



Prot No. 1864/2019

12 December 2019

Dear Archbishops and Bishops,

I write you this on the basis of a letter jointly signed by His Eminence Cardinal Leonardo Sandri, the Prefect of the Congregation for the Oriental Churches and Archbishop Rino Fisichella, the President of the Pontifical Council for the Promotion of the New Evangelization, inviting our Church to celebrate **the Sunday of the Word of God** in our Church with due importance as envisaged by Holy Father Pope Francis in his Apostolic Letter *Aperuit illis*.

The Sunday of the Word of God is instituted on the III Sunday of the Ordinary time according to the Latin liturgical calendar. As mentioned in the letter indicated above, this Sunday falls between 21 and 27 January every year. As per the Syro-Malabar liturgical calendar, this Sunday falls in the season of Epiphany. The observation of this Sunday is very much linked to the Unity Octave which is from 18-25 January. So inevitably, this Sunday is either during the Unity Octave or the Sunday immediately after the Unity Octave. In 2020, the Sunday dedicated for the Word of God is 26 January.

The directive part of the *motuproprio*s as follows: “The various communities will find their own ways to mark this *Sunday* with a certain solemnity. It is important, however, that in the Eucharistic celebration the sacred text be enthroned, in order to focus the attention of the assembly on the normative value of God’s word. On this Sunday, it would be particularly appropriate to highlight the proclamation of the word of the Lord and to emphasize in the homily the honour that it is due. ...In this regard, renewed efforts should be made to provide members of the faithful with the training needed to be genuine proclaimers of the word...” (No. 3).

Let us earnestly respond to the invitation of the Holy Father with enthusiasm and make every attempt to celebrate this Sunday with solemnity so that our faithful can make use of this occasion to deepen their knowledge in the Word of God and make it more experiential. Please find herewith attached the letter I received from the above mentioned prelates and a copy of the Apostolic Letter *Aperuit illis*.

I request you to give necessary instructions regarding the celebration of this Sunday in your Eparchy/Archeponarchy.

With the greetings of Christmas,
Yours cordially in Christ,

George Cardinal Alencherry
Major Archbishop of the Syro-Malabar Church