

\*Syriac was the liturgical language of the Easter churches in spite of their different nationalities.

\*The first Arabic liturgy in Syriac church was in Iraq during the tenth century (912) celebrated the Divine Eucharist in Arabic, in the ordination of the Arab Bishop

Our contribution to the world:

\* The number of monks & nuns in the Golden age was about 600,000.

In the fifth century there were in the mountains of Edessa alone Three hundred ministries occupied by 90,000 monks, in St. Mathew's monastery east of Mosul, they were 12,000. And in the following Century there were 6300 monks in St Basus Monastery near Homes (Syria), and at the same period 35,000 signed the declaration of faith in southern Syria

\*Most famous was St Mark in Jerusalem, In September,1940 Syriac Estrangelo inscription was discovered :

“This is house of Mary the mother of John surnamed Mark...It was rebuilt in 73A.D after king Titus had destroyed Jerusalem”

- Syriac Church established many important institutions, succeeded in graduating many well known scholars in both the East & the West
- Their translations and writings became in the following centuries a remarkable source for the Arabs scholars & philosophers and through them for the Western world.
- A few names of Syriac scholars: Bardaisan, Mor Ephraim, Mar Balay, Mar Yacoub of Sroog, Al-Kindy, Hunayn Ibn Ishaq...
- Most ancient manuscript of the Holy Gospel is found in Syriac , written by Yacoub in Edessa in 411 A.D. and it is preserved in the British Museum.

### **The Syriac Orthodox Church Today**

The majority of followers of Syriac Orthodox Church reside in India (26 Dioceses) and the rest are (32 Dioceses) spread mainly in Syria, Lebanon, Iraq, Jordan, Turkey, Egypt, Europe, North and South America and Australia.

In the past the Church had hundreds of monasteries, a few of which still flourish. The most famous are:

- St. Mathew's Monastery near Mosel in Iraq
- St. Gabriel Monastery in Tour Abdin in Turkey (4<sup>th</sup> Century).
- St. Hananya Monastery near Mardin in Turkey
- St. Mark's Monastery in Jerusalem where the Lord Jesus Christ took the last supper with his disciples.
- St. Ephraim Monastery in Holland established in 1981
- Mor Ephrem Monastery @ Ma'arat Sayyidnaya in Damascus

# **THE SYRIAC ORTHODOX CHURCH OF ANTIOCH**



**Mor Hananya Monastery**

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### **The Syriac Orthodox Church of Antioch**

The Syriac Orthodox Church occupies the highest rank in the history of Christianity. It was the original church established in Jerusalem and grafted in Antioch by the Aramean and gentiles converts. Its history is full of holy and eternal memories. Produced many illustrious scholars, martyrs, confessors, monks and saints who led it in the true path, carried its flag to all the parts of the world and fed its children with heavenly teachings.

### **Apostolic See of Antioch**

The Apostolic see of Antioch was established by Saint Peter the chief of the Apostles in AD 37 and he was the first patriarch of Antioch. St. Peter was succeeded by many exalted patriarchs most of whom astonished humanity by their glorious deeds and wonderful writings, including His holiness the patriarch Moran Mor Ignatius Aphrem IIKarim is the 123rd among the legitimate patriarchs.

The jurisdiction of the See of Antioch, extended over the lands of Damascus, Palestine, Cilicia, Mesopotamia, parts of Asia Minor and all of Persia.

### **Language (The Syriac)**

The Syriac language is the Aramaic itself, which has spread far and wide in the ancient world.

The alphabets of many other oriental languages were developed from Aramaic. It attained the status of an international language in the whole east for a long period of time. The Syriac was the language spoken by the Lord Jesus Christ and its Disciples.

The first Liturgy was written in Syriac by St. James, the brother of the Lord, the first Archbishop of Jerusalem. This same Liturgy being used in the Syriac Orthodox church of Antioch all over the world until this date.

### **Biblical Heritage**

The Biblical Heritage of the Syriac Orthodox Church of Antioch is significant In 404 AD, Daniel The Syrian & St. Mesrop Mashtots translated the Bible into Armenian.

In the seventh century, the Syrian Orthodox Fathers translated the Bible into Arabic in response to a request by Prince of Jessera.

In 1221 John Joseph, a Syrian priest translated the Bible into Persian.

In this century Fr. Mathen Konat, translated it into Malayalam (South Indian Language).

The most ancient manuscript of the Gospel available today is in Syriac copied in Edessa in (AD 411).

### **Believes**

The Syriac Orthodox Church believes that the Holy Bible, which comprises of the Old Testament and the New Testament, is the divine word of God

### **Culture of Syriac Orthodox Communities**

Though small in number, vibrant Syriac Orthodox communities are found all over the world today.

In most cases, the cultural roots of these communities go back either to Mesopotamia (predominantly South East Turkey and regions around Mosul and Takrit in Iraq) or to the state of Kerala in southern India.

Over the centuries, these cultures developed unique and rich cultural traditions, customs, and cuisines, much of which influenced by the practice of the Christian faith in the Syriac Orthodox Church.

Practice of spiritual life in the Syriac Orthodox Church is guided by the liturgical calendar of the Church.

The church calendar determines the observance of the high holy days, feasts of Saints, memorial days of the fathers, fasts, etc.

Many cultural traditions and customs are associated with these observances as also with the sacraments of baptism and matrimony, and rites such as funerals