



**Diocese of UK-Europe and Africa
Malankara (Indian) Orthodox Syrian Church**

**Ecumenical Faith Formation through Orthodox
Reflections for Transformation**



Annual Report [April 2025 – March 2026]

Glory and Praises be to the Holy Triune God!

1.0 Introduction

The concept of having an ecumenical initiative that will enable the Diocese of UK-Europe and Africa of the Malankara Orthodox (Indian) Syrian Church (MOSC) to begin a new strand of witness and mission originated with the plan to celebrate the 1700th Anniversary of the Council of Nicea in 2025. HH Baselios Mar Thoma Mathews III, the head of the Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church (MOSC) - Catholicos of the East and Malankara Metropolitan inaugurated the new initiative – Ecumenical Faith Formation through Orthodox Reflections for Transformation (EFFORT) during the Diocesan mega event Malankara Orthodox Sangamam on 25th May 2024 in Coventry, UK.

The DOT programme evolved from an in-depth planning of the initiative EFFORT through a concrete programme on 13th August 2024 when HG Abraham Mar Stephanos, Fr Dr Anish John and Dr Elizabeth Joy met to deliberate on a concrete programme for the Diocese of UK-Europe and Africa. Several meetings were convened at different levels to get the detailed DOT programme in place. HE Mar Abraham Stephanos, the Diocesan Metropolitan, inaugurated the DOT programme on 25th September 2024 at the Diocesan Office in Swindon (Malankara House, 35 Henman Close, Swindon UK- SN25 4ZW).

1.1 EFFORT Board and Faculty

- President: Diocesan Metropolitan HE Abraham Mar Stephanos
- Board of Directors: Diocesan Council
- Director: Dr. Elizabeth Joy
- Dean of Studies: Fr. Dr. Anish John
- Treasurer: Diocesan Secretary Fr. Varghese T. Mathew
- Liaison Officer: Fr. Stanly David James
- Faculties:
 - HE Abraham Mar Stephanos
 - Dr. Elizabeth Joy
 - Fr. Dr. Anish John
 - V Rev. Abraham George Chor-Episcopus
 - Fr. Jobin Mammen Cherian
 - Fr. Aashu Alexander Mattackel
 - Fr. Jobin Thomas Abraham
 - Fr. Dr. Jacob Mathew
 - Fr. Blessen George Babu

1.2 Course Modules and Faculty Assignments

Module	Faculty
Module 1 - Scripture in Orthodox Tradition	HE Abraham Mar Stephanos and Dr. Elizabeth Joy



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Module 2 – West Syriac and Biblical Greek	Fr. Jobin Mammen Cherian and V Rev. Abraham George Chor-Episcopus
Module 3 – Understanding the Nicene creed	Fr. Aashu Alexander Mattackel and Fr. Jobin Thomas Abraham
Module 4 - Introduction to Patristics (Pre-Chalcedon Christian Teachers)	Fr. Dr. Anish John and Fr. Aashu Alexander Mattackel
Module 5 – Sacramental Theology	Fr. Aashu Alexander Mattackel and Fr. Blessen George Babu
Module 6 - Orthodox Witness and Mission with Practical Work Assignment	Fr. Dr. Jacob Mathew and Fr. Jobin Mammen Cherian

2.0 Summary of Activities

2.1 DOT programme

The original team of three consisting of the Diocesan Metropolitan HG Abraham Mar Stephanos, Director Dr Elizabeth Joy and the Dean Fr Dr Anish John soon expanded with the appointment of two honorary Secretaries – Mr Biju Kurien Jacob with the Administration portfolio assisting the Director and Mr Saju Chacko with the Academic portfolio assisting the Dean. We soon had the Executive Committee in place, which included the five staff members, Fr Varghese Mathew the Diocesan Secretary as the Treasurer and Rev Fr Stanly D James, the representative from the Diocesan Council of the UK- Europe and Africa. The Diocesan Council acts as the Trustee Body for the DOT programme.

The DOT classes began on 30th September 2024 with 18 students duly registered. One student withdrew due to time constraints, and 17 completed Module One successfully and are in Module Two. Although we had teething issues in this first year and the first module, we are very grateful to our first batch of students who have been with us with much patience, especially in finding the most convenient day and time for the classes and the seminars. We have started batch 2 now successfully and we are delighted to report that we have now finalised the most suitable day and time for the majority of the students for both batches as Mondays and Thursdays 7:30 PM onwards. We also have Rev. Fr. Tiji Thankachen appointed as the Chaplain. Apart from the weekly lectures/classes and seminars, we also have monthly virtual worship conducted at 7PM on last Friday of the month. The virtual chapel is led by various priests in the diocese. All classes and virtual chapel are held on a virtual platform through Zoom.

2.2 Student details

In batch 1, we have a total of seventeen (17) students in which fifteen (15) from the UK and Ireland, one from the Middle East and one from India. Fourteen (14) students are from the MOSC, two (2) from the Malankara MarThoma Church and one from the Church of England.

In batch 2, we have a total of ten (10) students of which 9 are from UK mainland and one person from Sweden, all belonging to MOSC.

2.3 Modules, dates and Faculty

DOT programme is a two-year Diploma course with the details of the Modules and the faculty members as follows:



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Module	Schedule	Faculty
Module 1 - Scripture in Orthodox Tradition	September 2024 – December 2024	HE Abraham Mar Stephanos and Dr. Elizabeth Joy
Module 2 – West Syriac and Biblical Greek	January 2025 – April 2025	Fr. Jobin Mammen Cherian and V Rev. Abraham George Chor-Episcopus
Module 3 – Understanding the Nicene creed	May 2025 – August 2025	Fr. Aashu Alexander Mattackel and Fr. Jobin Thomas Abraham
Module 4 - Introduction to Patristics (Pre-Chalcedon Christian Teachers)	September 2025 – December 2025	Fr. Dr. Anish John and Fr. Aashu Alexander Mattackel
Module 5 – Sacramental Theology	January 2026 – April 2026	Fr. Aashu Alexander Mattackel and Fr. Blessen George Babu
Module 6 - Orthodox Witness and Mission with Practical Work Assignment	May 2026 – July 2026	Fr. Dr. Jacob Mathew and Fr. Jobin Mammen Cherian

2.3 Finance and Operations

We had 26 individuals register for the program in batch 1, out of which 17 became students in the batch 2024-26. Batch 1 is due to complete their studies in July 2026. For batch 2 we started the registration in July and we had 12 applicants out of which 10 became students. We offered a monthly payment option for students and they are paying in 12 instalments. Receipts for payments have been issued to all students.

With 2 batches running parallelly, the session days are now finalised as Mondays and Thursdays. We have issued course calendar for all relevant modules in advance to help students to plan their days in advance.

Two licenses of the Zoom platform has been procured, with procurement cost of £311.76. The current license needs to be renewed from September 30, 2026, and it is estimated that the annual license cost will be £279.80. The Zoom platform is used for all class sessions, and a WhatsApp group is maintained to facilitate continuous communication with the students.

An overview of the financial matters for the financial year 2024-25 is given below.

Income		Expenses	
Item	Amount	Item	Amount
Student Fees batch 2 - 10	£6,000.00	Zoom	£311.76
Income over Expense - year 1	£15,394.12	Tools	£0.00
		Faculty honorarium	£0.00
Total	£21,394.12	Total	£311.76



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3.0 Future Plans

3.1 Batch 2026 -28

We plan to recruit students for the next batch. We will review the first four months and plan for the third batch.

4.0 Acknowledgements

With hearts filled with gratitude, we offer thanks and glory to Holy Triune God for blessing the EFFORT DOT programme and guiding its first academic year with grace and mercy.

We extend our sincere gratitude to His Holiness Baselios Mar Thoma Mathews III, Catholicos of the East and Malankara Metropolitan, for blessing the ministry with his prayers and presence.

We remain deeply thankful to His Eminence Abraham Mar Stephanos, our Diocesan Metropolitan and President of EFFORT, for his unwavering support, spiritual leadership, and vision.

We also thank the Diocesan Secretary, Rev. Fr. Varghese T. Mathew, along with the Diocesan Council and staff for their continued administrative support and guidance.

For EFFORT
Secretary – Administration.