

THE THARAVAD PALLY, THE MONUMENT OF TRANCE AND THE ARCHDEACONS

PAKALOMATTOM



THROUGH THE ANNALS OF HISTORY

Born of the legacy of the apostolic tradition bequeathed by St. Thomas, the Apostle, during the first century, the St Thomas Christians in India consider the Christ experience of St Thomas, the foundation of their faith.

The natives of Palayoor, directly baptized by St. Thomas, the Apostle, migrated to various regions spreading Christian faith. The four prominent communities of Palayoor, Kalli, Kalikavu, Pakalomattom and Sankarapuri chose to settle in Kalikavu, just one and a half kilometers away from Kuravilangad even before 105 AD. Of these four clans, according to tradition, Pakalomattom family attained a noble and prominent status over others. Their abode at Pakalomattom later became the Tharavad (Homestead) of the Archdeacons. The Archdeacons, known as Lords of Duty, culled from the priests of Pakalomattom family, wielded power over St Thomas Christians all over India. Pakalomattom attained this unique privilege perhaps because of their intimate association with St. Thomas. Geevaarghese of the Cross, Geevarghese of Christ, Archdeacon Mathai, Archdeacon Kunjumathai and Archdeacon Thomas alias Mar Thoma I are a few of the major and prominent Archdeacons of Pakalomattom

THE STATUS OF ARCHDEACONS

St Thomas Christians regarded the status of Archdeacon magnate and noble. Archdeacon literally means, Lords of Duty, Prince of the faithful and chief preceptor. The Archdeacons, the close collaborators of the Metropolitan had power and authority over spiritual and material lives of the St. Thomas Christians all over India, They lead the Church in the absence or

death of the Metropolitan, selected aspirants to priesthood, appointed clergy to various parishes, received the newly appointed bishops and collected tithe on behalf of the Patriarchs and Bishops. It was customary among



George of the Christ

the Kings of Kochi to honour the newly appointed Archdeacons with the insignias of authority and supply soldiers and minions to escort them in their journey. The passing away of Archdeacon



George of the Cross

Geevaarghese of the Cross left the Tharavad Pally desolate without a successor. Tharavad Pally and its adjacent property, thus, went into the ownership of Alappattkottayil and Thomman Ouseph of Parekunel families. Chev. Dr. P.J. Thomas



Mar Thoma 1

of Parekunel family later donated 28.5 cents of his parental property to Kuravilangad Parish. The title deed of this agreement reads as follows: "to

protect the approximately 1500 year old tombs of Archdeacons adjacent to the Tharavad, safeguard their invaluable documents. Construct a chapel, and to fulfill the needs of the faithful...." Sri Varkey Varkey Allapattukottayil (Kottayil Aasan) donated 14.5 cents to Kuravilangad Church in 1953. Rev. Fr. Paul Alappatt, the Vicar of Kuravilangad Parish and Sri Varkey Alappattukottayil together with the financial support and assistance of Pakalomattom family constructed a chapel and erected granite cross at Pakalomattom in 1963. During the construction of the cha-



Sigillum Georgii de Christo, archidiaconi, Cochin 15 Januarii 1580. (Cochin 15 Jan. 1580; cf. doc. 115, p. 833).

Rev. Fr. George Frango de
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Georgius de Christo, archidiaconus, 15 Januarii 1580. (Cochin 15 Jan. 1580; cf. doc. 115, p. 833).

The seal and sign of Archdeacon George of Christ

pel, the remnants of the Tharavad (Nalukettu) had been unearthed. The well, adjacent to the ancient Nalukettu, is still preserved intact. The five tombs of the Archdeacons are in the proximity of the well.

The mortal remains of the Archdeacons are enshrined in mausoleums swathed with 6 x 1025 laterite stones. Both ends of these sepulchers are engraved with the sign of the Cross. Faithful, since ages continue to light both the stone and bronze lamps placed at the heads of the tombs as a sign of their devotion to the Archdeacons. Testimonials of miraculous cures through the intercession of Archdeacons are re-

ported from here. Nowhere else in India, save Pakomattom and Angamaly, have we the tombs of Archdeacons. No epitaphs like their names, date of birth or passage to eternity are inscribed on the tombs. Yet St Thomas Christians of all denominations and people of other religions tender prayers and offerings at these graves, considering the tombs, the abode of saints and holy ones.

As a result of the inevitable need to shield this universal legacy of the St. Thomas Christians in an ecumenical perspective, H.E Mar Joseph Kallarangatt, the bishop of Palai directed the Parish, to erect a granite gazebo over the tombs in 2007. The project was completed within three years. Another milestone was the decision to reconstruct the dilapidated chapel retaining its traditional beauty in October 2009. The renovation and reconstruction of the Archdeacon complex was spearheaded by Rev. Dr. Joseph Moolayil and Rev. Dr. Joseph Maleparambil during their tenure as Vicars. His Beatitude Mar Varkey Vithayathil, the Major Arch Bishop of Syro Malabar Church consecrated the chapel and the granite gazebo in the presence of Mar Joseph Kallarangatt, the Bishop of Palai and H.E. Mar Mathew Vaniakizhakel, the Bishop of the Eparchy of Satna on 17 January 2010. The granite gazebo is named the Great Monument of Trance or Maha Samadhi Mandapam and the chapel, the Root /parent Church or Tharavad Pally to perpetuate the Christian heritage of Kuravilangad

The Great Monument of Trance or Maha Samadhi Mandapam

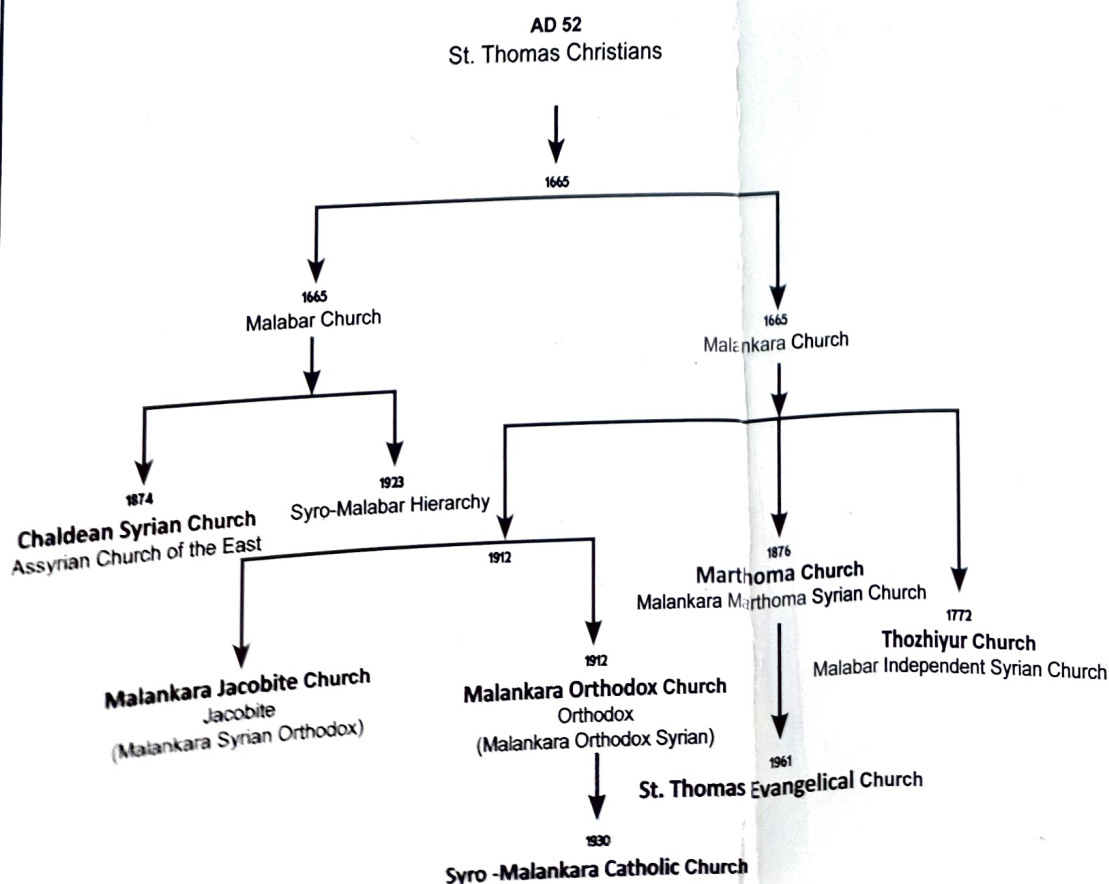
Sri Sebastian Padavath and his mother jointly bequeathed 2 cents to preserve the uniqueness of the place and to construct a granite

monument to perpetuate the memory of the Archdeacons in 2006. The granite gazebo over the 5 tombs of the archdeacons is constructed in conventional Kerala architecture with 24 pillars etched with 46 varieties of Crosses used in different denominations of Thomist Churches. The granite pavilion with a plinth area, 44 x 34 is constructed in the style "Krishna Sila". Students of history have much to learn from them. The Monument of Trance is opened for the faithful during the ecumenical week of prayers conducted every year from 18 to 25 January. These days are sanctified with prayers by different denominations of Thomist Church. To perpetuate the memory of Archdeacon Geevarghese of the Cross who steered the Syro Malabar Church during a turbulent period and who passed away in 1637, believed to be buried at Pakalomattom,

a granite statuette, unveiled by the Prefect of the Congregation for Oriental Churches, Cardinal Leonardo Sandri, on 8 November 2008, is erected at Pakalomattom.

The ancestral house of adoration had been very close to the present chapel. Of the many Archdeacons of St. Thomas Church, five are laid to rest at Pakalomattom and their tombs are still conserved intact. Believers from far flung areas still continue to offer foot lamps, illuminate the bronze and granite lamps at the tombs with oil and pray for their intercession. Of the five tombs three are placed in the middle and the other two are at a little distance away. The order of the tombs reminds the faithful of the positioning of concelebrants, usually 5 priests, during Rasa (High Mass). The chief celebrant and two cocolatebrants stand in the middle and the

St. Thomas Christians through the Centuries



Cyril Mar Baselios I
Thozhiyur Church
Malabar Independent Syrian Church



Joseph Mar Thoma
Marthoma Church
Malankara Marthoma Syrian Church



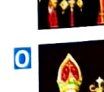
Bishop Dr.C.V. Mathew
St. Thomas Evangelical
St.Thomas Evangelical Church



Mar Baselios Thomas I
Malankara Jacobite Church
Malankara Jacobite



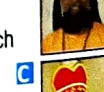
Baselios Mar Thoma Paulose II
Malankara Orthodox Church
Malankara Orthodox



Baselios Mar Cleemis
Syro-Malankara Church
Syro-Malankara Catholic Church



Mar George Alencherry
Syro-Malabar Church
Syro-Malabar Catholic Church



Mar Aprem
Chaldean Syrian Church
Assyrian Church of the East



Communities / Groups

- R** Reformed/Independent
- O** Oriental Orthodox
- C** Catholic
- E** Church of the East

other cocelebrants wearing chasuble stand at a distance on both sides. The archdeacons are interred in the traditional manner with heads facing West and feet, east.

THE THARAVAD PALLY (Root/Parent Church)

A prayer house is constructed near the tombs of the Archdeacons, adjacent to the Tharavad in the fashion of ancient homesteads. Keeping hold of conventional Kerala Architecture (Science of Carpentry), the prayer home is built with wooden panels, timber rafters, roof facades, spacious atrium Charupady (seating Arrangement) as in ancient temples and illams, front porch and entrance with balustrades etc.

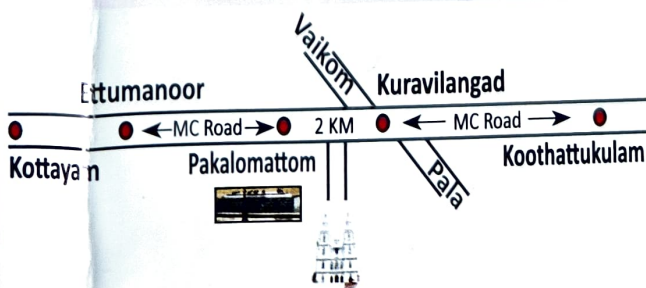
We welcome you all to The Tharavad Pally and the Monument of Trance at Pakalomattom, the common legacies of St Thomas Christians.

Feast

December 18, 19

Holy Qurbana

6.30 am on every Wednesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday.



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