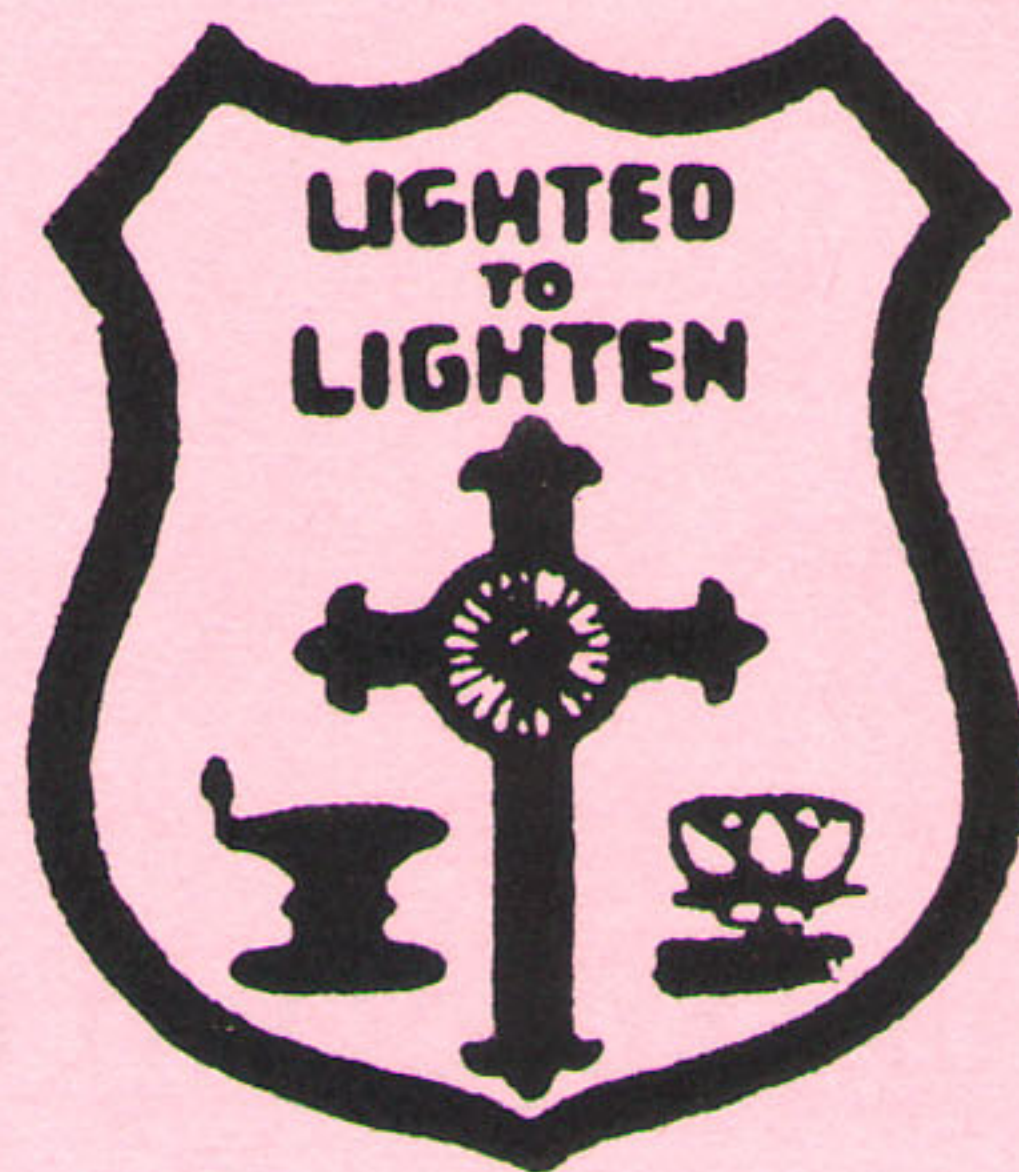


MAR THOMA MESSENGER



April 1990

A Publication of
The Diocese of North America

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FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

The greatest compliment that Jesus had bestowed upon the Christians is, "You are the light of the world" (Matthew 5:14). He commands the Christians to be what he himself claimed to be. Jesus said, "As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world". Paul also, when writing to the people in Philippi and when he was encouraging them to live out the Christian life in a heathen and a pagan city, said to them, "You shine as lights in the world" (Philippians 2:15). The people who are trying to be Christians must be like lights in the world. This is one of the wonderful messages of the New Testament.

How we can be the lights in this world? Mother Theresa tells about a Hindu gentle-man, who walked into one of their homes for the dying. An old man who had just been brought in from the streets was there and one of the sisters was taking care of him. The Hindu gentle-man watched amazingly, the love that sister had towards the dying man. Her tremendously genuine and tender love was seen in her eyes, her words, her touch and the expression on face. When that hindu walked out of that room where the dying patients were, he happened to meet Mother Theresa in the hallway. He said to her, "I came in here an empty man, a man without God in my heart and without peace in my mind. I leave here, full of the presence of God whom I have met in the love of that sister for the dying man, and full of peace of mind".

We are called for a life and mission that radiate the light of love through our daily life and activities. God expects from us the light which shines before the people, in the society we live. As members of the various parishes and congregations in this Diocese, are we fulfilling God's purpose in this land by reflecting the true light of Jesus Christ? Remember, we are **"LIGHTED TO LIGHTEN"** the world, which God loved so much.

Rev. Jayan Thomas,
Editor.

THE DIOCESAN BISHOP VISITS
NORTH AMERICA AND UNITED KINGDOM



The Rt. Rev. Philipose Mar Chrysostom Suffragan Metropolitan will be in North America and United Kingdom from May 15th to August 25th, 1990. His Lordship will be presiding over the Clergy Conference, Diocesan Council and the Diocesan Assembly. Also Thirumeni shall be the main leader for the Family Conference of North America at Lubbock from July 19 - 22, and the Diocesan Youth Conference at Baltimore from August 8 - 11. During Thirumeni's stay in the Diocese, His Lordship will visit the parishes and congregations, and shall participate in the Anglican Consultative Council in Wales from July 22 - Aug. 4.

Diocese Of North America & U.K. Mar Thoma Church

**Philipose Mar Chrysostom
Bishop**

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Dearly beloved in Christ,

As we welcome another year, our hearts go in gratitude to God for the many blessings over the year. Specially we thank God for the three new bishops. They have assumed charge of their dioceses. I am glad and proud that the diocese of North America and U.K. has donated one car. I understand some parishes have not yet remitted their share. I hope it will be paid soon.

Now you are all looking forward to the **Family Conference and Youth Conference**. Let us pray God to make these conferences a source of new visions, new responses, renewal and fresh strength to love God, obey Him and live in the joy of the fellowship with the Trine God. Please continue to pray for the conference and plan to attend them with real expectation.

I am glad to know that Sunday School has made much progress in implementing our plans. The Yuvajana Sakhyam and Sevika Sanghom should plan for more effective regional activities and organizations. We should soon have a youth worker. I understand St. Thomas parish in New York has already entered into an agreement to buy a plot with a Church building and possibilities of developing a diocesan or regional centre. I thank God and solicit the co-operation of all. Rev. Joseph Jacob joined Edmonton. The people in that area have become more active. Houston and Toronto have bought new parsonages. Oklahoma, Washington are planning for Church buildings. Your prayers, your financial help and your hearty co-operation are necessary in all these activities.

I hope to come U.S.A in May and stay on till July or early August. In July I will have to attend the Anglican Consultative Council in Wales. Exact dates of my visit will be communicated to you without much delay.

As we have entered another year I would like to invite your attention to the following matters.

Those of you who have not elected the Committee for the New Year, please do so without delay.

Accounts for 1989 and Budget for 1990 should be passed at least by the end of March.

Metropolitan has issued Kalpana for the election of members to the new **Mandalam**.

So please elect members to Mandalam and also to the Assembly.

I am writing this returning from the inaugural session of **Maramon Convention**. Dr. John Stott of U.K. gave very inspiring message. The meeting was well attended.

As you know on January I moved to **T.M.A.M. CENTRE at VAIKOM, RANNI**. This was only a conference centre. It had to be re-modelled as a residence. Kitchen, dining room, chapel, car shed etc. had to be constructed. It is almost over. This is a very good place. As this is the residence of the bishop of North America and U.K., I am sure you would also like to participate in the construction of the building.

With prayers and blessings,

19th February, 1990.

Philipose Mar Chrysostom

A Prayer For The Three

DR. P. M. MAMMEN, PHILADELPHIA

Thou hast exalted the lowly and the humble
To crown them with they glory:
Into the majesty of thy throne
Thou hast exalted the Three
Thy servants, Cheeran and the two Georges,
To make our Synod a collegium of Seven.
Make them thy shepherds, we pray thee,
Conform them to the image of Christ, we implore thee,
Confirm them in the holy Synod, we beseach thee.
Cleanse them in thy holy spirit,
Heal them in the thought of Christ:
Redeem them, restore them.
In thy redemptive power,
We submit them.

We are a Church, born anew: No dogma, no creed,
Thy Word alone to reform us,
To transform us despite our transgressions
With the infallible Truth that lies in Faith,
To toss us into the total transition,
From this earth we know to the ethereal Cosmos
We know not.
Make us thy humble temples,
Hallowed by thy presence, cleansed by thy purity.
Society without thee is a conspiracy
Against the humane nature.
Help us to conform to the virtues of thy Church,
To be self-reliant in a heightened sense
Of the image of Christ.

Detain these Three in thy eternal presence,
Help them to wait upon thee
In their islands of solitue.
In thy unhindered channels,
From thy ever-flowing reservoir,
Let thy Spirit flow unceasingly,
As we, thy children, weaned as we are,
Repose in thy lap.
Help them to see thy Way,
Help them to seek thy Will,
Impelled from within,
Not compelled from without.

Keep them in the light of Eternity
Well-composed, fully-committed,
Not to be surrounded
By the self-placating seekers,
To whom the power of the world
Is all-embracing.
Bestow upon them thy serenity,
To guard us, guide us,
The wicked and the wistful.

Oh Lord, our Father,
Help us to dwell on the theme of thy Church.
Is it only a tall building with a tower
And its bells that ding and dong?
Or, is it the Body of thy Son,
Expressed in the universality
Of thy concerting Congregation?
Help us to comprehend
Thy incomprehensible Unity,
Expressed in the triune configuration.
Give us a conscience,
A perfect interpreter of the Christ-like life,
That we may dwell in thy holy presence,
Free from the temporal vicissitudes that beset us all.

We hold these Three thy servants,
Exalted by thee to guide us.
Let thy Way be their guide,
Let thy Will be their peace.
Keep them awed and humbled.
Commission them, Oh Lord, we pray thee,
With a sense of mission,
And a sense of submission,
Backed by thy Eternal hand to steer them
Thy Eternal Voice to guide them.
Whisper to them in their hours of solitude,
Let them behold and hear,
Await and seek thy inner unity
To unfold thy divine purpose, moment-by-moment.



Sunday Schools In American Culture

Dr. T.M. Thomas

Sunday School movement started in Gloucester, England by Robert Raikes. He opened a school in 1780 for the Children of the poor and taught them reading and writing as well as the Bible. The idea of Sunday School spread to different parts of the world including North America. The American Sunday School Union was formed in 1824.

During the 19th century several protestant denominations in America worked together for the education of children under the Sunday School Union. It contributed to the growth of public schools in America, (called common schools at that time) by bringing all denominations together. Public Schools in its early period (2nd half of the 19th century) reflected protestant orientation and teachings. Catholics started their own schools because their beliefs were not incorporated in public schools. With such exceptions (Catholics) public schools succeeded in giving education to all young people. Since the money to run schools was raised by taxes, all children received a "free" education. The new system was initiated by Horace Mann, known as the father of public schools in the United States. The interdenominational nature of Sunday School became weak in the course of time when each church introduced its own curriculum materials. The David C. Cook curriculum which Mar Thomites use today maintain its interdenominational orientation.

In the early years of America, schools used the Bible for teaching children. Only recently the court prohibited the reading of Bible in classrooms as it violates the principle of the church-state separation. Today, religious education is not allowed in public schools where most of American children (nearly 90 percent) receive their education. Religion which played a key role in the education of young people in America for long has lost its predominant place. In this situation, Sunday Schools have a different responsibility.

Today, Sunday Schools in cooperation with the family should focus on the Christian religious education of children. Faith in God is to be strengthened. These are aspects of life that are being ignored in modern secular living. The central place given to man and his reasoning power as the source of values, has eroded human reliance on God. The sense of self-sufficiency of modern man separates him from God. The ethos of a secular world permeates the education of our young. In this contest, Christian religious education should receive greater attention of those interested in religion.

It is satisfying to note that the Mar Thoma parishes in North America give special importance to Sunday Schools. We will be better off if we recognize the forces of culture in which we live and provide what is needed in this culture for the growth of Christian faith. The selection of Sunday School materials (David C. Cook curriculum) which meet the cultural needs is the first step we have taken as diocesan Sunday Schools. The next step is our approach to teaching which should take into account the cultural context. Sunday School teachers must be aware of the cultural forces prevailing in America and help our children in their Christian nurturing. Teachers who understand the struggles that our young people face in this culture can be of great help to them and provide valuable Christian service.

The Marthoma Sevika Sanghom Western Region

The Western region consists of: the parishes and congregations in the states of California, Washington, Texas, Oklahoma, Illinois, Michigan, and the Alberta province of Canada. All adult female members in the region are the members of the Sevika Sanghom.

The decision was made in the assembly held in July 1989 that the regional and Diocesan Sevika Sanghom committee be formed. The arrangements are presently in progress.

Due to the geographical distribution of the parishes and congregations in the Western region, the possibilities of the regional level activities are limited. In spite of the inconveniences, the Sanghom members of the Western region had the opportunity to meet two times during 1989.

The first regional conference was held at Oklahoma Mar Thoma Church on March 4, 1989. Rev. Jayan Thomas, vicar of Trinity Mar Thoma Church of Houston was the moderator for this occasion and he led the Bible study. About seventy-five members from different parishes and congregations attended the conference. Rev. T.I. Joseph, Dr. V.T. Samuel, and Mrs. Elsie Jayan Thomas were the guest speakers. The theme for the conference was "The Role of Women in Christian Ministry". All the messages were inspirational for the audience.

Mrs. Jayan Thomas gave an eloquent speech pointing out the good qualities of specific women in the Bible and then explaining the role they played in Christian ministry both in Old and New Testament days. Some of the outstanding women she mentioned were Ruth, Esther, Martha, Mary Magdalene and Priscilla. It was a challenge to the women of the Mar Thoma Church.

Dr. V.T. Samuel presented a paper on Christian family. He discussed the characteristics of a healthy Christian family. The healthy Christian family is Christ-centered; it communicates and listens, supports one another, develops a sense of trust, teaches a sense of trust and teaches a sense of right and wrong.

The second regional conference was held on November 4, 1989 at Dallas Mar Thoma Church. Rev. T.I. Joseph presided over the meeting. A good number of Sanghom members attended the conference with enthusiasm. Rev. Eapen George of Dallas C.S.I. Church, and Mrs. Jayan Thomas were the guest speakers. The theme for this occasion was "Role of Women as Wife and Mother".

Mrs. Jayan Thomas spoke about the valuable qualities of a wife based on Bible verses Proverbs 31: 10-31, Colossians 3:8, and Genesis 2:22. The wife is compared to a merchant's ship which brings all kinds of goods to the harbor. She sacrifices herself to provide all necessary things for her family. This woman is submissive to her husband and raises her children in the fear of the Lord. She travels afar with the shining light until she can win her husband and children to the port of Jesus. "Her children call her blessed, and her husband praiseth her," (Proverbs 31:28). The audience listened with such attentiveness that you could hear a pin drop.

We thank and praise God Almighty for His wonderful mercies, kindness and guidance in the smooth running of the regional activities of the Sevika Sanghom during 1989.

Mrs. Kunjamma Abraham, Convener

THE MAR THOMA SUVISESHA SEVIKA SANGHOM

NORTHEAST REGION

The Mar Thoma Suvishesha Sevika Sanghom, founded in 1919 is a vital organization, which has become an integral part of almost all parishes of the Mar Thoma Church. The Sevika Sanghom enlightens the spiritual life of the parish by promoting the gospel work, and the women take a keen interest in fulfilling the mission of our church. The founders of this great organization passed on to us their vision to make the sanghom an effective organization in the furtherance of God's Kingdom. With the growth of the Mar Thoma Church in North America, the sevika sanghom found grounds for growth to carry out its mission in the New World also.

The sevika sanghom in the northeast region was organized in 1985 and all the Mar Thoma women in the parishes/congregations in the region are its members. The first meeting in the region was held on October 5, 1985 in the Staten Island Mar Thoma Church and 38 members from different parishes attended. Since then, two meetings are held regularly on the second Saturday in October and May, each year. Parishes in the region have hosted the meetings on different occasions. The number of participants has greatly increased to about 200 in the last meeting held in October 1989. The meetings give us the opportunity for prayer, fellowship, witnessing, intercessory prayer, Bible study and discussion on various topics. The sanghom has been very active collectively in its mission, as envisaged by the Mar Thoma Suvishesha Sevika Sanghom.

With the changes in cultural background, traditions, and with the great demand for adapting to the environment in an adopted land, it is not uncommon that any ethnic group may face difficulty in adjusting to the socio-cultural needs. With this view in mind, since 1988 Sanghom in the region has been conducting a one-day conference for married couples to discuss contemporary issues christian families face, in a pluralistic society. "Effective communication within the Family" and "Family in a Biblical perspective" were topics discussed during the last two conferences. Rev. Bruce Woolever of the United Methodist Church, and Rev. Geevarughtese Mathew, of the Mar Thoma Church, respectively gave leadership. These conferences have proved to be very useful, and continue to provide an opportunity for a better understanding of our needs and responsibilities, in a christian perspective and in the Mar Thoma tradition.

As a region we have been supporting the various mission of our church. We have supported the Sehora Ashram, and the education of a female student in the Mar Thoma Theological Seminary. Recently we also supported the Asanikethan, at Kottayam, where destitute women are sheltered and give training in several trades. The support of the sanghom units in the region is the guiding force and is commendable. Rev. George Mathew, Rev. Dr. P.J. Philip and Rev. E.I. Cheeran (The Rt. Rev. Euyakim Mar Koorilose Episcopa) had served the sanghom as regional co-ordinators, and we fondly remember their valuable services. Our vicars in the region are always with us and we greatly appreciate their advice. The support of our Diocesan Bishop the Rt. Rev. Dr. Alexander Mar Thoma, has always been a strength in giving us momentum for our growth.

We shall continue to serve the church. The great vision of our foremothers for witnessing the gospel, and which we have begun here, must be fulfilled in North America in greater dimensions. The potential and the opportunities for such a mission are enviously enormous. We must bring our young Mar Thoma Women into the manistream of the women's activities. I hope and pray that we grow continuously, drawing strength from the Lord, to serve those who are far and near, to comfort the sick and the helpless, to help the poor and the needy, to heal the broken hearted and to proclaim liberty to the captive. May the Lord bless the Sevika Sanghom.

Mrs. Kunjumol Cherian Secretary

**IMPORTANT CHILD REARING PROBLEMS AND SUGGESTED SOLUTIONS
PRESENTED BY MARTHOMA CHRISTIANS IN NORTH AMERICA**

The Marthoma Family Conference of 1989 was held at New Jersey and was attended by many families from all over North America. The participants were distributed a short questionnaire requesting their perceptions of the most important problems faced by our families in child rearing in North America and their suggestion for solving the problems. Two hundred and nine participants responded and their opinions and suggestions are considered very important to our community. This short paper is an attempt to summarize them for the information of all Marthoma Christians.

The group that responded to the questionnaire can be described in terms of their responses to some of the items on the questionnaire.

	Number	Percentage
1. Role in the family		
Husband	92	44.0
Wife	93	44.5
Other (grand parents, etc.)	22	10.5
No response	2	1.0
2. Age		
Less than 30	1	0.5
30 - 39	57	27.3
40 - 49	97	46.4
50 or more	49	23.4
3. Employment Status		
Not employed	9	4.3
Part-time employed	9	4.3
Full-time employed	143	68.4
More than Full-time employed	43	20.6
No response	5	2.4
4. Time spend with children		
0 - 3 hrs.	50	23.9
4 - 5 hrs.	48	23.0
6 - 8 hrs.	31	14.8
9 - 24 hrs.	28	13.4
No response	52	24.9

5. Relationship with children		
Excellent	84	40.2
Good	69	33.0
Satisfactory	36	17.2
Unsatisfactory	5	2.4
No response	15	7.2
6. Relationship with spouse		
Excellent	80	38.3
Good	63	30.1
Satisfactory	27	12.9
Unsatisfactory	9	4.3
No response	30	14.4
7. Expectations from the workshop		
Have a good time	12	5.7
Find why children misbehave	23	11.0
Find shortcomings and improve	89	42.0
Derive intellectual stimulation	45	21.5
Help others	26	12.4
No response	14	6.7
8. Previous training in christian parenting		
Taken courses, training, etc.	35	16.7
Read books, heard lectures, etc.	32	15.3
Learned from experience	79	37.8
No training	54	25.8
No response	9	4.3
9. Relationship of children to you		
Excellent	76	36.7
Good	87	41.6
Satisfactory	26	12.4
Unsatisfactory	3	1.4
No response	17	8.1
10. Workshop planned to attend		
Childhood	55	26.3
Teen and Youth	108	51.7
No response	46	22.0

Further analyses of the data indicated that husbands and wives in the group are comparable in their age group distribution. However, contrary to popular beliefs, more men in this group are employed on more than one full-time jobs compared to women. More women spend more time with their children than men (6.5 hours Vs.

4.6 hours). It is encouraging to notice that many men also spend more time with children. More men feel that they have excellent relationships with their children when compared to women. Perhaps, women who spent more time with their children will have more opportunities to be frustrated with situations at home and become less satisfied. Though many men state that their relationship with their spouse is excellent, only lesser number of women state that their relationship with their spouse as excellent. These results indicate that our women are having more problems with their spouse and children as they spend more time for the family after their job. Nine people have stated that their relationship with spouse is not satisfactory, and five people have stated that their relationships with their children are not satisfactory. These people have problems at home and the church has the obligation to help them resolve the problems and develop good sentiments about each other.

There are 262 problems listed by the 209 participants who responded to the questionnaire when given a chance to write two most important problems in our families. These problems are related to 43 different specific areas. The more frequently stated problem areas are listed below:

S.No.	Problem Areas	Number	Percentage
1.	Cultural differences between home and community/school/work place.	66	31.6
2.	Lack of time.	41	19.6
3.	Lack of communication.	16	7.7
4.	Lack of knowledge.	16	7.7
5.	Discipline.	15	7.2
6.	Peer influence.	12	5.7
7.	Bringing up children in christian and our family tradition in this country.	9	4.3
8.	Lack of family prayer.	7	3.4
9.	Substituting material possessions for parental love and guidance.	6	2.9
10.	Conflicts in family and broken relationships.	6	2.9
11.	Too much freedom and independence given to children.	6	2.9

A major trend noted in the responses is that parents want to bring up their children as their parents brought them up. They want implicit obedience from children, less freedom for children, children to learn Malayalam, children to understand the family and cultural values in Kerala, etc. When the law of the country, educational system, and the social environment as well as the T.V. work against them, parents will have a hard time implementing such a training for their children. Parents need more patience and understanding of the situation and learn to tolerate differences in opinion. They have to set good examples of what they preach and they should learn to show their affection to their children through simple expressions of love such as hugging, kissing, etc.

The participants have given 207 different suggestions to solve the problems faced by our families. These suggestions can be grouped into at least 42 different methods. The most frequent methods suggested are listed below:

S.No.	Suggested Methods	Number	Percentage
1.	Listen patiently and understand the problems of our children.	36	17.2
2.	Spend more quality time with children	30	14.4
3.	Educate the parents through workshops conferences, etc. child rearing techniques.	18	8.6
4.	Have open discussions (communication) between parents and children.	13	6.2
5.	Regular church attendance and family prayers.	12	5.7
6.	Parents should set themselves as good models for children to emulate and be good friends who they can trust.	11	5.3
7.	Regularly share with children christian experiences and teach them directly and indirectly christian values.	10	4.8
8.	Through training at home and in sunday schools, discipline children to understand what is right and wrong.	7	3.4
9.	Seek guidance and help from God through regular prayers and bible readings.	7	3.4
10.	See the children as our own and give them love, affection, and trust.	6	2.9

Even though, cultural differences are indicated as very serious problems, very few suggestions were given to directly handle this problem. One suggestion to handle this problem is to find a balance between the two cultures for ourselves and train the children to follow that route. Another suggestion is to learn with the child. Many suggestions blame parents as rigid and indicate less rigidity and more flexibility and openness on the part of parents. We should learn to respect our children and give them regularly, trust and love as well as positive feed backs such as praises and appreciation.

Some of the suggestions are very pessimistic, such as: 'go back to India'; 'women should stay home and take care of children'; 'change the attitude of Kerala men'; 'do not work overtime'; etc. We must understand that these suggestions are expressions of the frustrations among our people with the current state of affairs. All the responses to these questions indicated that the participants are aware of the many problems confronted by our community and they have several valuable suggestions to solve the problems. They are aware of their deficiencies and are willing to change. We have to develop some programs to organize the parents in our parishes to a few working groups to meet regularly and share the problems, discuss the issues, and take steps to assist those who need help develop strategies to deal with the problems. First, we have to compile a list of resource personnel available to us and schedule regular working sessions under the guidance of such people. Above all we should pray and ask His guidance and help to channel our resources to bring up our children as good Marthoma Christians in this country. We can be certain that His blessings and Grace will be ever upon us and that we will grow to be a powerful and gracious in the land of plenty.

Note: The workshop was led by Mrs. Nirmala Abraham, Dr. Abraham Panackal, Dr. Thomas N. Jacob and Rev. M. C. George.



The Mar Thoma Youth Conference of North America for 1989

The Mar Thoma Youth Conference of North America for 1989 was held at the University of Waterloo, Ontario, Canada from the 16th to 19th of August 1989. More than two hundred young people between the age of 18 and 30 from all parts of the United States and Canada and a handful of senior resource persons attended this year's conference. The theme was "Let us arise and build". Main leaders were the Rt. Rev. Philipose Mar Crysostom, Suffragan Metropolitan and Diocesan Bishop of North America, Rev. Dr. Robert C. Neville, Dean of the Boston School of Theology, Rev. Geevarughese Mathew and Rev. George Isaac. The conference was organized by the youth of the Canadian Mar Thoma Church in Toronto.

The conference started with an orientation session for the leaders and this set the tone for the rest of the meeting. During his address Thirumeni pointed out the qualities of a good leader - dependence, first and foremost, on prayer, careful evaluation and utilization of available resources, possession of a vision for the future and having a passion for justice - all characteristics which were exemplified in Nehemiah.

Each morning activities started with group prayers followed by worship, bible study, and then the main address and discussions. During the afternoons there were choir competitions, panel discussions and recreational games. During the evenings there were again worship followed by campfire, short play or dedication sessions. In between there were singing sessions led by Rev. George Isaac and several young people. The conference ended with communion service on Saturday morning.

As the theme of the conference came from the book of Nehemiah, the bible study was based on that book. Rev. Geevarughese Mathew's objectives were to make the participants familiar with the text and to make them understand the work of Nehemiah in a crucial period in history and to enable them to think about their role in building up of the church and society. Using the directions given by Rev. Mathew, reading of the text and discussions were held in small groups. Each group was led by a youth leader and assisted by a senior advisor. Insights gained from the bible study were that Nehemiah was a man of prayer, a man of courage and a man with a vision. When the prevalent socio-economic injustices were brought to his attention, he did not react to them immediately and impulsively, but carefully reviewed the situation. Taking his own counsel, he convinced and persuaded the oppressors of the poor to rectify their wrongdoings. The question put to the young people was to consider how they react to the socio-economic injustices in the world today. Will they follow Nehemiah's example?

The keynote talks were given by Dean Robert Neville. Taking up the theme of the conference, he asked the question "let us arise and build - what?" and followed immediately to answer it by saying we should arise to build the character of Christ within each one of us and in our institutions. Christians are what they are because of God's covenant with his people. A christian should be characterised by faith, hope and love.

Building character means generating excellence of will, mind and heart which together form the soul. That means developing psychic integrity. Will is the capacity to get organized and organization of desires is an absolute necessity. Faith can be developed by rituals in life, by repetition and by finding psychic integrity in Christ. Institutions provide the means for these.

The function of mind is to guide life, to set the pattern of will to psychic integrity. We need to know what is ultimately good. Love can be learned by practice. True love involves learning to love the unlovely. Love is the perfection of mind in Christ. Institutions which supports love are family and community. The building of character in one involve the building of institutions as well the individual mind because the two are inter-dependent.

Institutions can be classed as falling into three types, those of justice, of charity and of nourishing. Justice is the giving of due share to each one in the role they play in society; it is not conferring favours. The problem of rich oppressing the poor is the character of wealth. Economic systems cause historical dislocations. Allocating blames is not what is important, but the administration of justice. Hidden commitments hinder administration of justice. In a government, the role of policy making (legislature) and that of transferring the benefits of opportunity (executive) are in some places joined together and in some others separate. The role of judiciary is to consider the quality of situations. The institution of family is different from that of government. In a plural society, dual citizenship is required for justice.

Charity is the helping of people, not because they deserve, but because they are made the better by it. Governmental and non-governmental agencies do provide charity: the support for culture, for example. Churches must provide charity to those who fall through the cracks in these institutions. To be charitable, one needs wealth. Magnanimity is a Christian obligation - not an administration of justice.

Nurturing is the helping of people to grow. Mobility and meritocracy dislocates the capacity of families to hand down excellence. If indigenous Indian culture is to flourish by contact alone, then conditions in America are not conducive to it. On the other hand if you can inherit it by indirect means of distance communication such as reading, then the American atmosphere is not destructive. Youth of the Mar Thoma Church is therefore in an advantageous position to prosper here, since they can inherit their cultural traditions by indirect means. Institution of friendship is the most nurturing. Hence conferences of this type immensely help.

But one should not confuse nurturing with justice or with charity. The youth must find out the way in which they can generate greater justice and support institutions of charity as well as those of nurturing. In considering the importance of maintaining ethnic traditions, one should also consider the costs involved in maintaining these traditions for they also could be means of being less just and charitable, however nurturing they are.

The panel discussions were carried on by the youth themselves and they considered topics such as how they could become more involved in the community in which they live; the merits of arranged marriages versus self-choice marriages and freedom within the family, the church and the society. A surprising degree of support for arranged marriages were given by some married young people. The dedication session generated many public declarations of commitment to living in Christ and also witnessed some heart-rending testimonies to personal friendship, mutual support, love and care.

This being the tenth year of Mar Thoma youth conferences on this continent, a review session was held at the end which showed how much progress has been achieved in short ten years. The visionaries who initiated this institution as well as all those who nurtured it through the last ten years could be truly thankful to God for our youth in America. The most remarkable thing about this conference was the overwhelming evidence of it being organized and managed by youth, for youth without undue interference by senior people. Its success was a true testimony to the outstanding capabilities and commitment of the Mar Thoma youth in America. One could come away fully believing that God was working through them to secure the future of the Church in North America.

- Titus Mathews

NEWS AND NOTES

THE MAR THOMA FAMILY CONFERENCE OF NORTH AMERICA 1990

July 19-22, 1990

AT
LUBBOCK CHRISTIAN
UNIVERSITY
LUBBOCK, TEXAS

THEME

YE ARE A CHOSEN GENERATION

I Peter 2:9

MAIN LEADER

THE RT. REV. PHILOPOSE MAR CHRYSOSTOM
SUFFRAGAN METROPOLITAN

LEADERS AND SPEAKERS

Rev. Dr. John T. Seamands

Rev. Dr. Theodore Williams

Rev. Dr. Ramesh P. Richard

Rev. K. George Pothen

Dr. Prasad Mathew

THE CONFERENCE IS DIVIDED INTO FOUR MAIN GROUPS

1. Children ages 4-8 years
2. Juniors ages 9-12 years
3. Teens ages 13-17 years
4. Adults ages 18 and above

REGISTRATION

Please mail the registration form for the Family Conference completed to reach the conference office on or before May 30, 1990. (Since we are a very small congregation hosting the conference, we hope that you take this as a special favor and help us so that it will not be an added burden for our planning.)

Accommodations are limited to only 300 families. Children regardless of their age will share the rooms with their parents.

Registration Fees

(Non-refundable. U.S. funds only please)

Adults	\$25.00
Children 5-17	\$25.00
Late registration	\$35.00
(per person after due date)	

Conference Fees

Adults	\$105.00
Children 5-17	\$65.00
Children under 4	free

All participants must be registered in order to attend the conference. Commuting is not permitted.

Please contact
for additional information.
Our mailing address is . . .

Mar Thoma Family Conference
c/o Dr. P. John Lincoln
5405 - 17th Place
Lubbock, Texas 79416

NEWS AND NOTES

XI Mar Thoma Youth Conference of North America - 1990 Baltimore - Washington

Theme: "Living a Life Worthy of Our Calling"
Ephesians 4:1

Date: August 8 - 11

Venue: University of Maryland, Baltimore County
Baltimore, Maryland 21228. U.S.A.

Leaders: The Rt. Rev. Philipose Mar Chrysostom
(*Suffragan Metropolitan*)

Dr. Coleen T. Evans (*Washington, D.C.*)

The Rev. Michael Livingston
(*Princeton Theological Seminary*)

Registration

Participants must be Mar Thoma Youths, ages 18 to 27 or those who have completed the Twelfth grade. Youths belonging to the C.S.I., C.N.I., Episcopal Church of North America and Anglican Church of Canada may also attend. Registrations of all delegates must be endorsed by their local Mar Thoma Church Vicar.

The cost will be \$ 150.00 (U.S.) which will include a registration fee of \$ 30.00 (U.S.) to be paid by June 15, 1990.

The Deadline for Registration is June 15, 1990.

Conference Mailing Address

12630 Veirs Mill Road, # 1719
Rockville,
Maryland 20853
United States of America

EASTERN REGION MAR THOMA JUNIOR CONFERENCE 1990

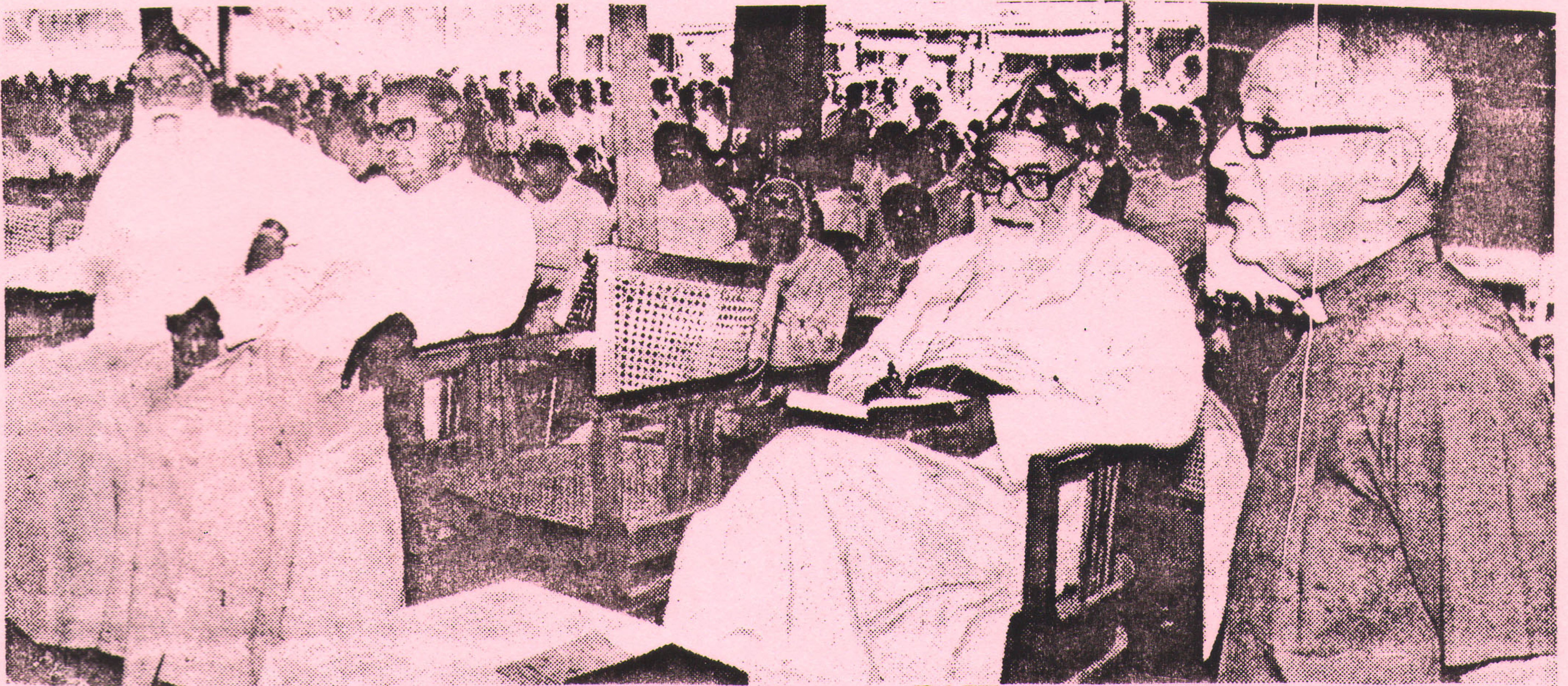
The Regional Junior Conference for the year 1990 will be held from August 3 through 5, 1990, at Hofstra University, Hempstead, Long Island, NY 11550.

For more information please contact Mr. Koruth Mathew, Headmaster, Long Island Mar Thoma Sunday School, at (516) 248 4344.

WESTERN REGION SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHERS' CONFERENCE

The Western Region Sunday School Teachers' meeting will be held on April 28 and 29, 1990, at Trinity Mar Thoma Church, Houston. REV. GEEVARGHESE MATHEW will be the main speaker.

For further information please contact Rev. Jayan Thomas, Vicar, Trinity Mar Thoma Church, Houston, at (713) 261 4603.



മാരാമൺ കൺവെൻഷന്റെ സമാപന സമ്മേളനത്തിൽ റവ. ജോൺ സ്റ്റോട്ട് പ്രസംഗിക്കുന്നു. ഫിലിപ്പോസ് മാർ ക്രിസോസ്റ്റം സഫ്രഗൻ മെത്രാപ്പോലീത്താ, ബിഷപ്പ് ടി. എസ്. ജോസഫ്, ഡോ. അലക്സാണ്ടർ മാർത്തോമ്മാ മെത്രാപ്പോലീത്താ എന്നിവർ മുൻനിരയിൽ.