every year for the Patriarchal anniversary.

Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV was back to normal within few months. Mar Dinkha IV does not act like heart patient. He has a healthy mind and a good and attractive physique.

6.14. 26th Patriarchal Anniversary and Assyrian N.T, October 2002

I was meeting our Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV after his heart surgery, which took place on 17th September 2002 in Chicago. On 20th October I celebrated Holy Qurbana in St. Johns Assyrian Church, assisted by Fr. Charles Klutz and Fr. Thomas Mathew.

On the evening of October 20th about 1000 people were gathered for Dinner to celebrate the 26th anniversary of the patriarchal consecration of His Holiness Mar Dinkha IV, Catholicos Patriarch of the Church of the East. The function was held in the Hanging Gardens Banquet Hall (formerly known as 13 Colonies). It is situated in 8301 West Belmont, River Grove, Illinois.

Hanging Gardens Banquet Hall can accommodate nearly one thousand guests. It is a favorite meeting place for the Assyrians in Chicago area. The church does not own it. The Church Hall in the basement of the Mar Gewargis Cathedral at 7201 North Ashland Ave is another spacious hall for the functions of the church. Usually after Qurbana the faithful go down and spend time for fellowship and breakfast.

Freidoun Benjamin, President of our *Motwa* Executive committee of our five parishes in Illinois had sent me a written invitation dated October 2, 2002 inviting me to be a guest “to the Testimonial Banquet given upon the occasion of the 26th Anniversary of the consecration of His Holiness K. Mar Dinkha IV, Catholicos Patriarch of the Holy Apostolic Catholic Assyrian Church of the East.” But the invitation had not reached me until I left India on 14th October. Usually 10 days are enough for an ordinary letter to reach India. But I think that after September 11, 2001 it takes more time as scanning is done to search for letter bomb in the post offices.

Mar Narsai de Baz, Metropolitan of Lebanon and Syria & Europe, Mar Meelis Zaia, Bishop of Australia and New Zealand and myself spoke on the occasion. Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV spoke thanking all people for praying for his health after the heart surgery. He cut the cake as usual. The congregation was to see their beloved Patriarch in his regular jovial mood. Although we thought that the Patriarch would cut the cake and go home, he spoke with vigour and happiness and sat through the programme till the finish.

6.15 Patriarchal Anniversary, November 2003

As usual the five parishes in Chicago area took initiative to celebrate the Patriarchal Anniversary of His Holiness Mar Dinkha IV, the Catholicos Patriarch of the Church of the East. The venue was the Hanging Gardens in West Belmont, River Grove in the suburb of Chicago. It was celebrated on Sunday October 19, 2003.

Metropolitan Mar Aprem of India, Bishop Mar Joseph Sargis of Baghdad, Bishop Mar Bawai Soro of California, Bishop Mar Aprim Athniel of Syria, Bishop Mar Emmanuel Elyah of

Chicago, Archdeacon Aprim de Baz, Archdeacon Awiqam Pithyo of the old calendar and many other clergy. Senator John Nimrod and several lay leaders were present. There was the usual singing of the Church Choir, cutting the anniversary cake, felicitatory speeches etc.

As there was some confusion in the minds of some church members that the statement on Sacramental life proposed to be signed by Pope John Paul II and Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV, His Holiness explained that this document is a mutual recognition of two sister churches. It is not to surrender our Church to the Vatican. The words of their beloved Patriarch cleared the doubts of the Assyrians. As it took a long time when the Patriarch concluded the speech, His Holiness did not stay there for the usual greeting the members individually.

Mar Aprem Metropolitan spoke on behalf of the Indian Church, wishing long and healthy life to the Catholicos Patriarch. He referred to the many achievements of the Patriarch. He expressed a simple hope that Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV will go down in history as the Patriarch of peace and unity.

6. 16. Statement on Sacramental Life

That document is the fruit of the dialogue of eight years since November 1995. The JCTD committee met annually. The decisions were communicated to the Holy Synod of the Assyrian Church as well as to the different councils in Vatican for study and suggestions. Credit should go to Bishop Mar Bawai Soro and Msgr Johan Bonny who did a lot of work as co-conveners.

His Holiness Mar Dinkha IV from time to time gave encouragement to bring this document to a final conclusion. In the 8th Holy Synod held in Chicago in June 2001 His Holiness

asked the prelates to inform him if they had any comments on the proposed document. In 2003 when he was thinking to proceeding to Vatican to sign this statement ceremoniously, he again wrote to the prelates to give their opinions in writing if any had any difference of opinion with the proposed document. As some prelates asked for an opportunity to discuss in detail the final document His Holiness called a Holy Synod to meet in October 2003 in Chicago. As it was impossible for prelates from Iraq to travel to Chicago in a short notice it was decided to get the opinions of the prelates through correspondence. Finally it was decided to hold a Holy Synod on May 10, 2004 in a suitable venue to be announced later. It was postponed further to meet in August in Chicago.

This Common Statement on Sacramental Life will be discussed in the proposed 9th Holy Synod to be held in August 23-30, 2004. This Statement does not adopt any new decisions. It is an explanation of the existing sacraments practiced in this Church for centuries. It is to clear the misunderstandings and to respect each other's spiritual services and sacraments in an ecumenical spirit. It does not propose any departure from the faith and practices of the Church of the East. It is a document prepared with due respect to the traditions existing in the Church of the East.

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSION

His Holiness Mar Dinkha IV, Catholicos Patriarch, will be remembered for the following seven areas of activity.

7.1. Patriarch of Unity

In the recent history of the Assyrian Church of the East there are some tribal rivalries, clannish conflicts, and division within the same community. As the Catholicos Patriarch of this Assyrian community His Holiness Mar Dinkha IV had a difficult task to bring unity within the Church of the East. But at the same time the clashes in the basis of the Julian Calendar and the Gregorian calendar were very real in many dioceses. Such division was visible in India, USA, Australia, Iraq, and Syria .

The Indian Church, which fought legal battles for 33 years (1962-1995) united in one spirit on 13th November 1995. The Church in India for the last eight years is a living example. This news of unity was a historic event. Many churches do not understand

how unity was achieved. Is it a magic or miracle? H. H. Mar Dinkha IV will go down in history as the Patriarch of Unity.

In places outside India the message and example of the unity in India has made some impact. The clergy and bishops meet each other in a Christian attitude of reconciliation. Whether it would immediately bring unity like the Church in India cannot be predicted with certainty. There may be some tribal considerations that decided the preference of some Assyrians to fight for the calendar.

The stand of the Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV is crystal clear. “We are one church, not two. The temporary split will disappear”. Let that day dawn before the stewardship of the present Patriarch ends.

7. 2. Patriarch of Ecumenical Dialogue

1. Dialogue with the Vatican
2. Dialogue with the Syriac speaking Churches, Pro Oriente, Vienna.
3. Dialogue with the Assyrian and Chaldean Churches.
4. Dialogue with the Assyrian and Syrian Orthodox Church
5. Dialogue with the Assyrian and Coptic Church
6. Dialogue with MECC membership.

Some of these dialogues had a temporary set-back. The dialogue with the Coptic Church is not at all active today. But the Coptic Church along with the Oriental Orthodox Churches (non-Chalcedonian) that had kept a lukewarm attitude in their relationship with Vatican has revived its dialogue in January 27—30, 2004 when Cardinal Walter Kasper led a delegation to Cairo. It has decided to continue their dialogue in Rome in January 25—30, 2005.

Similarly the dialogue between the Coptic Church and the Assyrian Church can be restarted. The Assyrian Church of the East cannot accept the demand of the Coptic Church that the Assyrians should condemn Nestorius. On the other hand, the Assyrian Church makes its stand clear. Their Church is not a Church started by Nestorius as some people have misinterpreted. This Church was in existence from the time of Jesus' disciples. Nestorius was a Greek from Antioch. He was not an Assyrian father. He is one of the Greek doctors venerated by this Church on the Memorial Day of the Greek doctors in the 4th Friday after Epiphany.

As a good gesture the Assyrian Church declared in the July 1997 meeting of the Pro Oriente Foundation, Vienna when it held its meeting in Chicago when Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV attended along with several other prelates that the Assyrian Church has decided in its Holy Synod of June 1997 that it would delete all negative comments against Cyril of Alexandria, Severus of Antioch and any other fathers of the Churches venerated by other Churches. The Assyrian Church did not demand the Coptic Church to reciprocate this gesture. The present writer stated in that meeting in Chicago that it was not in good taste to fill prayer books with curses. Almighty God knows more than all of us whom to bless. God does not need our recommendations to bless any body.

The question of the membership in the Middle East Council of Churches had a sad end. The Assyrian Church of the East that was a member of the World Council of Churches, Geneva wanted to be a member of the Middle East Council of Churches. The first dialogue between the MECC and the Assyrian Church took place on September 5-6, 1991. The Christological issue was studied. At the second meeting of September 15-20, 1992 the person and teachings of Nestorius were discussed. An

understanding was reached to give full membership to the Assyrian Church in MECC. But the MECC requested the Assyrian Church to send an observer to the assembly of 1999. Thus it became clear that the MECC was not willing to grant full membership to the Assyrian Church..

Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV wrote a strong letter to the MECC protesting against this policy of not granting membership to the Assyrian Church. The reason stated for this refusal is that the MECC has a system of four confessions or family of Churches in the MECC. The Catholic Church (Chaldean, Syrian Catholic, Maronite, Greek Catholic etc.), the Eastern Orthodox (Russian, Greek, Turkish), the Oriental Orthodox (Coptic, Syrian Orthodox, Armenian, Ethiopian etc) and the Protestant Churches. The MECC decided that the Assyrian Church did not belong to any of these four families of Churches. Although the Catholic Churches requested that we be included among the Catholic Churches, MECC ruled that such a classification was impossible, as the Assyrian Church did not have full communion with the Catholic Church.

Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV reported to the Holy Synod beginning on April 19, 1999 regarding the unfortunate stand taken by the MECC. With the views expressed by the prelates His Holiness Mar Dinkha IV wrote a strong letter to the General Secretary of MECC with copies to Cardinal Cassidy of the Secretariat for Christian Unity, Vatican, Chaldean Patriarch Raphael Bidawid of Baghdad and the President of MECC. Mar Dinkha IV wrote:

I also wish to add that for the future, we do not even have to defend or legitimate our apostolic faith or ourselves any further. Our Church belongs to the Middle East Christianity long before any MECC member Churches arrived in the region. Our Church

had so many saints, martyrs and missionaries; we suffered during the centuries for our Christian faith. There is no single Assyrian family that did not pay with its blood for the Christian faith. We are scattered all over the world as consequences of our faith. What else can be asked of us? Why should we be reduced to beggars?

The major concern today may be the direction the Vatican—Assyrian dialogue will take in 2004. Will the statement on the Sacramental Life prepared in Christian charity and understanding during the recent years will be signed ceremoniously in Vatican in 2004 with the same enthusiasm and expectation created on the occasion of the signing of the Common Christological Declaration on November 11, 1994?

As for the relation between the Chaldean Church and the Assyrian Church of the East it is not cordial today as it was in August 1997 when the Chaldean Patriarch Raphael Bidawid came to participate in the dedication ceremony of the newly constructed Mart Mariam Church in Rosalle, Chicago. The Chaldeans and the Assyrians thought that some sort of unity was going to happen soon.

The joint committee for Unity appointed in 1997 met on 17 and 18 September 1998 at Dayr Sayyadat Al-beere in Beirut, Lebanon. The common Statement issued in this meeting declared as follows:

Members of the Commission offer thanksgiving to God for this opportunity and His other gifts and, at the same time, thank the people, Churches and the government of Lebanon who honoured them with an audience with the President of the Republic of

Lebanon. They also thank all those who until now have laboured to make this glorious dream come true which is a heartfelt beginning for the reunification of their Church, the historical Church of the East. The Church of the East that was established in the Lands-between-two-Rivers (Mesopotamia) that extended to the lands of the Far East lifting high the torch of living faith which became manifested realistically in various cultures and societies for many centuries.

Active co-operation and tolerance were visible also in the Millennium celebrations in Seleucia Ctesiphon as well as in the Rabban Hurmizd monastery in Alkosh in October 2000. It was further strengthened when Rome issued on July 20, 2001 the Guidelines for admission to the Eucharist between the Chaldean Church and the Assyrian Church of the East. In January 2002 Mar Dinkha IV met with Pope John Paul II during the Day of Prayer for World Peace.

When Patriarch Raphael Bidawid died on 6th June 2003 in Beirut, Lebanon, Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV sent his condolences. The Assyrian priests in Lebanon attended the funeral. Unfortunately the Metropolitan in Lebanon Mar Narsai de Baz was away in America. Some people interpreted the absence of any Assyrian bishop in the funeral of Patriarch Raphael Bidawid as a sign of lack of enthusiasm in the Assyrian-Chaldean relationship.

Mar Emmanuel III Delli was enthroned as the Patriarch of the Chaldeans in December 2003 in Baghdad, Iraq. Mar Emmanuel had invited Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV to be present. His Holiness Mar Dinkha IV asked his representative in Iraq, His Beatitude Mar Gewargis Sliwa Metropolitan to represent him in the

service. Many people hope that the relation between the Chaldean Church and the Assyrian Church will improve in the coming years.

7. 3. Patriarch of Reconstruction

His Holiness Mar Dinkha IV dedicated many churches around the world. Mar Zaia Church in Zahle, Lebanon, Mar Zaia Church in Modesto, California, Mart Mariam Church in London, England, Mar Rabban Hurmizd Church in Sydney, Australia, Mar Gewarges Church in Hassake, Syria, and Mart Mariam Church in Moscow, Russia and others.

After His Holiness took charge of his new responsibility he consecrated eight prelates. Among these eight only one namely Mar Narsai de Baz was an Episcopa he promoted to the rank of the Metropolitan immediately after he got consecrated in Ealing, England. Actually Mar Dinkha had assisted Patriarch Mar Eshai Shimun when he consecrated Mar Narsai deBaz as bishop in Beirut, Lebanon on July 28, 1968.

All the other seven bishops were chosen and consecrated to their present responsibilities by the present Patriarch by choosing them and training them in co-operation with the Holy Synods meeting time to time.

1. Metropolitan Mar Narsai de Baz, October 17, 1976
2. Gewarges Slewa, Baghdad, June 14, 1981
3. Bishop Mar Bawai Soro, U.S.A., Oct 14, 1984
4. Bishop Mar Meelis Zaia, Australia, October 14, 1984
5. Bishop Mar Emmanuel, Canada, June 3, 1990
6. Bishop Mar Odisho Oraham, Sweden, July 24, 1994
7. Bishop Mar Aprim Athniel, Syria, October 10, 1999
8. Bishop Mar Isaac Yosip, North Iraq and Russia, October 24, 1999

7. 4. Patriarch of the 21st century

His Holiness is engaged in preparing an educated clergy not only for the top leadership, but also in the ranks of priests and deacons. Similarly His Holiness has paid attention to the publication of books on the faith, translation on prayer books and historical works from *lishana athieqa* to *lishana swadaya*.

Patriarch is encouraging schools for children to learn the language and history of our forefathers.

His Holiness encourages musical choirs in the Church. His Holiness published a new book of our religious songs to be sung in the Church, by Rabbi Shoora Michalian, now living in Sydney. These musical compositions will help several Churches to sing to the Lord with one voice whether in Chicago or in Australia or in India.

Here is a patriarch concerned about the clergy, youth, children and women. The women are in our church committees now. Although we do not have women priests, the Patriarch has encouraged *Rabbanyatha* (sisters) in Baghdad and India. May God Almighty strengthen His Holiness to encourage and equip this Church for the challenges of the 21st century.

Out of 120 patriarchs of the Church of the East only 20 Patriarchs completed 27 years of Patriarchate.

- | | | |
|----------------------------|---|----------|
| 1. Papa Bar Gaggi | (247-320) | 73 years |
| | (or 64 years if he was consecrated in 256). | |
| 2. Elia Shimun XII | (1600-1653) | 53 years |
| 3. Mar Eshai Shimun XXIII | (1920-1973) | 53 years |
| 4. Rowil Shimun XX | (1860-1903) | 43 years |
| 5. (Beth Sayada) Shimun VI | (1448-1490) | 42 years |

6. Mar Timotheus I	(780-820)	40 years
7. Shleemon Shimun XVI	(1700-1740)	40 years
8. Mikhail Shimun XVII	(1740-1780)	40 years
9. Yonan Shimun XVIII	(1780-1820)	40 years
10. Abraham Shimun XIX	(1820-1860)	40 years
11. Yawalaha III (Bar Turkaye)	(1281-1318)	37 years
12. Eshoyou Shimun XIII	(1653-1690)	37 years
13. Mar Dadisho	(421- 456)	35 years
14. Elia Shimun VII	(1505-1538)	33 years
15. (Bar Qakyume) Yawalaha II	(1191-1222)	31 years
16. Savreesho V	(1226-1256)	30 years
17. Dinkha II	(1329-1359)	30 years
18. Ishoyav V from Beth Zavdai	(1148-1175)	27 years
19. Shimun V	(1420-1447)	27 years
20. Khanania Dinkha IV	(1976-200?)	27 years

By the end of this year his name will move from the 20th place to the 18th place. After 6 years his name will go to the 14th place after Patriarch Mar Dadisho of the 5th century. If he lives another 10 years his rank in the list will be the 4th, immediately after his own predecessor and consecrator to the rank of bishop, Patriarch Mar Eshai Shimun who ruled the Church for more than 53 years when he resigned on August 16, 1973.¹ Patriarch Mar Dinkha will be 85 years old (one year more than the present Pope John Paul II), if he has to reach the 4th place in the list. If he crosses the record of his predecessor Mar Eshai Shimun, he will be 95 years of age, 4 years more than his late father Andrews and 10 years younger than his late grandfather Qasha Benyamin Soro who died in Iraq at the ripe old age of 105 in 1961.

¹ Although Mar Eshai Shimun resigned on August 16, 1973 he was living for two more years. He was assassinated on November 6, 1975.

7. 5. Patriarch of the Holy Synods

For centuries the Church of the East existed without convening holy Synods. The political and other circumstances made it impossible to meet in Holy Synods periodically and consult with brother prelates. Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV decided to serve the church in more democratic lines. It is not just meetings for the sake of gathering. He means business. The following statement from the letter of summons of the 8th Holy Synod shows the democratic approach of the Patriarch. He writes:

“We kindly request of each of you to prepare a report regarding the activities within your parishes. We will welcome suggestions and thoughts for the steadfast progress of the Church universal. Please write them down and present them in the Holy Synod with complete freedom, each item will be discussed; should it be constructive, we will probably implement the same within the whole Church.”

The full text of the Epistle summoning the Holy Synod is reproduced below. He wrote it in Assyrian language and got it translated to English as usual. This epistle is an evidence of his desire to consult with prelates and administer the Church universal in the principles of democracy.

His Epistle summoning the last Holy Synod is reproduced below in full. He usually advised the prelates to consult their members in order to get their opinions for the consideration of the bishops in general. He insisted that all bishops should present the whole Synod a report of the activities in their respective dioceses.

Patriarchal Epistle to summon the Holy Synod, Chicago, June 2001

The Patriarchal Cell Morton Grove, Illinois

Our Brothers in The Lord, Venerable Prelates, members of the Synodical Council, The Holy Apostolic Catholic Church of the East:

Prayers and Apostolic Blessings receive:

We write to inform you the decisions from the Patriarchal Council, conducted in Chicago, Illinois, 16- 22 February 2001. The members present who had assembled under our oversight, were, His Beatitude Metropolitan Mar Narsai of Beirut, His Beatitude Metropolitan Mar Gewargis of Baghdad, and their Grace Bishop Mar Bawai of San Jose, Bishop Mar Meelis of Sydney, Bishop Mar Emmanuel of Toronto, and Bishop Mar Odisho of Stockholm.

In The Council: We have decided to convene The Holy Synod, because of certain items not resolved; especially, the subject of Bishop Mar Aprim Khamis. We had learned from his letter, dated 21 February 2001, that he had petitioned us to consider and to resolve; in the matter of his subject in the Holy Synod. We believe that this is his privilege. We, therefore, request all of you, the Venerable Prelates, that on Monday, 4 June 2001, in Chicago, Illinois we convene at 11:00 a.m. The Holy Synod will convene in St Mary the Virgin Church, Roselle, Illinois. We kindly request of each of you to prepare

a report regarding the activities within your parishes. We will welcome suggestions and thoughts for the steadfast progress of the Church universal. Please write them down and present them in The Holy Synod with complete freedom, each item will be discussed; should it be constructive, we will probably implement the same within the whole Church.

We encourage that each of you consider the thoughts of your priests, deacons, and members of the various parish committees (because the councils and the committees are the representatives of the members of your various parishes; and they do have the right to present their thoughts and suggestions to Ordinary of each Diocese). The Diocesan Ordinary will present these suggestions to the Holy Synod, and in turn we the prelates (as the shepherds of the flock of Christ), are in need of the various good and reasonable thoughts of the priests, deacons, sons and daughters of The Church. To make decisions within The Holy Synod, it is important that the greater majority of the sons and daughters of the Church will accept them and to be happy with them, too.

We, the prelates, who place our hands upon priests, to elect and/or choose those persons who are faithful, knowledgeable, bearing a good name and deportment, in order to lead and strengthen their respective flock toward our Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ IS The Foundation Stone of The Church; the structure of the faith of each member of The Church is to be erected upon Jesus Christ

the Lord of The Church, so that it will not crumble. Because we recognize that the teachings of Christ and the awareness of the Sacred Scriptures in general among the sons and daughters is quite limited and weak. Why? Because they have not been disciplined (taught), owing to the myriad of crisis, persecutions, etc., which were coming against “the ship of The Church” politically, economically, and geographically. In this day, we are not experiencing persecutions as Christians, the sons and daughters of The Church of the East, therefore, it is time for us as The Prelates and Priests, to be zealous for The Faith in order to maintain The Vineyard which has been entrusted to us, so that it will produce an abundance of good fruits. This hymn from the Khudra, “The Fourth Voice” is to awaken us to recall the reason for the challenge we accepted for Holy Orders in The Holy Church.

“The Seed of Truth is the Teachings of Jesus;
The thorns came up and choked it;
Because the laborers were lazy,
The fields were crushed under foot.

The shepherds dozed and slept;
The wolves destroyed as they pleased;
There is no shepherd;
Who will withstand them?”

We should not be careless; we are to have a strong faith in one another; we are to love and respect one another; and, to be a good counselor to one another; because as apostles of our Lord, we have been

baptized by The Holy Spirit, so we are not to forget that we are members one to another, connected to One Body—The Church, The Body of Christ. If our faith is weak, we will be careless; we will have no strength to maintain The Church, which has been entrusted to us by our Lord. The teachings of Jesus are the true seed of piety and holiness. It is important to sow this seed in clean and prepared land, which is the hearts and lives of the sons and daughters of The Church. We are to prepare them, through sermons and preachings, to prepare them as suitable “soil” in order to produce good fruit; if we as preachers do not abide by the command of Jesus, we cannot be a lamp upon a stand which is to shine and gives forth light to all in the house, “let your Light so shine before men, that they can see your good deeds, and glorify your Father who is in Heaven.” (Matthew 5:16).

These words we write so that all the members of the Holy Synod will consider the great responsibility we all have within The Holy Synod; we are to look toward The Goal, which is Jesus Christ; what HE wants us to do. It is written (John 14:12), “I say to you, he that believes in ME, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I am going to MY Father.” Let us, then, believe and maintain HIS commandments, to be about doing good works for the sons and the daughters of The Church; HE has given us the authority, that “whatever we bind or loose, according to HIS will, it shall be done,” and we shall steadily progress. The purpose of The Holy Synod, therefore, is to consider (all together) and

discover ways and means for this time, and into the future, what to do in order to maintain, in good health, the spirituality of The Church scattered throughout the world. Wherever they may be in the world, they may be bound together unto God and unto HIS Son, Jesus Christ, therefore, we are to do as the Apostle has instructed us, (Phil 2:2-4) “Fulfill my joy, that you be like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. Let nothing be done through strife or vain glory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves.”

It is important that we prelates and priests be obedient doers to what our Lord Jesus Christ has commanded us. We are not to stray, neither right, nor left; but to follow the bright path, which HE shows unto us. The Apostles followed “The Way” and they reached eternal life! We are to lead the faithful toward eternal life into the “port of peace.” In other words, we are obligated to demonstrate wisdom, love, respect, and humility, toward one another, while we are together in Holy Synod, for our Lord Jesus Christ will help us to produce the good fruits in the sons and daughters of The Church. The Grace and mercies of our Lord Jesus Christ be upon you all, forever and ever: Amen

From the Patriarchal Cell
Morton Grove, Illinois

1st May 2001

Khanania Mar Dinkha IV
By Grace,
Catholicos Patriarch,
The Church of the East.

7.6. An Educator

Accomplishments in the field of education and literature:

1. Establishment of a seminary in Baghdad, Iraq.
2. Installation of a modern computerized printing press in Baghdad, Iraq.
3. Establishment of an Assyrian School in Teheran, Iran.
4. Appointment of a literary committee in Chicago, USA
5. Publication of the periodical “Voice from the East” as the Church organ which is circulated in many parts of the world.
6. Sunday schools in most parishes of the church.
7. Church choirs throughout the areas in which we have houses of worship.
8. Youth Associations have been formed within several parishes.
9. Authored many books on Church Dogma and others together with wide collection of hymns.
10. Many of the clergy attended universities to obtain optimum knowledge in theology and philosophy.
11. Setting up of the Assyrian Church of the East Commission on Inter-Church Relations and education Development (CIRED)
12. Annual publication of a newsletter, “THE MESSENGER” to publish reports on the progress and activities of the above-stated commission and important papers presented by the Church representatives on occasions when engaged in Inter-Church dialogues, etc.

7.7. A Song Writer

Many people who know H.H. Mar Dinkha IV do not know that he is a writer of devotional songs. The reason is that all his songs are in modern Assyrian. The book published by Qashisha

Benyamin Benyamin, Parish priest of the Mart Mariam Church in Detroit (13304 Toepfer, Warren, Michigan 48089) in 1981 has several songs penned by the Patriarch.

His mentor Mar Yosip Khananisho Metropolitan too was a songwriter. He had composed several *Thurgama* in the Assyrian language in the tune of

O damhaimnien engee Bawa Vavra u rukha de'qudsha enga thau suth melle d masyan paghra u mahyan navsha.

Let us hope that our choirmasters will produce CD cassettes of his songs sung by choir members to be played all over the world.

It is difficult to assess a person based on the written reports only. By observing a person in an objective manner we try to know the sterling qualities of that person. These words recorded in this book are only to know the person. His Holiness has charming personality beyond the description by words.

Almighty and Omnipotent God choose people to shepherd His flock sincerely. The Assyrian Church, which went through the difficulties and atrocities of the two World Wars and many other military operations, can look forward to better and peaceful times under the leadership of this peaceful Catholicos Patriarch. The omnipresent smile on the face of His Holiness Mar Dinkha IV may continue to cheer all his flock in the years ahead.

In conclusion it must be stated that Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV exhorted Assyrian people to be proud of their heritage. In Christmas Message of 2003 he exhorted:

As a national group, you are to honor with great pride, that you are an Assyrian maintaining

knowledge of your history and Assyrian language. Your love for one another is to be pure and sweet. As members of one body, you should have social, cultural, and political clubs. Work with one another in love, peace, and faith, toward one goal, maintaining the human rights of The Assyrian Nation. For you who are the laymen and assuming the responsibilities which you have accepted leading and working for the benefit of the steady progress in growth for the future of our Assyrian Nation. It is, therefore, important to consult with one another with a pure heart and clear conscience so that the sons and the daughters of your nation may collect a profitable harvest of your faithful labours. Those of you who are active in the National activities, in this present time, and possessing a good knowledge and with political experience are aware of the path upon which you are to lead, all the levels of our Assyrian Nation, under the one umbrella of unity, we pray for our worshipful GOD to undergird you all with strength, courage, and for all of you to be at peace among yourselves. Let HIM bestow HIS peace upon and among you all.

Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV is following the policy adopted by his predecessor Patriarch Mar Eshai Shimun after a long period of experience following the First World War (1914 – 18). He was exiled from Iraq to Cyprus in August 1933 accusing that he was claiming the temporal powers over the Assyrian people. He learned the lesson and claimed only spiritual powers and asked the Assyrian people to submit politically to the powers ruling over them.

Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV has no ambition to be the King of

Assyria. He is not working for gaining political position. He knows that his role is that of a spiritual father. He tries to fulfill that role advising his followers to be loyal. He has seen a lot of bloodshed. He was born in Iraq only two years after the massacre of the Assyrians in Simale. He was born exactly 20 years after Mar Dinkha Episcopa of his family was shot dead. He uses caution when somebody asks him to play politics. One may accuse him as a silent Patriarch. He knows to be silent when it is wiser to be so. His Holiness Mar Dinkha IV has proved to be prudent.

No doubt the name of His Holiness Mar Dinkha IV, Catholicos Patriarch of the Assyrian Church of the East, will go down in history as one who has given mature leadership at the turn of the century. He gave wise counsel in matters of urgent ecumenical concerns and political changes.

May God grant long life and peaceful days to His Holiness Mar Dinkha IV in these challenging and troubled days.

APPENDICES

A. BISHOPS CONSECRATED BY H. H. MAR DINKHA IV, 1976- 2004

In our hierarchy of twelve prelates seven were selected and consecrated by the present Catholicos Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV during 1981 — 1999. Of the following seven, the first four were consecrated in Chicago and the 5th was consecrated in Sydney, Australia. The sixth was consecrated in Hassake, Syria and the seventh was consecrated in Baghdad, Iraq just two weeks after the sixth. The first mentioned in the list is Mar Narsai de Baz who was consecrated a bishop by Patriarch Mar Eshai Shimun and assisted by Mar Dinkha in July 1968 in Beirut. Mar Narsai was elevated as the Metropolitan on the day of the consecration of Mar Dinkha as the Patriarch. Thus Mar Dinkha IV as Patriarch has consecrated two Metropolitans and six bishops, a total of eight, out of the eleven prelates he has under him now.

Prelates consecrated by H.H. Mar Dinkha IV (1976 – 1999)

- 1 His Grace Mar Narsai de Baz, Metropolitan of Lebanon, October 17, 1976, Ealing, London, England
- 2 His Grace Mar Gewargis Sliwa, Metropolitan of Iraq, June 14, 1981, Chicago
- 3 His Lordship Mar Bawai Soro, Bishop of Seattle, October 14, 1984, Chicago
- 4 His Lordship Mar Meelis Zaia, Bishop of Australia & New Zealand, October 14, 1984, Chicago
- 5 His Lordship Mar Emmanuel Rehana, Bishop of Canada. June 3, 1990, Chicago
- 6 His Lordship Mar Odisho Oraham, Bishop of Europe, July 24, 1994, Sydney, Australia
- 7 His Lordship Mar Aprim Athniel, Bishop of Syria, October 10, 1999, Hassake, Syria
- 8 His Lordship Mar Is'haq Yosip, Dohuk, Arbil & Russia, October 24, 1999, Baghdad

In November 1995 the two following prelates from India who had been consecrated in Baghdad in September 1968 by Mar Thoma Darmo Metropolitan of the old calendar submitted their allegiance to H.H. Mar Dinkha IV and obtained confirmation from him.

1. His Grace Dr. Mar Aprem Metropolitan
2. His Lordship Dr. Poulouse Mar Poulouse Episcopa (died on 24 March 1998)

B. CLERGY ORDAINED BY PATRIARCH MAR DINKHA (1962 — 2004)

(From February 1962 while he was a bishop to 17 October 1976 when he became the Catholicos Patriarch)

1962 Aug 12 in Iran

1. Nicholai d' Qashisha Gewargis
2. Kishto Isa

1966 Aprim Avraham Mar Yonan as deacon

1968 July 14 at Teheran, Iran

As deacons for the Church in India

1. C.C. Isaac (now priest)
2. K.V. Joy (now priest)
3. N.A. Timothy (still deacon)
4. A.C. Anthony (now priest)

As Sub Deacon

Dumara Philipose Benyamin (now Cor
Episcopa in Teheran)

1968 July 27 in Beirut, Lebanon

Qasha Patrose Yuvannis Khoury as
Archdeacon

Badal Siemon Pero as Qasha

Albert Yonan Giwargis as deacon

1968 Dec 29 Evan Barthomeo Shaino

Dumara Philipose Benyamin

Yosip William Mazai

1971 July 11 Mar Gewargis Church, Teheran

Qashisha Simon Yohannan

1971 Nov 21 Mar Thoma parish Abadan, Iran
Qashisha Samuel Kalo

1972 July 9 Mar Gewargis Church, Beirut
Qashisha Zaia Shia Eskaroo

1973 Mar Zaia Cathedral, Karradat Mariam, Baghdad
As Qaroya, Heevpadyaqna, Deacon, Qasisha,
cor-episcopa, Archdeacon Edward Khamis and
assisted Mar Yosip Khananisho Metropolitan
in consecrating him on the same day as Bishop
Mar Aprim Khamis (now in Phonix, Arizona,
USA)

1974 Jan 13 Mar Addai Church, Turlock, California, USA
Sanhiero Dinkha Gewargis,

1975 Sep 1 Mar Gewargis Church, Teheran
Slevo Samano

1974 Dec 26 Mart Mariam Church, Sydney, Australia
Shaul Talia Abraham
Goriel Hanna Odisho

1976 Mar 14 Gewargis Shleemon Zaia

(from 17 October 1976 to 2003)

1976 Oct 24 London, England
Nilus Abris d Bet Matran as deacon

1977 Younan Keena as archdeacon in Baghdad
(died on 27 January 1985)

- 1977 Jun 26 Mart Mariam Church, Urmia
Qasha Aprim Avraham Mar Yonan
- 1977 Jul 31 Mart Mariam, Sydney, Australia
Wardo Odisho Adam as deacon
- 1977 Nov 20 Mar Gewargis Church, Teheran
Qasha Dumara Benyamin
- 1978 Sep 16 Qasha Barkho Oshana David
- 1978 Sep 30 Qasha Badal Pero as cor-episcopa
Alfred Thomas (Sacramento, California)
- 1979 Dec 25 Mar Qardagh Church, Gailani, Baghdad, Iraq
1. Yalda Yohanna Avraham
2. John Yuash Yohannan
3. Philip Kambar Rehana
- 1979 Dec 25 Mar Abdisho Church, Tel Mohammad, Iraq
4. Ammanuel Baitho Yohannan (now in
Germany)
5. Daniel Benyamin Shmouel (later priest,
Killed)
6. Odisho Yusuf Toma (Bibaydi, Dohuk)
7. Noel Yusuf Kambar
- 1979 Dec 25 Mart Mariam Church, Narie, Baghdad
8. Khamis Hurmizd Yosip
9. Yohannan Abdisho Rehana
10. Edward Avraham Moshe
11. Wilson Pithyon Marogil
12. Mishael Nimrod Modo

- 1980 Jan 4 Mar Gewargis Church, Dora, Baghdad
 13. Khoshaba Malko Gewargis
 14. Benyamin Hurmizd Tashaldin
- 1980 Jan 6 Mar Gewargis Church, Kirkuk, Iraq
 15. Patrose Shmouel Darmo
 16. Ninos Shem Shmoel
 17. Gewargis Kanon Toma
- 1980 Jan 11 18. Pnuel, son of Qasha Jammo Toma
- 1980 Jan 13 19. William Shmoel Manaho
 20. Qasha Hormizd Shamasha Isha
- 1980 Feb 15 Mar Gewargis Church, Dora, Baghdad
 21. Yosil Daniel Nono
- 1980 Oct 5 Mart Mariam Church, Sydney, Australia
 22. Ashur Kaiser Lazar
- 1980 Jan 6 Rev. Samuel Dinkha (now in San Jose)
 Shamasha Gewargis Haroun was ordained
 priest for Melbourne, Australia.
- 1982 Jul 18 Mart Mariam Sydney, Australia
 Romeo Adam as deacon (Now Bishop Mar
 Odisho Oraham, Sweden)
- 1983 Jan 16 Mart Mariam, Urmia, Iran
 Esthapanose Yalda Turkhan (now in England)
- 1984 Feb 11 As deacons
 Yosip Immanuel Rashidi (now in Teheran)
 Athor Shimun Malko

- 1984 Apr 22 Philemon Rais Eshai Avraham
Shan Shimun Khamis
- 1984 Jun 24 At Mar Gewargis Church, Urmia
1. Deacon George Toma as priest (formerly
New Britain, Now in Chicago)
2. Koreish Yuarish Benyamin as deacon
3. Nicola Shimun Davidoff
- 1984 Nov 11 Khoshaba Bouza as Priest for Toronto (Now
Rosalle, Chicago)
- 1985 Jan 27 Mart Mariam Church, Los Angeles, USA
1. Nicola Warda
2. David Benyamin
3. Johnson Khanania
4. Gewargis Alosha Shiemon
- 1985 Oct 6 Dimitri Eskander as Priest (Now in Yonkers,
New York)
Benyamin Sultan Benyamin as Priest for Mar
Odisho Church, Midland.
- 1988 May 29 Mar Gewargis Cathedral, Chicago
As deacon
William Avraham Neno (brother of Bishop
Mar Yosep Sargis)
- 1989 Mar 26 At Mar Gewargis Church, Teheran
Deacons
1. Antwan Latchin
2. Jameel Elia Warda
3. Toma Kanon Toma
4. Ashur Andreos Tamras
5. Ator Andreos Tamras

6. Yousif
7. Wilson Koreish Ruvel
8. Mishael Shimun Malko

1989 Jun 25 1. Edmon Yohanna Pito
 2. Yosip Lob Baitho
 3. Jamès Lazar David
 4. Yosip Emmanuel Rashidi as priest for Mar Gewargis Church, Teheran.

1989 Jul 9 Mart Mariam Church, Urmia, Iran.

As Deacons

1. Sami Chiri Yohannan (From Diana, Iraq)
2. David Gilyana Davidof (From Iran)
3. Charles Catolik Shimon “
4. Jonatan (Edvin) Babelle “
5. Sargon Kallo Freidon “
6. Edik Albert Benotekeh “

As Priests

1. Deacon Esthapanose Turkhan (now Priest in England)
2. Deacon Michael Shimon Malko

1989 Sep 1 1. Ruvel Timotheus Shimun

2. Ashor Andreas Tamras

As cor episcopa

Qasha Ator Shimun Malko

1989 Oct 6

1. Gewargis Najib Ahjan as deacon
2. Shamasha Mishael Shimon Malko as priest for Urmia
3. Shamasha Esthapanose Turkhan as priest for Urmia
4. Qasha Aprem Avraham Mar Yonan as cor-episcopa for Urmia

- 1989 Oct 29 Charles Yoshiya Javeed as deacon in Iran
- 1990 Feb 18 Mar Gewargis Church at Doura, Baghdad
Yiuarish Warda as Deacon
- 1991 Jan 19 Mar Gewargis Church, Chicago
Subdeacon David Royal as Deacon
- 1991 Apr 28 Deacons for Johnkoping, Sweden
1. Maurice Jamo Hano
2. Aziz Patrose Kanon
3. Albert Esho Benyamin for Denmark (now Priest)
- 1991 May 19 Roma Shaviloff as Deacon in Teheran
- 1991 May 26 at Mart Mariam Church, Urmiya, Iran
Daryawesh Azizian as Deacon
Ramseen as Heevpadyaqna
Karanavel as Qaroya
Aprim as Qaroya
- 1991 Aug 18 at Mar Gewargis Sahda Church, Teheran
Toma Kanon Toma as Priest (now in New Zealand)
Alfred Aprim Yacobi as Deacon
- 1991 Aug 25 Mart Mariam Church, London, England
Heevpadyaqna Colin Stalious Yohannan as Deacon
Deacon Antwan Zaia Latchin as Priest (Sweden now in Chicago)
- 1991 Nov 8 Saqo Avraham Sliewo
Esau Sliwo Brimo

1. Saeed Sooth Sabr
2. Yokhannan Adam Khoshaba
3. Shimshon John Toma
4. Khoshaba Yohannan Abdisho
5. Emad Daniel Yohannan

1992 Nov 8 Syria
Deacon Aprim Athniel as priest

1992 Nov 22 Mart Mariam Church, London, England
Deacon Antwan Zaia Latchin as Priest

1996 Jan 12 Mart Mariam Urmi , Iran
Aprim Mar Yonan as Archdeacon
Qasha Benyamin Dumara as cor episcopa

1996 Jan 14

1. Heevpadyaqna Aprim as deacon
2. Heevpadyaqna Anthon as deacon
3. Heevpadyakna Banipal (son of Qasha Dumara Benyamin)

1. Qasha Daryawsh Azizian, Urmiyah
2. Deacon Edwin Babilla, Urmiyah
3. Deacon Sargun Kallu, Urmiyah
4. Heevpadyakna Meeshal Khano
5. Heevpadyakna Ramson Yohanna

1999 May 23 at Mar Gewargis Church, Chicago
As priests,

1. Deacon William Toma
2. Deacon David Royel

1999 Jun 18 at Mar Gewargis Church, Chicago
As cor-episcopa

1. Qasha Khamis Yosip of North Iraq
2. Qasha Aprim Athniel of Hassake, Syria

2001 Aug 12 At Los Angeles parish, USA,
Qaroye

1. Romeo Mathai Eshaya
2. John Sh.David alkhon
3. Ninos Sami Dinkha
4. Maron Malkiesdiq Iepasda
5. Ashor Sargon Alias

Deacons

6. Milies Jameel Avraham
7. Nargil Elia Bet Hodo
8. Dan Yonathan Daniel
9. Philip Moshe Markose
10. William Sh.Ishoyav Sh.Avraham
11. Sargon Zaia Marogil

2001 Sep 14 at Mar Gewargis Church, Chicago
As priest

Deacon Benjamin Koreish of Teheran studying
in Rome by a new name Qasha Poulos

2002 Jun 16 at Ceres Parish, California
As deacons

1. Ninos Ashur Pero
2. Wilson Zaia Oshana
3. Nimrod Avraham Shimco

2002 Jun 23 Mar Zaia Church, Modesto, California
As deacon

Najilo Nano
as Heevpadyaqna
Sargon Nathan Jalavi

C. CHURCHES DEDICATED UNDER PATRIARCH MAR DINKHA IV (1975- 2000)

1975	December 23 rd	Mart Mariam	Sydney, Australia
1980		Mar Gewargis Church	Chicago, Illinois
1981		Mar Gewargis Church	Diana, Arbil, Iraq
1982		Mart Mariam Church	Melbourne, Australia
1983		Mar Gewargis Church	Arbil, Iraq
1983		Mart Shmoon Church	Kora Gavana, Duhok, Iraq
1984		Mar Mari Church	Al-Ameen Dt., Baghdad
1984		Mar Odisho Church	Baghdad, Iraq
1985		Mar Gewargis Church	Dora, Baghdad, Iraq
1985		Mart Shmoon Church	Telkaif, Nineveh, Iraq
1985		Mar Gewargis Church	Baroshki, Duhok, Iraq
1985		Mart Mariyam Church	Duhok, Iraq
1986		Mar Zaia Church	Baghdad, Mechanics Dt.
1986		Mar Odisho Church	Daira and Komani, Iraq
1987		Mar Daniel Church	Simul, Duhok, Iraq
1987	August 15 th	Mart Mariam Church	London, England
1987		Mar Khanania Church	Derallok, Duhok, Iraq
1988		Church	Toronto, Canada
1990	December 16 th	Rabban Hormuzd Church	Sydney, Australia
1991		Mar Zaia Church	Modesto, California
1996		Church Hall	Phoenix, Arizona, USA
1997	August 15 th	Mart Mariyam	Roselle, Chicago, USA
1998	Sept 2 nd	Mar Zaia Church	Kaswa, Zahle, Lebanon
1998	Sept 27 th	Mart Mariam	Moscow, Russia
2000	January 25 th	Mar Dinkha Chapel	Chiyaram, Kerala, India
2000	January 29 th	Mar Joseph Church	Kunnamkulam, India

D. EIGHT HOLY SYNODS (1976 - 2001)

Since Mar Dinkha was elected Catholicos Patriarch of the Church of the East eight holy Synods were held. He believes in holding Holy Synods to make all the important decisions of the Church as well as the election of bishops, as the custom of Episcopal families supplying bishops has ended.

The 8 Holy Synods under the presidentship of Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV are the following

1. The Holy Synod of 1976 October 17-21, England
2. The Holy Synod of 1978 April 11-22, Baghdad
3. The Holy Synod of 1984, Oct 15-Nov 2, Chicago, USA
4. The Holy Synod of 1990, January 15 –19, Baghdad. Iraq
5. The Holy Synod of 1994. July 18-29, Sydney, Australia
6. The Holy Synod of 1997, June 23- July 1, Chicago, USA
7. The Holy Synod of 1999, April 19 – 27, Chicago, USA
8. The Holy Synod of 2001, June 4-14, Chicago, USA

1st Holy Synod 16-21 October 1976 at St. Paul's Priory, Alton, England. Prelates present in the Synod are,

1. H.H. Mar Khanania Dinkha IV, Catholicos Patriarch
2. H.G. Mar Timotheus Metropolitan, India
3. H.G. Mar Narsai Metropolitan of Athor
4. Bishop Mar Yokhannan Abraham, Syria
5. Mar Aprim Khamis, USA & Canada
6. Mar Claudio Veterreso, Aquelia, Italy
7. Mar Giovanni Biscu, Italy

2nd Holy Synod 11-22 April 1978 in Baghdad, Iraq. Prelates present in the Synod are,

1. H.H. Mar Khanania Dinkha IV, Catholicos Patriarch
2. H.G. Mar Timotheus Metropolitan, India
3. H.G. Mar Narsai de Baz, Metropolitan, Lebanon
4. Bishop Aprim Khamis, USA
5. Bishop Mar Claudio Veterreso, Aquela, Italy

3rd Holy Synod October 15th - November 2nd 1984 at Chicago, USA. Prelates present,

1. H.H. Mar Khanania Dinkha IV, Catholicos Patriarch
2. H G. Mar Timotheus Metropolitan, India
3. H.G. Mar Narsai de Baz, Metropolitan, Lebanon
4. Bishop Mar Yokhannan Abraham, Syria
5. Mar Aprim Khamis, USA & Canada
6. Mar Daniel Yacob, Kirkuk, Iraq living in USA
7. Bishop Mar Claudio Veterreso, Aquela, Italy
8. Bishop Mar Bawai Soro, Western USA
9. Bishop Mar Meelis Zaia, Australia

4th Holy Synod 15-27 January 1990 at Baghdad, Iraq. Prelates present,

1. H. H. Mar Khanania Dinkha IV, Catholicos Patriarch
2. H G. Mar Timotheus Metropolitan, India
3. H.G. Mar Narsai de Baz, Metropolitan, Lebanon, Syria and Europe
4. H.G. Mar Gewargis Sliwa Metropolitan, Iraq
5. Bishop Mar Yosip Sargis, Bagdad
6. Bishop Mar Aprim Khamis, East USA
7. Bishop Mar Bawai Soro, Western USA
8. Bishop Mar Meelis Zaia, Australia

5th Holy Synod 18-29 July 1994, Sydney, Australia. Prelates present,

1. H. H. Mar Khanania Dinkha IV, Catholicos Patriarch
2. H G. Mar Timotheus Metropolitan, India
3. H.G. Mar Narsai de Baz, Metropolitan, Lebanon, Syria and Europe
4. H.G. Mar Gewargis Sliwa Metropolitan, Iraq
5. Bishop Mar Yosip Sargis, Baghdad
6. Bishop Mar Aprim Khamis, East USA
7. Bishop Mar Bawai Soro, Western USA
8. Bishop Mar Meelis Zaia, Australia & New Zealand
9. Bishop Mar Odisho Oraham, Europe

6th Holy Synod 19-30 June 1997, Chicago, USA. Prelates Present,

1. H.H. Mar Khanania Dinkha IV, Catholicos Patriarch
2. H.G. Mar Narsai de Baz, Metropolitan, Lebanon, Syria and Europe
3. H.G. Mar Aprem Metropolitan, India
4. H.G. Mar Gewargis Sliwa Metropolitan, Iraq
5. Bishop Mar Yosip Sargis, Bagdad
6. Bishop Mar Poulouse Mar Poulouse, India
7. Bishop Mar Aprim Khamis, East USA
8. Bishop Mar Bawai Soro, Western USA
9. Bishop Mar Meelis Zaia, Australia & New Zealand
10. Bishop Mar Emmanuel Emmanuel, Canada
11. Bishop Mar Odisho Oraham, Europe

7th Holy Synod April 19-27, 1999, Mar Gewargis Church, Chicago, USA. Prelates present,

1. H.H. Mar Khanania Dinkha IV, Catholicos Patriarch
2. H.G. Mar Narsai de Baz, Metropolitan, Lebanon, Syria and Europe
3. H.G. Mar Aprem Metropolitan, India

4. H.G. Mar Gewargis Sliwa Metropolitan, Iraq
5. Bishop Mar Aprim Khamis, East USA
6. Bishop Mar Bawai Soro, Western USA
7. Bishop Mar Meelis Zaia, Australia & New Zealand
8. Bishop Mar Emmanuel Emmanuel, Canada
9. Bishop Mar Odisho Oraham, Europe

8th Holy Synod June 4-15, 2001, Mart Mariam Church, Rosalle, Chicago, USA. Prelates present,

1. H.H. Mar Khanania Dinkha IV, Catholicos Patriarch
2. H.G. Mar Narsai de Baz, Metropolitan, Lebanon, Syria and Europe
3. H.G. Mar Aprem Metropolitan, India
4. H.G. Mar Gewargis Sliwa Metropolitan, Iraq
5. Bishop Mar Aprim Khamis, East USA
6. Bishop Mar Bawai Soro, Western USA
7. Bishop Mar Meelis Zaia, Australia & New Zealand
8. Bishop Mar Emmanuel Emmanuel, Canada
9. Bishop Mar Odisho Oraham, Europe
10. Bishop Mar Aprim Athniel, Syria

Mar Timotheus Metropolitan, Patriarchal Delegate in India, could not attend the Holy Synods of 1997, 1999, and 2001 owing to his old age.

The new Bishop of Nuhadra and Russia Mar Isaac Yosip could not attend the Holy Synod, as the American visa was not granted in time. He reached Toronto one day after the Synod was over.

Bishop Mar Meelis Zaia is the Secretary of the Holy Synod, since the Holy Synod held in Sydney, Australia in July 1994.

N.B. Archdeacon Yonan Youvel Yonan of England was the

recording secretary in these Holy Synods.

Mar Claudio of Aquilo, Italy who was present in the Synods of 1976, 1978 and 1984 left the Church. The other Italian Bishop Mar Giovanni Biscu also left the Church. Both died.

Bishop Mar Daniel Yakob of Kirkuk who was present in the 1984 Synod joined the old calendar group. He is living in California. He is not active in the Church owing to ill health.

Patriarchal Councils

In addition to the Holy Synods, Patriarchal councils were held consisting of a smaller number of prelates related to the specific issues to be discussed. In recent years six patriarchal councils (*knushya Patriarchaya*) were held as follows.

1989 June

1993 December

1995 June Chicago

1996 June 4-6, Chicago

1998 September 14 & 15, Lebanon

2001 February, 16-22, Chicago

The Holy Synods are proposed to be held once in four years only to save the expenses of a global gathering. It is also held whenever necessity arose. Actually 4 Holy Synods were held during the last ten years.

It is noteworthy that His Holiness Mar Dinkha IV gave devotional talks from the Bible in every Synod. His letter of summoning the Holy Synod was always based on Biblical verses and reminding the prelates of the Church to be faithful to Bible.

E. DECREES OF THE FIFTH HOLY SYNOD, 1994

The fifth Holy Synod in the Patriarchate of His Holiness Mar Dinkha IV, Catholicos Patriarch of the Holy Apostolic and Catholic Assyrian Church of the East, convened in Sydney-Australia on July 18, 1994, and continued to July 29, with His Holiness presiding over the fathers assembled with him.

These prelates were:

1. His Excellency Mar Timotheus, Metropolitan of India.
2. His Excellency Mar Narsai de Baz, Metropolitan of Lebanon, Syria and Europe.
3. His Excellency Mar Gewargis, Metropolitan of Baghdad and Iraq.
4. His Grace Mar Aprim Khamis, Bishop of the Diocese of Eastern U.S.
5. His Grace Mar Bawai Soro, Bishop of the Diocese of Western US.
6. His Grace Mar Meelis Zaia, Bishop of the Diocese of Australia and New Zealand.
7. His Grace Mar Emmanuel Joseph, Bishop of the Diocese of Canada.

His Grace Mar Sargis, the bishop of Baghdad, was not able to attend, but he sent a letter to the Patriarch and the bishops congratulating them all and beseeching the Holy Spirit to assist the assembled in all that they may do for the glory of God's name and for the benefit of his Holy Church.

And also with the good will of all the assembled bishops and with the aid of the Holy Spirit the following decrees were adopted by the Holy Synod.

DECREE # (1)

Reverend Father *Odisho Adam Oraham* was nominated, elected and ordained a bishop to the See of Stockholm for the Diocese of Europe on Sunday, July 24, 1994, in the Cathedral Church of Rabban Hormizd in Sydney and was given the Episcopal name “Mar Odisho”.

DECREE # (2)

The Holy Synod under the leadership of the Catholicos-Patriarch decreed the establishment of a new ecclesiastical department in the Assyrian Church of the East under the name “*Department of inter-church Relations and Religious Development*”. The objective and responsibilities of this department are that of *inter-Church relations* shall be to prepare for and participate in consultations and theological dialogues between the Assyrian Church of the East and other Churches. This will involve the preparation of literature for the study and exposition of the correct dogma, faith, theology and Christology of the Church of the East. The objectives and responsibilities of this department in the second area, promoting *religious education and development*, shall be the preparation of catechetical literature for Sunday School students in the parishes of the Assyrian Church of the East, and teaching materials and aids for individuals who will be teaching the young in these schools. The department will also prepare Christian education books to teach the youth and general membership of the Assyrian Church of the East. In addition, this department shall develop additional programmes and activities in these to specific fields, for which the Assyrian Church of the East is in dire need.

For the completion of these responsibilities, the Holy Synod decreed the appointment of His Grace Bishop Mar Bawai Soro

as *Secretary General* of this department. In addition to this responsibility, His Grace will also be the bishop-in-charge for the two English language parishes of our Church in the United States, namely, the Seattle and Sacramento parishes.

DECREE # (3)

It has been decreed that His Grace, bishop *Mar Aprim Khamis*, will assume duties in the diocese of the Western United States this year during the first week of “*Subara*” (Annunciation). Since His Grace Mar Bawai will be assuming responsibility for the newly established department (see above # 2), Mar Aprim will become, from that time on, the diocesan ordinary for the said Diocese.

DECREE # (4)

Because of the fact that the majority of the sons and daughters of our Church have today resettled outside the traditional geographical boundaries of our Church, namely, the “Middle East,” this Holy Synod has reviewed the status of the Patriarchal See and its current condition and the status of the two Diocese of our Church in the United States,
And therefore has decreed that:

- (1) The Diocese of the Eastern United States shall be designated as the patriarchal diocese,
- (2) His Grace, Bishop Mar Apirm Khamis, shall assume the pastoral duties of His Grace Bishop Mar Bawai Soro and thus shall become the bishop of the Diocese of the Western United States,
- (3) His Grace, Bishop Mar Bawai Soro, shall become the secretary general for the “*Department of Inter-Church Relations and Religious Development*” and shall also

continue his higher theological studies for the degree of “Ph. D. in Theology”.

DECREE # (5)

The Holy Synod agreed to renew its invitation to the prelates of the Old Calendar to convene in a joint synod at a time and place agreed to by both sides, so that there may be an opportunity to discuss the problem of the schism that exists in the Church of the East. This invitation was extended to the prelates of the Old Calendar through Mar Addai, here in Sydney, Australia.

DECREE # (6)

Concerning the relations of the Assyrian Church of the East with the other Apostolic Churches, the Synod discussed the issue at length, with the prelates taking under consideration the state of affairs in which Christianity finds itself in both East and West. The Synod then decided that for the present it is necessary for the Assyrian Church of the East to continue maintaining the relationship of Christian charity and understanding, which already exist between her and a number of Churches. But beyond that, the Synod also decreed for that for the future the Assyrian Church of the East should attempt to establish new bonds of Christian love and brotherhood with other Apostolic Churches with whom the Church of the East, has not yet established any dialogue or exchange. Only in this way does the Synod see an opportunity for the Church of the East, together with the other Apostolic Churches, to preserve itself and protect its sons and daughters from this century's social ills and other problems, that is, when there exists a relationship of charity and mutual respect for one another's faith among all the Christian Churches in the world.

DECREE # (7)

For the purpose of promoting better organization in the Church, the synod has decided to adopt a new set of bylaws as an internal rule for the Holy Synod. The Synod has also decreed that this set of bylaws will be a synodical ordinance by which all future meetings of the Holy Synod will be governed. It was confirmed that the Patriarchal vicar shall continue to be His Excellency, Mar Narsai de Baz, and the newly appointed Secretary for the synod, for a period of three years, shall be His Grace Mar Meelis Laia.

DECREE # (8)

The Holy Synod shall be called to convene by the Catholicos-Patriarch at least once every three years. All decisions made during intervening periods — decisions that deal with issues that effect the whole Assyrian Church of the East — must be adopted by a Patriarchal Synod, which shall convene once a year after the Feast of the Resurrection. This Patriarchal Synod will consist of the following members: The Catholicos-Patriarch, the Patriarchal vicar, the secretary of the synod, and two other relates named by Patriarch. Whenever there is on the agenda of the meeting a case which concerns a certain Diocese the bishop of said Diocese must be called to that Patriarchal Synod.

DECREE # (9)

The Synod has decided and accordingly decreed that future priests who are candidates for Episcopal ordination, must have completed post graduate theological studies before their election and consecration takes place.

DECREE # (10)

The Synod took note of the fact, for the present, our seminary in Baghdad, Iraq, is sufficient for our Church's need, but that it requires additional support and expansion.

DECREE # (11)

It has been resolved that the Synod shall confirm the 1990 decree of the Baghdad Synod which stated that parish priests who leave their parishes on their own initiative and go to other parishes and intrude in the pastoral work there without the lawful permission of the local bishop, are actually becoming instruments of disunity in the community and in the Church. Therefore, such clergy have no right or authority to serve the community unless they have obtained a written permission from the local bishop of the concerned location. In addition, such clergy have no right to ask the new parish a stipend or any financial support.

DECREE # (12)

Our possibility that the church may solemnize the marriage of a believer to a non-Christian, the Synod decreed that there is no authorization in the church's synodical records for such a procedure. Thus, there will be no permission for parish priests to solemnize such marriages. And even if such a marriage has been recorded in a civil court, the Church will not administer any of the sacraments to the non-Christian until the time he or she is baptized canonically in the church.

DECREE # (13)

Wherever there is a situation in which the faithful have requested

the pastor of their church to allow them to receive the Sacrament of the Eucharist under the species of bread alone, the Synod has decreed that from now on priests are allowed to immerse the entire loaf of bread into the wine of the Holy communion; and permission will be granted to the faithful during the administration of the Sacrament to receive only the body of Christ which has been immersed in the Blood of Christ on the altar. This is similar to the practice by which the Church of the East has for centuries communicated by her young children. At the same time the chalice of the Blood of Christ will be available and will be offered to those who wish to communicate from it.

DECREE # (14)

The Holy Synod discussed new rules for cases of suicide among church faithful, and it has been decreed that funeral services shall be performed for those who, by reason of mental instability, have taken their own life.

DECREE # (15)

The Holy Synod discussed some cases in which the faithful have asked the church to have their bodies cremated following their funeral service. It has been resolved that for such cases the Synod allow the priests to perform the funeral service. But the service of the “third day” shall be conducted only if the remains of the body have been buried properly. However, if there is no burial place, there shall be no service of the “third day”.

DECREE # (16)

It has been decided that the Church in Iraq should plan and

prepare for the publication of a new edition of the “Khodra” which shall include new revisions. For example, the main volume the book should be separated from the Psalms and *Qd am u Watar*. These revisions shall be presented to the office of the Patriarchate for approval, through the department of “*Inter-Church Relations and Religious Development*.”

DECREE # (17)

The Synod decreed that, upon the recommendation of his bishop, a priest shall retire when he becomes sixty five (65) years of age. If the priest is 65 years of age and wishes to retire, then let it be according to his wish. But, if the bishop sees a necessity for the priest to retire, then he must do so. If the priest resists in such a case, he shall become liable for the punishments set forth in the canons. The Synod also decreed that prelates who become 75 years of age, should they be burdened with the difficulty associated with old age, shall also be allowed to retire.

DECREE # (18)

The Synod has resolved that one priest shall be appointed to conduct visitation to members of the Assyrian Church of the East who have been scattered throughout different countries in Europe and who have no access to a church of their own. The project is to be fulfilled in accordance with the financial ability of the Church in Europe.

The Assyrian Church of the East has no immediate and effective way of preventing her faithful from leaving their home countries in the Middle East. Yet the Church does not approve of the immigration of her followers from the East because the ultimate effects of this immigration are not in the interest of the Church and Christianity. However, at the same time, the Church

recognizes her duty to extend assistance to those who are undergoing difficulties because of this immigration. These individuals should be assisted by the church in any way possible, to the extent and availability of finances and personnel.

DECREE # (19)

The Synod has decreed that an open letter be sent to a number of world leaders asking them and their Churches and governments to provide all possible assistance in urging the lifting of the embargo imposed on the Iraqi people by the United Nations. A copy of this letter has been sent to the following:

- + His Holiness John Paul II, the Bishop of Rome and Pope of the Catholic Church.
- + Mr. Bill Clinton, President of the United States of America.
- + Mr. John Major, British Prime Minister.
- + Boutrus Boutrus Galli, Secretary General of the United Nations.
- + The Secretary General of the World Council of Churches.

DECREE # (20)

It has been decreed that His Excellency, Mar Narsai de Baz, shall be the Metropolitan in charge of Europe and Syria. In November 1994, he shall go to London, England, and accompany the newly ordained Bishop, His Grace Mar Odisho Oraha, to Sweden and there His Excellency shall introduce the new bishop to the priests, deacons, committees, and faithful there and in the European countries. For a period of three years,

His Grace Mar Odisho, shall work closely with His Excellency on matters pertaining to the administration of the new diocese.

DECREE # (21)

Concerning the Assyrian Church of the East in the ex-Soviet Union Republics, the Synod has decreed that His Excellency Mar Gewargis will administer for the time being our Church's affairs in those countries. He shall attempt to find suitable candidates for priestly ordination from among the faithful of our Church there. This task shall be facilitated by sending one of the priests from Iraq in order to see that the designated programme is carried out.

End of Decrees

F. FELICITATION ADDRESS 2000

Presented to His Holiness Maran Mar Khanania Dinkha IV, 120th Catholicos Patriarch of the Assyrian Church of the East during the apostolic visit to India from 19-31, January 2000.

We, the members of the Church of the East in India locally known as the Chaldean Syrian Church extend a warm welcome to Your Holiness. The Marth Mariam Big Church in Trichur is the first Church in the town, built in 1814 AD for the Christian community brought by the famous king of erstwhile Cochin State, Shakthan Tampuran in 1796 AD. for the commercial development of the state of Cochin.

The visit of the Patriarch, the supreme head of our Church is a blessing and honour conferred on the Chaldean Syrian Church in India, once in a blue moon. The first visit of a Patriarch that of His Holiness Mar Eshai Shimun, in December 1961 will remain a red-letter day in the annals of history of our Church. It was a historic event, which the town of Trichur will remember forever. Your Holiness is the second Patriarch to visit India. Your Holiness visited us twice before, first in February 1967 when Your Holiness was the Episcopa of Iran and a second time in January 1991. However, Your Holiness' present visit assumes added significance and will be inscribed in golden letters in the Church chronicles because Your Holiness is visiting a united Church. When Your Holiness left us in January 1991 Your Holiness expressed confidence that this Church will be united again. That prophecy came true in November 1995.

During the four years of reunion, we have made a new constitution and implemented it with the approval of Your Holiness. The elections to the *Sabha* Council as well as the

Board of Central Trustees were conducted in a spirit of cordiality and mutual respect.

During the last one-year period several ordinations were solemnized and we have built new Churches in Kunnamkulam and Chiyaram (within the Mar Mari Sreeha Parish). Both these Churches are to be dedicated this week by Your Holiness. Two years ago we built a Church in Palghat in the name of Mar Zaya. Your Holiness dedicated a parish hall in our St. Thomas parish in Coimbatore.

Today Your Holiness will dedicate the Bishop Dr. Poulouse Building for the Chaldean Syrian Higher Secondary School. Late lamented Mar Abimalek Timotheus Metropolitan had founded this school in 1927 with just two classes in the primary section. It became a High School in 1940. Two years ago it was upgraded as a school imparting higher secondary education after completion of the high school education.

The Chaldean Centre at Pallikulam, Trichur is a 10-million-rupee project, which our Church has undertaken to mark the 50th death anniversary of the late Mar Abimalek Timotheus Metropolitan who died on 30 April 1945. We are donating 50 houses costing nearly 3 million rupees. The first set of these houses has been completed and we request Your Holiness to bless them this week.

We have mentioned some of the activities of the Indian Church to apprise Your Holiness of the different facets of spiritual and social ministry the Church carries out.

We remember with gratitude the solicitude and concern Your Holiness has shown in moments of joy as well as grief the Indian Church has passed through.

The premature demise of Dr. Mar Poulouse Episcopa immersed the Church in deep grief. It is with profound sense of gratitude that we cherish Your Holiness' overture of love and concern in sending the Metropolitan of Lebanon Mar Narsai to Trichur as Your Holiness' emissary to share the Indian Church's agony and offer the message of solace in our moment of grief.

Your Holiness, we are proud of the many achievements of Your Holiness has made since Your Holiness' accession to the Patriarchal Throne of our Church on 17 October 1976. Your Holiness has fortified our Church to equip it to enter this millennium. There have been hardships especially because of the 1980-1988 war between Iraq and Iran, then the Kuwait problem of August 1990 and the bombing of Iraq in January 1991 while Your Holiness was visiting Trichur.

During the 23 years of being the Supreme Head of this Church Your Holiness consecrated Bishops for Australia, Canada, Europe, etc. Your Holiness consecrated successors to the Metropolitan of Iraq, Bishop in Syria following the demise of the prelates there. The consecration of a bishop for Dohuk, Arbil area in October 99 was done to have an effective Episcopal supervision of the Assyrian Church in Moscow as well as our members scattered in Georgia, Armenia and such erstwhile Soviet Nations.

Your Holiness is taking keen interest in the education of our future bishops, training them in the best theological institutions in Rome, Chicago etc. The starting of an order for nuns in Baghdad and in India will help strengthen our spiritual and social ministry.

Your Holiness traveled around the world many times and consecrated many Churches in USA, Lebanon, Iran, Syria, Australia, England, etc.

It is our ardent wish and prayer that God Almighty will grant long life to Your Holiness to complete many ecumenical and spiritual activities initiated by Your Holiness for the progress and prosperity of the great Assyrian Church of the East.

Mar Timotheus Metropolitan
Patriarchal Delegate to India.

Mar Aprem Metropolitan
Head of the Archdiocese of India.

Clergy
The Board of Central Trustees, Kaikars, and
Faithful of the Church in India.
Trichur, Kerala, India.

23rd January 2000.

G. THE EASTER PATRIARCHAL EPISTLE, 2001

Our Beloved Brothers in the Lord, Prelates, our spiritual sons, The Reverend Fathers, the pious Deacons, and all the sons and daughters of our Holy Church, all our brothers and sisters in Jesus Christ:

Prayers and blessings receive.

By the Holy Resurrection of our Lord, we believe that Jesus Christ is truly risen! The faithful greatly rejoice by the mercies of our Resurrected Lord, singing HIS praises, for HE has filled the world with HIS peace. HE now teaches us to give peace to one another because HE has sanctified us all with the peace of His Resurrection.

He has conquered death by His Resurrection, and we can now live in reconciliation, in pure heart and a perfect love, receiving the Body and Blood of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ under the species of The Bread and The Wine. Now, let us, together with the angels and the celestial hosts proclaim “Glory be to God in the Highest” for HE has bestowed HIS love upon all of humankind. He has offered to us HIS only begotten Son for the salvation of the world. By the resurrection of Jesus Christ, as in the sun of righteousness, rising again in the eastern sky, shines upon the whole world and enlightens all; showing our thoughts cannot be hidden from HIM. Fallen humankind is brought back into the Land of Light, which is filled with peace, tranquility, and good hope.

By HIS resurrection The Lord has given to us the hope of redemption; therefore, we declare to all of you our beloved sons and daughters of The Holy Church, and to all of our brothers

and sisters in Christ: May the Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ be blessed to you and yours! St Paul the Apostle tells us, “Endeavoring to preserve the harmony of The Spirit in the bond of peace, that you may become one body, one spirit, even as you are called in one hope of your calling; there is One Lord, One Faith, and Baptism, One God and Father of all, who is above all and through and in all of us.” (Eph 4:3-6) Jesus Christ by HIS death in His humanity upon The Cross, destroyed sin, thus we as human creatures are crucified, died, and are resurrected in HIM.

In the Sacrament of Holy Baptism we are immersed in the consecrated waters three times in the Name of the Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit, signifying the three days Jesus Christ remained in The Tomb. The Third day, the physical body was changed from mortality to immortality. In the same manner, those Christians who are baptized by The Apostolic Minister in The Name of the Holy Trinity, are “born again” into immortality by water and The Holy Spirit, according to the commands of our Lord (St John 3:5); thus they become a living member of the mystical Body of Christ!

Therefore, in order to be a viable living witness of Jesus Christ it is incumbent upon each believer to live a life of purity; and, free from sinfulness. Since the branch of a tree is connected to the trunk of the tree lives, it will produce fruit. A withered branch is disconnected and thrown into a flame of fire. From the day of our Baptism, we Apostolic Christians are united in Jesus Christ and DO live by HIS grace!

Jesus said, “I am the vine, you are the branches. He who remains with me, and I with him, will bear abundant fruit; for without me you can do nothing, unless a man remains with me, he will be cast outside like a branch, which is withered, which they

pick up and throw into the fire to be burned. If you remain with me, and my words remain with you, whatever you ask will be done for you.” [St John 15:5-7]

As an Apostolic Christian we build our faith upon Jesus Christ, the corner stone of our faith. Jesus Christ IS our salvation; HE is the enlightened (bright) way, which leads us toward Eternal Life. The Lord Jesus Christ is The Holy Door through which we enter our home not made by human hands, (which is The kingdom of Heaven). Therefore, now let us concentrate upon our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and seek to become like HIM. Since Jesus Christ is alive and will not die again, death will not overcome HIM again. Flesh and bone do not inherit The Kingdom of Heaven, therefore, we in our humanity must die in the flesh in order to live in our spiritual body. Therefore, all sons and daughters of The Holy Church of the East, let each one of you focus upon Jesus Christ. Jesus IS the Savior and the redeemer from our sins. HE is the Good Shepherd who watches over HIS Flock, The holy Church!

We, the Prelates and the Priests are HIS servants, working in HIS Vineyard; we are sent as Apostles and Preachers to proclaim the life-giving words of Jesus to you all. Through the words proclaimed, you will be lead toward the door leading into The Kingdom of Heaven (which is life eternal). When we speak of “the Church” we are speaking about the community of believers; the baptized individuals make up that community/church, whose Head is Jesus Christ; having offered Himself to sanctify (the Church). The necessity, therefore, to respect The Head of The Church (our Lord Jesus Christ), by being faithful to HIS commandments, we confirm our love for HIM. Without Jesus Christ we cannot perform “good deeds”. Our deeds are to conform to those of Jesus Christ! Jesus said, “A new commandment I give you, that you love one another, just as I

have loved you, that you love one another.” (St John 13:34-35)
“Go into the world and preach The Gospel to all.” (Mark 16:15)
The evangelization and preaching of message of salvation is a commandment of our Lord Jesus, it is given to all; including the Prelates, Priests. The idea conveys or suggests that it is our duty to spread The Holy Gospel to all of humankind. It is not to be limited just to us; it is limited to the whole world! All of us who have been baptized in Apostolic Baptism have received a unique spiritual gift to become proclaimers of the Holy Message of our Lord Jesus Christ. God has created man with the ability to make a choice. He was placed at the beginning of two ways. One way is Bright and Narrow (leading to eternal life), and the other is broad and benighted (leading to death). He is free to choose either of these two ways.

The Evil-one, because he is possessed of certain weakness, has many deceiving devices or mechanisms to employ in order to entrap humankind to follow a path of darkness into death. For the Christian to keep from falling or stumbling into a path of error and sin, is important that he participate in “good works of righteousness” such as fasting, praying and good works of charity. We instruct our Parish Priests together with the members of the Church Committee to promote and to participate in arranging for and actively involved in the Studies of the Scriptures and Catechism of The Faith. Furthermore, within each Church, when possible, the language of The Church and the Sacred Scriptures are to be taught; a developing Youth Association, Choir, etc. These are very important and are to be pursued.

The Apostle St Paul says: “Faith comes from hearing, and hearing comes from the word of God,” therefore, do not tire at hearing the proclamation of the word of God. Jesus said, “Do you not believe that I am with my Father, and that my Father is with me? The words which I speak, I do not speak of myself;

but my Father who abides with me does works.” (John 14:10) Remember, the words of Jesus Christ are those from our Almighty Father. They are like seeds, which have been sown upon fertile ground; they sprout up and produce an abundant harvest. However, to the contrary with that of unfertile soil, we pray that all the sons and daughters of The Holy Church will be “the fertile ground” which produces abundant fruit for the greater glory of God. We have been received into The Church of our Lord Jesus Christ to work together as members of one body. St Paul instructs us: “so we being any, are ONE body in Christ, and everyone, members one of another.” (Romans 12: 5) Here we can read that The Church has many members, with each member is gifted with a particular responsibility; for example:-

The eye is for seeing. The ear is for hearing. The eye does not say to the ear, “you are not needed.” The ear cannot say to the eye, “you aren’t needed.”

In the same manner within The Church all members are needed! And, each one according to his gift or capacity, has his work within The Church, in faithfulness and obedience, no one is to say, “I am coming to The Church, giving my dues, and working in The Church because of so and so an active member of The Church,” these are wrong thought! Each member possessing his faith, enters into activities in The Church because of Jesus Christ participating in the redemption of his soul; each member must build his faith upon Jesus Christ Who is The Foundation of The Church. Your faith edifice will be strong and will not fall, when it is built upon Jesus Christ. However, if your faith is built upon another individual, it is not the Christian faith, it belongs to another person (it is their own personal faith); once that’s person passes-away, that faith dies with him. Jesus Christ is Alive, HE will never die! He is our Lord, Our God, Our King, Our Savior, Our giver of Life, and forgiver of our sins! The

edifice of faith built upon Jesus will never fall; it will stand forever.

We encourage you to always be righteous in your judgments, by not calling that which is bitter, sweet, and vice versa, the sweet, bitter. We have One Righteous Judge, sitting on the right-hand of God, HE is our Lord Jesus Christ, who sees all things and hears all things, and he will give each one his just reward. We beseech you to bury the Word of God into the very depths of your heart. It will sprout forth into acceptable fruits of righteousness. Purify your intentions from all harmful effects of sin. You must become a temple of honor decorated in the beauty of holiness. You are all the temples of God the Father. Wherever you live, please do not forget, you are the sons and daughters of the Holy Apostolic Catholic Church of the East. Be close and active in the local church. Be careful to observe and practice The Liturgy, The Sacraments, The Synodical Canons of The Church.

In order to be respected and beloved within your land, I beseech all of you to be faithful citizens in the nation where you now abide, wherever you may dwell, be faithful citizens to your country; be careful to abide by the laws of the nation, because that is where you now have your home. With your neighbors, you must live in peace and love, regardless of their religious identity; respect them so that you, too, will be respected. Your neighbors are always in need of the help and support of you, his neighbor. The Lord Jesus commands us to love our neighbors as ourselves (St Luke 10:28). Concluding this our epistle, we say, once again, The Feast of The Resurrection be blessed to you! We beseech our worshipful God to perfect you, and keep you healthy, in order to celebrate this feast of the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ wherever you may live in peace and joy; all of you, sons and daughters of The Beloved Church, and

our Brothers and Sisters in Christ Jesus: The Grace and mercies of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you, now and always: Amen and amen.

Khanania Mar Dinkha IV
By Grace
Catholicos Patriarch
of the Assyrian Church of the East

Written in our Patriarchal Cell
Morton Grove, Illinois
Feast of the Resurrection 2001

H. THE PATRIARCHAL EPISTLE OF THE HOLY FEAST OF THE RESURRECTION OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST FOR THE YEAR 2003:-

Our beloved and pious brothers in the Lord The Prelates, Metropolitans and Bishops; our exemplary spiritual sons, the Priests; the elected Deacons, all the sons and daughters of the Holy Church, our Christian Brothers and Sisters:

Prayers and blessings receive:

We celebrate this Great Feast of the Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ from among the dead! It was HE who had been sacrificed the spotless Lamb of God for the redemption and forgiveness of the sins and trespasses of humankind; for those believers abiding in HIS commandments. The Four Evangelists confirm that The Body of HIS humanity was taken by the power of the Holy Spirit, of the blessed Virgin and Holy Mary for the redemption of humankind. He was offered as a sacrifice to God HIS Father, upon the Cross; died, on the 3rd day, which was Sunday, HE arose, by the power of HIS Godhead which never departed from/with HIM.

It was Early on Sunday Morning, the women went to HIS tomb, taking with them perfumes and spices to embalm HIS Body; and, to sweeten HIS tomb. When they arrived at the tomb they beheld that the stone had been rolled away from the entrance. Hurriedly they went to inform Simon Peter and John saying: *“we have seen the entrance of the tomb, it is open! His Body was not there. Simon and John went forth to the tomb; they entered within and they beheld the grave clothes folded and laid there, the napkin which had covered HIS head, was not with the grave clothes, but folded and put on the side.”*

This teaches us, the three days where Jesus had laid in the Tomb, HIS Godhead was with HIM, sustaining HIS Body against corruption, and HIS Body, changing from the corruption to the incorruption; thus a spiritual (*the incorruptible*) Body did not need clothing. It is, therefore, necessary that we should believe, that our Lord is Risen! HIS physical body, which had been buried; however, through HIS resurrection was changed into the spiritual body.

In order to strengthen the faith of HIS disciples, and to further confirm HIS resurrection Jesus in the evening of the same Sunday, as HIS disciples had gathered in an Upper Room, where the doors and the windows were closed, HE stood in their midst and said “*Peace be with you, . . . why are you troubled? Look and see, touch Me, see, that a spirit does not have flesh and bones as I do.*” (Luke 24:36-40)

One cannot touch a spirit! You can touch, however, a spiritual body; as that of a physical being as the will of God may deem it necessary. “*When you see the place of the nails in MY hands and the spear pierced side, believe that the same body which suffered upon the Cross on your behalf, you can now see it before you.*” “*Not in the same corruptible flesh and blood, but with the incorruptible . . .*” (I Corinthians 15:50) The Disciples of our Lord Jesus Christ believe the Lord is risen from among the dead; that HE is alive. (Whereupon following and forty days later, HE blessed them; separated from them and ascended into Heaven where HE sits at the right hand of HIS Father. Ten days later, HE will send forth the Holy Spirit. This is the spiritual authority of the Holy Priesthood; they then proceed going forth to proclaim HIM who is risen from the dead, according to HIS commandment. (Matthew 28:16-20)

Today, we are HIS faithful disciples! We are happy in our

belief that our Lord Jesus Christ is risen from among the dead; with a spiritual body; HE is alive and in Heaven! Death will never overcome HIM again; furthermore, we believe we have a Savior, we have a Good Physician, and if we ask of HIM, HE will heal our sickness and forgive our trespasses; HE has the medicine to cure all sin.

We celebrate this Great Feast of our Lord's resurrection, saying to the whole of the faithful, a blessed celebration with rejoicing for this Holy Feast.

Let us look at Jesus Christ who had become the foundation and Chief cornerstone of our faith (Hebrews 12:2-3) He was crucified upon the Cross, for the sons and daughters of the Church. Lest we forget this great love of our Heavenly Father; who revealed Himself to us by sending forth HIS Son, who dwelt in a human temple; because HE it pleased HIM that all humankind should *“live and come to the knowledge of the truth, for there is one God, and One Mediator between God and Man, The Man Christ Jesus, who gave of Himself for the redemption of mankind.”* (I Timothy 2:4-6)

Our Lord Jesus Christ loved us and sacrificed HIMSELF for our salvation. If we will live in HIS commandments, we receive eternal life. Ascending into Heaven to sit at The Right Hand of the Father, in HIS spiritual body, let us never forget to beseech HIM and pray before HIM to be our invited guest in the temple of our body and souls; to deliver us from the evil-one. We can assure you, our beloved, HE will accept our petitions as we offer our prayer-intentions in faith; and good-will.

Maundy Thursday, following The Mosaic Supper, according to the Old Testament, HE revealed to HIS disciples that this is the Last Supper that you will eat of this flesh; of the Paschal

Lamb. Why? for I am The Paschal Lamb for you (cf: Matthew 26:26-29)

Jesus says, “*Whosoever eats my Body and drinks my Blood, in love will, live forever, do this in my memory*” in The Church. “*Receive My body and My blood in faith;*” bread and wine to be communicated, “*as I have told you, and I will fulfill them, and I will make them my real body and blood*”

He did not call them the “symbols” nor the “likeness” but rather they are the real Body and Blood. It is not the body and blood of HIS humanity before His death; but, the Body and Blood of HIS resurrected spiritual body. It is HE who now sits at the right hand of HIS Father in Heaven.

It is the same body, which the priest breaks here on earth with the One who is sitting at the right hand of the Father; through the prayer of the priest. The Holy Spirit descends from Heaven, sanctifying the bread and wine, and the spiritual Body of Jesus Christ unites with the bread and wine, which is upon the Holy Altar. Therefore, the bread is The Body of the Lord, in truth, and the wine is the real Blood of Jesus. St John teaches us: “*The Bread of God which comes down out of Heaven, and gives life to the world, I AM the Bread of Life, HE who comes to ME, shall never hunger, and he who believes in ME shall never thirst . . .*” (John 6:33-36).

Jesus is teaching and saying to us, “. . . *blessed are those who repent and regret, for they shall be comforted . . .*” He does not mean weeping and bereaving for those who are dead, but Jesus means bereavement and weeping for the sins which we commit, because the defilement of sin cannot be removed by soap and water. In our repentance, fasting and prayers, and grieving tear-stained eyes, we are to be confessing our trespasses and sins.

Therefore, it is necessary to be faithful, respectful, a listener and to truly maintain the commandments of the Lord Jesus Christ, because He “. . . *says if you love Me keep My commandments*” - (John 14:15) Jesus Christ has commanded us to be humble, pure, kind, forgiving, a peacemaker, to honor one another; if we fulfill these commandments of our Lord Jesus Christ and maintain them, we will be united as a member in ONE Body, the Church; as Christians. We the priests and preachers have a responsibility! That is to teach and to faithfully proclaim the Words of our Lord Jesus Christ, to the sons and daughters of the Church; and, The Nations. To be builders, we must closely walk with our Lord, “. . . *because faith comes from hearing.*” (Romans 10:17)

The Word of God is to be heard by the sons and daughters of the Church in the simple language so that they can understand and develop sweet and delicious fruits. It is necessary for the members of The Church to come together; to gather themselves around the Word of God. The faithful are to participate in the classes in Messianic Teachings; within their homes they should read the Bible and strengthen their faith as “*the house which is built upon the rock.*” Thus, your faith is to be built upon Jesus Christ, for HE is The Stone upon which the Church is securely built.

Therefore, faith can be strengthened in the Church through hearing the Word of God; you are not “*to be hearers only, but rather, doers of the word,*” the seed which is sown in the field is buried in the soil, watered, grows and produces fruit for a harvest. Thus, the Word of God must be buried in the soil of your heart, to take root, to grow and to give good and delicious food. You are to participate in the Holy Qurbana, because it is the Bread of Heaven which came forth from God in Heaven (*cf:* John 6:33) You are to purify your hearts from all sin, and

become a clean vessel unto His glory, pure from wickedness, and to receive the Holy Qurbana. This will produce joy and rejoicing in the Lord, who had become The Sacrifice for our faith.

Sons and Daughters of The Holy Church, we ask wherever you may live, regardless of the country, be a faithful citizen, and take concern to maintain and uphold the laws of the nation in which you live. You'll be honored and loved for your loyalty, and considered good and faithful citizens. With your neighbors, be in love and peace; regardless of their national identity and religion. Respect them and they'll respect you, because a neighbor always will need the help of his neighbor, our Lord says: “. . . *this do and you shall live . . .*” (Luke 10:28)

Wherever you are living forget not that you are the sons and daughters of the Holy Apostolic Catholic Church of the East; remain close and active in The Church; take care to maintain the worship in Holy Sacraments, Sacred Traditions and Canons of the Church. With our rich heritage, you are to have no doubt as to who you are. Our forefathers, the sons and daughters of the Church of the East, have kept their national identity and their communicating language; however, they did adapt to the languages of the other nations in order to proclaim the “*unsearchable riches in Christ*”. As Christians in The Church of the East, you are to have pleasure and pride in your history and literature, God has given to us two gifts.

Concluding: Once again, we say, “**A Blessed Feast;**” we beseech our LORD for you, that you celebrate this Feast of the Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, wherever you are on this global sphere, living in peace and rejoicing, all of you the sons and daughters of the Holy Church, together with all our Christian brethren throughout the world.

The Grace and mercy of our worshipful Lord Jesus Christ be with you all, forever and ever: Amen

+K. Mardinkha

Khanania Mardinkha IV
by Grace Catholicos Patriarch,
Holy Apostolic Catholic Assyrian
Church of the East

Written in our Patriarchal Cell
Morton Grove, Illinois
The **Great Resurrection** 2003

I. THE CHRISTMAS EPISTLE, 2002

KHANANIA MARDINKHA IV
CATHOLICOS PATRIARCH
OF THE ASSYRIAN CHURCH OF THE EAST

8908 Birch Avenue
Morton Grove, IL 60053
U.S.A.

The Patriarchal Epistle for
The Feast of the Birth of our Lord Jesus Christ
for the year 2002

Our Brothers The Prelates, the elected Priests, honorable Deacons, sons and daughters of The Holy Church, and all Christians:

Prayers and Blessings receive:

We celebrate this Feast of the Birth of our Lord Jesus Christ in faith and honor, and offer thanksgiving to God the Father for sending forth His Son, the Second Person of The Holy Trinity as a ray of the Sun, which shone forth in the Virginal Bosom of The Blessed Mary, and abode and conjoined in the human temple which was taken from the body of The Virgin by the Power of the Holy Spirit. He became the Savior of humankind; and for this reason we confess that HE is true God and true Man; in two natures and two Qnume of HIS Godhead and of HIS humanity, united in One Person of Sonship. Neither HIS Godhead is from the nature of the mother; nor is HIS humanity from The Father. Both natures are preserved in their *qnume*.

Behold, this is a great mystery in the Providence of The Lord God.

25th December, each year, we Christians celebrate the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ, King of Kings; this is a day of great joy and happiness, for all Christendom, we say to all of you, therefore, The Sons and Daughters of The Church and all Christians, the Feast of the Birth of our Lord Jesus Christ be blessed unto you all. Christ is The Overseer, The Lord, The Head, The Guide, and The Teacher of our Holy Church; as it is HE who had set the example for us to follow. He was baptized and commanded us to be baptized. He fasted and encouraged us to fast, too. He prayed and taught us to pray. HE lived in all humility and instructed us to be humble, merciful and forgiving. It is, therefore, important as members of One Body (The Church of Christ) to do good deeds, and to be worthy members of The Holy Church. Jesus Christ has commanded us saying: “If you love ME, keep MY commandments, this is MY commandment, to love one another as I have loved you.” (John 15:12)

As a first premise, we are to have faith toward one another, so that we will love, respect, listen, and work together with each other; we will, then, produce good and sweet fruits of service unto the sons and daughters of The Holy Church. We are to learn what the meaning of The Church IS! The Church is the assembly of believers who have been baptized in The Name of the Holy Trinity. The Head of The Church is Jesus Christ; and The Church IS HIS Holy Body; and whosoever believes and confesses that Jesus Christ IS the Son of The Living God, and receives baptism will find The Path which leads into The Kingdom of God.

Jesus said to Nicodemus, “In truth I am telling you, if a man is not born again in water and spirit he cannot enter into The

Kingdom of God.” (John 3:3-6) Thus, baptism incorporates all of us into the Body of Jesus Christ. Jesus further instructs us: “I AM the vine, and you are the branches, whosoever abides in ME and I in him, the same shall bring forth abundant fruit, because without ME you can do nothing.” (John 15:5-6) Mysteriously, all Christians are bound into One Body of The Church, and the Head of this Body is Jesus Christ, who lives and sits at the Right Hand of God the Father, death shall not have dominion over HIM, and as The Head of The Church HE is pleading before God, saying: “Father, sanctify them, by Thy truth, Thy Word is Truth, as You have sent me into the world, so send I them forth, for them I am sanctifying myself, so that they will be sanctified. Neither pray I for these alone, but for those who will come after them; so that all will be one, even as WE are ONE, I in Thee, and they may be one with US.” (John 17:17-22)

Our Lord teaches us that we Christians are members of one another bound into One Holy Body of Jesus Christ; therefore, it is of necessity that we are to love and honor one another as brothers and sisters; because we are born again from one Holy Mother (The Church) through the Sacrament of Holy Baptism. Thus we must respect our Mother who has sanctified us and maintained this sanctification, pure by keeping the Divine Commandments.

Sanctification is given by Grace from God through The Church for the good and faithful believers who live above sin. A believer must be pure on the inside, and to not be a “show-off” demonstrating his works to others. As an edifice is built; its completion is when it is properly decorated within. Thus it is so in our humanity who wishes to be an abiding place for Christ; it is necessary to be enabled to decorate HIS edifice in faith, by building it upon Jesus Christ who is The Stone of the foundation

of The Holy Church. This decoration involves fasting from one's heart, prayer, humility, listening, sacrifice, mercifulness, truthfulness, purity, good manners, and repentance.

We Christians are not to forget the Celestial hosts who had been sent to the shepherds; and saying: "Glory be to God in the Highest and on earth peace and a good hope to mankind." (Luke 2:13,14) The angels glorified God when they had seen that HE had sent forth peace and a good hope to mankind through HIS Son Jesus Christ; born in Bethlehem. He became for the sons and daughters of His Church, a hope, redemption, and a messenger of peace. Our Lord says: "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you." (John 14:27) It is our hope that this peace sent to us by God, through HIS Son, will bring us (The Christian Churches) closer to one another, in order to work and cooperate in a common interest, in order to maintain good spiritual health within The Christian Church. Because we, as Christians, are bound together in one body, The Church of Christ, and Christ Himself is The Head and Overseer of it.

We beseech the sons and daughters of The Church; do not forget that Jesus Christ was sent for our sake as a messenger of peace; thus you are to try, as members, to work together, in faith, love, peace, and honor so that you will be enabled to offer a good harvest for your Lord, Jesus Christ. Be speakers of truth, mercifully kind, and forgiving and try to overcome evil by that which is good, as faithful Christians.

The human creature is weak, he makes mistakes; we do have a Good and Wise Physician who has spiritual medicine for all kinds of sin-sickness. Should a sinner approach and confess his trespasses and sin, and repents of the same to the Physician of Truth, our Lord Jesus Christ; HE will be healed and receive good health. Jesus Christ said: "I AM The Way, The Truth,

and The Life, no man comes to the Father except through Me.” (John 14:6) Jesus IS The bright path let us be bound unto HIM, bringing us health into eternal life. Whosoever takes this way is, of necessity, to be faithful, and purified from all sin. Thus walk close with Jesus Christ and His Church, do not stay away from The Church; because, whoever stays away from The Church stays away from Jesus Christ our Lord. Jesus said: “If a man abide not in ME he is cast forth as a branch and he is withered and men gathered them and cast them into the fire and they are burned.” (John 15:6) It is our hope that you will build your faith upon The Rock, Christ Jesus, so that your faith will be strong and stand and not collapse.

The Holy Church needs the help of all of the faithful, O, sons and daughters, each member has an obligation toward The Church, that is, not just paying the tithe. The most important obligation of a member is his faith and obedience to rules, liturgy, and The Sacraments. We encourage all to be present in The Church at the time of the prayers of the Holy Mass in order to hear the homily of the priests from the Holy Scriptures. Your participation in the classes of Messianic Teachings is of equal importance. Bring your children to the Sunday school of The Church; your young people to the Youth Association and Choir.

We direct the members of the Church committees and sub-committees, in each parish to be advisors and helpers to be faithful, respecters of, and obedient to the Parish Priest and the Bishop or Metropolitan of their Diocese. This being in order all will be working together in faith, love, peace, honor and obedience for the greater glory of The Holy Church.

We now request all of our faithful sons and daughters of the Holy Church, regardless of the nation into which you presently reside, and you are citizens of that nation, you are, therefore, to

be faithful and loyal, abiding in the laws of that nation. In obedience listen to those who are responsible for your governance so that you'll be honored and loved by them so that you'll live in peace as the citizens of that nation. With your neighbors, be at peace and respect them, so that you'll be respected.

As Christians be mindful, and maintain your treasured faith, liturgy, Holy Sacraments, regardless of the nation in which you presently abide. Simply live as faithful Christians ought to live; always. Do not be afraid, nor ashamed that you confess Christ.

In conclusion: The Feast of the Holy Nativity be richly blessed to you all. And, with the New Year, 2003, we pray that the forth coming year will bring blessings and peace and tranquility to all nations and to all Christians, and The Holy Church. The Grace and mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all, forever and ever: Amen

Khanania Mardinkha IV
By Grace
Catholicos Patriarch of the
Assyrian Church of the East

Issued from our Patriarchal Cell
in Morton Grove, Illinois
The Nativity of our Lord – 2002

J. THE CHRISTMAS EPISTLE, 2003

The Holy Feast of the Birth of our Lord Jesus Christ for the year 2003

Our Beloved Brothers in the Lord, Pious Prelates; Spiritual Sons, the priests; and chosen Deacons; and all the sons and daughters, of the Holy Church and Assyrian Nation, Fellow Christians, Prayers and Blessings Receive:

We are celebrating the Feast of the Birth of our Lord, who is The King of Kings, Jesus Christ. It was as on this day when the Angel came and announced to the Shepherds: “ Fear not, for behold I bring you good tidings of great joy which shall be to all people, for unto you is born this day in the City of David, which is Christ the LORD, and this shall be a sign unto you, you shall find The Babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger, and suddenly there was with the angels, a multitude of The Heavenly Hosts, praising God saying: Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace good-will toward men, and it came to pass as the angels were gone away into Heaven the shepherds said one to another let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which has come to pass which the LORD has made known unto us, and they came with haste, and found Mary and Joseph, and The Babe lying in the manger.” (Luke 2: 10-16) We are here learning and hearing from the Holy Gospel, behold, from the day of HIS birth, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, teaches us to be poor in spirit, humble, simple. He did not take the form of servant from the Angel, but from the seed of Abraham, and in our humanity, HE came to redeem our lost race by grace. Let us raise thanksgiving unto God our Heavenly Father for HIS love toward us for sending us HIS only Son to dwell in our human temple; the womb of the Holy Virgin, and HE became the Savior of our Race.

The birth of our Lord Jesus Christ is a day of joy and happiness for all Christians, for we have received a good hope from God the Father. If we believe we shall live; Jesus said: “I am the Way, the Truth and the Life, and no one comes unto the Father but by ME.” (John 14:6)

Therefore, we say to all of you, the sons and daughters of The Holy Church and Assyrian Nation, and all of our Christian brothers, the Feast of the Birth of our Lord Jesus Christ, be blessed unto you. The mystery was revealed to Joseph by the Angel saying, “ Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife for that which conceived of her is of the Holy Spirit.” (Mt 1:20). Jesus said, “ For the Bread of God is HE who comes down from Heaven, and gives HIS life for the world.” (John 6:33) He who came forth from Heaven, is God the Son, HE had to dwell in the human temple in order to be born as man, and to die as a man and to be raised from the dead. The same human body changed unto a spiritual body and ascended into His Father’s Heavenly Kingdom, This is why our Lord Christ says .” Verily, verily, I say unto you, except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink His blood, you have no life in you, whoso eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life.”(John 6:53-54)

The Son of Man is Jesus Christ! His physical body is not from Heaven, HIS spiritual body, following the resurrection, ascended into Heaven and sat down at the right-hand of the Father. This is why HE says to us, that you must receive my body and blood in faith. You are to offer bread and wine, as I have instructed you, I will change them into my body and blood. Thus the body which the priest breaks in The Church is the Same Body of our Lord, sitting in glory at the right-hand of God the Father; The God, the creator of all, has united with the first born of our race.

And now, after the same manner, The Risen Christ is united with the bread and wine which is upon the Holy Altar. Now, therefore, the Bread is in truth the Body of our Lord, and the Wine His Precious and real Blood. We are learning from the Holy Bible, that the teenage girl was greeted with good tidings by the will of The God. That from her The Holy Spirit shall take human flesh to build the human temple (for a dwelling place for Jesus). In the virginal womb; the dwelling place of God the Word; The LORD of all, in order to unite the image of Adam, corrupted by sin, sent HIS message from Heaven by the Angel Gabriel to bring peace and tranquility to earthly and Heavenly creatures; and for the redemption of humankind. God willed to send HIS Son to be the messenger and Apostle of peace; dwelling in the temple of human flesh, becoming the mediator between God and man.

Through the spiritual eye, Isaiah the Prophet saw the miraculous virginal birth, without benefits of marriage; The blessed Mary gave birth to Emmanuel the Son of God. In The Blessed Mary, the Holy Spirit formed the united body as it is written to be The Temple and the dwelling place for the worshipful image of God the Father, in one Sonship. It is written: “What shall we do that we might work the God? Jesus said, this is the work of God that you believe on HIM who HE hath sent.” (John 6:28,29)

We believe, therefore, that one is Jesus Christ in two natures, two *qnume* in One Person of Sonship; and, that Mary the Virgin, is The Mother of Christ, because, neither HIS Godhead is from the nature of the Mother, nor HIS manhood from the nature of The Father, both natures are preserved in their *qnume*. Let us give thanks to the gracious God, who made our race free from the slavery of the wicked one and death. We cannot speak about the greatness of HIS love to us, by which HE has made our race mediator in order to reconcile the world to his greatness. The

Light has shined upon Bethlehem, by The Birth of THE Light, seeing the shining star in the East made the Magi come and meet the Child Jesus to honor His Holy Birth, carrying with them gifts; gold, incense, and myrrh. Gold revealing that HE is the King; incense, revealing that HE is God; and myrrh, revealing HIS humanity which will suffer and be crucified to die upon The Cross for humanity. On this day of the Birth of Jesus Christ, light shines to enlighten the darkened hearts of the unbelievers. It is in faith that the sons and the daughters are singing 'glory' which HE chose to be sung for HIS honor, renewing all giving hope and redemption to the whole of humanity; the mortal ones. The sun has shone its brilliance by the Birth of the Son; so that those who are sitting in darkness will have the great light shine upon them.

The darkness of death was also removed by the shining forth. Behold, all Christians are raising 'Glory, be to the Father who has sent HIS Son,' redeeming our race from the bondage of sin and made us heir of HIS Kingdom, giving us Eternal Life. At HIS Holy Birth, the Angels sang "Glory be to in the Highest." And proclaimed peace and tranquility upon earth, and a good hope to mankind.

We learn from the Holy Gospel, Jesus Christ IS the messenger of peace and tranquility to all those who believe and are baptized in the Name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. It is the teaching of Christ to all the Nations, commanding HIS Apostles; as it is written: "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations baptizing them in The Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit"(Mt 28:19).

His Apostles and Disciples established The Church on Earth upon The Rock, which is Jesus Christ, Son of God. We Christians must build the structure of our faith upon Christ,

so that the stormy weather will not shake it, nor the strong winds of adversity bring forth damage, and the hurricanes of the evil-one will not destroy it, because, its foundation is The True Rock: Jesus Christ. Spiritually, all the faithful believing Christians are united into one body, The Holy Church of Christ. The Head of this Body IS Jesus Christ! The LORD teaches us that we who are Christians are members of one another. And we are united in the Holy Body of Christ! Therefore, it is necessary for us to love and respect one another as brothers and sisters, for we have been born the second time thus in Holy Baptism we have One Mother, our Mother Baptism must be respected because it is holy. This holiness must be nurtured and kept pure by the divine commandments. Holiness is a grace from God, given to the faithful and pious men who live a separated life.

We hope that the peace of GOD sent unto us through HIS Holy Son will bring us closer unto one another as fellow Christians, in order for us to work according to HIS commandments, in faith within The Church. Thus we are to fulfill the Sacred Rituals, The Holy Sacraments, The Canons, and Holy Traditions as we have received from our Holy Forefathers, over the two thousand years within The Apostolic Succession of The Holy Church. Although we are called by different names, and have differing languages, we must work with each other, in order to maintain and to keep in good spiritual health The Holy Body of our LORD.

We who confess Christ, and as member of HIM, we are united in One Church, The Body of Christ; HE is Her head, and Chief Shepherd. Although The Church on Earth may have branches, with each having its own head, yet, if we may, all the branches are united into the same trunk, which is Jesus Christ! Without Christ, we are able to do absolutely nothing. Therefore, let us

unite ourselves with Christ, in order to be united to one another producing good and delightful fruits to world.

We request all of you, all sons and daughters of our Holy Church, and our Assyrian Nation, wherever you may dwell under Heaven, as citizens of that nation, be faithful and law abiding of your nation. Respect and obey the civil authorities, gaining love and honor from among them. Live in peace with your neighbors, regardless of their religious identity. Be at peace with them; love them so that they may love and respect you. Be diligent as a believing Christian, to maintain the Faith, The Liturgy, and Sacraments of the Holy Apostolic Church. Wherever you dwell, let your activities and behavior reflect your most holy Faith. As a faithful believer be joyful, Christ will keep you healthy.

As a national group, you are to honor with great pride, that you are an Assyrian maintaining knowledge of your history and Assyrian language. Your love for one another is to be pure and sweet. As members of one body, you should have social, cultural, and political clubs. Work with one another in love, peace, and faith, toward one goal, maintaining the human rights of The Assyrian Nation. For you who are the laymen and assuming the responsibilities which you have accepted leading and working for the benefit of the steady progress in growth for the future of our Assyrian Nation. It is, therefore, important to consult with one another with a pure heart and clear conscience so that the sons and the daughters of your nation may collect a profitable harvest of your faithful labours. Those of you who are active in the National activities, in this present time, and possessing a good knowledge and with political experience are aware of the path upon which you are to lead, all the levels of our Assyrian Nation, under the one umbrella of unity, we pray for our worshipful GOD to undergird you all with strength,

courage, and for all of you to be at peace among yourselves. Let HIM bestow HIS peace upon and among you all.

Concluding, once again, and repeating, The Holy Feast of the Birth of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ be blessed unto all of you, and with the forthcoming New Year of 2004. We pray that our worshipful God, upon the occasion of this New Year will bring an abundance of blessings and peace, and tranquility for all the nations of the world, so that we will work with each other in love and peace, and to live with each other as humankind free upon the face of this earthly sphere. May the grace and mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ, be with you all, forever and ever. Amen

Khanania Mardinkha IV,
by Grace, Catholicos Patriarch
The Assyrian Church of the East.

Written at Morton Grove, Illinois,

The Feast of the Nativity – 2003

K. THE LIST OF 120 PATRIARCHS

Year	Patriarch
AD 33	Mar Toma
33	Mar Bar Tulmay
33 – 45	Mar Addai
45 - 81	Mar Agai, disciple of Addai (from the Seventy Disciples)
48 - 81	Mar Mari, disciple of Addai (from the Seventy Disciples)
90 – 107	Mar Abris, relative of the Virgin Mary
130 – 152	Mar Oraham I
172 - 190	Mar Yacob I, relative of Yosip the Carpenter
191 – 203	Mar Ebid M'shikha
205 - 220	Mar Akhu d'Awu
224 – 244	Mar Shakh'lupa of Kashkar
247 - 326	Mar Papa Bar Gaggai
328 – 341	Mar Shimun Bar Sabbai
345 - 347	Mar Shahdost
350 - 358	Mar Bar Bashmin
383 - 393	Mar Tumarsa
393 - 399	Mar Qaiyuma
399 - 411	Mar Eskhaq
411 – 415	Mar Akhkhi
415 – 420	Mar Yoalaha I
420	Mar Maana
421	Mar Qarabukht
421 - 456	Mar Dadishu
457 – 484	Mar Bawai or Baboi
484 - 496	Mar Aqaq
496 – 502	Mar Bawai
505 - 523	Mar Sheela

524 - 535	Mar Narsai
524 - 538	Mar Elisha (dual Patriarchate)
539 - 540	Mar Polos
552 - 567	Mar Yosip
570 - 581	Mar Khazqiyil
581 - 595	Mar Eshuyow I, Arzunaya
596 - 604	Mar Soreshu I, Garmaqaya
605 - 608	Mar Greghor, Partaya
628 - 644	Mar Eshuyow II (Gdalaya or Arab)
647 - 650	Mar Immeh
650 - 660	Mar Eshuyow III, Kdayawaya
681 - 684	Mar Gewargis I
684 - 692	Mar Yokhannan I, Bar Marta
686 - 693	Mar Khnanishu I (dual Patriarchate)
693 - 694	Mar Yokhannan II, Garba
714 - 728	Mar Sliwazkha
731 - 740	Mar Pethyon
741 - 751	Mar Awa
752 - 754	Mar Surin
754 - 773	Mar Yacob II
774 - 778	Mar Khnanishu II (the Assyrian monument in China was erected during his reign)
780 - 820	Mar Timotheus I
820 - 824	Mar Esho-barnon
825 - 832	Mar Gewargis II
832 - 836	Mar Soreshu II
837 - 850	Mar Oraham II, Margaya
850 - 852	Mar Teadasis (Theodoros)
860 - 872	Mar Sargis, Suwaya
873 - 884	Mar Annush d'beth Garmay
884 - 892	Mar Yokhannan III, Bar Narsai
892 - 898	Mar Yokhannan IV
900 - 905	Mar Yokhannan V
906 - 937	Mar Oraham III, Abraza

937 - 949	Mar Ammanoel I
961 - 962	Mar Esrail Karkhaya
963 - 986	Mar Odishu Garmaqaya
967 - 1000	Mar Mari Aturaya
1001 - 1012	Mar Yokhannan VI
1013 - 1022	Mar Yokhannan VII
1023 - 1027	Mar Eshuyow IV
1028 - 1049	Mar Elia I
1049 - 1057	Mar Yokhannan VIII
1057 - 1072	Mar Soreshu III (Bar Zanbur)
1072 - 1090	Mar Odishu II (Bar Ars) Aturaya
1092 - 1109	Mar Makkikha I (Bar Shlemon)
1111 - 1132	Mar Elia II
1133 - 1135	Mar Bar Soma (Of Suwa)
1135 - 1136	Mar Bar Gabbara
1138 - 1147	Mar Odishu III (nephew of Elia II)
1148 - 1175	Mar Eshuyow V (from Beth Zodai, Baladaya)
1176 - 1190	Mar Elia III (Abukhalim)
1191 - 1222	Mar Yoalaha II (Bar Qaiyuma)
1222 - 1226	Mar Soreshu IV
1226 - 1256	Mar Soreshu V (from Baghdad)
1257 - 1265	Mar Makkikha II
1265 - 1281	Mar Dinkha I, Arbilaya (from Arbil)
1281 - 1318	Mar Yoalaha III, Bar Turkaye (Turkish by race)
1318 - 1328	Mar Timotheus II, Arbilaya
1329 - 1359	Mar Dinkha II
1359 - 1368	Mar Dinkha III
1369 - 1392	Mar Shimun III
1403 - 1407	Mar Shimun IV
1407 - 1420	Mar Elia III
1420 - 1447	Mar Shimun V
1448 - 1490	Mar Shimun VI
1491 - 1504	Mar Elia V
1505 - 1538	Mar Shimun VII

1538 - 1551	Mar Eshuyow Shimun VIII
1552 - 1558	Mar Dinkha Shimun IX (Bar Mama)
1558 - 1580	Mar Yoalaha Shimun X
1580 - 1600	Mar Dinkha Shimun XI
1600 - 1653	Mar Elia Shimun XI
1653 - 1690	Mar Eshuyow Shimun XIII
1690 - 1692	Mar Yoalaha Shimun XIV
1692 - 1700	Mar Dinkha Shimun XV
1700 - 1740	Mar Shlemon (Sulaiman) Shimun XVI
1740 - 1741	Mar Mikhail (Mukhattis) Shimun XVII
1740 - 1820	Mar Yonan (Yuna) Shimun XVIII
1820 - 1860	Mar Oraham Shimun XIX
1860 - 1903	Mar Ruwil Shimun XX
1903 - 1918	Mar Benyamin Shimun XXI
1918 - 1920	Mar Polos Shimun XXII
1920 - 1973	Mar Eshai Shimun XXIII
1976 - 20??	Mar Khanania Dinkha IV

L. CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS

- 1935 September 15th Birth in Darbandoki, Northern Iraq
- 1935 October 25th Baptism at Mar Quriakose Church, Darbandoki
- 1949 September 12th Deacon ordained by Mar Yosip Khananisho Metropolitan
- 1957 August 15th Priest ordained by Mar Yosip Khananisho Metropolitan
- 1962 February 11th Consecrated Bishop by Patriarch Mar Eshai Shimun in Teheran, Iran.
- 1966 to 1967 January Visiting churches in USA
- 1967 Feb 22 –Mar 16th Visiting India as delegate of Patriarch Mar Eshai Shimun
- 1968 July 14th Ordaining four deacons in Teheran for India
- 1968 July 28th Assisting Patriarch Mar Shimun in consecrating Mar Narsai and Mar Yohannan Avraham as Bishops in Beirut, Lebanon
- 1970 April Visiting Iraq to welcome Patriarch Mar Eshai Shimun after an exile of 37 years.
- 1973 March Assisting MarYosip Khananisho Metropolitan for the consecration of Bishop Mar Aprim Khamis and Bishop Mar Yakob Daniel in Iraq.
- 1973 November 7-16 Visit to Australia.
- 1973 Aug - 1976 Oct 17 Chairman of the 3 member Episcopal council to look after the affairs of the universal Church after the resignation of Patriarch Mar Eshai Shimun.
- 1976 October 17th Consecrated Patriarch by Mar Timotheus, Metropolitan of India assisted by other Prelates.
- 1976 October 17th Elevating Mar Narsai as Metropolitan
- 1976 October 17-22nd First Holy Synod in England
- 1977 June First visit to Iraq after becoming the Patriarch to meet Mar Yosip Khananisho Metropolitan (died July 3,1977)

1977	June	First Visit to Australia after becoming Patriarch.
1978	April 11-22	Second Holy Synod in Baghdad
1978	October	Visit to Rome to attend the enthronement of Pope John Paul II
1979	December	Ordaining 12 clergy in Iraq
1980	January	Ordaining 8 clergy in Iraq (Doura, Kirkuk, Habbania)
1981	June 14 th	Consecrating Mar Gewargis Slieva as Metropolitan of Iraq, in Chicago
1982	June 22-30	Visit to Kiev, USSR
1983	February	Consecrating Mar Gewargis Church in Arbil, Iraq.
1984	October 14 th	Consecrated Mar Bawai Soro and Mar Meelis Zaia as Bishops
1984	Oct 15 - Nov 2	Chicago.3 rd Holy Synod
1984	Nov 7-9 th	Visit to Rome
1985	Nov-Dec	Visit to Iraq
1986		Consecrating new Mar Zaia Church in Baghdad
1987	August 15 th	Dedication of Mart Mariam Parish, Hanwell, London
1988	June	Visit to Russia
1989	June	Patriarchal Council
1990	January 15- 27 th	Baghdad. 4 th Holy Synod
1990	June 3 rd	Consecrating Bishop Mar Emmanuel Rehana in Chicago
1991	January 9 - 21 st	Visit to India
1992	October 18	Ordaining clergy in Syria
1993	December	Patriarchal Council
1994	July 24 th	Consecrating Mar Odisho Oraham in Australia as Bishop of Europe
1994	July 18-29 th	5 th Holy Synod in Sydney, Australia
1994	November 11 th	Signing Common Christological Declaration in Vatican along with Pope John Paul II
1995	June	Chicago, Patriarchal Council
1995	November 13 th	Unity in India
1996	June 4 - 6	Chicago Patriarchal Council.
1996	August 27	Cardinal Bernardine Visits Patriarch

- 1996 Nov 26 Governor of Illinois receives Patriarch
- 1997 June 23 – July 1 Sixth Holy Synod, Chicago
- 1997 July Addressing Pro-Oriente, Chicago
- 1998 Jun – Oct 6th Visit to Rome, Lebanon & Russia
- 1998 September 2nd Visit to Lebanon after 23 years
- 1998 September 14 & 15 Lebanon Patriarchal Council
- 1999 April 19-27 Chicago .7th Holy Synod
- 1999 October 10th Consecrating Mar Aprim Athniel as Bishop of Syria
- 1999 October 24th Consecrating Mar Isaac Yosip as Bishop of Nuhadra
(Northern Iraq) and Russia
- 2000 January 19-31 Apostolic Visit to India
- 2000 October 23-31 Millennium Celebration in Iraq
- 2001 January 21-26 Visit to Rome for Assisi Prayer for Peace
- 2001 February 16-22 Chicago. Patriarchal Council
- 2001 June 4- 15 Chicago. 8th Holy Synod
- 2001 October 21st Patriarch's Silver Jubilee Celebrations in Chicago
- 2002 May-June Visit to Australia to open St.Hormuzd Assyrian
School.
- 2002 September 18th Heart Surgery
- 2002 October 20th Release of Assyrian New Testament
- 2003 October 19 27th Patriarchal anniversary in Chicago
- 2003 December Patriarch deposes Mar Gewargis Sliwa Metropolitan
of Iraq to represent him in the installation of Mar
Emmanuel III as Patriarch of the Chaldean Church.
- 2004 February Hospitalisation (Angioplasty)

M. VATICAN DOCUMENTS

COMMON CHRISTOLOGICAL DECLARATION BETWEEN THE CATHOLIC CHURCH AND THE ASSYRIAN CHURCH OF THE EAST

His Holiness John Paul II, Bishop of Rome and Pope of the Catholic Church, and His Holiness Mar Dinkha IV, Catholicos-Patriarch of the Assyrian Church of the East, give thanks to God who has prompted them to this new brotherly meeting.

Both of them consider this meeting as a basic step on the way towards the full communion to be restored between their Churches. They can indeed, from now on, proclaim together before the world their common faith in the mystery of the Incarnation.

As heirs and guardians of the faith received from the Apostles as formulated by our common Fathers in the Nicene Creed, we confess one Lord Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, begotten of the Father from all eternity who, in The fullness of time, came down from heaven and became man for our salvation. The Word of God, second person of the Holy Trinity, became incarnate by the power of the Holy Spirit in assuming from the holy Virgin Mary a body animated by a rational soul, with which he was indissolubly united from the moment of his conception.

Therefore our Lord Jesus Christ is true God and true man, perfect in his divinity and perfect in his humanity, consubstantial with the Father and consubstantial with us in all things but sin. His divinity and his humanity are united in one person, without confusion or change, without division or separation. In him has been preserved the difference of the natures of divinity and humanity, with all their properties, faculties and operations. But

far from constituting “one and another”, the divinity and humanity are united in the person of the same and unique Son of God and Lord Jesus Christ, who is the object of a single adoration.

Christ therefore is not an “ordinary man” whom God adopted in order to reside in him and inspire him, as in the righteous ones and the prophets. But the same God the Word, begotten of his Father before all worlds without beginning according to his divinity, was born of a mother without a father in the last times according to his humanity, the humanity to which the Blessed Virgin Mary gave birth always was that of the Son of God himself. That is the reason why the Assyrian Church of the East is praying the Virgin Mary as “the Mother of Christ our God and Saviour”. In the light of this same faith the Catholic tradition addresses the Virgin Mary as “the Mother of God” and also as “the Mother of Christ”. We both recognize the legitimacy and rightness of these expressions of the same faith and we both respect the preference of each Church in her liturgical life and piety.

This is the unique faith that we profess in the mystery of Christ. The controversies of the past led to anathemas, bearing on persons and on formulas. The Lord’s Spirit permits us to understand better today that the divisions brought about in this way were due in large part to misunderstandings.

Whatever our Christological divergences have been, we experience ourselves united today in the confession of the same faith in the Son of God who became man so that we might become children of God by his grace. We wish from now on to witness together to this faith in the One who is the Way, the Truth and the Life, proclaiming it in appropriate ways to our contemporaries, so that the world may believe in the Gospel of salvation.

The mystery of the Incarnation which we profess in common is not an abstract and isolated truth. It refers to the Son of God sent to save us. The economy of salvation, which has its origin in the mystery of communion of the Holy Trinity - Father, Son and Holy Spirit - is brought to its fulfillment through the sharing in this communion, by grace, within the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church, which is the People of God, the Body of Christ and the Temple of the Spirit.

Believers become members of this Body through the sacrament of Baptism, through which, by water and the working of the Holy Spirit, they are born again as new creatures. They are confirmed by the seal of the Holy Spirit who bestows the sacrament of Anointing. Their communion with God and among themselves is brought to full realization by the celebration of the unique offering of Christ in the sacrament of the Eucharist. This communion is restored for the sinful members of the Church when they are reconciled with God and with one another through the sacrament of Forgiveness. The sacrament of ordination to the ministerial priesthood in the apostolic succession assures the authenticity of the faith, the sacraments and the communion in each local Church.

Living by this faith and these sacraments, it follows as a consequence that the particular Catholic churches and the particular Assyrian churches can recognize each other as sister Churches. To be full and entire, communion presupposes the unanimity concerning the content of the faith, the sacraments and the constitution of the Church. Since this unanimity for which we aim has not yet been attained, we cannot unfortunately celebrate together the Eucharist, which is the sign of the ecclesial communion already fully restored.

Nevertheless, the deep spiritual communion in the faith and the mutual trust already existing between our Churches entitle us from now on to consider witnessing together to the Gospel message and co-operating in particular pastoral situations, including especially the areas of catechesis and the formation of future priests.

In thanking God for having made us rediscover what already unites us in the faith and the sacraments, we pledge ourselves to do every thing possible to dispel the obstacles of the past which still prevent the attainment of full communion between our two Churches, so that we can better respond to the Lord's call for the unity of his own, a unity which has of course to be expressed visibly. To overcome these obstacles, we now establish a Mixed Committee for theological dialogue between the Catholic and the Assyrian Church of the East.

Given at Saint Peter's, on 11 November 1994

Joannes Paulus II

Catholicos Mar Dinkha IV

“JOINT SYNODAL DECREE FOR PROMOTING UNITY”

Between The Assyrian Church Of The East And The Chaldean Catholic Church

1. In the service of our Lord and the People of God, we, the bishops of the two branches of the ancient “*Church of the East,*” declare that the noble quest for restoring Christian unity remains, for us and for our Churches, a profound Christian obligation. Our Lord's Prayer for the unity of His followers prompts in us, today, a deep desire to reach peacefully and fraternally the full communion with all other Christians in the one holy Church of Christ. Seeking to

implement the will of our Lord Jesus Christ, according to the scope of our responsibility, we, in our respective Churches, realize that the actual meaning of Jesus' prayer "*that all may be one*" (John. 17:21-23) can be fulfilled factually as we strive to restore the unity of the Church of the East, as known by our common forefathers.

2. The basic theological agreement between the Catholic Church and the Assyrian Church of the East, as articulated in the "*Common Christological Declaration*", signed at the Vatican, on 11 November 1994, by Their Holinesses Pope John Paul II and Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV, has cleared the way for the Chaldean and the Assyrian Churches to initiate a process of dialogue and collaboration toward the goal of unity.
3. With the same spirit and purpose in mind, the two heads of our Churches, Their Holinesses Mar Dinkha IV and Mar Raphael I Bidawid met, with their respective delegations, in Southfield, Michigan (USA), on 29 November 1996, inaugurating officially the process of dialogue and collaboration; and, in a "*Joint Patriarchal Statement*", they called upon their churches to rally behind them for the success of this noble purpose, and for their Holy Synods to formulate concrete plans toward the realization of the goal of unity.
4. We, the Fathers of both Holy Synods, wholeheartedly respond to the call of our Patriarchs, which is ultimately the call of the Lord himself, and declare that we join them in this course toward our common destiny, totally endorsing their proposals as formulated in their joint statement. Consequently, we adopt the following measures in the quest for unity:

Close collaboration in the area of catechesis, particularly in training of catechists and in the development of related teaching material collaboration in the preparation and printing of liturgical books. The establishment of an ecclesial education institute in the Chicago-Detroit region, and possibly wherever members of both communities exist, for the purpose of training future priests, deacons and catechists from both Churches. This institute shall also offer continuing religious education to the active clergy of both Churches. for the fulfilment of the general theological program – in addition to in-house formation program – the institute shall reach a suitable arrangement with appropriate Catholic universities and/or institutions in the locality where the institute exists.

The formulation of a joint and common attitude emphasizing the usage of the Aramaic mother tongue, in both of its classic and vernacular forms, in liturgical ceremonies as well as in cultural endeavours of both Churches.

The development of pastoral programs and educational projects as expression of ecclesial and cultural collaboration between the two churches.

The development of a wide range of other activities and programs through which the faithful of both the Assyrian and the Chaldean Churches will become prepared to accept, as a common enrichment of their “Church of the East”, the variety of particular practices that have been developed in both Churches during the period of separation. The characteristics of the authentic heritage of the ancient “Church of the East” shall be a basis for evaluation and a point of reference in such endeavour. Nevertheless, we shall consider diversity, within agreed and recognized limits,

as an enrichment benefiting all the children of this Church.

5. To implement the above approved plan, we hereby decree that a “*Joint Commission for Unity*” (JCU) shall be constituted, according to a special statute approved by both patriarchs, to be composed of twelve members selected from both Churches – six from each side. Since the “*Common Christological Declaration*”(CCD) is the basic foundation for the collaboration between our two churches, all questions related to the areas of dogmatic and fundamental theology shall be reserved to the “*Mixed Committee for Theological Dialogue*” (MCTD) that has been formed accordingly between the Catholic Church and the Assyrian Church of the East.
6. Looking with fraternal understanding to our past and directing our hearts with trust and hope to the future, we commit ourselves and offer public testimony of the shared love and respect between our Churches at the present. Thus, we, mutually and reciprocally, declare that we recognize in each other, as living today in our Churches, the same apostolic succession, sacramentality and Christian witness. Therefore, we call upon our clergy and faithful everywhere to interact as brothers and sisters, founding their relationship upon Christian charity and employing evangelical principles of fraternal equality and social justice, in and throughout the testimony of their individual and communal lives.
7. Recognizing in both of our Churches the binding unity of faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, that we share, as well as our common liturgical and theological heritage taking pride in the same Fathers, Doctors of the Church, acknowledging the same shared ancestry and culture, we nevertheless recognize the existence of actual differences between our

churches that have been formed during the period of separation. Therefore, for the sake of being truthful with each other and toward our people, we respectively declare our basic intents and together formulate the following principles for dialogue:

Whereas the Assyrian Church of the East sees that

the preservation of her ecclesial identity as expressed in her liturgical, theological, spiritual and disciplinary patrimony as well as her Mesopotamian-Aramaic culture and

the recognition of her freedom and self-governance are principles that must be preserved continuously throughout the process of dialogue and in any achieved model of unity; and

whereas, in like manner, the Chaldean Catholic Church sees that

while preservation of the same above-mentioned ecclesial identity as expressed in her liturgical, theological, spiritual and disciplinary patrimony as well as her Mesopotamian-Aramaic culture must be maintained, the adaptation of that patrimony to existing regional and cultural conditions and

the preservation of her full communion with the Roman See must be basic principles continuously maintained throughout the process of dialogue and in any achieved model of unity.

Therefore, since some of our basic stands are distinct, both Holy Synods ratify the need for further dialogue and more

involved collaboration between the Assyrian Church of the East and the Chaldean Catholic Church, and, in due time and manner, between them jointly and the Roman See, in order to bring about unity between the Assyrian and the Chaldean Churches.

8. We sincerely hope that the “*Church of the East*”, restored to its historic fullness in faithfulness to the Lord, shall be an instrument for spiritual renewal, social harmony and cultural renaissance among her faithful, prompting them, once again, to bring the Good News of the Gospel to the four corners of the world for the glory of God’s name.
9. Therefore, we call upon all of our sons and daughters to raise fervent prayers for the purpose of achieving our full ecclesiastical unity, through the patronage of the Virgin Mary, Mother of our Lord Jesus Christ and our own blessed mother and the intercessions of the Apostles of the East, Mar Toma, Mar Addai and Mar Mari.
10. By the authority granted to us by the Holy Spirit, we declare that this “*Joint Synodal Decree for Promoting Unity*” effective for both Churches from this date, the fifteenth day of August 1997, the Feast of the Blessed Virgin. As a confirmation to this historic occurrence, we list our names under the names and signatures of our two venerable Patriarchs.

Mar Raphael I Bidawid
Catholicos Patriarch
Chaldean Catholic Church

Mar Dinkha IV
Catholicos Patriarch
Assyrian Church of the East

Members Of Both Holy Synods

Chaldean	Assyrian
1. Mar Emmanuel Delly, Patriarchal Auxiliary	1. Mar Narsai Debaz, Archbishop of Lebanon, Syria, Europe & Patriarchal Vicar
2. Mar Andre Sana, Archbishop of Kirkuk	2. Mar Timotheus, Metropolitan Patriarchal Representative in India
3. Mar Abdulahad Sana, Bishop of Alqosh	3. Mar Aprem, Archbishop of India
4. Mar Youhanna Issaye, (died) Retired Archbishop of Iran	4. Mar Gewargis Sliwa Archbishop of Iraq & Russia
5. Mar Stephane Babaca, Retired Archbishop of Arbil	5. Poulouse Mar Poulouse, Bishop of Trichur, (died 24 March 1998)
6. Mar Hanna Kello, Bishop of Amadia & Zakho	6. Mar Aprim Khamis, Bishop of Eastern USA
7. Mar Paul Karatas, Archbishop of Diarbakir	7. Mar Bawai Soro, Bishop of Seattle, General Secretary, of CIRED
8. Mar Hanna Zora, Archbishop of Ahwaz	8. Mar Meelis Zaia, Bishop of Australia & New Zealand, Secretary of The Holy Synod
9. Mar Abdulahad Rabban, Bishop of Aqra	9. Mar Emmanuel Emmanuel, Bishop of Canada
10. Mar George Garmo, Archbishop of Mosul (Died in Oct-99)	10. Mar Odisho Oraham, Bishop of Europe

-
11. Mar Ibrahim Ibrahim,
Bishop of the USA

 12. Mar Yousif Sarraf,
Bishop of Cairo

 13. Mar Yousif Thomas,
Archbishop of Beirut (died)

 14. Mar Thomas Meram,
Archbishop of Urmia and Salmas

 15. Mar Antonie Audo,
Bishop of Aleppo

 16. Mar Ramzi Garmo,
Archbishop of Tehran

 17. Mar Gabriel Kassab,
Archbishop of Basra
-

**Chaldean and Assyrian Churches Sign Pact.
Eucharist Access to Communion Approved
in Special Cases**

VATICAN CITY, OCT 26, 2001(Zenit org). The Chaldean Church and the Assyrian Church of the East have taken a decisive step toward East–West unity by offering access to the Eucharist to each other’s faithful in special instances.

An agreement published Thursday by the Vatican Press Office states that, when “necessity requires, Assyrian faithful are permitted to participate and to receive Holy Communion in a Chaldean celebration of the Holy Eucharist.”

The text was prepared by the Pontifical Council for promoting Christian Unity, in agreement with the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith and the Congregation for the Oriental Churches.

The guidelines permitting this change were signed July 20, but the Vatican has only now made them public, thus accepting the proposals of Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV of the Assyrian Church of the East, and Patriarch Mar Raphael Bidawid of the Chaldean Church. The Chaldean Patriarch is attending the Synod of Bishops in Rome.

The guidelines constitute notable progress in ecumenical relations. However, as document indicates, the measure “is not equal to full Eucharistic communion,” although it spells real progress “toward that blessed day when it will be possible to celebrate the Holy Eucharist in peace.”

**GUIDELINES FOR ADMISSION TO THE
EUCHARIST BETWEEN
THE CHALDEAN CHURCH AND
THE ASSYRIAN CHURCH OF THE EAST**

Given the great distress of many Chaldean and Assyrian faithful, in their motherland and in the diaspora, impending for many of them a normal sacramental life according to their own tradition, and in the ecumenical context of the bilateral dialogue between the Catholic Church and the Assyrian Church of the East, the request has been made to provide for admission to the Eucharist between the Chaldean Church and the Assyrian Church of the East. This request has first been studied by the Joint Committee for Theological Dialogue between the Catholic Church and the Assyrian Church of the East. The present guidelines subsequently have been elaborated by the Pontifical Council

for Promoting Christian Unity, in agreement with the Congregation for the Doctrine of Faith and the Congregation for the Oriental Churches.

1. Pastoral necessity

The request for admission to the Eucharist between the Chaldean Church and the Assyrian Church of the East is connected with the particular geographical and social situation in which their faithful are actually living. Due to various and sometimes dramatic circumstances, many Assyrian and Chaldean faithful left their motherlands and moved to the middle East, Scandinavia, Western Europe, Australia and Northern America. As there cannot be a priest for every local community in such a widespread diaspora, numerous Chaldean and Assyrian faithful are confronted with a situation of pastoral necessity with regard to the administration of sacraments. Official documents of the Catholic Church provide special regulation for such situations of pastoral necessity with regard to the administration of sacraments. Official documents of the Catholic Church provide special regulations for such situations, namely the Code of Canons of the Eastern Churches, can. 671, S2-S3 and the Directory for the Application of Principles and Norms of Ecumenism, n. 123.

2. Ecumenical rapprochement

The request is also connected with the ongoing process of ecumenical rapprochement between the Catholic Church and the Assyrian Church of the East. With the 'Common Christological Declaration', signed in 1994 by Pope John Paul II and Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV, the main dogmatic

problem between the Catholic Church and the Assyrian Church has been resolved. As a consequence, the ecumenical rapprochement between the Chaldean Church and the Assyrian Church of the East also entered a further phase of development. On 29 November 1996 Patriarch Mar Raphael Bidawid and Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV signed a list of common proposals with a view to the reestablishment of full ecclesial unity among both historical heirs of the ancient Church of the East. On 15 August 1997 this program was approved by their respective Synods and confirmed in a 'Joint Synodal Decree'. Supported by their respective Synods, both Patriarchs approved a further series of initiatives to foster the progressive restoration of their ecclesial unity. Both the congregation for the Oriental Churches and the Pontifical Council for the Promotion of Christian Unity support this process

3. The Anaphora of Addai and Mari

The principal issue for the Catholic Church in agreeing to this request, related to the question of the validity of the Eucharist celebrated with the Anaphora of Addai and Mari, one of the three Anaphoras traditionally used by the Assyrian Church of the East. The Anaphora of Addai and Mari is notable because, from time immemorial, it has been used without a recitation of the Institution Narrative. As the Catholic Church considers the words of Eucharistic Institution a constitutive and therefore indispensable part of the Anaphora or Eucharistic Prayer, a long and careful study was undertaken of the Anaphora of Addai and Mari, from a historical, liturgical and theological perspective, at the end of which the Congregation for the Doctrine of Faith on January 17th, 2001 concluded that this Anaphora can be considered valid. His Holiness Pope John Paul II has

approved this decision. This conclusion rests on three major arguments.

In the first place, the Anaphora of Addai and Mari is one of the most ancient Anaphoras, dating back to the time of the very early Church; it was composed and used with the clear intention of celebrating the Eucharist in full continuity with the Last Supper and according to the intention of the Church; its validity was never officially contested, neither in the Christian East nor in the Christian West.

Secondly, the Catholic Church recognizes the Assyrian Church of the East as a true particular Church, built upon orthodox faith and apostolic succession. The Assyrian Church of the East has also preserved full Eucharistic faith in the presence of our Lord under the species of bread and wine in the sacrificial character of the Eucharist, in the Assyrian Church of the East, though not in full communion with the Catholic Church, are thus to be found “true sacraments, and above all, by apostolic succession, the priesthood and the Eucharist” (U,R., n. 15)

Finally, the Words of Eucharistic Institution are indeed present in the Anaphora of Addai and Mari, not in a coherent narrative way and *ad litteram* but rather in a dispersed euchological way, that is, integrated in successive prayers of thanksgiving, praise and intercession.

4. Guidelines for admission to the Eucharist

Considering the liturgical tradition of the Assyrian Church of the East, the doctrinal clarification regarding the validity of the Anaphora of Addai and Mari the contemporary context in which both Assyrian and Chaldean faithful are

living, the appropriate regulations which are foreseen in official documents of the Catholic Church, and the process of rapprochement between the Chaldean Church and the Assyrian Church of the East, the following is made:

1. When necessity requires, Assyrian faithful are permitted to participate and to receive the Holy Communion in a Chaldean celebration of the Holy Eucharist; in the same way, Chaldean faithful for whom it is physically or morally impossible to approach Catholic minister, are permitted to participate and receive Holy Communion in an Assyrian celebration of the Holy Eucharist.
2. In both cases, Assyrian and Chaldean ministers celebrate the Holy Eucharist according to the liturgical prescriptions and customs of their own tradition.
3. When Chaldean faithful are participating in an Assyrian celebration of the Holy Eucharist, the Assyrian minister is warmly invited to insert the words of the institution in the Anaphora of Addai and Mari, as allowed by the Holy Synod of the Assyrian Church of the East.
4. The above considerations on the use of the Anaphora of Addai and Mari and the present guidelines for admission to the Eucharist, are intended exclusively in relation to the Eucharistic celebration and admission to the Eucharist of the faithful from the Chaldean Church and the Assyrian Church of the East, in view of the pastoral necessity and ecumenical context mentioned above.

Rome, July 20th, 2001 (Original text: English)

INDEX

A

- Abimalek Timotheus, Mar 6, 12, 42, 119
 Addai II, Mar 24, 39, 46, 52, 79
 Adharbijan 85
 Alkosh 79, 98
 Andrews 10, 11, 99
 Anglicans 39
 Antioch 82, 83, 89, 96, 151
 Aprem, Mar, India 5, 6, 24, 39, 46, 53, 65, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 94,
 105, 112, 120, 142
 Aprim Avraham Mar Yonan 106, 107
 Aprim de Baz, Archdeacon 16, 50, 94
 Aprim Khamis, Mar, Arizona 21, 22, 24, 25, 26, 27, 29, 36, 37, 38, 39,
 44, 50, 51, 61, 64, 75, 100, 106, 111, 112, 113, 114, 136, 142
 Aprim, Mar Athniel 64, 75, 94, 98, 105, 109, 112, 137
 Archdeacon Yonan 35, 36, 39, 63, 112
 Armenian 29, 53, 59, 97
 Ashitha 7
 Assyrian Church 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 13, 14, 18, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27,
 29, 32, 38, 39, 40, 41, 43, 44, 45, 48, 49, 50, 52, 53, 54, 55, 57, 59,
 61, 63, 78, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 103, 104,
 113, 114
 Avraham 21

B

- Bawai, Mar Soro 30, 36, 45, 46, 50, 51, 61, 75, 76, 86, 87, 92, 93, 94, 98,
 100, 105, 111, 112, 113, 114, 136, 142
 Baghdad 6, 8, 16, 21, 24, 25, 26, 32, 33, 39, 41, 46, 50, 53, 55, 63, 64,
 71, 74, 75, 76, 82, 84, 85, 94, 97, 98, 99, 100, 103, 105, 106, 107,
 109, 110, 111, 112, 113, 116, 119, 135, 136
 Benjamin, Gewargis Deacon 7
 Benjamin, Mar Shimun 17, 72, 136
 Benjamin Koreish 110
 Benyamin, Qasha 10, 11, 14, 15, 99
 Bill Clinton 117

Benjamin Koreish 218
Benyamin, Qasha 19, 20, 27, 28, 197
Bill Clinton 233

C

Cardinal Bernardine 58, 92, 271
Cardinal Cassidy 85, 86, 171, 192
Cardinal Francis George 172
Cardinal Konig 180
Cardinal Walter Kasper 9, 153, 155, 190
Chalcedon 103, 105, 190
Chaldean Church 57, 99, 115, 117, 120, 121, 148, 150, 156, 190, 192,
193, 194, 195, 272,-278, 281, 283, 284, 285, 286, 288

D

Derbandoki 19
Dinkha, Mar, Martyr 19, 20, 24
Dinkha IV, Mar 10, 11, 12, 15, 16, 17, 18, 44, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52,
53,
Dohuk 149, 209, 212, 237

E

Emmanuel Elyah, Bishop 172, 186
Emmanuel Emmanuel, Canada 100, 222, 223, 282
Emmanuel III Delli, Patriarch 194, 272
Ephesus, Council of 105, 164

F

Fraidon Darmo 58, 124

G

Gewargis Sliwa, Mar 120, 126, 194, 209, 221, 222, 223, 272, 282
Gregorian Calendar 45, 46, 189

H

Haroon-el-Rashid 167

I

- India 8, 9, 11, 12, 15, 17, 18, 21, 22, 23, 27, 32, 34, 35, 37, 39, 41, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 52, 65, 76, 80, 85, 90, 91, 104, 106, 127, 128, 130, 131, 132, 133, 135, 139, 141, 142, 143, 144, 145, 146, 147, 149, 150, 151, 152, 154, 155, 160, 162, 169, 186, 188, 190, 196, 209, 210, 219, 220, 221, 222, 223, 224, 235, 237, 238, 270, 271, 272, 282
- Iran 7, 8, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 25, 32, 39, 41, 45, 55, 57, 58, 74, 103, 106, 107, 108, 109, 118, 119, 136, 142
- Iraq 3, 4, 7, 8, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 21, 22, 24, 25, 26, 32, 33, 39, 41, 45, 47, 48, 49, 51, 52, 57, 61, 63, 64, 75, 76, 78, 79, 86, 95, 98, 99, 103, 104, 105, 107, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 113, 116, 118, 119, 136, 137, 142, 146
- Isaac 126, 149, 195, 223, 272

J

- Jammo, Sarhad 99, 100
- Johan Bonny 187
- John Major 93, 233
- John Paul II, Pope 9, 10, 58, 59, 85, 87, 88, 134, 149, 150, 154, 171, 187, 194, 197, 233, 271, 273, 276, 285, 288
- John Sulaqa 99, 156
- Julian Calendar 24, 46, 104, 189

K

- Kashgar 162, 163
- Khanania, Qasha 20, 21, 24, 25, 27, 28
- Khananisho, Mar 12, 15, 20, 21, 22, 24, 25, 27, 28, 39, 41, 43, 48, 49, 127, 205, 211, 270
- Kokhi 156, 157, 158, 162, 163, 164, 165, 166, 167

L

- Lebanon 15, 41, 42, 43, 44, 47, 56, 77, 88, 91, 100, 102, 112, 113, 117, 118, 119, 120, 122, 123, 126, 144, 148, 149, 150, 151, 186, 193, 194, 195, 209, 210, 219, 221, 220, 223, 224, 225, 237, 270, 272, 282
- London 15, 45, 47, 51, 62, 63, 68, 76, 115, 123, 125, 141, 171, 195, 209, 211, 216, 217, 219, 233, 271

M

- Mar Bawai Soro 58, 59, 71, 88, 90, 99, 100, 120, 149, 150, 171, 172, 183, 184, 186, 187, 195, 199, 209, 221, 222, 223, 225, 227, 271, 282
Mar Eshai Shimun 21, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 32, 33, 34, 39, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 49, 52, 53, 81, 91, 143, 195, 196, 197, 206, 208, 235, 269, 270
Mar Ibrahim Ibrahim 100, 283
Mar Makikha 167
Mar Mari 101, 157, 159, 160, 161, 162, 163, 165, 168, 266, 281
Mar Shimun Basidi 169
Mar Meelis Zaia 44, 51, 75, 76, 77, 81, 88, 91, 100, 182, 183, 186, 195, 209, 221, 222, 223, 225, 229, 271, 282
Mar Yabhalaha, Patriarch 168
Mar Yabhalaha, Andrews 42, 43

N

- Narsai de Baz, Mar 41, 42, 43, 48, 50, 127, 186, 194, 195, 208, 209, 221, 222, 223, 225, 229, 233
Nestorian 104, 105, 165
Nestorius 8, 104, 105, 108, 164, 191

O

- Odisho, Mar Oraham 19, 121, 195, 199, 209, 222, 223, 226, 233, 234, 271, 282

P

- Panna Kaku 19, 20
Pro Oriente 9, 10, 18, 90, 103, 104, 105, 106, 107, 190, 191
Poulose Mar Poulose 46, 90, 91, 100, 135, 143, 145, 146, 209, 222, 236, 237, 282
Pope John Paul II 9, 10, 58, 59, 85, 87, 88, 134, 149, 150, 154, 171, 187, 194, 197, 233, 271, 273, 276, 285, 288

Q

- Qurbana 25, 44, 62, 63, 65, 69, 76, 77, 83, 84, 91, 130, 135, 139, 141, 171, 182, 183, 184, 185, 250, 251

R

- Raphael Bidawid, Patriarch 101, 156, 192, 193, 194, 284, 286

S

Sargis, Mar Yosip 49, 63, 64, 99, 149, 186, 221, 222, 225

Seleucia Ctesiphon 45, 46, 65, 86, 103, 140, 147, 148, 151, 155, 156,
158, 160, 161, 162, 166, 168, 169, 194

T

Teheran 12, 20, 21, 22, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 32, 34, 35, 36, 38, 39, 40,
113, 114, 115, 204, 210, 211, 212, 213, 214, 215, 216, 218, 270

Theodore of Mopsuestia 8

Toma, George, Dr. 127, 128

Trichur 8, 11, 17, 22, 28, 32, 33, 34, 37, 46, 52, 82, 83, 91, 100, 102,
105, 128, 129, 130, 135, 143, 146, 155, 235, 236, 237, 238, 282

U

Urmiya 12, 22, 216, 217

V

Vatican 17, 60, 85, 88, 99, 148, 149, 153, 154, 174, 187, 188, 190, 192,
193, 271, 273, 277, 283, 284

W

Walter Kasper, Cardinal 9, 153, 155, 190

World Council of Churches 52, 53, 107, 191, 233

Y

Yabhalaha, Andrews 42, 43

Yabhalaha 168

Z

Zaia De Malik Ismayil 118

BOOKS BY DR MAR APREM

Biographies

1. Mar Thoma Darmo-A Biography pp. 214, 1974
2. Mar Abimalek Timotheus-A Biography pp. 282, 1975
3. Mar Abdisho Thondenat pp. 136, 1987
4. Strange But True: An Autobiography pp. 236, 1981
5. Not So Strange: An Autobiography Part II pp. 236, 1991

Church History

6. Nestorian Fathers (Reprint 2002) pp. 168, 1976
7. Nestorian Missions (Reprint 2002) pp. 134, 1976
8. The Chaldean Syrian Church in India pp. 241, 1977
9. The Council of Ephesus of 431 pp. 196, 1978
10. Sacraments of the Church of the East pp. 142, 1978
11. Nestorian Theology pp. 183, 1978
12. Nestorian Lectionary & Julian Calendar pp. 140, 1982
13. Western Missions Among Assyrians pp. 152, 1982
14. A Nestorian Bibliography pp. 128, 1982
15. Indian Christian Who is Who pp. 210, 1983
16. The Chaldean Syrian Church of the East
(ISPCK, Delhi) (out of Print) pp. 64, 1984
17. Good News Festivals in India pp. 224, 1984
18. Indian Christian Directory pp. 264, 1984
19. Mar Aprem, Theologian & Poet pp. 136, 1990
20. History of the Assyrian Church in the 20th century pp. 308, 2003

Travelogues

21. America Revisited pp. 148, 1977
22. From Baghdad to Chicago pp. 168, 1985
23. Australian Assyrians pp. 132, 1988
24. To Belgium and Holland via UK & USA pp. 124, 1989
25. Sydney to Canberra pp. 128, 1989
26. The Assyrians in Iraq pp. 112, 1990
27. Germany Via Vienna pp. 140, 1991
28. Washington to New York pp. 133, 1992
29. London to Moscow pp. 134, 1993
30. Los Angeles to Tokyo pp. 136, 1993
31. Oxford to Austria pp. 144, 1994
32. Salzburg to Boston pp. 140, 1995

-
- 33. Israel, Scandinavia & U.S.A. pp. 112, 1996
 - 34. Hassake to Hollywood pp. 112, 1998
 - 35. Italy, Liban & Iran pp. 112, 1998
 - 36. To U.K. Via U.S.A. pp. 104, 1999
 - 37. U.S.A., Canada, Europe and Thailand pp. 104, 2000
 - 38. Austria to Australia pp. 104, 2001
 - 39. India to Indiana pp. 112, 2002
 - 40. Budapest to Rugby pp. 128, 2003
 - 41. Two Trips in 2002 pp. 104, 2003

Humour

- 42. Bishop's Jokes (Reprint 1995) pp. 180, 1983
- 43. Laugh with the Bishop (Bombay) (6th Reprint) pp. 95, 1988
- 44. Laugh to Health (C.L.S., Madras) pp. 82, 1992
- 45. Holy Humour pp. 104, 1993
- 46. Joy to the World pp. 104, 1994
- 47. Holy Smile pp. 100, 1997

Malayalam

- 48. An Introduction to the History of the Eastern Churches (Reprint, 1990) pp.196, 1976
- 49. Christeeya Bhakti Ganangal pp. 124, 1985
- 50. സഭാചരിത്ര നിഘണ്ടു pp. 424, 1985
- 51. ക്രിസ്തുവിന്റെ കാൽപ്പാടുകളിലൂടെ pp. 168, 1985

General

- 52. From Relief to Development A profile of CASA pp. 282, 1979
- 53. Teach Yourself Aramaic (Reprint, 1993) pp. 152, 1981
- 54. Behold the Cross of Calvary pp. 208, 1987
- 55. Sermons from the Gospels Vol. I pp. 208, 1988
- 56. Sermons from the Gospels Vol. II pp. 138, 1990
- 57. The Nestorian Canon Law pp. 120, 1995
- 58. Mesopotamia Light pp. 128, 1993
- 59. Voices of the East pp. 112, 1998
- 60. Mother of the Motherless pp. 112, 2002
- 61. Poems & Prayers pp. 100, 2002
- 62. Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV pp. 312, 2004

To be published (2004)

- 63. Assyrian Fathers
- 64. Syriac Manuscripts in India
- 65. Teach Yourself Aramaic Vol II

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

The Most Rev. Dr. Mar Aprem (formerly George Mookan) was born in Trichur, Kerala, India, in June 1940. Educated in India, England and America, he specialised in Church History. He was the President of the Church History Association of India in 1976-1982.

He holds two master's degrees in Church History, one from the United Theological College, Bangalore (M. Th. of Serampore, 1966) and the other from the Union Theological Seminary, New York (S.T.M. degree, 1967). He was a candidate for Doctor of Theology (Th.D) degree at Princeton Theological Seminary, U.S.A., when he was consecrated bishop in Baghdad, Iraq in 1968. Later he earned his D.Th. degree from Serampore University, near Calcutta. Mahatma Gandhi University in Kottayam granted a Ph.D degree in Syriac Studies to him in 2002.

Ordained a deacon on June 25, 1961, he became a priest on the day he completed twenty five years of age on 13 June, 1965. He was consecrated Bishop on 21st September, 1968 and promoted as a Metropolitan eight days later in Baghdad.

His biography appears in the **International Who's Who of Intellectuals**, Vol. 6, Cambridge, the **International directory of Distinguished Leadership**, first Edition, U.S.A. and others.

He was given 'Men of Achievement' Award of the International Biographical Centre, Cambridge, England in 1984, and the 'Medal of Merit' of the Coptic Orthodox Cultural Centre, Venice for his cultural and ecumenical achievements.

Since 1968, he is the Head of the Church of the East in India with his headquarters in Trichur. He is active in several religious and social organisations all over India.

LIST OF PHOTOGRAPHS

1. Village of Derbandoki in North Iraq. Photo taken in 1990
2. Khanania with father Andrews and mother Panna (may be in 1940)
3. 1946 at village Batasi in North Primary School. Khanania is 4th from the right in the back row.
4. Khanania (right) with his cousin. The grand father Qasha Benyamin is in the middle (1948?)
5. Deacon Khanania (1953?)
6. Deacon Khanania in Baghdad in 1955
7. Mar Yosip Khananishu Metropolitan in the middle. Deacon Khanania is seated first from the right with seminary students
8. Qasha Khanania in civil dress in December 1957 when he went to Iran
9. Qasha Khanania in front of the tomb of Mar Isaac Khananishu Metropolitan of Shamashdin who died in 1918 in Karmansha, Iran.
10. Mar Yosip Khananishu with Qasha Khanania in Teheran in 1958 along with another priest.
11. First committee in Teheran. Qasha Khanania is seated 2nd on the right. 1958
12. Patriarch Mar Eshai Shimun visiting Teheran in February 1962. Qasha Khanania is kneeling on the right side of the Patriarch
13. Mar Eshai Shimun and Qasha Khanania
14. Mar Eshai Shimun after consecrating Rev. Khanania as Bishop Mar Dinkha

15. Bishop Mar Dinkha with four students studying for priesthood namely, 1. Koreish 2. Mshalemon 3. Dumara and 4. Feidor. Out of these four only one namely Dumara (3rd from the right) became a sub deacon on 14 July, 1968, now cor-episcopa in Teheran
16. Bishop Mar Dinkha, Fr. M. Kochaly and Fr. Ivan in Iran on July 12, 1964
17. Qurbana in Mart Mariam Church in Urmiah on 12 July 1964. Bishop Mar Dinkha renovated this Church, which dates back to the first century.
18. Bishop Mar Dinkha's visit to Chicago in 1966. Qasha Aprim de Baz is on the left and Qasha Goliath on the right of the Bishop. Most of the leaders in the photo are no more.
19. Yonkers, New York, U.S.A. Fr. George Mookan (later Mar Aprem) at the Reception of Bishop Mar Dinkha (middle) in January 1967.
20. Ground breaking for Mar Mari Shleeha Church in Yonkers, New York in January 1967.
21. Bishop Mar Dinkha in Trichur, India on 22nd February 1967 seated between Fr. Antony Chakola and Qasha Isaac Rehana.
22. Patriarch Mar Eshai Shimun with prelates in Baghdad in 1970. Left to Right is Mar Yosip Khananishu Metropolitan, Mar Dinkha, Mar Andrios Yawalaha, Mar Narsai de Baz & Mar Yohannan Philipose.
23. Prelates in Baghdad in 1973. L to R: Mar Yohannan Philipose, Mar Yosip Khananishu Metropolitan, Mar Timotheus Metropolitan. Standing: Mar Aprim Khamis, Mar Narsai de Baz, Mar Dinkha & Mar Andreos Yawalaha.
24. Consecration of Mar Dinkha IV as Catholicos Patriarch in Ealing, London, U.K. on 17 October 1976. Left to Right:

-
- Mar Yohannan Avraham of Syria, Mar Timotheus Metropolitan of India, Mar Claudio Veterezzo of Italy, Mar Narsai de Baz, Mar Aprim Khamis and Mar Giovanni Biscu.
25. In the White House, Washington Vice President Walter F. Mondale (1976-80) receives the Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV.
 26. Mar Gewargis Slewa Metropolitan reads oath of allegiance at the time of his consecration as Metropolitan for Iraq on June 14, 1981 in Chicago.
 27. Chaldean Patriarch Mar Poulouse Sheighu (d. 1989) received Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV in Baghdad, 1984.
 28. Visit to Vatican on November 6 to 8, 1984 accompanied by the newly consecrated Bishop Mar Bawai Soro and Mr. Fraidon Darmo of England. Pope John Paul presents a gold chain to the Patriarch
 29. Patriarch presents a gold chain to the Pope, Vatican, November 1984
 30. The Holy Synod of November 1984 in Chicago. Left to Right: Standing: Mar Claudio Veterezo of Italy, Mar Daniel Yakob of Kirkuk, Mar Aprim Khamis, Mar Narsai DeBaz, Mar Timotheus, Mar Avraham, Mar Meelis Zaia, Mar Bawai Soro.
 31. Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV and President Hafiz Assad of Syria.
 32. Mar Gewargis Patriarchal Cathedral, Chicago.
 33. The 1000th anniversary of the Church in Russia at Bolshoi Theatre, Moscow in 1988. President Gorbachev and Mrs Rasina Gorbachev, Patriarch Pimen of Moscow are in the front row. Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV is the 2nd from the right in the 2nd row, between Archbishop of Canterbury and Patriarch Mar Zakai Iwas of the Syriac Orthodox Church. Patriarch Schenuda of the Coptic Church is the first from the left in the same row.

34. Patriarch Mar Dinkha along with Archdeacon Aprim Mar Yonan with the newly ordained deacons in Mart Mariam Church, Urmia, Iran in September 1989
35. Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV in Baghdad in January 1990.
36. The Holy Synod of January 1990 in Baghdad. Standing Left to Right: Mar Yosep Sargis, Mar Timotheus, Mar Gewargis Sliwa, Mar Meelis, Mar Narsai, Mar Aprim Khamis and Mar Bawai Soro.
37. Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV visiting the Church in India in January 1991. Public reception on January 11, 1991. Left to Right: Cor-episcopa Raphael Vattakuzhy, Bishop Mar Meelis, Mar Joseph Kundukulam, Mar Timotheus, Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV, Catholicos Baselius Poulouse, Mathews Mor Coorilos (present Catholicos of the Indian Orthodox Church), Minister Lonappen Nambadan.
38. With the members of the managing Committee after the inauguration of the Mar Timotheus Charitable Hospital on January 13, 1991. Left to Right. Fr. Pius, Fr. Gabriel, Mar Aprem, Mar Timotheus, Patriarch, Mar Meelis, Mar Poulos, Three members namely Dr. Sunny Chackola(2nd) Fr. M.I. David (4th) and Dr. Kurian Mookan (on the extreme right) are still active members of the managing committee.
39. Festival of Dinkha for the old calendar with reception to Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV at the Metropolitan's Palace on January 19, 1991. Left to Right: Poulouse Mar Poulouse, Mar Timotheus, Patriarch, Mar Aprem, Mar Meelis.
40. Left to Right: Mar Aprem, Mar Timotheus, Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV. Mar Meelis Zaia and Mar Poulouse are engaged in an interesting conversation in Mar Timotheus Hospital in Trichur in January 1991

-
41. The family of the Patriarch. Seated Left to Right: Andrews (father), Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV, and Deacon Ezaria (Patriarch's younger brother). Standing Left to Right: Sargon (nephew), Lydia, Virginia (sister of the Patriarch) and Sargina.
 42. The Holy Synöd in Sydney in July 1994 after the consecration of Mar Odisho as Episcopa. Mar Gewargis, Mar Timotheus, Patriarch, Mar Narsai, Mar Bawai, Mar Khamis and Mar Odisho.
 43. Patriarch and the Pope sign Common Christological Declaration on 11 November 1994 at Vatican. Left to Right: Standing: Bishop Mar Meelis Zaia, Bishop Mar Bawai Soro, Metropolitan Mar Narsai de Baz
 44. Jim Edgar, Governor of Illinois, receives Patriarch in Chicago on Nov 26, 1996
 45. First Visit of Mar Aprem to Patriarch Mar Dinkha after the unity in India in 1995, Mar Aprem presenting a large photo of 100 elephants present for Pooram festival in Trichur. Photo taken in June 1996. Front row. L to R. Deacon Dadhway, Deacon Namato, Mr. Freidon, Mar Khamis, Patriarch, Mar Aprem, Mrs. Tina, Mr. Wilson, Mrs. Christina.
 46. Patriarch inaugurating the Mart Mariam Church in Rosalle, Chicago on June 22, 1997. Mar Meelis, Mar Aprem of India, Mar Emmanuel are seen on the right side
 47. Patriarch with the members of the Holy Synod in Chicago in June 1997
 48. Members of the Church choir in Baghdad along with Patriarch, Mar Gewargis Sliwa Metropolitan, Mar Odisho on November 2, 1997
 49. Mar Aprem conducts prayers in March 1998 at the tomb of

- Panna, mother of the Patriarch (d. 1968)
50. The Church of Mar Zaia in Zahle, Lebanon, Mar Dinkha IV consecrated it on 13 September 1998
 51. President Elias Al Hiravi of Lebanon receiving Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV in Beirut in September 1998
 52. Mart Mariam Church in Moscow, consecrated by Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV on September 27, 1998.
 53. Holy Synod of April 19-27, 1999 in Chicago. Patriarch with three Metropolitans and five bishops.
 54. Patriarch of Antioch Mar Zakkai Iwas of Damascus with Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV and Mar Narsai Metropolitan of Lebanon. Bishop Mar Odisho, Mr. Zaya de Malik Ishmael, Bishop Mar Meelis Zaia of Sydney are seated on the right side of Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV.
 55. Patriarchal Visit to India in January 2000. Patriarch in a chariot drawn by four horses.
 56. The visit of His Holiness to the residence of the Patriarchal delegate in India on 20 January 2000. Left to Right: Mar Narsai, Mar Timotheus, Patriarch, Mar Aprem and Fr. George Toma.
 57. Patriarch visits the Seminary of the Church of the East on 27 January 2000.
 58. With the clergy of the Church of the East in India. Patriarch is seated between Mar Narsai Metropolitan and Mar Aprem Metropolitan.
 59. Patriarchal Visit to Mar Timotheus Orphanage, Kalathode on 28 January 2000. The orphan boys and girls, along with the committee members.
 60. Farewell meeting to the Patriarch on 31 January 2000. Mar Timotheus aged 80 is trying to get up.

61. President Saddam Hussein greets Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV in Baghdad. Patriarch Raphael Bidawid of the Chaldean Church smiles October 2000.
62. Patriarch Raphael Bidawid and Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV with archbishops and bishops in Baghdad in October 2000. Mar Emmanuel III Delli, Chaldean Patriarch elected in December 2003 standing behind His Holiness Mar Dinkha IV.
63. Patriarch Mar Raphael Bidawid, Mar Addai II and Mar Dinkha IV with other Bishops during the 2nd Millennium celebration in Baghdad in October 2000.
64. Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV with clergy celebrating Holy Qurbana in a special tent erected in Seleucia-Ctesiphon near Baghdad in October 2000.
65. Patriarch Mar Dinkha visiting the Rabban Hurmizd Church near Mosul in October 2000.
66. Inside Rabban Hormizd monastery, the tombs of our Patriarchs, in October 2000. Left to Right: Mar Emmanuel of Canada, Mar Gewargis Sliwa of Baghdad, Mar Narsai de Baz Metropolitan of Lebanon, Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV and Bishop Mar Yosip Sargis of Baghdad. The two junior bishops Mar Is'haq Khamis and Mar Aprim Athniel are in front of the Patriarch.
67. Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV with the graduates from the Church of the East near Chicago area. Fr. Dr. George Toma is standing next to the Patriarch. Photo taken in 2003.
68. Prayer for Peace at Assisi near Rome, in January 2002. Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV is seated 3rd on the right side of the Pope.
69. Pope John Paul II receives the Patriarch in Vatican in January 2002.

70. Ordination of Fr. Paul Benjamin of Iran (studying in Rome) in Chicago on September 13, 2001. Fr. Paul is on the extreme right. Four other priests namely Fr. David Royal doing doctorate in Rome, Fr. Dr. George Toma (Patriarch's secretary), Fr. Antwan Latchin (Manager at the Patriarchal Residence), Fr. Shleemon Hasqiel (Vicar of the Mar Gewargis Patriarchal Cathedral) and deacon Marbena, Narsai Shleemon and Noel Kambar Ph. D.
71. Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV and Patriarch Mar Addai II of Baghdad in Chicago at the 30th Patriarchal anniversary of Mar Addai II held in March, 2002.
72. Releasing the Assyrian New Testament in Chicago on October 18, 2002.
73. Patriarch unfurls the flag in St. Hurmis Assyrian school in Sydney, Australia. Mar Narsai Metropolitan (Left) and Bishop Mar Meelis Zaia (Right) are seen.
74. Celebration dinner of 27th Patriarchal consecration on October 19, 2003 Patriarch is about to cut the anniversary cake.
75. Patriarchal dinner on October 19, 2003. Seen at the head table Left to Right: Bishop Mar Sargis of Baghdad, Mar Aprem Metropolitan of India, Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV, Bishop Mar Bawai Soro, Bishop Mar Aprim Athniel, Archdeacon Awiqam Pithyon, Cor-episcopa Athanasius.
76. Choir of Mar Gewargis Cathedral with Patriarch in Chicago in 2001.
77. Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV leading the dignitaries to the 27th Patriarchal reception Dinner followed by Mar Aprem of India and Bishop Mar Sargis of Baghdad.



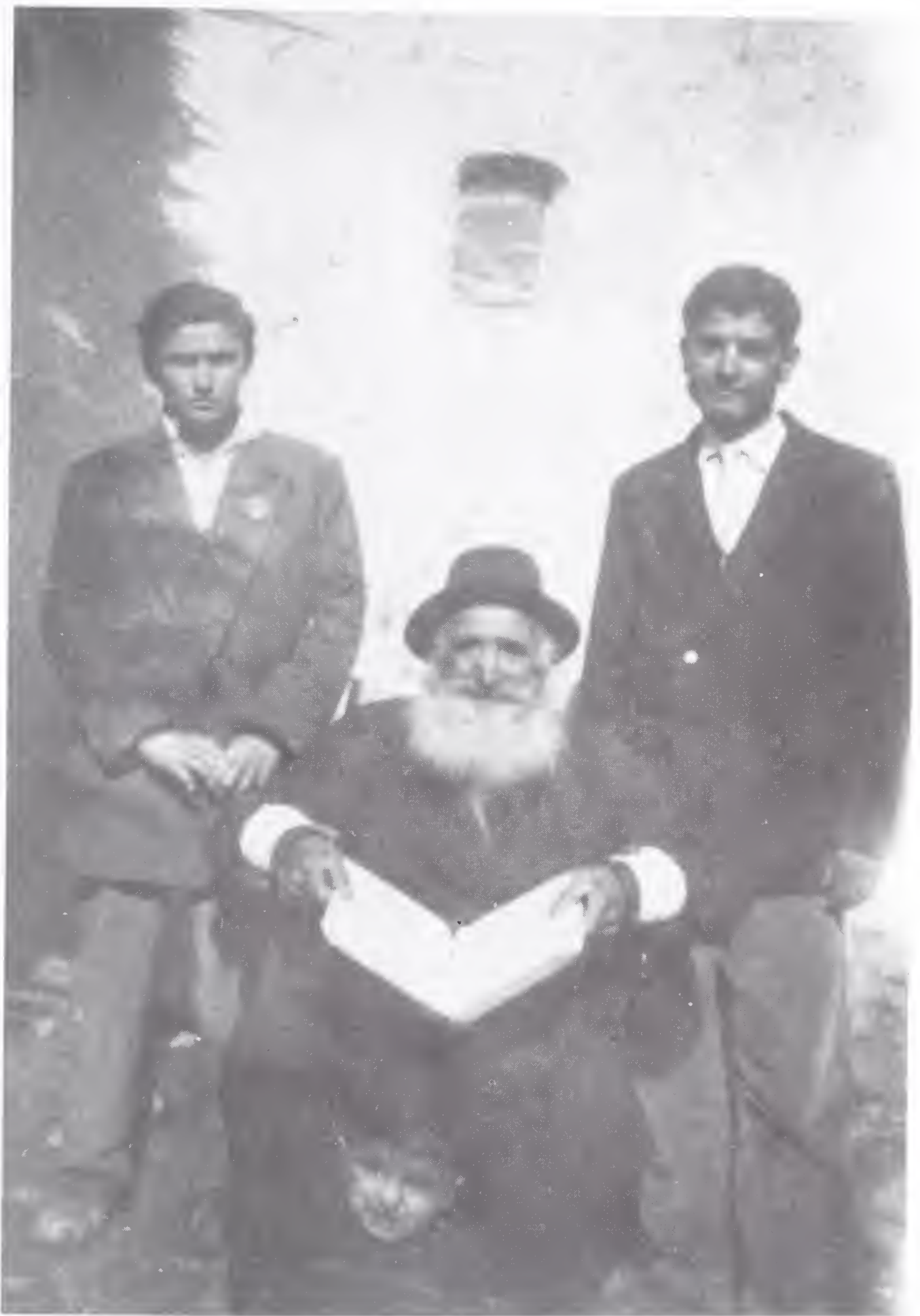
1. Village of Derbandoki in North Iraq. Photo taken in 1990



2. Khanania with father Andrews and mother Panna
(may be in 1940)



3. 1946 at village Batasi in North Primary School. Khanania is 4th from the right in the back row.



4. Khanania (right) with his cousin.
The grand father Qasha Benyamin is in the middle (1948?)



5. Deacon Khanania (1953?)



6. Deacon Khanania in Baghdad in 1955



7. Mar Yosip Khananishu Metropolitan in the middle.
Deacon Khanania is seated first from the right with seminary students.



8. Qasha Khanania in civil dress in December 1957
when he went to Iran.



9. Qasha Khanania in front of the tomb of Mar Issac Khananishu Metropolitan of Shamasdin who died in 1918 in Karmansha, Iran



10. Mar Yosip Khananishu with Qasha Khanania in Teheran in 1958 along with another priest.



11. First committee in Teheran. Qasha Khanania is seated 2nd on the Right.



12. Patriarch Mar Eshai Shimun visiting Teheran in February 1962.
Qasha Khanania is kneeling on the right side of the Patriarch.



13. Mar Eshai Shimun and Qasha Khanania.



14. Mar Eshai Shimun after consecrating
Rev. Khanania as Bishop Mar Dinkha



15. Bishop Mar Dinkha with four students studying for priesthood namely, 1 Koreish 2. Mshalemon 3. Dumara 4. Feidor. Out of these 4 only one namely Dumara (3rd from the right) became a sub deacon on 14 July, 1968, now cor-episcopa in Teheran.



16. Bishop Mar Dinkha, Fr. M. Kochaly and Fr. Ivan in Iran 1964 July 12.



17. Qurbana in Marth Mariam Church in Urmiah on 12 July 1964. Bishop Mar Dinkha renovated this Church which dates back to the first century.



18. Bishop Mar Dinkha's visit to Chicago in 1966. Qasha Aprim de Baz is on the left and Qasha Goliath on the right of the Bishop. Many of the leaders in the photo are no more.



19. Yonkers, New York, U.S.A. Fr. George Mookan (later Mar Aprem) at the Reception of Bishop Mar Dinkha (middle) in January 1967.



20. Ground breaking for the Mar Mari Slecha Church in Yonkers, New York in January 1967.



21. Bishop Mar Diakha in Trichur , India on 22nd February 1967 seated between Fr.Antony Chakola and Qasha Isaac Rehana.



22. Patriarch Mar Eshai Shimun with prelates in Baghdad in 1970. Left to Right is Mar Yosip Khananishu Metropolitan, Mar Dinkha , Mar Andrios Yawalaha, Mar Narsai de Baz & Mar Yohannan Philipose.



23. Prelates in Baghdad in 1973. L. to R: Mar Yohannan Philipose, Mar Yosip Khamanshu
Metropolitan, Mar Timotheus Metropolitan
Standing: Mar Aprim Khamis. Mar Narsai de Baz, Mar Dinkha & Mar Andrios Yawalaha

Photographs of Mar Dinkha IV after becoming the Patriarch
in October 1976



24. Consecration of Mar Dinkha IV as Catholicos Patriarch in Laling, London, U.K. on 17 October 1976
Left to Right: Mar Yohanan Avraham of Syria, Mar Eimothus Metropolitan of India, Mar Claudio
Veterezzo of Italy, Mar Narsai de Baz, Mar Aprim Khamis and Mar Giovanni Biscu.



25. In the White House, Washington, Vice President Walter F. Mondale (1976-80) receives the Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV.



26. Mar Gewargis Slewa Metropolitan reads oath of allegiance at the time of his consecration as Metropolitan for Iraq on June 14, 1981 in Chicago.



27. Chaldean Patriarch Mar Pauline Shegiba (d. 1989) received Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV in Baghdad, 1984.



28. Visit to Vatican on November 6 to 8, 1984 accompanied by the newly consecrated Bishop Mar Bawai Soro and Mr. Iraidon Darmo of England. Pope John Paul presents a gold chain to the Patriarch.



29. Patriarch presents a gold chain to the Pope, Vatican, November 1984.



30. The Holy Synod of November 1984 in Chicago. Left to Right:
Standing :Mar Claudio Veterezo of Italy, Mar Daniel Yakob of Kirkuk,
Mar Aprim Khamis, Mar Narsai De Baz, Mar Timotheus, Mar Avraham,
Mar Meelis Zaia, Mar Bawai Soro.



31. Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV and President Hafiz Assad of Syria.



32. Mar Gewargis Patriarchal Cathedral, Chicago.



33. The 1000th anniversary of the Church in Russia at Bolshoi Theater, Moscow. In 1988 President Gorbachev and Mrs Rasina Gorbachev, Patriarch Pimen of Moscow are in the front row. Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV is the 2nd from the right in the 2nd row, between Archbishop of Canterbury and Patriarch Mar Zakai Iwas of the Syrian Orthodox Church. Patriarch Shenudah of the Coptic Church is the first from the left in the same row.



34. Patriarch Mar Dinkha along with Archdeacon Aprim Mar Yonan with the newly ordained deacons in Mart Mariam Church, Urmia, Iran in September 1989.



35. Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV in Baghdad in January 1990.



36. The Holy Synod of January 1990 in Baghdad. Standing Left to Right: Mar Yosep Sargis, Mar Timotheus, Mar Gewargis Sliwa, Mar Meelis, Mar Narsai, Mar Aprim Khamis and Mar Bawai Soro.



37. Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV visiting the Church in India in January 1991. Public reception on January 11, 1991. Left to Right: Cor-episcopa Raphael Vattakuzhy, Bishop Mar Meelis, Mar Joseph Kundukulam, Mar Timotheus, Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV, Catholicos Baselius Poulouse, Mar Mathews (present Catholicos of the Orthodox Church), Minister Lonappen Nambadan.



38. With the members of the managing Committee after the inauguration of the Mar Timotheus Charitable Hospital on January 13, 1991. Left to Right, Fr.Pius, Fr.Gabriel, Mar Aprem, Mar Timotheus, Patriarch, Mar Meelis, Mar Poulos. Three members namely Dr.Sunny Chaekola (2nd), Fr.M.I.David (4th), and Dr. Kurien Mooken(on extreme right) are still active members of the Managing Committee.



39. Festival of Dinkha for the old calendar with reception to Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV at the Metropolitan's Palace on January 19, 1991. Left to Right: Mar Poulos, Mar Timotheus, Patriarch, Mar Aprem, Mar Meelis.



40. Left to Right: Mar Aprem, Mar Timotheus, Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV, Mar Meelis Zaia and Mar Poulos are engaged in an interesting conversation in Mar Timotheus Hospital in Trichur in January 1991.



41. Patriarchal family on December 25, 1991 seated Left to Right: Andrews (Father of the Patriarch), II,II Mar Dinkha IV, Deacon Ezaria (younger brother of the Patriarch). Standing : Sargon (son of Deacon Ezaria, Lydia, Virginia (Sister of the Patriarch), Sargina.



42. The Holy Synod in Sydney in July 1994 after the consecration of Mar Odisho as Episcopa. Standing Left to Right: Mar Emmanuel, Mar Meelis, Mar Gewargis, Mar Timotheus, Patriarch, Mar Narsai, Mar Bawai Soro, Mar Aprim Khamis and Mar Odisho.



43. Patriarch and the Pope sign Common Christological Declaration on 11 November 1994 at Vatican. Left to Right Standing: Bishop Mar Meelis Zaia, Bishop Mar Bawai Soro, Metropolitan Mar Narsai de Baz.



44. Jim Edgar, Governor of Illinois, receives Patriarch in Chicago on Nov 26, 1996.



45. First Visit of Mar Aprem to Patriarch Mar Dinkha after the unity in India in 1995. Mar Aprem presenting a large photo of 100 elephants present for Pooram festival in Trichur. Photo taken in June 1996. Front row L to R. Deacon Dadhway, Deacon Namato, Mr. Freidon, Mar Khamis, Patriarch, Mar Aprem , Mrs. Tina, Mr. Wilson, Mrs. Christina.



46. Patriarch inaugurating the Mart Mariam Church in Rosalle, Chicago on June 22, 1997.
Mar Meelis, Mar Aprem of India, Mar Emmanuel are seen on the right side.



47. Patriarch with the members of the Holy Synod in Chicago in June 1997.



48. Members of the Church Choir along with Patriarch, Mar Gewargis Sliwa Metropolitan and Mar Odisho of Sweden in Baghdad on November 2, 1997.



49. Mar Aprem conducts prayers in March 1998 at the tomb of Panna, mother of the Patriarch (d.1968).



50. The Church of Mar Zaia in Zahle, Lebanon. Mar Dinkha IV consecrated it on 13 September 1998.



51. President Elias Al Hiravi of Lebanon receiving Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV in Beirut in September 1998.



52. Mart Mariam in Moscow, consecrated by Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV in September 27, 1998.



53. Holy Synod of April 19- 27, 1999 in Chicago. Patriarch with three Metropolitans and five bishops.



54. Patriarch of Antioch Mar Zakkai Iwas of Damascus with Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV and Mar Narsai Metropolitan of Lebanon. Bishop Mar Odisho, Mr. Zaya de Malik Ishmael, Bishop Mar Meelis Zaia of Sydney are seated on the right side of Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV.



55. Patriarchal Visit to India in January 2000. Patriarch in a chariot drawn by four horses.



56. The visit of His Holiness to the residence of the Patriarchal Delegate in India on 20 January 2000.. Left to Right: Mar Narsai, Mar Timotheus, Patriarch, Mar Aprem and Fr. George Toma.



57. Patriarch Visits the Seminary of the Church of the East on 27 January 2000.



58. With the clergy of the Church of the East in India. Patriarch is seated between Mar Narsai Metropolitan and Mar Aprem Metropolitan.



59. Patriarchal Visit to Mar Timotheus Orphanage, Kalathode on 28 January 2000 .The orphan boys and girls, along with the committee members.



60. Farewell meeting to the Patriarch on 31 January 2000. Mar Timotheus aged 80 is trying to get up.



61. President Saddam Hussein greets Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV in Baghdad. Patriarch Raphael Bidawid of the Chaldean Church smiles. October 2000.



62. Patriarch Raphael Bidawid and Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV with archbishops and bishops in Baghdad in October 2000. Mar Emmanuel III Delli, Chaldean Patriarch elected in December 2003 is standing behind H.H. Mar Dinkha.



63. Patriarch Mar Raphael Bidawid, Mar Addai II and Mar Dinkha IV with other Bishops during the 2nd Millennium celebration in Baghdad in October 2000.



64. Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV with clergy celebrating Holy Qurbana in a special tent erected in Seleucia - Ctesiphon near Baghdad in October 2000.



65. Patriarch Mar Dinkha visiting the Rabban Hormizd Church near Mosul in Oct 2000.



66. Inside Rabban Hormizd monastery, the tombs of our Patriarchs, in October 2000. Left to Right: Mar Immanuel of Canada, Mar Gewargis Sliwa of Baghdad, Mar Narsai de Baz Metropolitan of Lebanon, Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV and Bishop Mar Yosep Sargis of Baghdad. The two junior bishops Mar Is'haq Khamis and Mar Aprim Athniel are in front of the Patriarch.



67. Choir of Mar Gewargis Cathedral, Chicago with Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV in 2001.



68. Ordination of Fr. Paul Benjamin of Iran (studying in Rome) in Chicago on September 13, 2001. Fr. Paul is on the extreme right. Four other priests namely Fr. David Royal doing doctorate in Rome, Fr. Dr. George Toma (Patriarch's secretary), Fr. Antwan Latchin (Manager at the Patriarchal Residence), Fr. Shleemon Hasqiel (Vicar of the Mar Gewargis Patriarchal Cathedral) and deacons Marbena, Narsai, Shleemon and Noel Kamar Ph.D.



69. Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV and Patriarch Mar Addai II of Baghdad in Chicago at the 30th Patriarchal anniversary of Mar Addai II held in March, 2002.



70. Pope John Paul II receives the Patriarch in Vatican in January 2002.



71. Prayer for Peace at Assisi near Rome, in January 2002. Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV is seated 3rd on the right side of the Pope.



72. Releasing of Assyrian New Testament in Chicago on October 18, 2002.



73. Patriarch unfurls the flag in St.Hurmis Assyrian School in Sydney, Australia. Mar Narsai Metropolitan (Left) and Bishop Mar Meelis Zaia (Right) are seen.



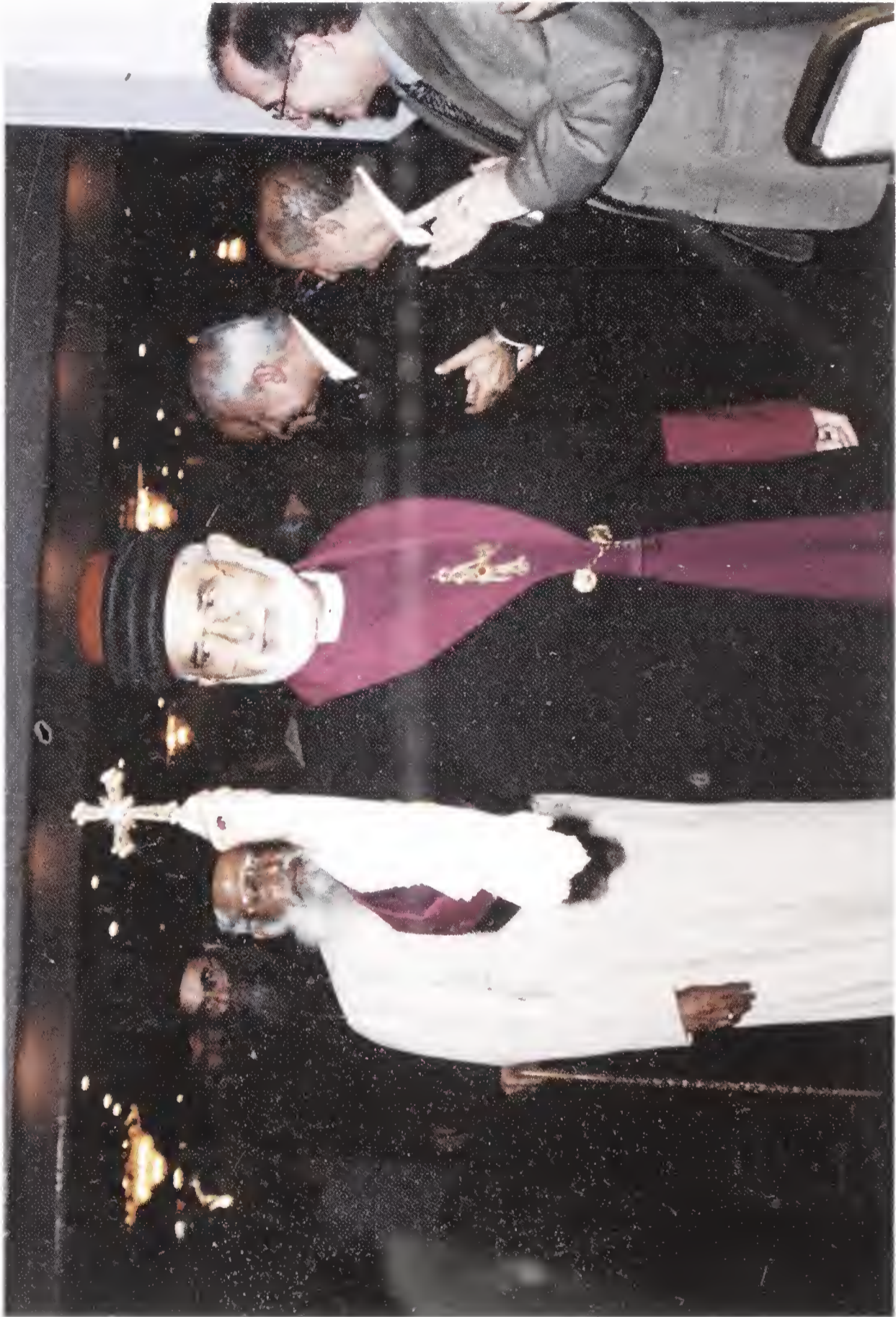
74. Celebration dinner of 27th Patriarchal consecration on October 19, 2003 Patriarch is about to cut the anniversary cake.



75. Patriarchal dinner on October 19, 2003. Seen at the head table Left to Right: Bishop Mar Sargis of Baghdad, Mar Aprem Metropolitan of India, Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV, Bishop Mar Bawai Soro, Bishop Mar Aprim Athniel, Archdeacon Awiqam Pithyon, Cor-episcopa Athanasius.



76. Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV with the graduates from the Church of the East near Chicago area. Fr. Dr. George Toma is standing next to the Patriarch in 2003.



77. Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV leading the dignitaries to the 27th Patriarchal reception Dinner followed by Mar Aprem of India and Bishop Mar Sargis of Baghdad.

Prelates of the Church Today



H.H. MARAN MAR DINKHA IV
120th Catholicos Patriarch of Church of The East



MAR NARSAI DE BAZ
Metropolitan, Lebanon



MAR APREM
Metropolitan, India



MAR GEWARGIS SLEEVA
Metropolitan, Iraq



MAR YOSIP SARGIS
Bishop, Baghdad



MAR APRIM KHAMIS
Bishop, Western USA



MAR BAWAI SORO
Bishop, Seattle



MAR MEELIS ZAIA
Bishop, Australia



MAR EMMANUEL
Bishop, Canada



MAR ODISHO ORAHAM
Bishop, Europe



MAR APRIM ATHANIEL
Bishop, Syria



MAR ISSAC YOSIP
Bishop, Dohuk & Russia

സംസ്കൃതം നവം നവം നവം



ISBN 81-902205-0-0