

The Structure and Functioning of the Syro-Malabar Central Liturgical Committee (SMCLC)

The purpose of the Syro-Malabar Central Liturgical Committee is to assist the Synodal Commission for Liturgy in the liturgical matters of the Church. Besides the Chairman of the Commission for Liturgy, the two Bishops who are the members of the Commission, and the Secretary of the Commission, this committee consists of the following members:

1. All the Conveners/Secretaries of the Eparchial Liturgical Commissions of the Eparchies of the Syro-Malabar Church.
2. Another member from every Syro-Malabar Eparchy of Kerala nominated by the Eparch.
3. One Liturgical Expert each from Major Seminaries of the Syro-Malabar Synod designated by the Rector.
4. Six representatives (preferably experts in Liturgy) from the Syro-Malabar Religious Conference SMRC (3priests, 2 women religious, 1 brother religious).
5. One lay representative each from the Ecclesiastical provinces of the Syro-Malabar Church nominated by the Metropolitan in consultation with the Suffragan Bishops.
6. Members nominated by the Major Archbishop: The Major Archbishop may nominate members not more than ten. Out of these, three shall be from the Major Seminaries of the Syro-Malabar Church of which at least one shall be from the mission territories.

The period of the Committee shall be three years. The Commission for Liturgy may set up particular sub-committees to study particular parts of Liturgy or particular works. The Chairman also may invite experts as and when necessary.

General guidelines regarding the work of the Commission for Liturgy

The Commission's work shall be guided in a special way by norms and directives contained in the following:

Constitution on Sacred Liturgy (SC), excepting those norms which refer, only to Latin Church.

Decree on Eastern Churches (OE) and Ecumenism (UR).

Decrees and other communications of the Apostolic See for Oriental Churches in General and for the Syro-Malabar Liturgy in particular.

Other Papal documents and directives given by the Apostolic See.

Directives laid down by the Syro-Malabar Bishops' Synod.

Special care shall be taken regarding the preservation of lawful liturgical rite (OE 6) and the opening of ways for legitimate progress (SC 23).

The matters of research and scientific seminars.

Preparation of the Liturgical Texts

The general mode of procedure in drafting the Liturgical texts shall be:

The Commission appoints a drafting committee when found necessary to prepare the initial document as per the guidelines given for that purpose. These guidelines shall include:

- The sources to be translated, revised or at least consulted.
- Special norms and methods if any to be followed.
- Time limit to submit the draft
- The draft prepared by the committee will be sent to the members of the SMCLC.

- The SMCLC members shall discuss it in their respective forums and bring their suggestions to the SMCLC.
- The draft will be discussed in SMCLC and the committee will make the second draft.
- The second draft will be presented in the Synod with the specifications of the alterations. The Commission will incorporate the suggestions of the Synod.
- As per decision of the Synod the draft may be sent to the Eparchies for their comments.
- The draft with the suggestions from the Eparchies and SMCLC will be submitted to the Synod.
- The Synod may give the final approval and take necessary steps for its promulgation and implementation.

Printing and Publishing of Texts

Draft text can be printed "Pro manuscripto" by the commission for private circulation in order to collect observations.

The manuscript copy of the text, which goes to the Press, should be carefully checked to make sure that the contents conform exactly to what has been definitely approved by the Synod.

Before its promulgation due experimentation, for a definite period can be allowed as per the direction of the Synod. Experimentation shall be followed by an evaluation.

The Major Archbishop promulgates the approved texts with the Recognitio of the Apostolic See as per the norms. The texts will be printed and published by the Commission. When the individual Bishops print the text of the Holy Qurbana for the use of the people with catechetical instructions as decided by the Synod, the individual Bishops shall make sure that the text is intact and a copy shall be sent to the Commission.

The copyright of all the Liturgical Books published by the Commission for Liturgy rests with the Synod. Individual Bishops can allow the printing of the certain liturgical texts, like the ordination rite of priests and bishops. This is only for private circulation at the time of particular ordination and not for sale or use on other occasions. On such occasions the Bishop shall make sure the integrity of the text and a copy shall be sent to the Commission.

Through circulars, study sessions, conferences, articles and other publications instructions may be given to the faithful before new texts and rites are introduced.