

A GUIDE TO
THE ORTHODOX
LITURGY AND FAITH



**A Study on the Holy Qurbana of the
Orthodox Syrian Christians of India**

Dr. Punnose U. Panoor

PRAYER

1. *By The light we see the light
Jesus, full of light
Thou, True light, dost give the light
To Thy creatures all
Lighten us with Thy gay light,
Thou, the Father's light' divine*
2. *Thou, who dwellest in the light-
Mansions, holy, pure;
Keep us from all hateful thoughts,
From all passions vile
Grant us cleanliness in our hearts
Deeds of righteousness to do*

A GUIDE TO
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AND FAITH

The Meaning and the Interpretation
of the Holy Qurbana of
The Orthodox Syrian Christians of India

Dr. Punnoose U Panoor

A GUIDE TO THE ORTHODOX LITURGY

OF FAITH

by

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PREFACE

The Holy Qurbana is our supreme act of worship. It is the chief service of each Lord's Day and a necessary accompaniment to other sacraments. It is open to all the faithful including children. We approach it with reverent preparation and fasting.

To participate in such a Holy Qurbana, and to get the blessings one has to approach it and take part in it with true devotion and understanding and has to have full knowledge of the contents and purpose. As Bishop Pekenham Walsh says, "Even the most beautiful words and actions can become formal and unreal, and the life that is lived outside the Church, may contradict the worship within it. This is a danger for the priests as well as for the people".

This is a compilation of writings of various authors so as the meaning of the Holy Qurbana is made clear to the faithful, particularly children, who are born and brought up outside Kerala and are studying in English medium.

It is prepared in three parts : Part -1. explains how we got the present form of worship, and also explains parts of the church building, utensils used and vestments used by priests and bishops.

Part-II deals with the meaning and interpretations of various parts of worship. It is given in the form of questions and answers so that the reader can easily understand and follow prayers and rituals during the Holy Qurbana.

Part -III deals with useful information which will help us to grow in the faith.

I am confident that this book will be useful to all members of our church, and particularly to our children and youth who are in need of instructions in English.

This book is dedicated to the blessed memory of late Metropolitan His Grace Kuriakose Mar Gregorios of Pampady who was kind enough to bless the writer to enter the Madbaha for the service of the Lord in the year 1960, and to my departed BELOVED PARENTS.

All your suggestions are welcome

This book is prayerfully submitted for the glory of God.

FOREWORD

My Spiritual Son Dr Punnoose U Panoor has a special gift of God to do researches in the field of liturgy and to write simple and extremely beneficial guides to those who are interested in the plain and hidden meanings of liturgical theology and practices. 'A Guide to the Orthodox Liturgy and Faith' of the Orthodox Syrian Christians to those who cannot read Malayalam was a dire necessity and Dr. Punnoose has ably filled up that vacuum in simple English. The book is written like a catechism (in question and answer form) like the Malayalam book of Fr G John called 'Sworgeeya Manna'. The title of the book could be 'Do you know your Liturgy?' as the meaning and interpretation of the Holy Qurbana are the contents of the publication. The growing generations of boys and girls of the Church outside Kerala will ever be grateful to Dr. Punnoose for his labour of his love. Congratulations to the Publishers also. I hope this small book will be widely read in India and outside.

Bethany Aramana

The Most Rev Geevarghese
Mar Osthathos Metropolitan
Diocese of Niranam

THE ORTHODOX SYRIAN CHURCH

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The Holy Qurbana is the highest form of worship of the Orthodox Church. It was established by our Lord Jesus Christ Himself. It is one of the Sacraments or mysteries of the church. The word of God plus the spirit of God makes a new creation. This is true of the creation of the universe and the incarnation of our Lord. The words of God "Let there be light" plus the spirit of God who was hovering over the face of the waters caused the creation of light. Jesus was born in the womb of the virgin Mary through the word from God brought by the angel and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. The bread becomes body and the wine becomes blood when the word of the Lord said by the priest and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. The liturgy involves several actions and symbols which are meaningful and which affects the whole person - body, mind and spirit.

Sufficient understanding and meaningful experience is essential for the worshippers. I am glad that this book by Wing Commander U Punnose Ph.D, explains the implications of the several aspects of the liturgy and answers many questions usually asked by many especially by the youth of the church outside Kerala. The author has taken the pains to deal with all aspects of the Holy Sacrament. I do congratulate him on this endeavor and recommend the book to all worshippers.

Zachariah Mar Dionysius
Metropolitan

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The Rev: Fr: P.C. Eapen M.A., Ph.D (NYU)

Vicar

Dear Dr. Punnoose,

I want to thank you profusely for lending me a copy of the manuscript, "A GUIDE TO THE ORTHODOX LITURGY AND FAITH", you prepared. I read the entire manuscript very carefully and found it to be a very useful guide worthy to be recommended to the faithful members of our church. May I take this opportunity to congratulate you for your incomparable ability to make the most abstruse topics very meaningful and understandable.

The relation between God and man and man's quest for eternal life in God is to be realised by the underlying theme of the manuscript prepared. Insights into the meaning and relevance of the Holy Qurbana will certainly help achieve that peace and fulfilment one aspires for in day to day living.

The purpose of this book, as I could understand, is to serve as an open invitation into the fold of the church to explore the interior thoroughly. The author has very ably pointed out the more obvious glories within the church, with deeper understanding and devotion.

This guide book, I am pretty confident will help those who really want to make life in the church relevant and meaningful. Those who look forward to renew and refresh their spiritual life in Christ Jesus will find inspiration and spiritual excitement in this creative endeavour.

May God Almighty richly bless all those who use this very valuable exposition of mystery of the Holy Qurbana and enable them to become truly christians.

May God bless you.

With warm personal greetings and fondest of all best wishes,

Yours affectionately,

Coimbatore

25-06-93

Father P.C. Eapen

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The author gratefully acknowledges the sources from which he has drawn ideas and inspiration in writing this book. Their names and sources are given under Bibliography.

He is indebted to His Grace Geevarghese Mar Osthathos, Metropolitan of Niranam Diocese for asking him to write a book of this nature and also for blessing him with an apt forward.

His Grace Zacharias Mar Dionysius, Metropolitan of Madras Diocese has always been a benefactor and guide to the author and he expresses his deep gratitude to His Grace for the encouraging words in the form of an introduction.

This book in the present form is made possible only with the blessing of His Grace Mathews Mar Barnabas, Metropolitan of American Diocese who took pains to correct the entire draft and gave valuable suggestions inspite of Thirumany's busy schedule. The author is grateful to His Grace also.

The author is also grateful to Rev Fr Dr P C Eapen, vicar of St. Mary's Orthodox Syrian Church Coimbatore for his inspiring and scholarly appreciation of this book.

I remember with gratitude late Rev Fr PM Philipose Puthettukaduppil, Rev. Fr. KK George Plapparambil and other reverend priests and friends who encouraged the author in the study of this subject and guided in his spiritual life.

Thanks are also due to my wife Vimala, sons: Ajit and Anil, nephews: Roy, Suja, Reji, Saji and Binu for their constant encouragement in the form of typing and correcting the script, contacting the printer etc.

Gratitude of the writer is also due to Mr Mani Samuel of Micro Graphics and Premier Offset Printers, Kottayam for undertaking the printing job and bringing and the book in this attractive form.

This is made possible only with the blessing of the Almighty God and the Author praises Him and submits this book for His Glory.

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I

THE 'HOLY QURBANA' A SHORT STUDY

Introduction

1. Holy Baptism and Holy Qurbana are the fountain - head of our spiritual life. In our church, the Holy Qurbana/Holy Eucharist is considered not merely as one of the seven sacraments, but as the central act of christian worship.

Why do we study?

2. In order to take an active part in the liturgy and to develop an intelligent reverence towards it, it is essential that the people should have a good knowledge of the text and of the significance of the liturgy. What the church expects is fuller participation of the laity in the liturgy of the church.

The Priesthood of the People.

3. It is also necessary that the laity should understand that the congregation is the "people of God", each of whom has through his or her baptism been given a share in the priesthood of Christ. In the words of St. Peter, they form a holy priesthood - called to "offer a spiritual sacrifice, which God accepts through Jesus Christ" (1 Pet 2-5). Priests and people together form the Body of Christ, each having his own function to perform in the offering of the Sacrifice. Jesus Christ Himself is offering the whole church to the Father. We may say that people share in the general priesthood of Christ while priests have special priesthood received from Christ.

Participation of the People

4. Ours is a people's Liturgy. The original is in Syriac which has been fully translated into vernacular (Malayalam), English, Hindi and Tamil. According to our traditions, to celebrate a Holy Qurbana, at least a layman is to be present, in addition to the priest and the deacon. The priest offers prayers on behalf of the people and the people are to respond saying "Amen" (so be it so) to the prayers making the prayers their own. They say 'Amen' nearly 40 times during the Holy Qurbana lasting for an hour.

Meaning and Importance

5. The word *Qurbana* or *Qurbano*, means *Offering* or *Sacrifice*. It is also known as *Qurobo* or *Access*, signifying that it is through it that '*man draws near to God*'. It was instituted by Christ Himself and is continued in the Church by His command to the present day. It is an act in which Christ Himself becomes present, offers us to the heavenly Father and we offer ourselves through Christ.

6. The names given to the Holy Qurbana in our church and other churches are given below :

- (a) The Breaking of Bread - The earliest name.
- (b) The Eucharist - also a very early name, indicating thanksgiving.
- (c) The Lord's Supper - stressing the fact of feeding us with heavenly food.
- (d) The Holy Communion - union with Christ and with all His redeemed, on earth and in heaven.
- (e) The Sacred Mysteries - unfathomable mystery in this spiritual eating and drinking the Body and Blood of Christ.
- (f) The Mass - Referring to last words of the Latin / service 'Ite missa est' which means, 'you are permitted to go'.
- (g) Assembly - It is called assembly because it assembles the scattered faculties that are in us, into the unity of the one God. It is also the assembly of the faithful.
- (h) Access - It is called access, because all from far and near and from heaven and earth, have been brought together as Paul has said, "In Him we both have access (Eph 1:14)

etc. that is, God's people and the gentiles, heavenly beings and earthly beings.

- (i) Oblation - It is called oblation because He was made an oblation to God the Father, for our sins as the Apostles said, "He who offered Himself for us...etc. (Heb 9:14)
- (j) Perfecter of Perfections - it is called so because through this all other sacraments are perfected.

The Rite of Jerusalem

7. The first rite of the Qurbana was that which was celebrated in Jerusalem, following the example of Our Lord at the Last Supper. It was known as "Breaking of the Bread" (Acts 2:42, 46), but later came to be known as the Eucharist or Thanksgiving, from the solemn prayer of Thanksgiving within which the offering takes place. The essential ritual action always remain the same following the action of Christ, when he took bread and wine (*offertory*) blessed them and said the words of institution: (*Consecration*), broke the bread (*fraction*) and gave them to His disciples (*Communion*). With this, a preliminary service based on the service of Jewish Synagogue was added. It consisted of reading from scripture, together with Psalms and a sermon. Later on New Testament readings were also added.

The Rite of Antioch

8. According to the ancient tradition, the rite of Antioch is the Liturgy of St. James or the rite of Jerusalem. It is believed that the present form of the liturgy was finalised in the 4th or 5th century. Though the original liturgy was in Aramic, the spoken language of the Lord and the Apostles, it was translated into Greek and Syriac later.

The Syrian Church

9. In the course of time the Syrian Church with its liturgy in Syriac spread all over the east from Syria to Mesopotamia and Persia, and even to China and India. The centre of this church was not only in Antioch but also at Edessa on the borders of Syria. In the 4th century, there flourished a school of christian learning under its great scholar and doctor, St. Ephrem. The whole Syrian liturgical tradition was enriched by St. Ephrem and his successors with an abundance of hymns and spiritual songs and remains one of the richest sources of poetry in the christian church.

10. The Syrian Church had a very strong ascetic tradition and soon became a centre of monastic life with its hermits and monks. It was in these monasteries that the liturgy was largely developed.

The Malankara Liturgy

11. The Malankara liturgy belongs to the family of the West Syrian or Antiochian liturgy. This liturgy in its present form was brought from Jerusalem to Antioch, and it was from there that the first missionaries took the rite and the liturgical customs to other places. In the Antiochian group of liturgies there are about 70 different Anaphoras. The most ancient and venerable among these is that of St. James. This Anaphora is the prototype for all the rest. It is one of the most sublime Anaphoras in the Christendom.

12. Another distinguishing mark is its intimate connection with the Holy Scripture. The prayers are replete with echoes and idioms of the Bible. In the office preceding the liturgy there are appropriate readings from the Holy scripture, especially from the Old Testament. In the liturgy itself there are many psalms and two readings from the Epistles, besides the Gospel.

Again this liturgy is full of mystical symbolisms. The vestments and the sacred ritual are all meaningful. These help greatly for engaging the faculties of the mind and invite the faithful to an even deeper understanding of the mystery of the Holy Eucharist.



The Lord is my shepherd : I shall not want

Psalm 23:1



2

THE HOLY QURBANA PURPOSE AND MEANING

The Meaning of Sacrifice

1. Sacrifice is the fundamental act of religion, by which we acknowledge our dependence on God and show our desire to be united with Him. To express this desire we offer a gift to God. 'The gift is not a mere object, it is part of the offerer; it is the offerer. The giver gives himself through and by his gift.

2. "What really matters in sacrifice is the interior sacrificial spirit expressing our feelings of love and gratitude. Without these sincere interior dispositions, the externals of sacrifice are meaningless. Such was the sacrifice of Cain, such were the insincere sacrifices of some of the priests of the Old Law who were sharply reprov'd by the Prophet Malachi". (The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass P7)

The Sacrifice of the Old Law

3. Sacrifice has been offered by mankind from the earliest times of which we have many records. In the Bible we read of the sacrifice of Cain and Abel (Gen. 4:34) of Noah (Gen 8:20, 21) and Melchisedec, all of whom lived under the natural law. Under the Old Law regular sacrifices were prescribed, of which the most important was the sacrifice of the passover, which was offered in memory of the deliverance of Israel from bondage in Egypt. This again has been considered to be a figure of the sacrifice of Christ, the Lamb of God, who offered himself in sacrifice to deliver mankind from the bondage of sin.

The Sacrifice of Christ

4. But all these sacrifices were, in the words of the Epistle to the Hebrews, "shadows of the good things to come" (Heb 10). They were meant for a time, and came to an end when Christ died on the cross. For by His sacrifice on the cross Christ fulfilled all the sacrifices not only of the Old Law but also of the Natural Law. His is the sacrifice of the New Covenant by which the ancient covenant of God first with mankind and then with Israel is fulfilled in the covenant with the church which is the new Israel. By offering Himself, in sacrifice for all men, and shedding His blood in atonement for the sin of the world, Christ reconciled mankind with God and fulfilled the purpose of all sacrifice. The sacrifice on the Cross was completed by the resurrection, which was, as it were,, the sign of God's acceptance of the sacrifice of Christ. By His death He paid the ransom for the sins of mankind, and by His resurrection He raised up mankind to a new life in Himself. The sacrifice of Christ is thus the token of the sacrifice which all men have to make, and it is a token of supreme power, because it enables us to die with Him in sin and to rise with Him to a new life.

The Sacrifice of the Eucharist

5. When He offered bread and wine at the Last Supper, Christ our Lord wished to give His Church a memorial of His own sacrifice in order to communicate His Salvation. The sacrifice of the Eucharist is not merely calling to memory something which is past, but that is actually making a present reality.

The Sacrifice of the Church

6. When the bread and the wine are offered in the Qurbana they are the symbols of ourselves. We should therefore, consciously offer ourselves to God in the Qurbana.

The Presence of the Risen Christ

7. We must always remember that Christ who thus makes Himself present in the Qurbana is He, who is now risen from the dead and sits at the right hand of the Father.

The Presence of the Holy Spirit

8. In all the Eastern liturgies, after the words of Institution there is an invocation of the Holy Spirit, who is asked to descend and perfect the offering. As Christ by His resurrection is said to have become a 'life giving Spirit' (1 Cor 15:45), so now through His living body in the Eucharist, He communicates His spirit to his disciples.

Standing as a sign of the Resurrection

9. Standing was the normal posture of prayer among the Jews and this custom was followed by the early church from the time of the apostles. The general customs of the ancient church was to stand for prayer, with hands raised, facing the east. Kneeling was considered to be an expression of penitence and was observed in public worship on fast days. It was said by one of the Syrian Fathers, 'Kneeling is a sign of our fall; standing of our resurrection'. For this reason it was the universal custom always to stand for public prayer on Sundays and at paschal time in honour of the resurrection. This practice is still preserved.

Total Participation

10. The Holy Qurbana is the commemoration of our Lord's life in the form of a spiritual drama. But this is based upon historical facts and it connects us with what is going on in the inward and heavenly sphere. It is the connecting link between past and the present on the one hand, and eternity and present on the other. It is not the mere calling back to memory what happened in the past but the bringing into present as a reality, what was in the past and what is in eternity. There is no distinction like the actor and spectators. Every one is caught into and made part of this spiritual drama where life giving love of God is experienced and the life-surrendered love is expressed ("His Grace Mathews Mar Bernabas-the New Life in an Old Church Pg-88 and Bishop Pakenham Walsh- Devotional Study of the Holy Qurbana Pg-8).

11. The following comment is true in the case of the liturgy of the Eastern churches as a whole, 'the worshipper with all his senses takes part in the divine liturgy, the ear by the Bible lessons, sermons, singing and prayers; the eye through icons, symbols, significant movements, procession, light and colour; the sense of smell through incense; and the sense of taste, through the elements and the bread of fellowship.'

12. The observation of Evelyn Underhill is also noteworthy; "sensible stimulation of eye, ear or even of taste, touch and smell can give supra-sensible suggestion to us and awaken, nourish and deepen the worship sense. Any exclusive spirituality which rejects these homely aids defects its own end'.

The Supreme Importance of Holy Qurbana

13. "It is the central act of worship in our church as it is obligatory on all Sundays and festival days except Good Fridays in which there is a special service commemorating the passion, death and burial of our

Lord. Sunday which has become the Lord's Day by His resurrection from the dead, is celebrated as the memorial of our deliverance from the bondage of sin just as Saturday was observed by the Jews as a memorial of their deliverance from the bondage of Pharaoh (Deut 5:15). While the passover is commemorated only once in a year, Holy Qurbana which is the New Testament passover, is celebrated on every Sunday (1 Cor 5-7).

14. "The Holy Qurbana becomes our spiritual preparation for the whole week. It can be celebrated on all days except most of the week days in lent. Then it becomes the spiritual preparation for every day also. Then the petition in our Lord's prayer "give us this day our daily bread" refers to Holy Qurbana also.

15. "The reverence with which we prepare to celebrate it also shows the importance of Holy Qurbana. *It is with fasting, abstinence, confession and special prayers that we prepare.* In the liturgy itself, in the elaborate preparation, in the Prothesis, liturgy of the catechumens and the kiss of peace, we find the importance of approaching this Holy Sacrament with the utmost veneration and purity of heart. In fact we cannot have real and effective spiritual growth through mere spiritual contemplation, as long as we are in the mortal frame" Holy Qurbana is also necessary.

The Minister and the Ministry

16. The true minister is Jesus Himself. As the Man and Head of whole human race, he is offering us to the Father in Heaven, through Himself. Thus our Lord is both the Minister and the offering. Therefore, the Holy Qurbana is not directed to the Son, but to the Father. Note that almost all prayers in the Holy Qurbana are addressed to the Father.

17. "Our Lord is described as the high priest in Heb 7:17, 21, 23 and Rom 8:34. The priest and the congregation are identifying themselves with our Lord and thus they themselves become ministers and the offering. In the institution of the Holy Qurbana, the priest is only narrating what Jesus said and repeating what he did. Thus we may visualise our Lord Himself giving thanks and blessing the elements". (New Life in an Old Church P 88-89).

Place of Priests

18. Priests: We believe that priests and bishops ordained and consecrated through apostolic succession are the only persons who have the right to celebrate Holy Qurbana. The priest acts in five different capacities in the conduct of the service.

- (a) *As the representative of God* when he pronounces absolution and benediction.
- (b) *As the mediator between God and the people.* Here he is acting as the *representative of our Lord Jesus Christ*, who is the true mediator. In this capacity intercessions are offered by the priest for the congregation using third person plural. (they, their)
- (c) *As the representative of the people.* The priest acts as the mouth piece of the congregation. The people praying through listening and responding Amen in the end, thereby making the prayer their own. Here the first person plural (we, us, our) is used so as to include both the priest and the congregation.
- (d) *As the leader in worship.* The priest begins the prayer and the congregation saying it along with the priest. Here also first person plural is used. (we, us, our)
- (e) *As an individual.* Praying for his own needs as an individual and as a priest. (eg. the prayers said by the priest in the kneeling position, when the creed is said by the deacon) and the congregation.

19. Deacons: Deacons ordained through Apostolic succession can assist in the sanctuary. In his absence, a layman is allowed to assist. He is given blessings and permission by the bishop or by the priest if the bishop is not available. The deacon acts as the connecting link between the priest and people, and leads the people in worship.

20. The Laity: In the celebration of the Holy Qurbana, the whole congregation, headed by the priest, is performing that act. Just as our Lord raised up His eyes before blessing the bread, the congregation is asked to lift up their consciousness, thoughts and hearts to heaven. While the priest is offering thanks, the congregation also praises God. So also in the invocation of the Holy Spirit, the thrice repeated prayer of the priest 'give answer to me, O Lord,' is followed by the thrice-repeated cry of the congregation 'Kurie-elaison' (Lord have mercy). Also there is much response and actions to be performed by the congregation in the Holy Qurbana. Again, on these occasions the priest asks the congregation to pray for him, by bowing down before them with stretched arms.



THE CHURCH BUILDING, UTENSILS AND VESTMENTS

A. The Church Building

Introduction

1. The Holy Qurbana of the Orthodox Church is normally celebrated only at a dedicated place called church which has a specially anointed altar. Sometimes it is celebrated in other places on an altar-board known as Thablitho or on a leaf taken from the gospel in an emergency case.

Why do we face the east?

2. The church building is built with the altar at the eastern most part so that the priest may celebrate facing east and all may stand behind him facing east. Why face the east? It is believed that the second coming of Christ, the Sun of Righteousness, will be from the east, the place of the rising sun (Matt 24: 27). The east is regarded as a more important (higher) place than the west, according to the traditions.

3. The church is dedicated and the altar sanctified only by a prelate (bishop). It must be consecrated with 'Holy Mooron'. Temporary consecration can be done by the priest.

Parts of the Church Building

4. The Church building must have the following four parts as in the case of the Jewish Temple of Jerusalem.

- (a) Madbaha (place of Sacrifice). It is raised up from the rest of the building. Holy of Holies. It is also called Sanctuary or Kdus Kudsheen, the Kesthrumn or the Chancel.

- (b) Part inside the rails (Choir) - Holy Place
- (c) Main Hall (Nave) - Court of Israelites
- (d) Portico (Northex) - Court of the Gentiles

5. Priest and deacons enter the madbaha while the portico is the place for the catechumens. The portion inside the rails is for the choir and the main hall for congregation.

What does the Veil represent?

6. The veil, blue in colour, which closes Madbaha is supposed to represent the blue sky which hides the heaven above.

The Madbaha

7. Madbaha is considered as representing heaven. In Heaven our Lord is continuing His priestly intercession in the midst of angels. In the Madbaha, the Body and Blood of our Lord are offered by the priest, the representative of our Lord, in the midst of deacons and candle lights. It is supposed to represent Paradise and the fruit of the tree of Life (Rev 2:7); the parallel of which is the Body and Blood of our Lord in the Madbaha.

8. The word Madbaha is from "Dbah" meaning sacrifice. Holy Qurbana is celebrated in the Holy of Holies.

The Thronos or Altar

9. The Thronos is generally about four feet high, six feet in length, and three and a half or four feet in width. It is built sometimes of wood, and is placed so as to admit a passage between it and the east wall of the sanctuary.

10. **Meaning.** 'Thronos' is a Greek word meaning the *throne or seat of the King of Kings, God*. This is called altar in the western churches. The term *altar* is also used in our church, as the Holy Qurbana is a sacrifice. It is called the *Table of Life*, because on it we find the bread of life. It is also called the *Tomb of the glorified Lord*, because the Bread and wine placed upon it are transformed into the Body and Blood of our resurrected Lord, in the manner in which the earthly body of our Lord was transformed into the glorious body in the Tomb at the time of His resurrection.

11. Again, the altar reminds us of Golgotha and the Lord's tomb, as the death and resurrection of our Lord are celebrated on it.

12. *Sheelakootam*. The covering spread over the Thablitho and extending down on the front side is called Sheelakoottam'. The frontal of this is usually decorated with ornamental embroidery work. This is made of three pieces of different colours. The red cloth represents the universe, the green the earth, and white the church.

13. *Dargo*. This is the step of the altar on which the priest alone stands, and that only for the celebration of the Holy Qurbana or such other important services. Even the fully ordained deacon is not supposed to step on this.

B. The Equipments For Celebration And Their Meaning

Thablitho

14. In the centre of the altar is placed the thablitho, a wooden slab or marble slab, of 18 inches long, 12 inches broad and half inch thick. The consecration service for both the altar and the thablitho is the same, and is done often together. Both are anointed with Holy Mooron in the same fashion. It is consecrated only by a bishop.

15. The thablitho is not generally used bare, but tightly covered over with a cloth - covering.

16. While arranging the altar for celebrating, the Thablitho is placed with its length east to west.

17. It is placed upon the thronos and under the paten and chalice containing the Body and Blood of our Lord. It is supposed to represent our Lord Himself, who is the fountain and corner stone of the church (1 Cor 3:11, Eph 2:20, 1 Cor 10: 1-4). Since Holy Qurbana (sacrifice) is conducted on this thabalitho placing the Body and Blood of our Lord upon it, this represents the cross also, upon which Jesus was crucified. It is also like the *Mercy Seat* holding God's Shekinath in the tabernacle.

The Bethgazo Room

18. It is meant for keeping the essential things for the eucharist and also as a vestry. This is on the northern side. The room on the southern side is used as the baptismal room. These two rooms are not found in many churches. In case there is no baptismal room, the baptismal font is fixed within the chancel. If there is no Bethgazo room on the northern side, the vesting is done with in the sanctuary itself.

Gospel Stand or Lectern

19. This is a peculiarly shaped table covered over with colourful clothing. Its top is so cut as to hold the gospel opened in position for reading and also with convenience for placing two candle sticks left and right in front of the gospel. In Devalokam it is placed on the northern side and that is said to be the right place. The book of the gospels called 'Evengeliyoon' is kept all the time on this. For this reason, veneration and sanctity is attached to this table. When anyone waves the censor round, he specially waves thrice towards this and bows in reverence.

The Cross

20. The cross is placed on the altar at the middle to the eastern end. The cross may be plain or ornamental without any graven image on it. It is commonly draped with a red stole like the 'Oororo' of the deacon, signifying the glory of his resurrection.

Candles

21. In the early centuries of christianity candles were used for lighting. The candles used on the altar are to be pure wax candles. Animal matter of any kind is forbidden to be used on the altar.

Light is an expression of christian joy. During the Holy Qurbana candles are lighted to express our joy that Christ has redeemed us from the darkness and brought us to the eternal light.

22. Candles imply the following meanings.

- (i) Wax is gathered from different kinds of flowers. Similarly those who have believed in the gospel and united in the body of Christ are one body coming from different tribes and nations.
- (ii) The burning of wax reminds us that we should be prepared to sacrifice ourselves to lighten others.
- (iii) Our worldly and bodily desires and passions must be eradicated by the Holy Spirit.

23. The number of candles used on the altar also vary. One candle in the middle represents the resurrected Lord. Two is the minimum number. If *two* in number, it represents two cherubims; if *seven*, it reminds us of the golden lamp on the Holy place of the Jerusalem temple, if *twelve*, they represent the twelve Apostles (Matt 5:16, 2 Cor 3:18).

The Curtain

24. It is drawn off from south to north. It usually has a cross in the middle.

25. The veil is the a symbol of the hiddenness of heaven.

The Paten (Pinko) and Chalice (Koso)

26. They are usually made of silver or gold. Nowadays they are made of stainless steel. That they should be made of incorruptible material is necessary as they have to hold wine in it for a long time.

27. The paten in which the bread is placed has three legs.

28. The chalice in the east in which wine mixed with water is poured, is of the same form as the western. Blood and water came from our Lord's side. Hence we mix wine with water.

Mkablono (Receptacle)

29. The name means receptacles. This name is given to the coverings of the Holy vessels. They are square in shape and usually decorated, with pendant borders and marked on the top with ornamental cross. It is usually made of nice silk. It represents the clouds that shadowed over the Tabernacle (1 Kings 8:10-11).

Stand for the thekso

30. The Thekso may be printed or script. It is usually placed on the altar on a special stand, on the right hand side of the celebrant. It should not be bound in leather, as no animal matter is allowed on the thronos.

Kancho (Star)

31. This is made of silver or gold, in the shape of a cross with the four ends bending down in one direction and is used to cover the bread and keep the Mkablono in position without touching the bread inside. It represents the star which appeared to the wise men of the East and stood over the manger at the time of Christ's birth (Matt 2:9).

Spoon

32. This is used to take the 'Blood' from the chalice and to take the Gmurtho (small piece of Bread) cast in it at the time of fraction. This represents the tongs which the angels used in giving the coal to the mouth of Isaiah (Isa 6:6,7) in his vision. The spoon also is made of the same metal as the holy vessels.

The Washing Cup

33. It is kept at the left side of the Holy vessels and at the eastern end. This is used for mingling the wine with water at the thuyobo and also to keep water to wash the tips of finger at the fraction and at the conclusion of the celebrants communion. Water is taken in this for the washing of the Holy vessels at the end of communion. Kerchief is used to dry the tips of fingers after the washing and also to dry the Holy vessels.

Gmurtho (Cushion)

34. This is used for rubbing the fingers after taking the bread. It is a small cushion. It is about three inches long and one and half inches broad and one inch thick. In the beginning of the service it is kept on the right hand side of the altar with the Kancho (star) in it, but later is transferred to the left side.

Shooshepo

35. It is more or less square in shape and about three feet. It is made of white thin silk and is large enough to cover the holy vessels together and often has a cross in the middle. In some cases a little ornamental embroidery work is also seen done on it, around the cross.

36. This 'Shooshepo' represents the hard rock which gave forth water to the twelve tribes of Israel (Number 20:2-11) the stone which closed the tomb of our Lord (St. Matt 27:60), and the great sheet which descended before Peter in his vision (Acts 10:11).

Marvahtho (Fan)

37. They are fans made of silver or some other metal and are always used in pairs. In the centre of fans, the seraphic face and wings are represented. The rim of the fan is full of small round bells which jingle as the fan is shaken and produce a pleasant sound. The fan and the rattling represent the scraphims and the flutter of their wings, around the mysteries. It represents the adoration of the angels. It is carried in processions and shaken at the most solemn parts of the Qurbana.

Handbell

38. The handbells are shaken at important moments of the eucharistic service and at processions of feasts connected to the eucharist. This is also regarded as an accompaniment.

The Church Bell

39. This was originally, striking on a piece of wood, in the early church. The following interpretations are given in this regard :-

- (i) When we hear its voice we sign ourselves with the cross and say 'Bless my Lord' (Barekmor).
- (ii) As a trumpet assembles the forces of a kingdom for the extolling and praising of the King, so the bell assembles us for praising of our King, Christ.
- (iii) As the trumpet or herald assembles the troops for combat with the enemy, so the bell assembles us to battle with satan, the enemy of our human race.
- (iv) It assembles people to worship and prayer at church.

The Censer

40. It has a lower half and an upper half, four chains and 12 bells. The chains represent the Holy Trinity.

41. The first chain stands for God the Father, the second and the third together for the son, who is man and God, the fourth stands for the Holy Spirit.

42. The conjoining of the chains on the circular disc on the top with the hook represents the unity of the Trinity.

43. The bells, twelve in number represent the apostles of Christ. These bells give a pleasant rattling note as the censer is waved.

44. The top cup of the censer represents the heavens and the lower one the earth. The carbon or charcoal in it represents sinners.

45. Fire signifies the Holy Spirit, by whose contact the black coal shine and glows.

Frankincense

46. As fragrance makes all happy, so the service of God should please Him. The smoke rising signifies that our prayers should rise to the presence of God like sweet incense.

Leavened Bread

47. The word used in Syriac for bread is 'Lahmo', meaning leavened bread. It is divided into twelve sections impressed with a cross in each. The bread is called Hamiro. It is known as 'Bukhro', the first born, signifying Christ, the 'first born' of the Father (Col 1:15). We may offer ourselves as first born.

48. It is to be made every time just before celebration, the leavening being done in the previous evening.

49. The bread is made out of leaven, flour of wheat, water, salt and olive oil. They represent the four elements, flour representing earth, water representing itself, leaven the air, salt the fire, even as the human body is created of these four elements.

50. Generally a portion of the leaven is kept while the Hamiro is being made, for future use.

51. Our Lord speaks of himself as the Bread of Life. (Jn. 6:5). The word used is leavened bread. The Lord speaks of the kingdom of God as resembling leaven which a woman hid in three bushels of flour (St. Matt 13:33).

52. Boorktho. This is bread made in the same way as the Eucharist bread, and is blessed by the priest with a special ordinary prayer.

Wine

53. The wine used is 'Mass Wine'.

54. Wine and water are offered in the Eucharist, representing blood and water which came down from the side of the Lord when pierced by lance. (Jn 19:34). Wine and water represent 'divinity' and 'humanity' of Christ also, as given in the prayer of blending at the offertory "unite Lord, this water with this wine as you united our humanity with your divinity".

The Lections

55. (i) The Old Testament lessons are read, as per calendar of readings recognised in the Church.

(ii) Two epistles are read on either side of the entrance to the sanctuary. Acts or general Epistle is read on the northern side. Then the Pauline epistle is read on the southern side.

56. The Pauline Epistle is read later because that was written later.

57. The Gospels are read later than the epistles as the epistles are considered as forerunner of the gospel like the pilots of a king.

58. The scriptures are read for the following purposes :

(i) They may give spiritual food to the soul for spiritual strength.

(ii) They are to give guidance in spiritual life.

59. Singing of the Halleluiah before the Gospel is like a horn or trumpet summoning the faithful people to hear the divine words, which is spiritual food for their souls.

C. The Vestments

60. The vestments are modelled after the Old Testament fashion as well as based on the Pauline epistle, where he speaks of the spiritual armour (Exodus 28: 2-43, Eph 6: 11-17).

Phino or the Cope

61. This is generally made of rich and colourful silk. The cope is a robe of royalty as St. Peter has said, "Ye are the chosen generation and a royal priesthood," etc. (1 Peter 2:9). The priest stands in place of Christ the king. It is also the robe of righteousness and holiness. It also symbolizes the purple robe which they put on Jesus before the crucifixion (Jn 19:5). Again it represents the mantle of Elijah which fell on the Prophet Elizha (2 Kings 2:13).

62. In the Holy week and in times of sorrow dull colour is used.

Hamnica

63. It is the breast plate made out of the same material as the cope. It also means 'garland'. It represents the breast plate of Aaron which he wore when he was entering the Holy place to officiate as priest (Exodus 28:15).

64. It is a breast plate to stand the attack of the enemy. This teaches that christian life is a war against world, flesh and the devil, the three enemies.

Oororo: Stole

65. This is also made by the same material as the cope. Sub-deacons and deacons wear it on the shoulder, and signifies the wings of the seraphims.

The Belt - Girdle

66. This shows the preparedness for service, for worship and for war against the enemy. Girding the loins shows readiness for action.

The Zindo

67. This also is made of the same material as the cope and the Hamnico. It is the part of the sleeve covering the forearm. They are for both arms.

Shoes

68. Special footwear is recommended for the celebration of the Eucharist. It is sometimes made with costly decorations on it with velvet covering and silver thread designs. The shoes signify the 'preparation for the Gospel of peace' (Eph 6:15) and the readiness to "bring into subjection everything which is exalted above the knowledge of God" (2 Cor 10:5) and to tread down the lusts of the flesh.

69. These shoes are not be used outside the church.

The Kootheeno (alb)

70. The priest wears the *black cassock* as a symbol of the fall of man. Then the wearing of the white Kootheeno over that signifies the salvation through Christ.

71. The white garment reminds us of the luminous whiteness of Christ's garment at the time of transfiguration on Mount Tabor (Matt 17:2), and of the angels who appeared on different occasions (Matt 28:3 and Acts 1:10). Also it reminds us of the garment of immortality we have received in Holy Baptism.

72. White colour symbolizes purity and holiness. (Rev. 7:9)

73. It is meaningful if people attending the Holy Qurbana wear white garments.

The Bishop's Additional Vestments

74. In addition to these vestments, the bishop wears a head cover called '*Sheelamudi*' or rich embroidered cloth, the centre of which is generally decorated with a dove, symbol of the Holy Spirit. This is in the place of crown. Over this he puts on the '*great stole*' (Uroro robe which is like a long scapular of rich material embroidered with various symbols. It is called *patraseen*. It is the sign of the Bishop's special dignity and is the liturgical equivalent of the *pallium* in the West.

75. On his breast the bishop wears the *pectoral cross*, and he carries in his hand a *golden cross* with a cloth attached, with which he gives blessing. He holds a *pastoral staff* as a sign that he is the shepherd of his flock, representing Christ, the Good Shepherd.



RELEVANT BIBLICAL PORTIONS & PRAYERS CONNECTED WITH HOLY CONFESSION AND HOLY QURBANA

A. Relevant Biblical Portions (King James Version)

1. *St. Matthew 26:26-28*

26. As they were eating, Jesus took a small loaf of bread and blessed it and broke it apart and gave it to the disciples and said, "Take it and eat it, for this is my body".
27. And He took the cup of wine and gave thanks for it and gave it to them and saying, "Drink Ye all of it"

2. *St. Mark 14:22-24*

22. As they were eating, Jesus took bread and asked God's blessing on it and broke it in pieces and gave it to them and said, "Take, eat, this is my body".
23. And He took a cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them and they all drank of it.
24. And He said unto them, "This is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many".

3. *St. Luke 22:17-20*

17. Then He took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, "Take this, and divide it among yourselves."

18. For, I say unto you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God shall come."
19. And He took bread, and gave thanks and brake it, and gave unto them, saying, "This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me."
20. Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you."

4. *St. John 6:32-35*

32. Then Jesus said unto them, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Moses gave you not that bread from heaven; but my Father giveth you the true bread from heaven.
33. For the bread of God is he which cometh down from the heaven and giveth life unto the world.
34. Then said they unto Him, "Lord, ever more give us this bread".
35. And Jesus said unto them, "I am the bread of life; he cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst."

5. *St. John 6:53-58*

53. Then Jesus said unto them, "Verily, verily I say unto you: except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink his blood, ye have no life in you.
54. Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day.
55. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed.
56. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him.
57. As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father, so he that eateth me, and even he shall live by me.
58. This is the bread which came down from heaven; not as your fathers did it manna, and are dead; he that eateth of this bread shall live forever."

6. *1 Corinthians 10:16-17*

16. "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the

communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?

17. For we being many are one bread, and one body: for we are all partakers of that one bread"

7. *I Corinthians 11: 23-29*

23. "For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus, the same night in which he was betrayed took bread:
24. And when He had given thanks, he break it, and said, Take, eat; this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me.
25. After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it in remembrance of me.
26. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come.
27. Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink the cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord.
28. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup.
29. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body.

B. Prayers Connected with the Holy Confession and Qurbana.

1. *A Prayer Before Confession*

(Could be said together repeating after a priest or another leader before confession).

O Lord, I have sinned; forgive me. O God, be merciful to me, a sinner. Because Thou wilt not the death of the sinner, rather that he should

repent and live. I confess that I have sinned against Thee. Hence I am no more worthy to be called Thy son. Make me as one of Thy servants. O merciful Father, blot out my transgressions, and cleanse my sins. O Gracious Lord, look not upon my iniquities, and cast me not from Thy presence. O Lord, hearken to the voice of my sorrow, and look upon my tears. I repent for all my transgressions, and determine not to return to the hateful paths of sins again. Accept my penitence, and lead me into Thy way and grace. Amen.

2. Absolution given by the Priest

(while laying hand on the head)

May Almighty God have mercy upon you and may He guide you to eternal life. I, His unworthy servant, through the authority entrusted by our Lord Jesus Christ to His disciples, who in turn, bestowed it to their successors until it was given to me, absolve you, blessed brother (sister/son/daughter) of all the sins you have confessed as well as those you have forgotten, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit for eternal life. Amen.

May the passions of our Saviour, Lord Jesus Christ and the intercessions of Saint Mary, Mother of God, be of helpful to you for the remission of debts and for the forgiveness of sins. Amen.

3. Prayer Before Holy Communion

O God and my Lord, make me worthy to receive Thy Holy Body and life - giving precious Blood for the eradication of my evil desires, and for the expulsion of my sinful deeds. Grant me O God, that through partaking these Holy Mysteries may be for the remission of my debts, and forgiveness of my sins and for the enlightenment of my soul, into eternal life. Amen.

4. Prayer After Holy Communion

O Lord Jesus Christ, our God, I have received Thy Holy Body and precious Blood unto remission of debts forgiveness of sins and for life eternal. May this Eucharist be not for condemnation but for the life and redemption; for joy and health. Make me worthy to stand at Thy right hand at Thy glorious second coming. Amen.



Part - II

Celebration of Holy Qurbana



5

GENERAL INFORMATION

1. Who are the Catechumens?

Catechumens are those who study the faith and prepare themselves to accept baptism.

2. Who is permitted to celebrate the Holy Qurbana?

Bishop or a Priest. They are not permitted to celebrate without the assistance of a deacon or one given special blessing and permission to serve at the altar.

3. How does a priest prepare for the Holy Qurbana?

The priest shall prepare himself from the previous evening for celebration. He shall be free from family life and worldly distractions, concentrating his thoughts on the Holy Qurbana alone. He should refrain from all stimulants, frivolities, worldly enjoyments and laxity from the previous evening. He keeps himself in a retreat.

4. What is the significance of fasting?

It is for the honour of the Holy Qurbana. In the Old Testament also it was usual not to eat before the sacrifice. (1 Sam 9.13).

5. On what all occasions do we celebrate the Holy Qurbana?

The celebration of the Holy Qurbana is regarded as obligatory on Sundays and feast days. Also on days, when the members of the Parish have made special request, Eg. on the anniversary of some dead person, a birthday, or a special intercession in case of some anxiety etc.

7. On what all days we do not celebrate the Holy Qurbana?

Holy Qurbana is not celebrated on week days in the great Lent except, mid-lent, fortieth day, Maundy Thursday and Annunciation Day. In the 3 days lent Holy Qurbana is not celebrated on Monday and Tuesday unless it is Mayaltho (Presentation of infant Jesus in the Jerusalem temple).

9. After receiving the Holy Qurbana what are we supposed to do?

The communicants are not to kneel down at the canonical prayers till evening that day. They are not supposed to take a bath that day. They are supposed to be spending the whole day, in singing devotional hymns or reading devotional books, or Bible study or religious work. Participating in the Holy Qurbana is to lead a godly life. Hence a completely surrendered life is to be led.

10. Through which side, the celebrant enters the Sanctuary?

He enters by the southern side and proceeds to the northern side of the altar.

11. How is the altar prepared for the celebration or the Holy Qurbana?

The celebrant arranges the things or the deacon who assists arranges them in advance for him.

One candle lighted in the centre, is the symbol of the resurrected Christ.

The 'Lahmo' is taken reverently with both hands by the celebrant and placed in the middle of the Paten. Then Kaukbo (star) and Kablono are placed.

About an ounce of wine is taken in the small silver cup. Equal quantity of water is added.

12. What prayer does the priest say after entering the Madbaha?

The priest bows and says, "Into Thine house, O God, have I entered, and before thy sanctuary have I worshipped, O heavenly king, do thou pardon me all the offences I have committed against Thee".

13. *When does the Priest request the People to pray for him?*

The Priest requests for the prayers of the people four times 1) before entering the sanctuary for celebration, 2) at the creed 3) before his communion and 4) after the final benediction.

14. *Why does the Priest wash his hands?*

This is a ceremony signifying the cleaning of one's conscience from guilt (Matt 27.24).

Washing of hands reminds us of the feet washing of the disciples to make them worthy to partake in the Lord's Supper.

15. *How is the day reckoned in our Church ?*

The day is from evening to evening (6 PM to 6 PM) according to the old semitic tradition.

16. *What part of the service is called "the service of Melchisedec?"*

The first part of the preparatory service when bread and wine are prepared on the altar is called the service 'of Melchisedec'. This recalls the story of Melchisedec, the Priest of the Most High God, who brought out bread and wine at his meeting with Abraham. (Gen 14:18). Melchisedec is referred to in the Epistle to the Hebrews as a type of Christ. Christ is called a "Priest for ever after the manner of Melchisedec (Heb 6:20). This signifies that Christ came to fulfil not only the sacrifice of the Jewish law but also those of the Natural Law, which have been offered from the beginning of human history, hence He is the saviour of all mankind. The prayers begin with the great penitential Psalm (Ps 51) and expresses the desire for purity of heart with which the priest must approach the altar. The priest having prepared the table asks that his sacrifice may be accepted on the spiritual altar which is above and that he and his flock may become a living sacrifice on the heavenly altar.

17. *What part of the service is called 'the service of Aaron'?*

The second part of the preparatory service is called the service of Aaron, because during it the priest wears sacred vestments and offers incense.

18. *What are the foreshadows of the Holy Qurbana, found in the old Testament?*

- (a) The Tree of Life in the garden of Eden (Gen 2:9 3:22)

- (b) The offering of Abel (Gen 4:4)
- (c) Noah's boat (Gen 6:14, 7:1)
- (d) The sacrifice of Abraham on Mount Moria (Gen 22:13)
- (e) The offering of Malchizedek (Gen 14:18)
- (f) All offerings of the Old Testament
- (g) The bronze snake (Num 21: 5-9)
- (h) The Passover Lamb (Exod 12:5-7)
- (i) The coal given to the Prophet Isaiah (Is 6:6-7)

19. In the Holy Qurbana, which are the occasions in which the priest say "Peace be to you all"?

It is said on seven occasions as follows :-

- (a) Before the reading of the Evengelion.
- (b) After the reading of the Evengelion.
- (c) Before giving the Kiss of Peace to the Deacon.
- (d) Before second benediction.
- (e) Two times before the elevation of the Mysteries.
- (f) Before the final benediction.
- (g) The purpose of saying "Peace be unto you" is to prepare for benediction.

20. What were the various types of offerings found in the Old Testament period?

- (a) Perfect Burnt offering (Levit 22: 17-25)
- (b) Burnt offering (Levit 1:10-17, Psalm 66:15)
- (c) Offerings for unintentional sins (Levit 4:1-21)
- (d) Sin offering (Levit 6:25, 10:17)
- (e) Repayment offerings (Levit 5:6-19, 6:6, 7:1)
- (f) Fellowship-offerings (Levit 3:1-17)
- (g) Grain-offerings (Levit - 2:, Numb 15:4)
(Food - offerings)
- (h) Special gift of food (Numb 15:10)
- (i) Offering of wine and olive oil
(Gen 35:14 Exod 29:40 Mub 15:5)

- (j) - Thanks-offering (Levit 7:12, 22:29, Psalm 50:14)
- (k) Free will offering (Levit 23:10, Dent 16:10, 23:23)
- (l) Offering of incense (Exod 30:8, Mala 1:11)
- (m) Offering of the first born (Exod 22:29, Dent 18:4)
- (n) Offering of one-tenth (tithe) (Levit 27:30, Num 18:21, Dent 14:22)
- (o) Offerings of various items (Exod 35:22, Numb 7:2-8)
- (p) Offerings of tax or price for life (Exod 30:13-15)

21. *How should we prepare ourselves for the Holy Qurbana?*

As Holy Qurbana is to renew our Lord's in dwelling in us we must repent, get cleansed of our sins, and we must be ready for a dedicated life. St. Paul explains this in 1 Cor 11:27-30: "It follows that if anyone eats the Lord's bread or drinks from his cup in a way that dishonours him, he is guilty of sin against the Lord's body and blood. So then, everyone should examine himself first, and then eat the bread and drink from the cup. For, if he does not recognize the meaning of the Lord's body when he eats the bread and drinks from the cup, he brings judgement on himself as he eats and drinks."

We must be reconciled with our brethren (St. Matt 5:23, 24)

Thus Holy confession is taken as a preparation for Holy Qurbana. Also we have to pray for the Holy Spirit by way of preparation for the Holy Qurbana, as it is the Holy Spirit who helps us in our prayers (Rom 8:26).

Silence, fasting and abstinence help us to prepare ourselves better and they are to be observed to show our reverence for the Holy Qurbana.

The Public Service

22. *How is the Public Service begun?*

At the beginning of the Public Service, the veil closing the sanctuary is drawn aside, signifying that the promised Messiah has now appeared. At this time we speak of St. Mary who brought forth the Christ and John the Baptist who baptised Him. The whole congregation sings a song of praise while the priest, the deacon and the servers go solemnly round the altar carrying lights and incense, and waving the fans.

23. *Explain the importance of reading of the Scriptures?*

The reading of the Scriptures, is the solemn proclamation of the Word of God, the 'good news' of salvation. It is intended to form an instruction based on the biblical passage.

In the Syrian Church, there are always three readings, one from the Acts or the Catholic Epistles, one from St. Paul and one from the gospel. They are each preceded by a chant.

The first reading is done by the deacon from the northern side of the chancel, standing on the steps. It represents preaching of the gospel to the Jews.

The second reading is done from the southern side, representing preaching of the gospel to the gentiles.

The reading from the Gospel is done with great solemnity, as in all liturgies, the priest standing in the centre of the sanctuary, while the servers carry lights and incense.

Proemion and Sedro

24. *What are the Proemion and Sedro?*

The Proemion and Sedro are the typical form of solemn prayers in the Syrian Church, which are used in all the prayers of the Divine Office. It first offers praise and thanksgiving for the blessing which God has bestowed on us, above all in the sacrifice of his Son, then makes petition for his grace to be given to his people.

There are several Proemions and Sedros which may be used for the Qurbana.

25. *What is the prayer of Absolution?*

The prayer of absolution is the prayer in which priest prays for the forgiveness of sins for all the faithful both living and dead. This is said between the proemion and Sedra.



6

THE HOLY QURBANA OF THE CATECHUMENS

1. *What is the meaning of saying "Bless my Lord" or Barekmor before reading ?*

The deacon says this before the readings and on a few other occasions. This is addressed to the celebrant and is often used to mean "with your permission Sir". No reply is expected.

2. *Explain the meaning and significance of Trisagion.*

*'Holy art thou, O God !
Holy art thou, Almighty,
Holy art thou, Immortal,
Crucified for us,
Have mercy on us.'*

Trisagion is an extended form of the song of Seraphs. It is addressed to God. "When crucified for us, have mercy on us" is added to it, the whole becomes addressed to Jesus Christ.

Some say that after the crucifixion of our Lord, the seraphs came down and sang the first three steps of the Trisagion. At that time, Joseph of Arimathea (Mark 15: 43) sang 'Thou that was crucified for us have mercy upon us'.

According to Bar Sleebi three sets of angels came down at the time of burial of Christ. They sang, the first set 'Holy art Thou God', the second, 'Holy art Thou mighty' and the third 'Holy art Thou immortal'

and Joseph and Nicodemose inspired by the Holy Spirit burst forth 'Thou that wast crucified for us have mercy on us'.

3. Why do we remember St. Mary and John the Baptist in the beginning of the Holy Qurbana?

These two saints are remembered and their prayers are asked for, for they were the two most intimately connected with the incarnation of the Lord, Mary who brought Him forth and John who prepared His way.

4. What is the significance of the number three?

God is a trinity and so number 3 has special significance.

5. Explain the meaning of kissing the corners of altar?

Kissing is not merely an expression of love in the ordinary sense, but is an expression of spiritual fellowship and respect and a means to receive blessings.

6. What is the meaning of kneeling down? When do we do it?

Kneeling down is a sign of our fall through Adam. Our rising up from the genuflexion is a sign of our resurrection through the resurrection of our Lord. Hence on Sundays, feast days, the seven weeks before the Pentecost and on the days in which communion is received, we don't kneel down.

7. Explain the meaning of closing the Sanctuary.

The veil of the sanctuary is a symbol of the hiddenness of God. Veiling is done on the following occasions :

- (a) The veiling before the public part of the service shows the time before Christ.
- (b) *The veiling at the Fraction* signifies the Sun setting at the time of crucifixion.
- (c) *The veiling before the procession* of the Mysteries shows that Christ is hidden after His ascension.
- (d) *The veiling after the people's communion* marks the end of the public part of the service.

8. Why does the deacon go forth with the incense at the time of creed?

He goes about the whole nave and then returns to the Altar. This signifies that :

- (a) God the Word who came down from heaven and was made a sweet savour and an incense of reconciliation and offered himself for us all.
- (b) The deacon collects their prayers and bring them to the altar.
- (c) This is a sign for the unbaptized to go:

The faithful standing in the church bow down as the deacon waves the censer towards them. When the deacon returns to the altar and says, 'Stouman Kalos,' he gives the signal that all should get ready for the prayer following.

9. *Explain the meaning of the blessing of the censer?*

The priest blesses the censer in the name of the Holy Trinity, making the sign of the cross three times over the chains and then turns to incense the people. It is an adoration of the Holy Trinity. This blessing has been given much solemnity and is intended as a preparation for the holy sacrifice, which is about to begin.

As a preliminary of the adoration the priest says, "I, a weak and the sinful servant, shall answer and say". This means that the adoration of the Trinity done in response to the absolution received from God. This description of the Holy Spirit in this adoration makes it clear that this is also an invocation of the Holy Spirit to strengthen us to celebrate Holy Qurbana. The priest speaks of the Holy Spirit as follows: "Holy is the living Holy Spirit who sanctifies the incense of His sinful servant, having mercy and kindness on ourselves" .. (Rom 8:26, Heb 9:14).

10. *Explain the significance of the Creed?*

The creed is said at the beginning of the Qurbana of the faithful. The need for faith when we celebrate the Holy Qurbana is thus emphasized, by reciting the creed.

The creed was formulated at the Council of Nicea in 325 AD and completed at the Council of Constantinople in 381 AD.

In our liturgy the creed is introduced in the first person plural, "We believe" showing that it is the common faith of the Church.

11. *What do we believe, according to the Nicene Creed?*

We believe the following:-

- (a) In the one *True God*, the father Almighty

- (b) In the one *Lord Jesus Christ* who took birth for the salvation of humanity (His birth, baptism, teachings, crucifixion, burial, resurrection, ascension to heaven, second coming and final judgement).
- (c) In the one living *Holy Spirit*
- (d) In the One Holy, catholic (orthodox) and Apostolic *Church*
- (e) We acknowledge *one baptism* for the remission of sins.
- (f) In the *Resurrection of the dead*
- (g) In the *new life in the world to come*.
- (h) St, Mary is described as the Mother of God and so this is a confession of faith against Nestorians.

12. When does the priest pray privately in a kneeling position?

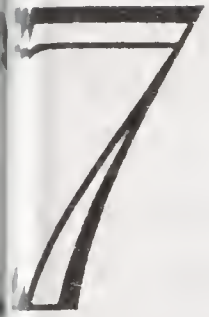
- (a) The first prayer of this kind is in the Pro-thesis, that God might guard his mind, his five senses, his eyes, his ears, his hands and his entrails from all evils. It is a kind of complete surrender and re-dedication to God.
- (b) The second is at the creed
- (c) The third before he communicates himself.
- (d) The last is after the dismissal, when he remembers all those for whom he has already interceded, both the quick and the departed.



He maketh me to lie down in green pastures :
he leadeth me besides the still waters.

Psalm 23:2





THE ANAPHORA OF THE FAITHFUL

First Section

Explain what is the Anaphora?

The word 'Ana' means 'Up' and 'phora means 'to carry'. (Greek) It is used to mean various things. It may mean Veil, Covering, text of liturgy, the Eucharist Celebration and Shooshepo.

The Anaphora is the solemn prayer of thanks giving which our Lord uttered at the Last Supper and the words and actions which He used when he instituted the Eucharist. The original Anaphora of the rite of Antioch is that of St James, but there are a great many others, eighty-eight in all, which were introduced in later times. Of these about sixty-four have their authors identified, which may be used for celebration.

What is the significance of the Kiss of Peace?

The Kiss of Peace is of apostolic origin (Rom 16 : 16, 1 Cor. 16 : 20, 1 Cor. 13 : 12, 1 Peter 5 : 14) and is used in every liturgy to signify the 'Fellowship of the Spirit' of which the Eucharist is the outward sign. For this reason it was always confined to the faithful. The Neophytes were never permitted to exchange the kiss of peace with the faithful. It shows the love and harmony which should exist among the disciples of Christ, This is a condition for their participation in the Eucharist.

It also signifies that Christ has made an end of the enmity between God and man, between His people and the gentiles, between the soul and the body, and has caused peace and love to reign among us.

By this we fulfil the word of the Lord who said, "If thou offer thine offeringleave thine offering, and go, be reconciled with thy brother (Matt 5:23: 24) St. Peter also has said, "Greet ye one another with a kiss of charity" (1 Peter 5 : 14).

Bishop Pakenham Walsh gives his appreciation of our custom as follows : "I do not know where you own such beautiful custom, with symbolic action of the censor and the two hands, come from, So far as I can ascertain, it is unique in Christendom and in my opinion, is the best of all existing usages. (A Devotional study of the Holy Qurbana, P-30). The prayers said on this occasion are also noteworthy "that purified from all guile and hypocrisy we may greet one another with a holy and divine kiss".

3. Why do we bow down our heads when praying?

After the Kiss of Peace, we bow our heads. This is to express our humility and receptive mood because God blesses us stretching forth His right hand. Then the prayer of humble approach follows " "For we trust not in our righteousness, but in thy mercy".

In the eucharistic celebration, bowing of the head occurs thrice. According to Bar Sleeti (Expositio Liturgae p 45) we collectively bow before Christ who sees all secrets and cleanses, lightens and completes each one as he or she deserves. It also refers to the angels (heavenly hosts) and the souls of the just bowing and prostrating in the New World, unto the Trinity. By this meditation while bowing, we learn that by this we are blessed, and that teaches us the true worship in spirit and in truth. Again by that is meant that they bend their inner and invisible heads before God, that they may receive the blessings he asks of Him.

4. Explain the significance of covering and lifting the Anaphora

When the holy sacrifice is about to begin the veil is lifted from the paten and chalice and solemnly waved over the offerings. The prayer which the priest says, compares the veil to the stone which covered the sepulchre of Christ and which is now, as it were, rolled away and to the rock of the desert which gave water to the people of God, signifying the water of life, which Christ gives to his people in the Qurbana (1 Cor 10:4). It also signifies the opening of heaven and the coming of the cloud of glory indicating God's presence on the Mount of Transfiguration (Matt 17 : 5).

5. How is the benediction given by the Priest?

When the celebrant turns to bless, he turns always by the right side after making the sign of cross on himself and then he makes the sign of the cross on the people and finally lifts his hand and blesses them by lowering it gently down.

The priest blesses the people three times during the Qurbana. The first blessing is using the words of St. Paul (2 Cor 13:14) and making the sign of the cross over the people three times. The sign of the cross is made in the Syrian liturgy with the thumb and first two fingers joined together signifying the Holy Trinity. The people sign themselves in the same way.

6. What is the Eucharistic prayer?

The dialogue between priest and people which follows is one of the most ancient liturgical formulas, found in all liturgies at this point. The people are asked to lift up their hearts and minds to where Christ sits, at the right hand of his Father, and then to give thanks in holy fear, to which they respond; "It is meet and right! Thus they associate themselves with the priest in the sacred action which is about to follow. They then break with the song of the angels 'Holy, holy, holy, (Isaiah 6:3) recalling that the angels are present at this solemn moment, joining their praise to that of the church on earth.

When we raise up our eyes to heaven we see Jesus Christ on the right hand of the Father (Acts 7:55-56).

"The People are directed to lift up their hearts to heaven, to see heaven not earth, the heavenly Altar not the earthly Altar, the heavenly priest not the earthly priest, the heavenly Body and Blood, not the earthly bread and wine, the heavenly worshipping host, not the earthly congregation" (Bishop Pakenham Walsh-ibid P 36).

Regarding the praise that follows, Bishop Walsh says, "The outburst of praise that follows is one of the most glorious things in the whole liturgy and it is common in longer or shorter form in all liturgies. We join the whole Angelic Hosts and all the saints of God, in a combination of the seraphim's hymn in Isaiah 6 and the "Blessed is He that cometh, Hosanna' in Ps 118:26 words sung by the crowd when they led Christ in triumph from Bethany to Jerusalem on the first Palm Sunday. It is a great devotional help to picture yourself part of that triumphant procession, of redeemed men of every age and every race escorted by the Holy Angels, and led into the Holy City of God by the all victorious King of Kings, our saviour Jesus Christ.

"Your liturgy has a feature, which so far as I can ascertain is peculiar to itself, and has come down to you from the oldest forms used in Malabar, namely "Blessed is He that hath come and is to come in the Name of the Lord". This is a very beautiful and significant addition, reminding us of the first and the second coming of our Lord, and of the 'little while' in between, as well as of His gracious coming in the Holy Sacrament (ibid P 38).

When the priest and the congregation looks up to heaven and give thanks, we are following the example of our Lord, who looked up into heaven and gave thanks over the bread and wine.

Second Section

7. How is the Holy Qurbana celebrated?

The priest narrates whatever the Lord did, and blesses the bread and wine by making the sign of the cross. Thus they become the Body and the Blood of our Lord. In fact, it is our Lord himself that blesses. We have to meditate that our Lord is blessing ourselves also who form His Mystical Body. We are thus broken as bread and shed as blood for His continued work of feeding and saving the world. "It is you, your very life within the cup" (St. Augustine).

As ordinary bread is changed to His Body, we ordinary men and women, even our ordinary lives also, are thus transformed into the vehicle of God's grace (Jn 2:9), if we let Him to bless us, offering ourselves to Him.

By giving His Blood also, our Lord has given us everything He has. So also He makes our whole being His, when He blesses us.

8. Explain the meaning of the Anamnesis or the sacrificial memorial?

The priest and the people together recall the mystery of the death and resurrection of Christ which is made present in all its saving power, while they look forward to the second coming of Christ, for which this mystery prepares them. In this sacred mystery, both past and future are brought near through the presence of Christ in person among His people. We say, "Our Lord, Thy death we commemorate, and Thy resurrection we confess, and we look for Thy second coming. May Thy blessing be upon us all."

And then the priest enlarges on this commemoration, and reminds us of the 'judgement' that must come to every man according to his deeds. 'and so there is the prayer that all our sins may be blotted out'.

9. Whom do we address all prayers to?

After the prayer of commemoration, which is addressed to our Lord, all the prayers are addressed to God the Father. There is only one prayer before the final benediction, addressed to our Lord.

10. At the time of the prayer of commemoration, why does the priest lift the spoon and cushion?

The two are lifted up and placed on the left side of the Thronos. The priest lifts them over head in his right hand quickly like a flash, signifying the second coming of the Lord on the last day, in the sky, like lightning. (It is placed on the right side of the priest which is the left side of the Thronos)

11. Explain the process of the invocation of the Holy Spirit (Epiclesis)

In all eastern liturgies the consecration is followed by an Epiclesis or invocation, of the Holy Spirit in which the Holy Spirit is called upon to descend upon the gifts. The mystery of the Holy sacrifice is considered to be completed and perfected by the action of the Holy Spirit. As the gift of the spirit comes to us as a result of the resurrection of Christ, so now the Holy Spirit is present communicating His grace and filling the hearts of people. During the Epiclesis the priest waves his hands over the bread and wine with a fluttering motion, signifying the descent of the Holy Spirit. We find the deacon warning the people to stand in awe as the Holy Spirit is descending, and hovering over the mysteries. The Holy Spirit is here represented by the dove, flying and hovering over (Mark 1 : 10). The hands signify the wings of the dove.

In the St. James liturgy of the ancient church it was said "upon us and these offerings". The other liturgies used in our church and derived from St. James liturgy especially that of St. Issac, emphasise this coming of the Holy Spirit upon the believers also. Since the bread and wine represent ourselves, we are actually calling down the Holy Spirit on ourselves.

This is followed by the thrice repeated earnest prayers of the priest. "Give answer to me, O Lord " and the people respond with a three fold

“Kurie - elaison” meaning “Lord have mercy”. This reminds us of the repeated prayer of Elijah on Mount Carmel to send down fire from heaven upon the sacrifice “Hear me, Lord, hear me” (1 Kings 18: 36-39) Both above prayers are for sending down the Holy Spirit. The coming of the Holy Spirit upon the offering is to transform the offerings into the Body and Blood of our Lord.

12. At what time does the bread and wine change into Body and Blood of Christ?

We cannot say that the transformation of bread and wine into Body and Blood of Jesus Christ takes place at a particular time, as Institution and the Epicleses contain prayers and waving of hands more than once. There is no particular time or occasion which can be said to be the time of transformation. We are to take into account the whole service in the Holy Qurbana. Each and every part of the service is an essential part of the service.

13. Explain the significance of the consecration of the Elements

The consecration of Elements is the very heart of christian worship and christian life. There is a twofold vision before the eye of faith. They are :-

- (a) First we see that the gifts of bread and wine, which we have offered to God, are made sacramentally to us the Body and Blood of Christ, that we may receive Him into our very being.
- (b) Secondly, we see, in the unity and offering of mankind in the bread taken up into the priest's hands, Christ's Body, the Church,

Our Lord feeds this living church, and each member of it, with his own Body and Blood, that we may not die to sin but live to righteousness; When we see the Bread broken, we see Christ breaking us up, that we may in sacrificial love give ourselves also for the feeding of the world.

(The second blessing of the bread and wine showing two invocations of the Holy Spirit is a special feature of St. James Liturgy).

Third Section

14. *The Great Intercessions.*

The intercessions are called the 'Diptychs'. These are two tablets which contain the names of the living on one side and the names of the departed on the other side. The Syrian word "Thubden" means "then again," the beginning word of each prayer.

The litany or prayer of intercession originally took place before the Anaphora, but in many liturgies it was transferred to a later section because the prayer of intercession was considered to have a special efficacy in the presence of the Body and Blood of Christ. Thus St. Cyril of Jerusalem says, "It will be a great benefit to those souls for whom prayer is offered, while the holy and most sacred sacrifice lies before us".

There are eighteen prayers of intercessions, half of them for the living and the remaining for the departed. During every prayer said by the deacon, the priest says a prayer silently and afterwards he prays loudly. The order of the intercession is as follows :-

- (a) For the living spiritual fathers
- (b) For the living faithful brethren
- (c) For the living faithful secular rulers
- (d) For the Mother of God and the saints
- (e) For the departed spiritual Fathers and doctors of the Church.
- (f) For all the faithful departed

(Prayers which are said silently by priests are said with folded hands, and those aloud with hands raised)

Bishop Pakenham Walsh points out an omission in our liturgy. He says, "There is one omission in your liturgy which I consider a very serious one. There is no opportunity given for special biddings to be announced by the celebrant or by the Deacon for special people and special needs. It is time that private subjects for intercession can be handed over to the Priest, that is as it should be, but there are things happening in the parish, in the country, the province, the nation, and the world, calling for special prayer, and there ought to be opportunity for these to be announced and prayed for" (ibid P 47).

15. In whose name is the second benediction said?

The second benediction is in the name of our Lord as we are going to meditate on His passion.

16. Why is the sanctuary closed after the above blessing?

The sanctuary is closed as Jesus went to the garden of Gethsemane in the night and prayed alone and also because there was darkness at the time of His death (Luke 23: 44).

17. Explain the meaning of the Fraction?

This signifies the suffering, and death of our Lord. The lifting of the bread signifies the resurrection.

Originally there was only the "breaking of bread", in preparation to communion, but it is now invested with much further symbolism. The priest breaks the bread and anoints it with the precious blood, signifying that the body and blood of Christ, which are separated in death were reunited at the resurrection. The portion of the sacred host are arranged in a pattern, so as to represent either a Lamb or a Man. (From Maundy Thursday till the Sunday after Easter the Lamb pattern is supposed to be used, and thence the Man-pattern).

19. Why is a coal (Gmurtho) cast into the chalice at the Fraction?

It means that this blood belongs to that body. The body is cast into the blood, because although the body and blood are put into vessels yet is one quickening body of God the Word.

20. Why are the Body and Blood of Christ called Mysteries?

They are so called because they appear as bread and wine and yet are body and blood. It is as Jesus appeared as man and was at the same time God.

If Lord's word has power to create the whole 'Cosmos, then when He says about the bread, 'This is my body' it becomes His body.

We believe the bread to be His body, but we cannot comprehend it. Hence they are called 'The Mysteries'.

The Christ became man while His divinity was not lost in the least. His divine and human natures are inseparably united.

According to the Orthodox faith, the material content does not undergo any change. After blessing, the bread remains as bread. At the same time it becomes the Body of Christ. It is in the manner as Jesus was completely human while he was God.

22. Explain the meaning of the Seraphic Hymn?

While the sanctuary is hidden, and the priest within the veil is performing the fraction and the commixture, that is the symbolic representation of passion, death and resurrection of Christ, during which a portion of the bread is placed in the chalice, the congregation sings a penitential hymn or a hymn based on Isaiah's vision. (Is ch 6). It describes the worship of the seraphim. It reminds us that if these mighty and sinless beings approach God with such awe and reverence, veiling their faces and their feet with their wings, how more should we, sinful and weak creatures, draw near with humblest adoration to the presence of our God.

Fourth Section

23. Why is the veil drawn after the Seraphic hymn?

The Sanctuary is opened by drawing aside the veil symbolizing the appearance of our Lord to the disciples after his resurrection. It also reminds us of the rending of the veil in the Holy of Holies of the Jerusalem temple, at the time of the death of our Lord, thereby showing that the Holy of Holies is thrown open to whole of humanity through the sacrifice of our Lord.

24. Explain the significance of the Lord's prayer

When the veil is drawn aside, the people join with the priest in saying the Lord's prayer after a preparatory prayer. It reminds us that it is through the sacrifice of our Lord and the consequent sending down of the Holy Spirit that we are born again as children of God, worthy to call God 'Our Father' (1 Peter 1: 3 : 5, Gal 4 : 6, Jn 3: 3, 5, 1 : 12, 1 Jn 4 : 7).

"It is the Family prayer of the church, addressed to the Father in Heaven by His Little children. It is all inclusive, and can be used for every kind of intention. Every clause is wonderful in its combined depth and simplicity".

Bishop Walsh further comments on this prayer as follows." But its very familiarity makes men repeat it hurriedly without thinking of its meaning in other words, saying it, instead of praying it. This we must avoid and we must make those first words. "Our Father which art in heaven" when they fall upon our ears, a trumpet note calling us to devout attention". (ibid P 55)

The first three verses are prayers of dedication

- (i) Hallowed be Thy name means "may your name be glorified." This means a prayer and dedication to have a godly life, that people who see us may praise God. (St. Matt. 5:16)
- (ii) Thy Kingdom Come. This means "make us obedient."
- (iii) Thy will be done on earth. This means "may we do Thy will."

As it is in heaven means "as the angels do in heaven".

Then there are four Petitions, which are meant to help us to be godly

- (i) Give us this day our daily bread-This is a prayer for strength in body, mind and soul.
- (ii) Forgive us our debts and sins as we have forgiven our debtors. We must be freed from sins of omission and commission in our relationship with men and God.
- (iii) Lead us not into temptation. This is a prayer for deliverance from sufferings beyond our ability.
- (iv) Deliver us from the evil one. This is to guard us from satan so that we may not love ourselves more than we love God.

Through this prayer, we offer not only ourselves but the whole mankind for the glory of God.

25. What does the next benediction remind us of?

The benediction in the name of the Holy Trinity reminds us of the blessing of our Lord with uplifted hand at the time of ascension (Luk 24: 50-51)

The sevenfold attributes of the Trinity are: "the Glorious, 2. Uncreated, 3. Self-existent, 4. Eternal, 5. Adorable, 6. Consubstantial and 7. Holy."

26. *Explain the significance of the Elevation of the Holy Mysteries*

After the solemn blessing, the priest holds up the sacred mysteries. Bells ringing, two lighted candles on either side, marvahas on the either side shaken (Acts 1:10), and the deacons call to watch with fear and trembling, all these emphasise the solemnity of the occasion. This is the climax in the Holy Qurbana. This commemorates the ascension of our Lord who went inside the veil, to offer intercession for us (Heb 9:7). Along with the Holy Mysteries we offer ourselves to the Father. In other words, our Lord is offering us all to the Father, through Him and we join in that eternal stream of offering.

The words "Holy things to the holy" which accompany this section belong to a very ancient tradition in the liturgy. They remind us of the great holiness which is required of those who approach the Holy Qurbana. The people's response, "there is none other holy" shows the uniqueness of God.

"Then the Priest speaks of God the Father, as our Creator, God the Son, as our Redeemer, and God the Spirit, as our Perfecter."

Then we are in heaven itself :

- (a) We see our great High Priest, Jesus Christ, presenting Himself, His eternal sacrifice, His broken Body, His poured out Blood, for us sinners.
- (b) In that offering He is offering us, His body, the Church of God.

He has united us to Himself to make us holy and without spot, to present us to His Father. That work is not yet completed. We "watch with fear and trembling", knowing that we are not yet holy, not fit to receive these Holy Mysteries which are given to the holy and pure alone. But He accepts us as we are as the prodigal son was received.

We then offer ourselves as a living sacrifice to God. St. Augustine says 'It is you who lie upon the Altar, it is you, your very life, in the Cup'. (Bishop Walsh - *ibid* P 58-59)

27. *Explain the Communion of Saints?*

The godward action offering ourselves to God is followed by manward action of the Trinity who came down upon our hearts. This represents the Pentecost (we believe that whenever the Holy Spirit comes the Father and the Son also come. (Jn. 14:23))

Along with Trinity we find the saints (2 Cor 5:8) We remember here our fathers who have taught us to be the children of God. The Church is now received as the Bride of Christ. This is signified by the hymn "the kings' daughter stood forth in glory". (Ps 45: 10-11) The bride includes all believers chief of whom is St. Mary (Mk. 3:35) The loyalty and selfless love demanded of the bride is also emphasised "forget thou thy people and thy father's house".

We remember the departed in the following order accompanied by incense.

- (a) The Mother of God
- (b) Saints including the patron Saint.
- (c) The faithful departed including the clergy

There is no adoration of saints themselves but their intercession is sought.

28. How does the priest ask the people to pray for him and how should we answer?

At the close of each Eucharistic adoration the Priest again turns to the people and stretches out his hands saying silently. "My brethren and my beloved, pray for me".

The people answer the prayer by stretching out their hands to him

29. Why is the sanctuary closed again?

The sanctuary is again closed, symbolising that our Lord is now hidden to our bodily eyes.

30. What does the third opening of the Sanctuary signify?

It is for giving the Holy Qurbana to the congregation. It is also an occasion to signify the second coming of our Lord, which is yet to happen.

31. How is the procession of the Holy Mysteries conducted?

"The priest now comes forward carrying holy Mysteries, with the appropriate prayer. This is a very solemn and joyous time to the congregation; lights are carried, incense smoke arises, the altar bell and the great church bell are rung.

The priest says, "O, Son of God, who comes for our salvation and will come again for our resurrection."

The Holy Mysteries are brought down and people are given Communion.

32. *How should the communicant prepare for the communion?*

The communicant must confess prior to the communion. If there is no need for confession, he or she should receive "Hussoyo" before receiving the holy communion.

33. *How is the communion given?*

The communion is given to the people under both kinds, as is the custom in Eastern Churches. The piece from the Body is dipped in the precious Blood and is given to the faithful standing.

Holy Qurbana is called by the fathers the 'medicine' of immortality. The Qurbana is not only a sacrifice but also a sacred banquet which prepares for the banquet with Christ in the heavenly kingdom.

34. *What do we do after the communion?*

Holy Communion is followed by the hymn of Praise. The priest says "may Thy Holy Body which we have eaten and Thy sanctifying Blood which we have drunk, be not for punishment and condemnation, but for life and salvation to us all".

35. *What is the meaning of taking the mysteries back to the Thrones?*

We can meditate on the final triumph of our Lord (ps 110: 1, 1 Cor 15 : 24-28).

36. *Why is the censor set aside by the deacon?*

The Service is over. Hence the censor is set aside

Fifth Section

37. *Explain the prayer of thanks giving?*

There is a prayer giving thanks to the Father for making us worthy the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ.

This is followed by a prayer addressed to the Son for continued guidance.

38. *How are the people dismissed by the priest?*

The congregation is dismissed with a benediction saying "depart ye in peace with the blessings and provisions for the day". The Holy Qurbana is thus considered as the provision for the day. It is like the manna which Israelites ate on their way to Canan.

The above reminds us that Holy Qurbana is to be received by everyone. The priest makes a request to pray for him always.

39. *How does the congregation depart?*



The congregation sing the Kauma, or spends sometime in silent prayer and after offering their free will offerings, kiss the hand of the priest, partakes in Agape (a bread blessed by the priest, relic of the 'Love-Feast) and depart in contentment.

40. *How is the Holy Qurbana concluded?*

The Qurbana is concluded behind the veil, when the priest complete his communion and says the post-communion prayers. He concludes by kissing the alter three times. The fare well said to the Sanctuary is very touching. "I know not if I may return to Thee (Sanctuary) or not". This reminds that death is always at the door and makes us vigilant in preparing ourselves to meet the Lord whenever the call comes.

41. *Conclusion*

In the Holy Qurbana we renew the indwelling of the Holy Spirit and of our Lord in our hearts. But if we don't care to lead a godly life according to the prompting of the Holy Spirit and Jesus Christ, the blessing we have received will be lost.

*He restoreth my soul : he leadeth me
in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake*

Psalm 23:3



8

GROW IN FAITH -

(More Questions & Answers)

1. What is the meaning of the word 'Orthodox'?

The word 'Orthodox' means straight glory or true doctrine. It means following right form of doxology for praising God as, "Glory be to the Father and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, one true God from ages unto ages of ages. Amen", In this, equal glory is attributed to all three persons of the God head, and at the same time the unity of the Triune God is affirmed.

2. Who was Arius and what were his teachings?

Arius was a fourth century presbyter of Alexandria who taught that Jesus Christ was a created being, not God. To Arius and his followers, only God the Father was truly God, because He alone is uncreated. The Holy Spirit, is also a created being according to the Arius.

The above teaching is heresy and we the orthodox Christians are to guard against it.

3. Which are the Oriental Orthodox Churches?

The five oriental Orthodox churches are :

- (a) The Ethiopians (22 Million)
- (b) The Coptic or Egyption (8 Million)
- (c) The Armenian (3 1/2 Million)
- (d) The Indian (2 Million)
- (e) The Syrian (1/4 Million)

These churches have the same faith and are in communion. They are not in communion with the Eastern Orthodox churches like the Greek Orthodox Church, Russian Orthodox Church etc.

4. How do we define the Church?

The Church is the Body of Christ wherein dwells the Holy Spirit who came upon the church at Pentecost. It is the Body of Christ, the Christ is present in the body. Christ is the Lord of the Church. There is an intimate union of the Church with Christ and the Holy Spirit in spite of the presence of sinful human beings in it. In fact, it is the forgiven sinner who is united to Christ by the Holy Spirit, and all sinners united to the Christ are also united to each other. All believers, from "Adam to the Second Coming" are in the Church and they do not leave the Body of Christ at the time of death. The Orthodox are much more aware of the perpetual presence of Christ, the Virgin Mary, the Apostles, the Prophets, Adam and Eve, and all the Holy ones in the Church, this is experienced especially at worship. (HG Dr. Paulose Mar Gregorios).

5. What is the place of Icons in the Worship?

The icons are windows through which one can see the saving event of the incarnation of Jesus Christ and his continuing life in the body of Christ. We make icons or religious paintings only of those aspects of God which have been physically manifested through the prophets of the Old Testaments, through Jesus Christ, and through his saints in the Church. (HG Dr. Paulose Mar Gregorios).

6. In what way the Eastern Orthodox Churches differ from the Catholics?

The main differences are the following:-

- (a) The Eastern Orthodox do not accept the supremacy of the Pope. They believe that each regional Church should be administratively autocephalous (having its own head) and the highest authority in each Church is its own Synod of Bishops rather than anyone outside. They regard the Roman papacy as a denial of the Apostolic constitution of the Church.
- (b) The Eastern Orthodox believe that the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father, while the Roman Catholics state that the Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son.

- (c) The Orthodox do not accept the Infallibility of the pope.
- (d) They do not accept as dogma the Roman Catholic teaching on the bodily assumption into heaven of the Virgin Mary after her death.
- (e) While the Roman Catholics accepts more than twenty Ecumenical Councils, the five Oriental Orthodox Churches accept only three councils, namely Nicea (325), Constantinople (381), and Ephesus (431).
- (f) We don't believe in Purgatory.

8. *Explain the significance of the 'Making the sign of cross'*

It is a very rich and ancient christian practice. Making the sign of the cross sums up the whole christian faith in a single ritual act. The three fingers of the right hand put together symbolizes the Holy Trinity, touching the forehead first and then moving down to the chest, then moving from the left shoulder, to the right shoulder. This action embodies the theology of Incarnation. Christ the second person in the Holy Trinity came down and saved us, making us children of the right.

Further, when the sign of the cross is made on one's body, the body, mind and soul of that person are consecrated to God and that person will be protected from the trap of Satan.

The priest blesses the congregation with the sign of the cross.

9. *Why do we use lights in the Church?*

Light is another symbol universally used in the church. Here again christianity meets other major religions on a common ground. The Christian patristic tradition has always held that the sun is the source of biological life in this universe, "Christ the Sun of Righteousness" is the true source of eternal life. St. John the Evangelist affirms that "God is light and in Him there is no darkness at all". (1 Jn. 1:5) Lighting a lamp is the first act of worship in Eastern Church as in religions like Hinduism. Light is knowledge and life. It dispels darkness which is ignorance and death. Jesus as light is life. Light brings out the hidden beauty of nature, save us by showing danger and enables us to work for the common good. We are called to be light. (St. Matt. 5:14)

10. *Why do we face the east for prayers?*

The sun as the source of physical light has set the orientation of worshipping congregations and church buildings in the East. People

face east for prayer. Facing the east, the direction of the rising sun, is a venerable old custom in the church which connects it with the Garden of Eden. In the biblical story Eden was in the east. Adam was expelled westward, to the direction of the setting sun (Gen 3:24) So Adam and all of humanity still yearn nostalgically for the original source of blessedness and light in the garden in the east. So they turn to the east when they pray and praise God. The Christian traditional teaching is that Christ would appear in glory from the east in His second coming. (St. Matt. 24 : 27)

11. Explain the significance of remembering St. Mary in our worship.

We seek her intercession in worship.

Virgin Mary, mother of Jesus Christ, has been a very powerful symbol in the theology and worship of the Christian tradition. She is called Theotokos, Mother of God, in the Eastern tradition and in the Roman Catholic Church. In christian understanding she stands for three realities at the same time: (a) mother of the historical person, of Jesus Christ, (b) symbol of the Church, and (c) symbol of the whole created reality. The liturgical texts make abundant use of symbols when referring to the Theotokos. The old Testament typologies take a prominent role in the Christian liturgical understanding of Mary and through her Christ Himself. One example is the burning bush which Moses saw in the front while shepherding (Exodus 3:2). It was a theophany. Yahovah appeared to Moses in the form of fire in a green bush. The fathers of the Church took the bush as a prefiguration of Mary in whom appeared Christ. It was a mystery that the bush was not consumed by fire. So was God's son born in the womb of Mary, an ordinary human being, without destroying her and without breaking the seal of her virginity. This points to the central truth of incarnation that God became a human being in Christ and dwelt in the midst of humanity in the heart of material creation, symbolised by Mary, and that humanity has been enabled to receive its own creator.

12. Define the word 'Sacrament'?

St. Augustine defined the sacrament as a "visible form of an invisible grace or visible sign in sacred things". The council of Trent defined it as "a visible sign of invisible grace instituted for our Justification". We define the sacrament as "visible means of invisible grace ordained by our Lord for the salvation of humanity".

13. What are the seven sacraments observed by the Orthodox Church?

The Seven Sacraments are Holy Baptism, Holy Muron, Holy Confession, Holy Qurbana, Holy Anointment of the sick, Holy marriage and (Holy orders or ordination.)

14. What are the sacraments that cannot be repeated?

Holy Baptism, Holy Muron and Holy orders.

15. What are the sacraments a believer is expected to receive?

Holy Baptism, Holy Muron, Holy Confession, Holy Qurbana, Holy Anointment of the sick.

16. What is the principle behind a sacrament?

Visible means can be used to achieve invisible grace.

As man is a psychosomatic organism with five sense organs, he desires to touch, feel and see spiritual reality in addition to hearing about God. Hence the supernatural must be communicated to man through the natural.

17. Explain the meaning of the prayer "Kyrie-Eleison."

'Kurie-Eleison' is a Greek word meaning 'Lord, have mercy'

This is a cry for mercy. It reflects our deep desire in our hearts that we may receive in our unworthiness through the mercy of God, blessing of our redemption. Let us recognize our helplessness and unworthiness and cry. "Lord, have mercy". We are helpless in the sense that without God, we cannot do anything. We are unworthy in the sense that we are not worthy to receive any blessing from God, due to our sins of omission and sins of commission.

18. What is the meaning of the word Amen?

The people answer with the word Amen which means "so be it". By this word the congregation gives its assent to the prayer and declares itself to be one with the priest. This word is uttered nearly 40 times by the congregation during the Holy Qurbana.

19. What do we hear in the "Liturgy of the word"?

In this we hear the word of God through the epistles, gospel and sermon. As people come late, the sermon is postponed to a later time in the Holy Qurbana.

[It is a pity that many people do not pay much attention to this part and come late for the service. For many, the purpose and reason of this part of service is lost. The people are to be properly instructed on the importance of this service.]

20. *What is the place of the Bible in the worship?*

The Orthodox hold the scriptures in the highest regard. They encourage reading, study, and meditation of the scriptures. A few passages from the Old Testament and three from the New Testament are to be read in each Sunday or festal liturgy.

21. *What is the importance of "the Creed"?*

(Nicene Creed, a Symbol of Faith)

'Credo' is a Latin word meaning "I believe". When we say the Creed at the Holy Qurbana, we mention a list of things we believe. We proclaim solemnly that we believe in the Holy Trinity Holy Church, Holy sacraments and life after death. We explicitly and beautifully express our belief in the Divinity of Christ.

The Creed is said by the whole congregation.

22. *What is the meaning of the offering of bread and wine?*

The gifts of bread and wine which we offer to God are our gifts. Now the gifts stand for the giver. The gift without the giver is bare. The fact that the giver goes with the gift that makes the giving of gifts a universal custom. When some one who loves us gives us a present, we value it far above its intrinsic worth. It represents for us the love and affection, gratitude and good wishes of the relative or friend who has given it. Something of this is in the gifts which we give to God. These gifts (bread and wine) are offered not for their material value, but in order to convey a message. They have a meaning. They express our love and gratitude. They signify our submission and respect. But the meaning of our offering goes further. What we owe to God is not ordinary devoutness, respect and love, but complete self-surrender, something we may not offer to any creature but to God alone. Thus when we present our gifts to God, they still convey our homage and devotion, but they are meant also to be a solemn acknowledgement of God's supreme dominion over us and of our total dependence on Him, our sincere gratitude to Him and the corresponding interior attitude of complete self-surrender. God does not need our gifts, He wants our complete redemption.

23. *Explain why we should receive the Body and Blood of Christ?*

Our Lord Himself speaks about the importance of His Body and Blood.

“I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats this bread, he will live forever. The bread that I will give him is my flesh, which I give so that the world may live I am telling you the truth, if you do not eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you will not have life in yourselves. Who ever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him to life on the last day. For my flesh is the real food, my blood is the real drink. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood lives in me and I live in him”. (John 6: 51-56)

A Holy Qurbana without receiving communion is like attending a feast without eating. Thus to be present at the Qurbana and not caring to receive communication is like presenting a cheque for payment at the bank and then walking away without waiting for the money.

The Sacrament of Holy Confession

25. Is confession considered a pre-requisite for receiving the Holy Communion?

It is not so considered, but the church emphasizes that we should prepare ourselves spiritually through Holy confession, when there is something to be confessed, in order to receive the Holy Communion. Confession is the sacrament of penitence. At the time of baptism, we renounce satan and his works on the one hand and accept Christ and His ways on the other. We are called upon to lead a godly life. Very seldom we reach this goal. Often we are tempted to neglect our duties and responsibilities and lead a life of worldly pleasures. We have sins of commission and sins of omission. The Church provides us an opportunity for penitence in the sacrament of confession.

26. The need for confession

We should examine ourselves periodically and see whether we live a life of love and fulfil our responsibilities. Whenever we realize that we fall short of the mark, we should ask for divine help to correct ourselves. We do such confessions to the priest who represents Christ and receives from Him the absolution that comes from God alone.

In confession, the confessor gives creative suggestions/counselling out of his spiritual experiences. An important aspect of confession is the

faith in the priest (confessor) that he will keep confidential all matters discussed at the confessional.

27. *Explain why confession is required?*

We can understand it from three angles i.e. psychologically, biblically, and theologically.

(a) **Psychological basis**-Karl Jung, a non-Christian Psychologist has said that mental diseases are comparatively less in the churches which have the practice of confession. It is because if there is an opportunity to confess to a priest the secret sins and release the guilty conscience from the burden thereof. Hence the chances of repression to the unconscious mind are less. Expression prevents repression. Even in Protestant churches with no auricular confession, there is counselling which is a modern substitute for private confession. In confession the counsellor has authority to give absolution. More over as the father confessor is under divine vows to keep the sins in absolute secrecy, those who confess will have confidence in him.

(b) **Biblical basis** The power to remit or absolve sins was given to the apostles. "Truly I say to you whatever you bind on earth would be bound in heaven and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven" (St. Matt 18:18 Also see St. Jn. 20: 21-23).

(c) **Theological basis**-A sacrament is the visible means of invisible grace. The ministers are the visible symbols of Christ in every age.

Though we can receive forgiveness from God through Private prayers the seal of forgiveness must be received from the priest whom Christ has graciously empowered to absolve sins. This is necessary as every sin is a sin against God and man. (Communion in the Body of Christ by His Grace Geevarghese Mar Osthathos-p 19-25).

28. *What do we do in the Holy Qurbana?*

(a) We participate in the sacrifice of our Lord.

(b) The whole Church offers itself through the bread and wine.

(c) The real celebrant is Jesus Christ Himself and the priest represents Him. Our Lord is celebrating Holy Qurbana through the whole church which is His body

(d) Receiving the Holy Qurbana is a time of renewing our baptismal covenant.

(e) It is a preparation for a dedicated life.



Part - III

Intercessions, the
Bible, Songs & Hymns,
and the church Calendar



THE GREAT INTERCESSIONS (Diptychs or Thubdens)

(a) The 1st Thubden - For the Living Spiritual Fathers

In this prayer, we remember and pray for the spiritual fathers of the orthodox faith. We pray for the Patriarch of Antioch Moran Mar Ignasius, the Catholicose of the East Moran Mar Baselius, Mar Gregorious of Jerusalem, the Diocesan Metropolitan and other bishops of our church. When a bishop of another diocese is present his name is also remembered.

(b) The 2nd Thubden - For the living faithful brethren

Here we pray for the weak, the sick, those who are in all kinds of hard trials, sinners, repenters, those who have done good to the church and all brethren who are specially to be remembered.

(c) The 3rd Thubden- For the living faithful secular rulers

We pray for all faithful and truly christian rulers. We also pray for the whole christian community, the clergy and the faithful people.

(d) The 4th Thubden - For the mother of God & the Saints

We remember and pray for the intercession of St. Mary the Mother of God, John the Baptist, St Stephen the first Martyr, the Prophets, the Apostles, the preachers, the

Evangelists (St. Matthew, St. Mark, St. Luke and St. John), the Martyrs, and the Confessors. We specially remember St. Peter and St. Paul the chief among the apostles.

- (e) **The 5th Thubden - For the departed spiritual fathers and doctors of the church.** In this prayer, we remember the three synods held at Nicea, Constantinople, and Ephesus which maintained and delivered the one apostolic and uncorrupt faith. We also remember all fathers and doctors who participated and contributed to the faith. We particularly remember 23 church fathers who lived upto AD 600.
- (f) **The 6th Thubden - For all the faithful departed**
We remember all the faithful departed and pray for those whose names are given for remembrance.

Short Notes on the Fathers remembered in the 5th Thubden:

A. The Great Synods (Councils)

(a) The council of Nicea

The Council held at Nicea in A.D. 325 was called by the Roman Emperor Constantine and was attended by 318 doctors of the Church. It was called to oppose the teachings of Arius who taught that Jesus Christ - the Logos- was the first creature of God and not God and that he was not co-eternal and co-essential with the father, The Christ of Arius was neither God nor man but a semi-god or a semi-man. St. Athanasius who was just a deacon at that time stood for the true faith and the clause "true God of true God, of the same substance with the father and together with the Father and Son is worshipped" was accepted and added in the creed.

(b) The council of Constantinople

The council held in AD 381 at Constantinople was called by the Emperor Theodosius and was attended

by 150 church fathers. The council declared the teachings about the Holy Spirit by Constantine Patriarch Machadonius as heretic and accepted the divinity of the Holy Spirit. The clause, that "Holy Spirit proceedeth from the Father" was added to the creed.

(c) **The council of Ephesus**

The council held in A.D. 431 at Ephesus was called by Emperor Theodosius II and was the third general council. The Patriarch of Alexandria Mar Cyril (Kurilos) was the President of the council. The Patriarch of Constantinople Nestorius questioned the union of the divine and human nature in the person of Christ and said that the Virgin Mary should only be called the "Mother of Christ". and not Mother of God. The council discarded those teachings and added in the creed the phrase "The Virgin Mary, the Mother of God". The council formulated the present form of the creed.

B. **The Fathers Remembered in the Holy Qurbana:**

(a) **St. James**

He was brother of our Lord Jesus and was the first bishop of Jerusalem. The first anaphora was formulated by him and the first Qurbana was celebrated in the building of Sehion. His epistles are famous. He became a martyr in A.D. 62.

(b) **Mor Ignecius Nuro**

As a boy, he grew with the apostles at Antioch. It is believed that when he was a child, Jesus took him in his hands and blessed (St. Mark 9:33-36). Hence he was called 'Theophorus' meaning 'one who is held by God'. He was the third bishop of Antioch. He suffered for the church and became a martyr in Rome. His seven epistles given to the church emphasize the place of Episcopos in the Church and the importance of the Holy Qurbana.

(c) **Mor Clement of Rome (Clemis) A.D. 97**

He became a Christian due to the preaching of St. Peter and St. Paul, and later became a bishop of Rome. He

taught the church through his epistles the importance of priesthood and the sacraments. He also became a martyr in A.D. 97 or 98.

(d) Mor Dionysius

There were a number of Church fathers in this name. Mor Dionysius of Alexandria (264) and Mor Dionysius Areopigate (500) are remembered. Mor Dionysius Areopigate was a disciples of Origen. After Origen, he served as the head of the Catechetical School of Alexandria. He was selected as a bishop of Caesaria in A.D. 257. Though he had written a lot on faith we only have a few of his writings.

(e) Mor Athanasius (A.D. 373)

He was born in Alexandria in A.D. 295. He became a deacon in his young age itself and attended the Nicene Council in A.D. 325. He fought against the heretic teachings by Arius and affirmed the church in true faith. He was called 'Pillar of the Church' by Mor Gregory of Narsians. He became Patriarch of Alexandria and consecrated 270 bishops. He passed away in AD 373.

(f) Mor Julius (352)

Born in Rome, he was consecrated the bishop of Rome in A.D. 338. He was a staunch believer in the Nicene Creed. A council was called by him in A.D. 340. He wrote an anaphora and two epistles. He passed away in A.D. 352.

(g) The Great Mor Basil of Caesarea (Baselios)

He was born in A.D. 329 in Caesarea of Cappadokia. He became a priest in A.D. 362 and was consecrated a bishop of Caesarea in A.D. 370. He was a scholar and a saint. He affirmed the Church in the Trinitarian faith, and saved the Church from the heretic teachings of Arius. He passed away in A.D. 374.

(h) Mor Gregorios

We remember two fathers namely Mor Gregorios of Nyssa and Mor Gregorios of Naziansus. The first

Gregorios was the younger brother of Mor Baselios the Great and the second Gregorios was his friend.

Mor Gregorios of Nyssa was born in A.D. 335 in Caesarea of Cappadokia. He was made a bishop of Nyssa Town in A.D. 371 by his brother Mor Baselios the Great. He was present in the council held in Antioch under the leadership of Mor Milithias. He attended the Constantinople council in A.D. 381. He had made a number of sermons and written many poems and articles. He passed away in A.D. 394.

Mor Gregorios of Naziansus was a shining star in the early Church. The council held in Ephesus in A.D. 431 saw him as 'Great'. He was a friend of Mor Baselios and a great theologian of the Eastern Church. He was born in A.D. 324 at Ariausus, a place near Naziansus. He studied at Caesarea, Alexandria and Athens and became a great orator and a scholar. He became a bishop in A.D. 370. He passed away in A.D. 390.

(i) Mor Dioscoros of Alexandria (454)

He was born in Alexandria and studied the orthodox faith during his childhood. He became a bishop in A.D. 466 as a successor to Mor Cyril of Alexandria. In A.D. 467, he presided over the second council held at Ephesus. In A.D. 451, he attended the council held at Chalcedonia and fought for the church. He passed away in A.D. 484.

(j) Mor Timothy of Alexandria (A.D. 497)

He was a disciple of Mor Cyril (Kurilos). He was the Head of the throne of Alexandria and held a Council against the chalcedonia council. He led a life of fasting, prayer, and penance. He was a scholar and wrote a number of books. He passed away in A.D. 497.

(k) Mor Philoxenos of Mabugil (523)

He was born in Iraq. He became famous due to his scholarship and wisdom. In A.D. 485 he became a friend of Patriarch Peter II and attended the Antiochian council. He was made a bishop of Mabugil that year

itself. He fought for the true faith of the church and was a scholar, writer, teacher, philosopher, theologian and a lawyer. He died as a martyr in A.D. 523.

(l) **Mor Antimus of Constantinople (A.D. 458)**

He was a perfect monk. He was the Episcopa of Thribeesonth and was made the Patriarch of Constantinople in A.D. 535. He was a holy father who fought against the heretic teachings of diophysites (two natures) of chalcedonia and affirmed the church in true faith. He wrote many 'Ekbos' of our worship.

(m) **Mor Ivanios (A.D. 407)**

He was born in A.D. 344 in Antioch. He was consecrated a deacon by Patriarch Mor Militius. Due to his exceptional oratory skill, he came to be known as Ivanios with the golden tongue. He became a priest in A.D. 385. He spoke vehemently against the heretical teachings. He made a number of sermons based on Genesis, the Gospels according to St. Matthew and St. John and the Epistles of St. Paul. He was made the patriarch of Constantinople in A.D. 398. His books, commentaries, sermons, and articles are famous. He passed away in A.D. 407 and has been considered a saint by the church.

(n) **Mor Kurilos of Alexandria (St Cyril) (A.D. 466)**

He rose to the position of the Patriarch of Alexandria in A.D. 429, from a monastery at the desert of Netria. As he was a famous theologian and had studied the orthodox faith thoroughly, he presided over the Ephesus Council. He challenged the heretic teachings of Nestorios and taught and included in the Creed the truth, "Virgin Mary, the Mother of God". He expounded the doctrine of the incarnation of God the Word, our Lord Jesus Christ, declaring and showing clearly that he became incarnate.

(o) **Mor Serverus of Antioch (A.D. 538)**

He was born in A.D. 459 at Susbolos in Bisadia. He was named as the Patriarch of Antioch in A.D. 512. He was a man of wisdom and led a very devout life. Through his saintly and holy life, he attracted people. Though in

A.D. 518. he was transported to Egypt by the order of King Usthinose he ruled the church for nearly 20 years through his representatives and letters. He passed away in A.D. 538. We have received our faith about Christ through the books of this scholarly father.

(p) **Mor Jacob Baradaeus (A.D. 578)**

He was born in the sixth century as son of a syrian priest named Theophil. He became a scholar in theology in his childhood itself. He became a priest and stayed in a nearby monastery. His devoted and saintly life was famous. He wore thick dress made of many pieces of cloth, and hence he was known as "*Burdacus*" meaning one who wears torn cloths. He was consecrated a bishop of Uraba by the Patriarch Theodosius of Alexandria. During the time of persecution, he travelled and affirmed the believers in true faith. He ordained 102,027 priests and cosecrated 10 bishops. He also consecrated Patriarchs for Antioch and Alexandria. Because of his strenuous works and rebuilding of faith, we are nicknamed as "Jacobites" by the Greek and the Catholics.

(q) **Mor Aprem (Ephrem) A.D. 373**

He is known as "the Sun of Syrians, "Column of the Church, "the Hand of the Holy Spirit, and the Prophet of the Syrians" due to his knowledge, devotional and poetic life. He showed that hymns could be used in the worship. He was a teacher (malpan) in the theological seminary at Niseebin for about thirty-eight years. It is believed that he also attended the Nicene Council. He wrote a number of hymns based on the Bible from Genesis to Revelation. He wrote a number of prayers and taught the importance of remembering St. Mary in our prayers.

All Churches respect him as a saint. He passed away in A.D. 373.

(r) **Mor Jacob**

We remember two fathers with the same name. Mor Jacob of Srug (A.D. 521) and Mor Jacob of Edessa (A.D. 708).

- (i) Mar Jacob of Srug was born in A.D. 451 in Kurtom village on the bank of Euphrates river. He became a monk. In A.D. 519 and was raised as Episcopa of Bethnen Desrug. He passed away in A.D. 521.

He wrote a number of books in prose and poems. We have got 95 sermons in his name. His membras are known as "the flute of the Holy Spirit". He wrote nearly 760 membras.

- (ii) Mor Jacob of Edessa translated the Holy anaphora from Greek to Syriac. He formulated many sacramental proceedings in the Church.

- (s) Mor Issac (A.D. 461).

He was born in Omis in the fourth century. He was lucky that he could get training under Mor Aprem. He became a disciple of Job who was a disciple of Mor Aprem. He passed away in A.D. 461.

- (t) Mor Baleus (A.D. 450)

He was a disciple of Mor Aprem. He was a scholar and a poet. He became Episcopa of Balis. His syriac hymns are used in our worship. He upheld the teaching of the real presence of Christ in the Holy Qurbana.

- (u) Mor Bar Saumas (A.D. 457)

He was born in a village called Smeesath in the middle of the fourth century. He was a disciple of Mor Aprem, who was known for his fasting, praying and saintly life. Days and nights he stood and prayed. He was a scholar and a man of Holy Spirit. His prophecies were true. "Bar Saumas" means "son of fasting".

- (v) Mor, Simeon the Stylite (A.D. 459)

He was a famous monk in the Syrian Church. He was born in A.D. 389 at a place near Syria and Philipia, in a Christian family. He became a monk in his young age itself and led a religious life of fasting, praying, penance, etc. He built a pillar near Aleppo and spent nearly 40 years on it praying. He got the name the Stylite (Desthuni) as he lived on pillar. He brought a number of people to the Christian faith. He passed away in A.D. 459.

(w) Mor Abahai

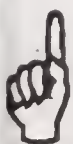
He was born in a village called Dexan in Mardin in the middle of the fourth century. When his parents expired, Abahai and his brothers sold off all their property and started living in a monastery in Masdin. He became a Bishop of Nicea and ruled the Church for 32 years. He passed away at his 110th year.

It is a fact that no name has been added in the fifth Thubden since the eighth century, though a number of fathers fought periodically for the preservation of true faith. It will be appropriate that the liturgy includes names of all patron saints namely, St Thomas the Apostle, St. Gregorios of Parumala and others to remember.



Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow
of death I will fear no evil : for thou art with me :
thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.

Psalm 23:4



10

PLACE OF THE BIBLE IN OUR WORSHIP AND THE HOLY QURBANA

Explain the place of the Bible or the Word of God in the Holy Qurbana.

1. There is an impression among many that the Orthodox Church does not give importance to the Bible or the Word of God as it should be. This is a totally wrong notion due to lack of understanding of the structure of our worship and due to inattentiveness. One who studies the structure of worship and participates attentively finds that the prayers and hymns are full of biblical quotations and references, and that they are included with a view to affirm the faith of believers.

2. *The following psalms are frequently used in the morning and evening prayers :-*

19, 51, 63, 91, 113, 115, 116, 118, 120, 132, 140, 141, 148, 149, 150.

3. *The following passages are also read during the prayers:*

Isiah 42 : 10-13, 45 : 8

St Matt 5 : 3-12, 6 : 9 - 13,

St Luke 1 : 46-55,

4. There are a number of references from the Bible quoted and remembered throughout the prayers and praises.

5. It is also relevant to point out that a number of biblical characters are remembered and people are exhorted to follow their example. In the song sung, just before the public celebration starting with - "May our incense favour Three (Karthave Prarthana Kettarul ...)," we remember the following persons and incidents:

Aaron's incense	Exod 30
Ninivetes' Plea	Jonah 3:10
Jona's prayer	Jonah
Zachariah's incense	Luk 1 : 8-22
Phinehas' prayer-	Numbers 25: 1-8
St Mary	Luke' 1 : 28
The bush Moses saw..	Exod 3: 2, 3
Abel's gift.....	Gen 4:4
Noah's gift.....	Gen 6 : 20
Abraham's sacrifice	Gen 22

6. Before the public celebration of the Holy Qurbana, readings from the Old Testament are done. Usually there will be five prophetic readings related to the particular day's gospel reading so that it serves as a background and history. This is meant for preparing the people for the birth and life of Christ.

7. In the first part of the Holy Qurbana, (that is the Holy Qurbana of the Catechumens,) two New Testament portions are read from the north and south steps of the Madbaha. The first reading is usually from the Acts of Apostles or from one of the catholic Epistles and the second reading is from the Epistle of St. Paul. After these readings, the priest reads the gospel related to that particular day's remembrance.

8. Immediately after that the priest is supposed to give a sermon explaining the significance of that particular day's readings from the Bible so that the lesson is driven home.

9. The following hymns are also taken from the Bible :

(a) Paul the Blessed

Saint, the Lord's Apostle, saint Gal 1 : 18

(b) Blessed are those servants good

Whom their Lord shall find... St Luke 12:37-40

(c) Seraphim of fiery line Isiah 6 : 1

10. The Lords prayer (Our father, who art in heaven..) repeated often and given in the beginning of the fourth chapter, is taken from St Matt 6: 9-13, and St Luk 11: 2-4.

11. The words of Institution of the Holy Qurbana are repeated from St Luke 22 : 19, St Mark 14 : 24. and Cor 11 : 24 & 25 are also quoted in this connection.

12. The prayer said by the priest "Lord answer me" is quoted from 1 King 18 : 36-39.

13. In Chapter IV of the second part of the Holy Qurbana, when the mother of God, Saints, and the departed are remembered and incensed, the hymns chanted are taken from the psalms. They are given below :

(The word "Kukilion" means circle, and it starts with a psalm)

(a) See the royal daughter stand Psalm 45: 9-11

(b) The righteous shall prosper like palm trees ...
Psalms 92: 12-14

(c) In righteous thy priest be clothed Psalm 132 :9-12

(d) As doth a father his children love ... Psalm 103 :13-15

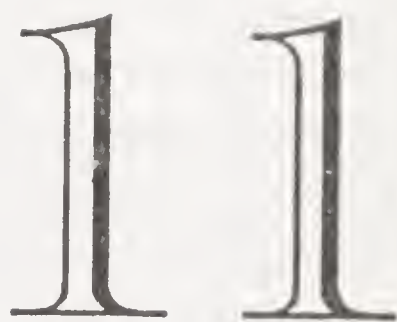
14. The Apostolic blessing given by the Priest after the celebration of the sosappa, "May the love of God the Father, the Grace of the only begotten Son and the fellowship and communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all my brethren, for ever" is quoted from 2 Cor 13 : 12.

15. At the end of the Holy Qurbana, when the priest communicates the particles from the chalice, he says Psalm 23: "The Lord shall feed me as shepherd and I shall not want....."

16. The above are only a few of the examples to illustrate that the prayers and praises in the Holy Qurbana are mainly based on the Bible. The prayers called the promeon and sedras are also full of biblical references and quotations.

17. It is true to say : "The Bible is indeed a great and Holy book. It does contain the word of God. The Church has always honoured and preserved it, but not the book which contains a record of what Christ said and did upon earth. The method the Church has employed from the earliest days for the instruction of the Catechumans is founded upon the Holy Scriptures. She has always included readings from the Bible in the Mass (Holy Qurbana)" (The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass ... P 158-159) It is true in the orthodox church also.





SONGS AND HOMILIES IN THE HOLY QURBANA

1. Prayers and praises in the Holy Qurbana are done in both prose and poems. This is done intermittently so that people fully take part in the worship whole heartedly and in unison. It is as St. Paul has said :

“Speak to one another with the words of psalms, hymns and sacred songs; sing hymns and psalms to the Lord with praise in your hearts. In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, always give thanks for everything to God the Father” Eph 5 : 19-20

2. Since the time of the holy Synod of Nicea, St. Apraim the Syrian began to produce holy musical songs, and (A.D. 373) *Issac of Antioch* and Balai (c 400) also composed a multitude of hymns based on texts taken from David. Also at the time of the Synod of Ephesus, some potters, exquisitely pious, and who burned spiritually, produced a multitude of songs. Then after the Synod of Chalcedon, Mor Severios the exquisite dogmatic, composed the response to be sung, taking them from Greek hymns and translating into Syriac.

3. The hymns are for the somewhat materialist. The highly spiritual do not need music. Music lightens the pains and strains of the monastic, who spend long times in prayer, just as the mother's song soothes the child. It also sweetens the soul. Songs hold better in the memory than prose.

4. Most of the liturgical songs could be sung in eight tunes. The practice of singing in eight 'colors' (tunes) was introduced in Syrian Church by the Antiochian Patriarch St. Sevarios (512-538). He compiled a collection

of such songs which could be sung in eight tunes. It was translated into Syriac by Paul of Edessa in the beginning of seventh century. It is known as 'Ecara,' which was further improved during the time of St. Jacob of Edessa (703).

5. Syrian liturgical songs are a treasure of theology and spirituality. Most of them deal with biblical events. Many of these songs are prayers which raises human minds to the presence of the Almighty. The man who desires to be filled with the power from God confesses his sins and weaknesses. Therefore, there are a member of penitential songs in the Syrian Church.

6. The worship is not only for the intellectual satisfaction of human mind, but also to reveal wholly his emotions and thought. Liturgical songs have been included with this aim in view. This is also one of the means through which the people take part fully in the worship. It is meant for the participation of the whole congregation.

7. Tunes of Syrian Songs

Syrian songs are sung in many tunes. Usually one song is sung in eight tunes or colors. It has been designed in such a way as to give the worship beauty and new experience. It also helps to remove the monotony due to the same tune.

8. Tunes in a weekly cycle

The weekly cycle begins on Sunday and the day begins on the previous evening. If songs on Sunday are sung in the first tune (color), the fifth tune will be used on Monday ; If the first tune is used on Tuesday, the fifth will be used on Wednesday.

9. The above can be shown as below :

First week	1 - 5
Second week	2 - 6
Third week	3 - 7
Fourth week	4 - 8
Fifth week	5 - 1
Sixth week	6 - 2
Seventh week	7 - 3
Eighth week	8 - 4

10. *Tunes in an yearly cycle*

There are special occasions to start a tune in an yearly cycle. The Sunday of sanctification (Kudaseetho) is the beginning of a cycle of worship. The first tune is used on that Sunday. That week the first and the fifth tunes are used. The next Sunday is the Sunday of Consecration (Hudos eetho). That week the second and sixth tunes are used.

11. *The same can be explained as follows :*

The tunes in a year start on the following days :

- (a) Kudos eetho
- (b) The Sunday after Christmas
- (c) Kothine Sunday
- (d) The Sunday after the feast of the Cross.

12. The tunes of the feast are given below :

Yeldo	-	1
Danaha	-	2
Mayaltho	-	3
Suboro	-	4
Suloko	-	5
(The remembrance of St Peter and St Paul)		
The Feast of Transfiguration	-	6
Sunoyo	-	7
The Feast of the Cross	-	8
The Feast of St Mary	-	1
Of the Saints	-	8
Of the Departed Priests	-	7
Of the Departed Faithful	-	8

13. During the Holy Week (Passion Week) the above tunes are not used. The songs are sung with a feeling of contrition and sorrow.

14. The word "Kukkaya" is seen often with certain hymns. It means that the hymn was composed by a father from a place called Kukka. The tune of such hymns is called 'Kukkaya'

15. The Kukilion

The Greek word 'Kukilion' means "cycle" or a song sung repeatedly. It is a small form of worship done in songs or hymns. Often there are five Kukilions used in our worship. They are for the Mother of God, the Saints, Sreeba, the departed priests, and the departed faithful. These prayers are done along with incense.

The following psalms are sung in Kukilion :

- (a) See the royal daughter stand : Psalm 45: 9-11
(Ninnal Sthuthiodu.....)
- (b) The righteous shall prosper like : Psalm 92; 12-14
(Neethinjan panapole.....)
- (c) In righteous thy priests be clothed : psalm 132; 9-12
(Charthum neethiye.....)
- (d) As doth a father his children love : Psalm 103 13-15
(Makkalilappan.....)
- (e) (About the Cross) Psalm 44; 5-7
vellum sathrukkale

17. The Kukilion is not a part of the Holy Qurbana. Usually at the end of the Holy Qurbana, these prayers are done with incense asking for the intercession of the Mother of God and Saints.



Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of
mine enemies : thou anointest my head with oil:
my cup runeth over.

Psalm 23:5



THE CHURCH CALENDAR

The Weekly Cycle

1. **Sunday:** The Christian week like the Christian year centres on the mystery of Resurrection. Every Sunday is a commemoration of the Resurrection of Christ, bringing hope to the Resurrection of all mankind, the 'good news' of the Gospel. But it has reference not only to the future but also to this present life. Already by his baptism a Christian has begun to participate in the new life in Christ. Every Qurbana, as we have seen, makes this mystery really present. The observance of Sunday is intended to bring this great mystery to mind at the beginning of every week, so that Christian may continually renew the memory of the Resurrection, and strive to live week by week in its light.

2. **Monday and Tuesday:** These days are days of 'repentance'. Repentance in the Gospel means 'conversion' or change of heart. It is the theme of the preaching of both John the Baptist and our Lord, "Repent, for the Kingdom of God is at hand." Thus every week the Christian has occasion to renew his faith, to turn back to God and look for the coming of His Kingdom.

3. **Wednesday :** Wednesday in the Eastern Churches is always kept in honour of the mother of God, as according to ancient tradition, the Annunciation took place on a Wednesday. Thus every Wednesday calls us to reflect on the place of Mary in the economy of salvation on her divine motherhood, as the Mother of Jesus and through him of all Christians.

Wednesday is a day of lent as it was the day in which our Lord was preparing for His death and Judas received money to betray Jesus.

4. **Thursday** : This day is kept in memory of the Apostles. With the Apostles, the Syrian Church also associates the prophets of the Old Testament, who prepared the way for the gospel and the martyrs who laid down their lives in witness to it.

5. **Friday** : Friday is the commemoration of the passion of Christ by which we were redeemed.

6. **Saturday** : This day is dedicated to the dead,

7. Thus at the end of the week our thoughts are turned to the end of our earthly life.

The Yearly Cycle

8. As the Christian week centres on Sunday, the day of the Resurrection, the Christian year centres on Easter. In the early church there were only two great festivals, Easter and Pentecost and the whole period between was regarded as a sacred season in which the church in a sense anticipated the new life of the world to come.

9. The liturgical year is not simply a commemoration of the past events of the life of Christ. They are made a present experience.

10. The Syrian Church begins the year at the end of October or the beginning of November with the feast of the consecration of the church. Church is described as the bride of Christ.

11. The five Sundays before Christmas are called 'Sundays of the Annunciation and commemorate incidents from the annunciation to Zachariah, and to the birth of Christ. The birth and baptism of our Lord were celebrated on January 6th in the beginning. Later on the birth of Christ was transferred to December 25th.

12. On the last two Sundays after Epiphany before lent, the Syrian Church celebrates the commemoration of the departed. This is the equivalent of 'All Souls Day' in the Western Church.

13. Eighteen days before the feast of Lent, there is a short feast of Nineveh for three days.

14. Lent commemorates the forty days of fasting by the Lord preceding the Passion week and is a long preparation for the festival of Easter. But Saturdays and Sundays are not fasting days. The Sunday before Easter is called Palm Sunday, commemorating our Lord's entry into Jerusalem when the children sang Hosanna. The rest of the week is known as Passion Week. Thursday commemorates the Last Supper, Friday our Lord's passion and Saturday the preaching of the gospel to the dead.

15. Easter time is a time of joy and thanks giving in which the church enters into the new life of Resurrection. The Sunday after Easter is known as 'New Sunday,' as Sunday has become the day of resurrection. On Pentecost, Holy Spirit descended on the church and gave rebirth to the believers. From this time onwards every Sunday commemorates the twofold mystery of the resurrection and the gift of the Spirit.



Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me
all the days of my life : and I will dwell
in the house of the Lord for ever.

Psalm 23:6



13

CHAPTER IN SUM

A most important question remains: what do we do and through the Holy Qurbana?

In the Holy Qurbana, we commemorate the whole life of Christ. We go back to the period of Christ and remember His birth, ministry, preachings and teachings, sufferings, death, resurrection and His promise of second coming. The essential part of this ceremony is to become one with Christ by taking His own Body and Blood in the form of bread and wine.

The question remains; do we really and wholeheartedly participate in this solemn ceremony? Do we understand the meaning of various symbols used? Do we know the significance of each part of worship? Do we go to church to partake His Body and Blood or just to be listeners?

The Holy Qurbana is a feast, the feast of Christ. He is giving Himself to us. Christ said "I am the Bread of Life" unless we take Him in, we cannot become His part. He says "Eat it, this is my Body". "Unless you eat the flesh of the Messiah (Son of man) and drink His Blood, you cannot have eternal life within you" (St. John 6:53).

"Everyone who eats my flesh and drinks my Blood is in me, and I in him" (St. John 6:56).

This is an occasion for strengthening love and unity among the believers.

It is the time to praise God the Almighty along with the departed believers.

Every word and action in the Holy Qurbana is important and meaningful. To enjoy the substance of it one has to study and understand the meaning behind every symbols and actions.

It is not the explanation that makes it real and realistic, but the wholehearted participation in all rituals and partaking of His Body and Blood.

Here the Holy Spirit dwells on us and makes us new creation as the bread and wine change into the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ by indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

Here we affirm our faith in the Holy Trinity: the Father the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

Here we receive necessary "Provisions and Blessings" for our journey of life.

"When we receive the Holy Qurbana, it produces what it signifies, it vivifies the soul, by a special increase of sanctifying grace and actual graces. By giving sanctifying grace in Baptism Christ unites us to the Blessed Trinity, in Holy Communion He intensifies our divine life, our union with the Infinite. He increases our faith and confidence so that we may feel sure of His action.. He makes God penetrate more deeply into our soul, just like fire penetrates a piece of iron. And even when His bodily presence in us ceases, we remain united to Him. Christ never ceases to live in us, to give light, life and strength to our souls by the invisible rays of His grace."

"Of all the Sacraments none is more healthgiving, for by it sins are washed away, virtues are increased, and soul is fed with an abundance of all spiritual gifts. It is offered in the Church for the living and the dead, that all may profit by that which was instituted for the salvation of all. Lastly no words suffice to describe to sweetness of this sacrament in which spiritual delights are tested at their very source and the exceeding charity of Christ in His passion is called to mind. It was in order to impress more deeply upon the minds of the faithful the boundlessness of His charity that, when he had kept the pasch with His disciples and was about to depart out of this world into His Father, Christ instituted this sacrament as a perpetual memorial of all His passion, the fulfillment of the ancient figures, the greatest of all His miracles. To those who grieved at His absence it was to be a special consolation". (St. Thomas Aquinas)



Appendix B:

Prefatory Prayers

1. In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, One true God: Glory be to Him, and may His grace and mercy be upon us forever, Amen.
2. Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God Almighty,
by whose Glory, the heaven and the earth are filled.
Hosanna in the Highest.
3. Blessed is he, who has come, and is to come, in the name of the Lord God; Glory be to him in the highest.
4. Holy art Thou, O God,
Holy art Thou, Almighty,
Holy art Thou, Immortal.
+Crucified for us-
Have mercy on us - (Repeated three times)
5. Lord, have mercy upon us;
Lord, be kind and have mercy,
Lord, accept Thou our office, and our entreaties,
Have mercy upon us.
Glory be to Thee, O God
Glory to Thee, Creator,
Glory to thee, O King,
Christ, who dost pity sinners, Thy servants - Barekmor.

The Lord's Prayer

(St. Matt 6:9-13, St. Luk 11: 1-4)

6. Our Father, who art in heaven, / hallowed be Thy name: / Thy kingdom come; / Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven, / Give us this day our daily bread / and forgive our debts and sins, as we have forgiven our debtors. / Lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from the evil one, / For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, for ever and ever - Amen.

Hail Mary

(St. Luk 1: 28-31) (1:42)

7. Hail Mary, full of grace, / Our Lord is with thee, / blessed art thou among women, / and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, our Lord Jesus Christ / O virgin saint Mary, O Mother of God, / pray for us sinners, now and at all times, and at the hour of our death. Amen.

Appendix C: The Nicene Creed

1. We believe in one true God, The Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible:

2. And in One Lord Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God; begotten of the Father before all worlds; Light of Light; Very God of very God; begotten, not made; being of the same substance with the Father, and by whom all things were made;

Who for us men, and for our salvation, came down from heaven, and was incarnate of the Holy Virgin Mary, Mother of God, by the Holy Spirit and became man, and was crucified for us in the days of Pontius Pilate; and suffered, and died, and was buried;

And on the third day rose again according to His will; and ascended into heaven, and sat on the right hand of his Father; and shall come again in his great glory to judge both the living and the dead; whose kingdom shall have no end.

3. And in the one living Holy Spirit, the life-giving Lord of all, who proceeds from the Father and who with the Father and the Son is worshipped and glorified, who spoke by the prophets and the Apostles.

4. And in the One, Holy, Catholic (orthodox) and Apostolic Church.

5. And we acknowledge one baptism for the remission of sins,

6. And look for the resurrection of the dead;

7. And the new life in the world to come - Amen.

Appendix D: Greek and Syriac words

Aloho	-	God
Ahai	-	My brethren
Habibai	-	My beloved ones

Amen	-	So be it
Anaphora	-	Qurbana
Barekmore	-	Bless my Lord or Permit my Lord
Barek	-	Blessed
Batrihum olmela		
Olam olmin	-	In both worlds forever
Beskudisso	-	Holy place
Bovuso	-	Songs of supplication
Catechumens	-	Those who prepare for baptism
Catholici	-	Universal
Damodoseno	-	Till I come
Debaha	-	Sacrifice
Evangelion	-	Gospel
Episcopa	-	Bishop
Eniyono	-	Meditational hymns
Encharist	-	Sacrifice for thanksgiving
Halleluah	-	Praise to Lord, Praise God.
Hosanna	-	Praise, Save now,
Husoyo	-	A prayer of absolution
Jesus	-	Saviour
Kadisso	-	Holy, saint
Kurielaison (GK)	-	Lord have mercy
Kauma	-	A prayer said standing.
Kukilion	-	A song sung repeatedly
Knusio	-	Fellowship
Litany	-	Supplication said in the form of a prayer and response
Liturgy	-	Service
Messiah (Mesiho)	-	The anointed one
Mena olam Vadam mololotam olmin	-	From the beginning and forever and ever.

Morio rahem melai nu adarain	-	Lord have mercy upon us and help us.
Morio	-	Lord
Morioyono	-	concerning the Lord
Msemsono	-	Deacon
Manisso	-	Songs of praise
Mamodissa	-	Baptism
Nehavun	-	Be it so
Ouraitho	-	Five books of Moses
Promion	-	Preface or Introductory prayer
Pagro	-	Body
Qurbana	-	Gift, offering, sacrifice
Ruho	-	Spirit
Rusma	-	Benediction
Rosso	-	Mystery
Staumenkalos (GK)	-	Let us stand well
Seraphim	-	One group of the angles with six wings
Sleeho	-	Apostle
Sedro	-	Long Order (a prayer immediately after)
Slomo	-	Peace
Subho Labo Labro valtruho Kadiso	-	Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit
Domo	-	Blood
Thuyobo	-	Preparatory Service
Tubden	-	Then again (the intercessory Prayer in the Holy Qurbana)
Trisagion	-	Thrice Holy
Vu Kades	-	And Sanctified
Vakso	-	And broke

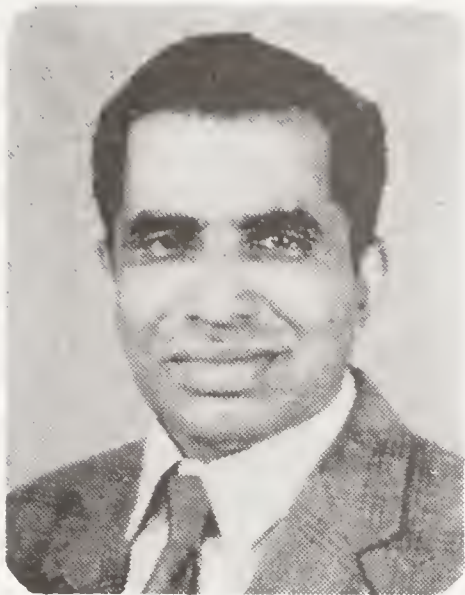
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2. He took his Doctorate in Education from the Bombay University. He was an External student of United Theological College Bangalore for the BD Course. He got a Diploma in Public Relations from St. Xaviers Institute of Communications, Bombay, in addition to passing various service examinations. He continues his studies on various subjects.
3. He was the Youth Movement secretary of Madras Diocese during 1981-86 and has been an active organizer and leader of the Orthodox Youth and students in Madras, Bangalore, Bombay, Delhi and Nagpur where he served before coming to the present place, Coimbatore. He has been contributing articles to various Church magazines and was also an Editor of 'the Gregorian Magazine' published from Bombay. Presently, he is an editor of the Madras Diocesan publication SION (South Indian Orthodox News).
4. This guide on the Holy Qurbanakramam is an effort to help the English knowing children and youth to understand and participate in 'Worship' effectively and wholeheartedly.

ABOUT THE BOOK

"An Aid to worship of the Holy Liturgy" of the Orthodox Syrian Christians to those who cannot read Malayalam was a dire necessity and Dr Punnoose has ably filled up that vacuum in simple English"

His Grace Geevarghese Mar Osthatheos
Metropolitan of Niranam Diocese

"Sufficient understanding and meaningful experience is essential for the worshippers. I am glad that this book by Dr U Punnoose explains the implications of the several aspects of the liturgy and answers many questions usually asked by the youth of the Church outside Kerala. The author has taken pains to deal with all aspects of the Holy sacrament"

His Grace Zacharias Mar Dionysius
Metropolitan of Madras Diocese

"I have received the book on the Holy Qurbana and Faith. I read it several times and it is good. I am happy that the book contains many ideas from my books"

His Grace Mathews Mar Barnabas
Metropolitan of American Diocese

"The purpose of this book as I could understand is to serve as an open invitation into the fold of the church to explore the interior thoroughly. The author has very ably pointed out the more obvious glories within... This guide book I am pretty confident will help those who really want to make life in the church relevant and meaningful"

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