

# **NORMS, POLICY AND PROCEDURE OF THE SAFE ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE**

## **Archeprarchy of Thalassery**

### **Preamble**

The procedural norms contained herein are based on the following legislative documents of the Catholic Church and the Government of India: 1) Various canonical legislations of the supreme authority of the Catholic Church, 2) Procedural norms for Dealing with Cases Involving Sexual Abuse of Minors of Catholic Bishops' Conference of India (hereinafter called as CBCI) 3) Gender Policy of Kerala Catholic Bishops' Council (hereinafter called as KCBC) 4) Guidelines to Deal with Sexual Harassment at Workplace (CBCI, 2017) 5) Guidelines for Safe Environment Programme - KCBC (hereafter Guidelines), 6) Protection of Children from the Sexual Offence Act 2012 (hereafter POCSO), 7) Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace Act 2013, 8) Juvenile Justice Act 2010 (hereafter JJ Act).

Among these, the JJ Act tries to consolidate and amend the law relating to children alleged and found to be in conflict with the law and children in need of care and protection by catering to their basic needs through proper care, protection, development, treatment, social re-integration, by adopting a child-friendly approach in the adjudication and disposal of matters in the best interest of children and for their rehabilitation through processes provided, and institutions and bodies established. The General principles provisioned for the care and protection of children in the JJ Act appeal to its application in our institutions belonging to the Catholic Church and parishes. POCSO act, which protects children from offenses of sexual assault, sexual harassment, and pornography and provides for the establishment of special courts for the trial of such offenses and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto, demands us to ensure the healthy, physical, emotional, intellectual and social development of children. The Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace Act provides protection against sexual harassment of women at the workplace and

for the prevention and redressal of complaints of sexual harassment and for the matters connected therewith or incidental thereto.

Taking inspiration from the above-mentioned Civil Act of 2013 and having considered the seriousness of the situation and the importance of the other civil acts, CBCI published a guideline to deal with Sexual Harassment in the workplace in 2017. It has been formulated to create a safe, healthy, and loving environment that enables its employees to work without the fear of prejudice, bias, and sexual harassment. It creates a mechanism for preventing and redressing complaints and also provides safeguards against false or malicious charges. Also, CBCI, in its Procedural norms for dealing with cases involving sexual abuse of minors – 2015 exhibits the mind to show zero tolerance towards sexual abuse of children, to take necessary disciplinary action against offenders, to constitute an appropriate mechanism with essential infrastructure and time-bound procedures to deal with cases of sexual abuse; to respond with compassion and care to victims of sexual abuse; to make available to the victims professional care including therapy/counseling and to address the critical component of prevention.

Kerala Catholic Bishops' Conference adopts the spirit of the above-mentioned civil acts and the corresponding norms and directives/guidelines from CBCI and the other relevant ecclesiastical laws, provides for maintaining an environment that is free of all forms of gender violence, sexual harassment, and discrimination on the basis of sex/gender in the Kerala Catholic Church. The Major Archbishop of the Syro-Malabar Church, in conformity with the synodal decision of the Synod of bishops, promulgated the KCBC Guidelines for the entire Syro-Malabar Church and decreed it be enforced in all Syro-Malabar eparchies and all related institutions with effect from 1 March 2019.

Accordingly, the archbishop of the Archeparchy of Thalassery, its superior authority, has constituted a committee called the Eparchial Safe Environment Committee with the Eparchial Safe Environment Director as its Chairperson to prevent and handle Sexual or any other form of harassment in the workplace and for the protection of children and vulnerable adults from sexual and any other forms of offenses committed by Church Personnel namely, clerics that is bishops, priests, deacons, lay workers and volunteers both paid and otherwise, religious both men and women and seminarians. The following norms and procedures are given for that purpose.

**PART I**  
**PRELIMINARY NORMS**  
**Section I - Title and Objectives**

1. Title: These norms are called “Norms and Procedures of the Eparchial / Archeparchial Safe Environment Committee in the Syro-Malabar Church”. These norms apply to all Church personnel, parishes and institutions, as the case may be, according to the definitions given in various documents quoted herein, within the eparchy/archeparchy.
2. The objectives of the Eparchial/Archeparchial Safe Environment Committee are the following:
  - 2.1 To implement the policy given by the ecclesiastical as well as civil authorities against harassment and abuse committed against women, children or vulnerable adults by any category of Church personnel.
  - 2.2 To remain as a permanent mechanism for the prevention and redressal of harassment cases and other acts of gender based violence and its cover ups in any form.
  - 2.3 To ensure the implementation of the Safe Environment Policy through proper handling of the complaints and their follow-up procedures.
  - 2.4 To uphold the commitment of the eparchy to provide a safe environment free of gender based discrimination where everyone can feel comfortable.
  - 2.5 To promote a social, psychological as well as a spiritual environment to raise awareness on harassment in its various forms.

**Section II – Definitions**

3. In these norms unless the context otherwise requires:
  - 3.1 *Safe Environment* means an environment where a person is free from sexual and all sorts of harassment and feels comfortable.
  - 3.2 *Minor* means any person under the age of eighteen or who is considered by law to be the equivalent of a minor.
  - 3.3 *Vulnerable Adult* means any person in a state of infirmity, physical or mental deficiency or deprivation of personal liberty which, in fact, even occasionally, limits their ability to understand or to want or otherwise to resist the offence.

3.4 *Child pornography* means any representation of a minor, regardless of the means used, involved in explicit sexual activities, whether real or simulated, and any representation of sexual organs of minors for primarily sexual purposes or the indecent or obscene representation of a child.

3.5 *Church Personnel* means clerics (bishops, priests, deacons), members of the institutes of consecrated life and societies of apostolic life, candidates to priesthood and religious life as well as other similar states of life, lay faithful who are employees or volunteers (*kaikkars*, sacristans, accountants, catechism teachers, parish council members, office bearers of pious associations, similar office bearers, etc.) in the Church.

3.6 *Sexual Harassment* means and includes any unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favours and other verbal expression or physical conduct of sexual nature which makes a person feel offended, humiliated or intimidated. It includes any one or more of the following unwelcome acts or behaviour, whether directly or by implication.

3.6.1 Physical contact and advances

3.6.2 Demand or request for sexual favours

3.6.3 Making sexually coloured remarks or jokes or conversation

3.6.4 Showing pornography

3.6.5 Any other unwelcome physical conduct or verbal or non-verbal expressions of sexual nature

3.6.6 Any act falling under the purview of the following cases will be considered as an incident of sexual harassment:

3.6.6.1 When submission to unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favours, and verbal expression or physical conduct of a sexual nature are, implicitly or explicitly, made a term or condition for teaching, guidance, employment, participation or evaluation of a person's engagement in any activity.

3.6.6.2 When unwelcome sexual advances, and verbal or non-verbal expressions and/or physical conduct such as loaded comments, remarks or jokes, letters, phone calls or e-mails, message through any social media platform, gestures, exhibition of pornography, lurid stares, physical contact, stalking, sounds or display of a derogatory nature is verified.

3.6.6.3 When a person uses the body or any part of it or any object as an extension of the body with a sexual purpose in

relation to another person without the latter's consent or against that person's will.

3.6.6.4 When deprecatory comments, conduct or any such behaviour is based on the gender identity/sexual orientation of the person and/or when the premises or any public forum of the institute is used to denigrate/discriminate against person(s), or when a hostile environment is created on the basis of a person's gender identity/sexual orientation.

3.6.6.5 Teaching activities or explanation of various issues related to fertility, reproductive health and other research topics in a scientific manner as a part of training programmes approved and endorsed by legitimate authorities will not be considered as harassment.

3.6.7 Relevant questions asked or explanations sought by the legitimate authorities (counsellors, judges etc.) regarding sexual problems, sexual orientation or the concept of sexuality of the contesting spouses in a marriage case in the ecclesiastical tribunals will not be considered as harassment.

3.7 *Cover up* means actions or omissions intended to interfere with or avoid civil investigations or canonical investigations, whether administrative or penal, against a Church personnel, by his/her legitimate superior.

3.8 *Safe Environment Director* is the one who is responsible for implementing the Safe Environment Programme in an eparchy/archeparchy of the Syro-Malabar Church and ensuring adherence to its requirements. The Director is appointed by the eparchial/archeparchial bishop or the one who holds his responsibility.

3.9 *Safe Environment Committee* means the Committee appointed by the eparchial/archeparchial bishop to assist the Safe Environment Director for implementing safe environment policy.

3.10 *Complainant* means a victim, or if the victim is unable to make a complaint due to mental or physical incapacity or death, his/her parents/legal guardian/heir or such other person as may be prescribed by law.

3.11 *Respondent* means the Church personnel against whom a complaint has been made.

3.12 Wherever *she/he* is used in these procedures to indicate a person or persons, it includes also the persons not belonging to either of these genders.

3.13 *Day* means a calendar day according to the Christian era excluding holidays, both religious and civil, whether full or partial.

### **Section III - Jurisdiction**

4. These norms and procedures would apply to:

4.1 Clerics (bishops, priests and deacons) belonging to and residing in an eparchy/archeparchy of the Syro-Malabar Church.

4.2 Members of the Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life when they hold an office in an eparchy/archeparchy of the Syro-Malabar Church and when they reside in the parishes or the Church related institutions in the geographical boundary of the eparchy/archeparchy of the Syro-Malabar Church, without prejudice to the competence of the Safe Environment Committees of the Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life of Pontifical and Major Archiepiscopal Right.

4.3 Candidates to priesthood and religious life as well as other similar entities.

4.4 Lay employees, volunteers like *kaikkars*, accountants, sacristians, catechism teachers, parish council members, office bearers of pious associations, organizations, movements etc. whenever they act in the capacity of Church personnel.

4.5 Service providers and outsiders find themselves within the jurisdictional area of an eparchy/archeparchy of the Syro-Malabar Church at the time of the commission of the act coming under the purview of these norms.

5. The Safe Environment Director has the duty to ensure that the internal complaint Committee/redressal Committee is formed and maintained in every Catholic institution in an eparchy/archeparchy.

## **PART II CONSTITUTION AND FUNCTION OF THE SAFE ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE**

### **Section I - Constitution of the Safe Environment Committee**

6. The Committee shall consist of a minimum of five members, who shall be appointed by the bishop/archbishop of an eparchy/archeparchy. The Committee should be composed of priests, religious sisters, lay men and lay women.

6.1 The Director may be female or male. She/he shall have adequate knowledge in legal matters and its procedures concerning sexual harassment of women, minors and vulnerable adults. She/he is appointed by the bishop of an eparchy/archeparchy for a period of three years. The Director may be reappointed any number of times.

6.2 The Office Administrator, appointed by the bishop, shall be a person, male or female, who shall supervise and administer the day to day affairs of the office including maintenance of office files, records, namely, attendance register, case diary, case files, other document register, complaint register and similar documents.

6.3 The Coordinator, appointed by an eparchial/archeparchial bishop/archbishop shall preferably be a lay person, who is to function as a facilitator.

6.4 Among the other members, there could be:

6.4.1 A counsellor/psychologist/ social worker;

6.4.2 A person of good reputation, having knowledge in the civil law and/or previous experience in investigation and enquiry of cases.

6.4.3 A person having knowledge in canon law, preferably a priest.

6.5 Depending on the necessity of each case, the Director may co-opt members and experts on an *ad hoc* basis.

6.6 The appointment of the members may be made for a period of three years which can be renewed any number of times by the bishop / archbishop of an eparchy / archeparchy.

6.7 The members can be removed for valid reasons by the appointing authority, after, having given her/him a chance to explain herself/himself. It is highly recommended that she/he is not removed while the enquiry of a case is in progress.

## **Section II - Disqualification of the Committee Members**

7. No person shall be appointed or continue to be a member of the Committee, if he/she is:

- 7.1 Declared insolvent by civil courts
- 7.2 Lunatic or a person of unsound mind
- 7.3 Convicted for an offence involving moral turpitude
- 7.4 Involved in a misconduct amounting to immoral trafficking
- 7.5 Convicted and punished in any criminal offence/s
- 7.6 Facing any inquiry/penal trial relating to sexual harassment or found guilty of sexual harassment; punished for any misbehaviour or misconduct
- 7.7 Standing against the faith, teaching and morality of the Catholic Church or found a wilful defaulter of the Church laws

### **Section III- Powers and Duties of the Committee**

8. The Safe Environment Committee will be the authority in an eparchy/archeparchy of the Syro-Malabar Church to deal with any sort of harassment case and the infringement of the Safe Environment Policy promulgated by the Major Archbishop of the Syro-Malabar Church.

9. The Committee is invested with the following duties:

9.1 Ensure a safe and secure environment for minors and vulnerable adults within the eparchy/archeparchy. The Committee shall:

9.1.1 Provide periodical safe environment training to the Church personnel in an eparchy/archeparchy. Orientation seminars will be organized for the faithful to discuss the nature and extent of the sexual harassment of women at workplace, the protection of children and vulnerable adults from sexual offences, gender policy and Juvenile Justice Act and all related ecclesiastical and civil laws.

9.1.2 Publish the Safe Environment Policy in the regional languages widely in any accepted mode.

9.1.3 Publish the names and phone numbers of Members of the Committee.

9.2 Issue certificates to the Church personnel who participate in the periodical training programmes and seminars and any other events organized by the Committee.



- 9.3 Help the victim with necessary aids to report the cases of sexual assault or harassment to the Committee itself as well as to the civil authorities.
- 9.4 Address the spiritual, physical and emotional state of the victim, his/her family and the affected community.
- 9.5 Address the possibility of false accusations against the clergy, employees and volunteers.
- 9.6 Provide a safe, accessible and sensitive mechanism for registering complaints.
- 9.7 Take cognisance of complaints about sexual harassment, conduct inquiries, and provide assistance and redressal to the victims and recommend appropriate action against the harasser.
- 9.8 After the inquiry, recommend disciplinary action to the concerned authorities.
- 9.9 Recommend the intervention of the eparchial/archeparchial authority to provide legal assistance to the complainant if he/she chooses to file a complaint in relation to the offence under the Indian Penal Code or any other law in force at the time.
- 9.10 Recommend the intervention of the eparchial/archeparchial authority to provide medical assistance to the victim with the consent of the complainant or even without consent in such cases where the complainant is physically or mentally incapacitated to give his/her consent.
- 9.11 Inform the concerned authority to arrange for appropriate psychological, emotional and physical support (in the form of counselling, security and other assistance) to the victim whenever the Committee finds it necessary.

#### **Section IV - Meetings of the Committee**

10. The members of the Committee shall meet at least once in three months.
- 10.1 The Director shall convene a meeting at the request of the majority of the total members of the Committee, on a date not later than fifteen days from the receipt of such a request.
- 10.2 The quorum for the meeting of the Committee shall be five. If the quorum is not complete in the scheduled time, it shall be adjourned for

half an hour and thereafter the requirement of quorum ceases and the meeting shall proceed with at least three of its members.

10.3 All decisions in the meeting will be taken through consensus of the members of the Committee present in the meeting. In case of any disagreement among the members regarding any decision, it will be decided by the majority of votes.

10.4 Agenda, discussions and the decisions shall be recorded in writing and undersigned by all the members present in the meeting.

### **PART III PROCEDURAL NORMS**

#### **Section I - Procedure for Filing a Complaint**

11. Any person/employee, male or female (hereinafter mentioned as the 'Complainant') shall have the right to file a complaint concerning any harassment against Church personnel (hereinafter mentioned as the 'Respondent'). All complaints shall be addressed to the Director of the Safe Environment Committee.

11.1 The complaint should be filed within a period of 3 months from the date of incident. In case of a series of incidents, the complainant should file a case within a period of 3 months from the date of the last incident. The Committee may extend the time limit, not exceeding three months, if the Committee is satisfied by the reasons given by the complainant to make a written complaint.

11.2 In the case of sexual abuse of minors by clerics, prescription period is twenty years, which begins to run from the day on which a minor completes his eighteenth year of age (SST Procedural Norms Art. 7 §§1, 2)

11.3 Where the aggrieved person is unable to file a complaint on account of his/her physical or mental incapacity or death or otherwise, his/her legal heir or guardian or any other person as prescribed by law may make a complaint under this section.

11.4 All complaints shall be in writing. The complainant can avail the assistance of the Safe Environment Committee Director or any of its members to prepare the complaint in writing.

11.5 If possible the complaint should be dated and signed in front of the Director by the complainant. When the complaint is prepared with the assistance of the Committee, the complaint prepared shall be read out to the complainant and will receive his/her signature.

11.6 The identity of the complainant/informant shall be kept confidential as much as the law demands.

## **Section II - Preliminary Investigation**

12. Within a period of 7 (seven) working days from the date of reception of the complaint, the Director shall convene a meeting of the Committee to deal with the complaint and make a preliminary inquiry or fact finding inquiry to verify the facts of the complaint. An Inquiry Committee (Internal Complaint Committee) shall be constituted as per the norms of *Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace Act 2013*, Art. 10-11, if the complaint is found genuine.

12.1 The Inquiry Committee has the option to settle the matter between the complainant and the respondent through reconciliation at any stage of the inquiry. For this, the wishes of the complainant shall be ascertained. If the complainant wishes that a warning would suffice, then the alleged offender shall be called to the meeting of the Committee, and shall be heard, and if a warning is just and proper, he/she may be warned about his/her behaviour. The matter shall be treated as concluded and disposed of with a note to that effect made in the complaint register signed by both the parties.

12.2 When a settlement has been arrived through reconciliation, in cases permitted by the law, the Director shall record the settlement so arrived and forward the same to the eparchial/archeparchial bishop/archbishop.

12.3 The Director shall provide the copies of the settlement as recorded to the complainant and the respondent.

12.4 When a settlement is reached through reconciliation, no further inquiry shall be conducted by the Safe Environment Committee.

12.5 Reconciliation shall not be made on the basis of monetary settlement.

12.6 Where the aggrieved person informs the Committee that the terms of settlement arrived under 12.2 have not been complied with by the respondent, the Committee makes an inquiry and continue with further proceedings mentioned in the Act.

12.7 If the case falls under POCSO (Protection of Children from the Sexual Offence Act 2012), the Committee shall direct the concerned persons to report the matter to the Police as per the norms. At the same time, the Committee shall report the case of sexual abuse by clerics and religious to the competent hierarchy/major superior who will report the matter to the Congregation for the Doctrine of Faith.

### **Section III - Constitution of the Inquiry Committee**

13. The Inquiry Committee will be a part of Safe Environment Committee with the following criteria:

13.1 The Director in consultation with the Bishop and the members of the Safe Environment Committee shall constitute an Inquiry Committee.

13.2 The Director shall constitute the Inquiry Committee with a chairperson through a formal act and in writing.

13.3 The Inquiry Committee shall consist of minimum of five members. In case a woman is the victim, the Chairperson and the majority of the members of the Committee shall be women. In case a man is the victim, the Chairperson and the majority of the members shall be men.

14. The Inquiry Committee (Internal Complaint Committee) enjoys statutory power as per the norms of *Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace Act 2013 Art.11 (3)*.

14.1 Summoning and enforcing the attendance of any person (complainant/ respondent/witness) and examining him/her on oath and recording the statements;

14.2 Requiring the discovery and production of valid documents;

14.3 Any other matter which may be prescribed.

### **Section IV - The Inquiry Process**

15. In case the complainant requests that the complaint should not be concluded with a warning but should be processed, the same may be processed and has to be solved within a stipulated time of 90 working days, starting from the receipt of such a request, if the date is different from the receipt of the complaint.

15.1 Within seven days from the starting of the inquiry process, the Inquiry Committee shall summon the respondent and read out the content of the complaint to him/her. The respondent has no right to record, copy or get a copy of the complaint. The reply of the respondent shall be recorded by the Committee and he/she shall be allowed fifteen days for further defence or clarifications. The replies may also include a list of questions that the party demands the Inquiry Committee to ask the other party or its witnesses. In case the complainant has any additions to make to the complaint filed earlier, he/she can submit a statement to that effect in fifteen days.

15.2 Within seven working days of the receipt of the replies and defense and the list of questions, the Inquiry Committee shall start the process of an oral hearing.

15.3 In the course of the oral hearing, the complainant, the respondent, and their witnesses will be heard individually and privately.

15.4 All parties can also submit documentary evidence, if any, at the time of the oral hearing.

15.5 The Inquiry Committee shall have the power to ask any questions that it deems fit to all parties during the oral hearing.

15.6 The Inquiry Committee may ask also questions which have been submitted by the complainant and respondent for the other parties. However, the Inquiry Committee has the right to reject any question that it has reasons to believe to be irrelevant, mischievous or gender sensitive.

15.7 The Inquiry Committee may also call upon additional witnesses and ask them any question that it may deem fit.

15.8 The Inquiry Committee may request the concerned authorities for any document pertaining to the complaint, if that is within the limits of law.

15.9 The Inquiry Committee shall conduct the proceedings in a fair manner and may provide opportunity to the complainant and the respondent for presenting and defending his/her case.

15.10 The Inquiry Committee may consider as relevant any earlier complaint against the respondent. However, at no time in the inquiry process shall the past history of sexual conduct of the complainant be

probed into, as such information shall be deemed irrelevant to a complaint of sexual harassment.

15.11 If the respondent fails, without valid grounds, to appear for three consecutive hearings convened by the Chairperson, the Inquiry Committee may proceed with the complaint based on available evidence.

15.12 Both parties have the right to get the assistance of legal practitioners but they shall not take part in the inquiry process.

### **Section V - Complaint Withdrawal**

16. The complainant may withdraw his/her complaint in writing at any time during the inquiry process. However, the Committee must ascertain the reasons for the withdrawal of the complaint and record the same in writing and get it counter-signed by the complainant.

16.1 The inquiry procedure shall, on such withdrawals, be terminated. However, the Committee may proceed if the Committee is informed or has any reason to believe that such withdrawal is the consequence or effect of coercion or intimidation or influence by any other means exerted by the respondent or any person on behalf of the respondent.

### **Section VI - Disciplinary Actions**

17. At the conclusion of the inquiry process, the Committee may recommend disciplinary action in its report to the eparchial/archeparchial bishop/archbishop. Recommendation of disciplinary action by the Committee could depend on factors such as the nature and extent of injury caused to the complainant, the impact of the violation on the institution as a whole, the position of the harasser in the hierarchy, the repetition of offences and similar factors. The Committee may recommend disciplinary action in the form of warning, written apology, bond of good behaviour and other relevant mechanisms as prescribed either in the Church laws or in the civil laws.

### **Section VII - Redressal**

18. The Director shall submit a report along with recommended disciplinary actions to the eparchial/archeparchial bishop/archbishop within 7 working days from the date of definitive conclusion of the case and it shall be intimated to both the parties through a letter.

18.1 The bishop/archbishop upon the receipt of the inquiry report may implement the disciplinary action on the basis of the recommendations of the Committee within 30 days.

18.2 The disciplinary action may be proportionate to the nature of the violation.

18.3 In case the complaint is not proved, the Committee shall recommend that no action is required to be taken in the matter.

18.4 Mere inability to substantiate a complaint or provide adequate proof need not attract action against the complainant.

18.5 In cases where the Committee arrives at the conclusion that the allegation by the complainant is malicious or fabricated with the full knowledge of the complainant or where the complainant has produced any forged or misleading document, the Committee may recommend appropriate action against such complainant.

18.6 If the Committee arrives at a conclusion that during the inquiry any witness has given false evidence or produced any forged or misleading document, it may recommend punitive action against the said witness.

18.7 Non-adversarial modes of redressal and resolution could also be considered in appropriate cases. Examples of this may be verbal warning, verbal apology, promise of good behaviour and similar actions.

18.8 The victim of sexual harassment/complainant may have the option to seek adjustments such as change of the room/location of the office room, change of the quarters, etc.

18.9 The Committee, in exceptional cases, may ask the eparchial/archeparchial Bishop to allow the complainant to proceed on leave for a period of up to three months (the leave will not be deducted from his/her leave account). In case of extremely grave complaints the Committee may propose to the eparchial/archeparchial bishop/archbishop an administrative leave to the respondent.

18.10 The Committee may propose other reliefs also to the complainant as may be prescribed.

### **Section VIII - Appeal**

19. The aggrieved party has the right to appeal against the recommendations made by the Inquiry Committee. The aggrieved party may appeal to the

Appellate Safe Environment Committee of the Syro Malabar Church within 10 working days from the date of its receipt.

### **Section IX – Interpretation and Amendments**

20. Official Interpretation of these Norms and Procedures is the competence of the Major Archbishop who shall do so after consulting the General Moderator for Administration of Justice in the Syro-Malabar Church.

21. The amendments to these norms and procedure shall be made by the Synod of the Syro-Malabar Church after having heard the eparchies/archeparchies of the Syro-Malabar Major Archiepiscopal Church, without prejudice to the norms given by the higher authorities.

#### **Appendix: Sources**

These norms and procedures are based on the following legislative documents of the Catholic Church and the Government of India:

- 1) *Motu Proprio, Sacramentorum Sanctitatis Tutela* with its latest updates in December 2019.
- 2) Apostolic Letter, *As a Loving Mother*, 2016.
- 3) *Motu Proprio, Vos estis Lux Mundi*, 2019.
- 4) *Procedural Norms for Dealing with Cases Involving Sexual Abuse of Minors* (Catholic Bishops Conference of India, 2015).
- 5) *Gender Policy* (Kerala Catholic Bishops' Council, 2009).
- 6) *Guidelines to Deal with Sexual Harassment at Workplace* (CBCI, 2017).
- 7) *Guidelines to Deal with Sexual Harassment at Workplace* (KCBC, 2017).
- 8) *Guidelines for Safe Environment Programme* (KCBC, 2019).
- 9) *Protection of Children from the Sexual Offence Act*, 2012.
- 10) *Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace Act*, 2013.
- 11) *Juvenile Justice Act*, 2010.