

National Seminar and Colloquium

On the occasion of the Centenary of the Apostolic Letter “Maximum Illud” and the declaration of “Extraordinary Missionary Month October 2019” by Holy Father Pope Francis, St. Ephrem’s Theological College conducted a National Seminar and Colloquium on ‘Liberative Word and Missionary Praxis’ on 3rd and 4th September with the collaboration of the Eparchy of Satna.

The Seminar had altogether four sessions on the first day. The inaugural session initiated with the procession of the Holy Bible, a small prayer and the enthronement of the Holy Bible. The inaugural meeting was set in motion with the lighting of lamp. His Excellency Mar Joseph Kodakallil, Bishop of Satna, Chairman, Synodal Commission for ETC, presided over the inaugural meeting. Very Rev. Dr. Joseph Ottapurackal, the Rector of St. Ephrem’s welcomed the gathering. His Excellency Mar Raphael Thattil, Bishop of Shamshabad, Member of Synodal Commission for ETC inspired the participants as well as the resource persons with the Keynote Address.

Soon after the inaugural session the first session of the seminar began. Rev Dr. Thomas Embayil VC was the moderator of the session. Three papers were presented in this session. First paper on “Religious Identity of Israelites and Missionary Consciousness during the Exilic and Post-Exilic Biblical History” was offered by Rev. Dr. Cyriac Valiakunnumpurath, (PVP, Vadavathoor). Rev. Dr. Mathew Palachuvattil from Holy Trinity Major Seminary, Jalandhar tabled the next paper on “Mission Mandate in the Synoptic Gospels,” and thereafter, Mr. Joseph Chittilapilly addressed the audience on “Experiences of a Missionary.” Each paper presentation was succeeded by a floor discussion regarding the paper which ensured the active participation of audience. Each session was ended with the concluding remarks of the moderator.

The second session commenced in the afternoon. Rev. Sr. Keerthi CHF, the Principal of Nirmal Matha School, Kailaspur, was the moderator. Rev. Dr. George Alukka CST, the Provincial of Khrist Jyothi Province, Punjab, presented his reflections on “Christian Mission based on John 20:21-23 with a reference to Punjab mission”. Paper on “Initial Proclamation in the Teachings of the Church with reference to North-East mission” was opened by Rev. Dr. Joseph Anikuzhikattil SDB, Professor of Sacred Heart Theological College, Shillong, and Rev Dr. Paul Chungath, Syncellus of the Eparchy of Sagar enlightened the audience with

“Reflections on and Reminiscences of Sharing the Gospel.” The second session was also longed about two hours and it was followed by the concluding session under the moderator, Rev. Dr. John Thoppil who shed light on the missionary endeavours in the light of *Maximum Illud*. His Excellency Mar Sebastian Vadakkal, Bishop of Ujjain, Member, Synodal Commission for ETC delivered the concluding message of the seminar. Rev Dr. George Kudilil, the General Convenor of the national seminar expressed the words of gratitude to all who cooperated to make the seminar a success. The day was made more colourful and attractive by the presentation of various cultural programmes which were followed by the concluding session of the seminar. Cultural programmes performed by the members of *Ephrem Pariwar* were really an exposure of the cultural heritage of India as well as of the Syro- Malabar Church. The entire seminar was well oriented under the guidance of various facilitators of each session such as Rev. Dr. Cyriac Puliampallil, Rev. Dr. George Mangalapillil, Rev. Dr. Devamitra Neelankavil and Rev. Dr. John Kondooparambil. The entire community gathered numbering around 200 participants was honoured with sumptuous food under the humble guidance of Rev. Fr. Joseph Parayil and Rev. Fr. Mathew Peedikayil.

The colloquium as well as the workshop in connection with the National seminar was conducted on 4th September. Different biblical scholars from all over India made discussions on the various topics related to “Liberative Word and Missionary Praxis” and came up with some practical solutions to promote the missionary activities in the present context of India. The sessions were moderated by Rev Dr. George Kudilil. Mr. Joseph Chittilapilly and Rev. Dr. Cyriac Valiakunnumpurath, the facilitators made timely interventions. The following were the papers presented on the second day:

“The Missionary Dimension of the Call of Israel in the OT” by Mar Prince Antony Panegandan, (Bishop of Adilabad), “A Search into the Dimensions of Mission Elements in the Book of Deuteronomy” by Rev. Dr. Manoj Parackal MST (Ruhalya Major Seminary, Ujjain), “Involvement of the Servant of God in the Liberative Mission of the People in Exile – A Rereading of the Babylonian Exile in the Current Indian Context” by Rev. Dr. Ignatius Kunnumpurath OCD (Teresianum, Rome), “Esther: An Exemplary Woman Missionary Model in the Cultural and Religious Scenario of India” by Sr. Dr. Linta Pulickathadathil SH (SH Generalate, Manganam, Kottayam), “Discipleship as a Paradigm for a Missionary in the Gospel of Mark” by Rev. Dr. Sibichan Panthanmackal MSFS (Thejus Vidyapith, Bengaluru) and “Pauline Mission Strategies in the Indian Context” by Rev. Dr. Joseph Ottapurackal, the Rector of St. Ephrem’s Theological College, Satna.