SALA STAMPA DELLA SANTA SEDE
BOLLETTINO
HOLY SEE PRESS OFFICE BUREAU DE PRESSE DU SAINT-SIÈGE PRESSEAMT DES HEILIGEN STUHLS
OFICINA DE PRENSA DE LA SANTA SEDE SALA DE IMPRENSA DA SANTA SÉ
BIURO PRASOWE STOLICY APOSTOLSKIEJ دار الصحافة التابعة للكرسي الرسولي

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Video Message of the Holy Father to the Archeparchy of Ernakulam-Angamaly of the Syro-Malabar Church

The following is the text of the video message sent by the Holy Father Francis to the archeparchy of Ernakulam-Angamaly of the Syro-Malabar Church:

Video Message of the Holy Father

Brothers and sisters of the Archeparchy of Ernakulam-Angamaly, I am close to you!

I have been following you for years. I know about the faith and apostolic commitment of the beloved Syro-Malabar Church which is a source of joy and pride for the Universal Church, and this is why my heart is saddened as I speak to you today.

After long and tiring work, your Synod reached an agreement on the way to celebrate Holy Qurbana. Charity and love of communion spurred its members to take this step, even though some of them do not consider it an ideal form of celebration. These are the sacrifices required by communion!

But the Church is communion. If there is no communion, then there is no Church. It would be a sect. I know that for years, some, who should be examples and true teachers of communion, mostly priests, have been pressing you to disobey and oppose the decisions of the Synod. Brothers and sisters, do not follow them!

When discussions are not peaceful, they create violence. And there has been and there is violence among you, especially against those who want to remain in communion and celebrate the way your Church has agreed upon. I too have urged you multiple times to be docile to your Church. How can there be the Eucharist, if communion is broken, if the Most Blessed Sacrament is disrespected, with fighting and brawls?

I know there are reasons for the opposition that have nothing to do with celebrating the Eucharist or the liturgy.

They are worldly reasons. They do not come from the Holy Spirit. If they do not come from the Holy Spirit, then they come from somewhere else.

This is why I examined closely and attentively the reasons that have been used for years to convince you. I have already written to you several times in the past, but I know that my letters were not read out to everyone.

I have now decided to address you, the holy faithful People of God, the clergy, men and women religious, and especially you, dear lay faithful, who have great faith in the Lord and love the Church. And I am doing it in a slightly unusual way, so that no-one may have any more doubts about what the Pope thinks.

In the name of the Lord, for the spiritual good of your Church, of our Church, I ask you to heal this rupture. It is your Church, it is our Church. Re-establish communion, remain in the Catholic Church!

And you, presbyters, remember your ordination and the commitments you took on. Do not separate yourselves from the journey of the Church, but rather walk with the Synod, with your bishops, with the Major Archbishop. Accept putting into practice what was decided by your Synod.

I have sent Archbishop Cyril Vasil' as my delegate. He came among you, and he too, on my behalf, has asked you to put an end to the opposition and sometimes, to the violence – there has been some!

Do you not see that in this way the Church is at a standstill and many initiatives of goodwill can no longer be put at the service of the holy people of God, at the service and the sanctification of the people of God?

Make it so that by Christmas 2023, your archdiocese will humbly and faithfully agree to keep the peace with the rest of the Church, respecting all the indications of your Synod.

I ask you to be careful! Be careful that the devil does not lead you to transform yourselves into a sect. You are churches, do not become a sect. Do not force the competent ecclesiastic authority to acknowledge you as having left the Church because you are no longer in communion with your Pastors and with the Successor of the Apostle Peter, called to confirm all brothers and sisters in the faith and to preserve them in the unity of the Church. With great sorrow, sanctions would be incurred. I do not want to reach that stage.

Thus by Christmas, in the Archeparchy of Ernakulam-Angamaly, as throughout the Syro-Malabar Church, may Qurbana be celebrated in communion according to the directions of the Synod. Remember your Major Archbishop in your liturgy and pray for him. This has always been an important sign – that you recognize yourselves in the unity of the Church. Then it will be Christmas for all your people, for everyone.

Please do not continue to wound the Body of Christ! Do not separate yourselves from it! And even though there have been some grievances against you, forgive them with generosity. May the Eucharist be the model of your unity. Do not shatter the Body of Christ which is the Church, so as not to eat and drink judgment upon yourselves (cf. *1 Cor* 11:29).

May the Lord bless you and the Holy Spirit illuminate you. And please do not forget to pray for me. Thank you!