



M A R T H O M A  
**MESSENGER**

VOL. 1 NO. 1

OCTOBER 1990

A PUBLICATION OF THE DIOCESE OF NORTH AMERICA & U.K.



**PILGRIMS**



ആകർഷണീയമായ സ്വർണ്ണാഭരണങ്ങൾക്കും

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# MAR THOMA MESSENGER

*An official publication  
of the Diocese of North  
America & U.K.*

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**October    1990**

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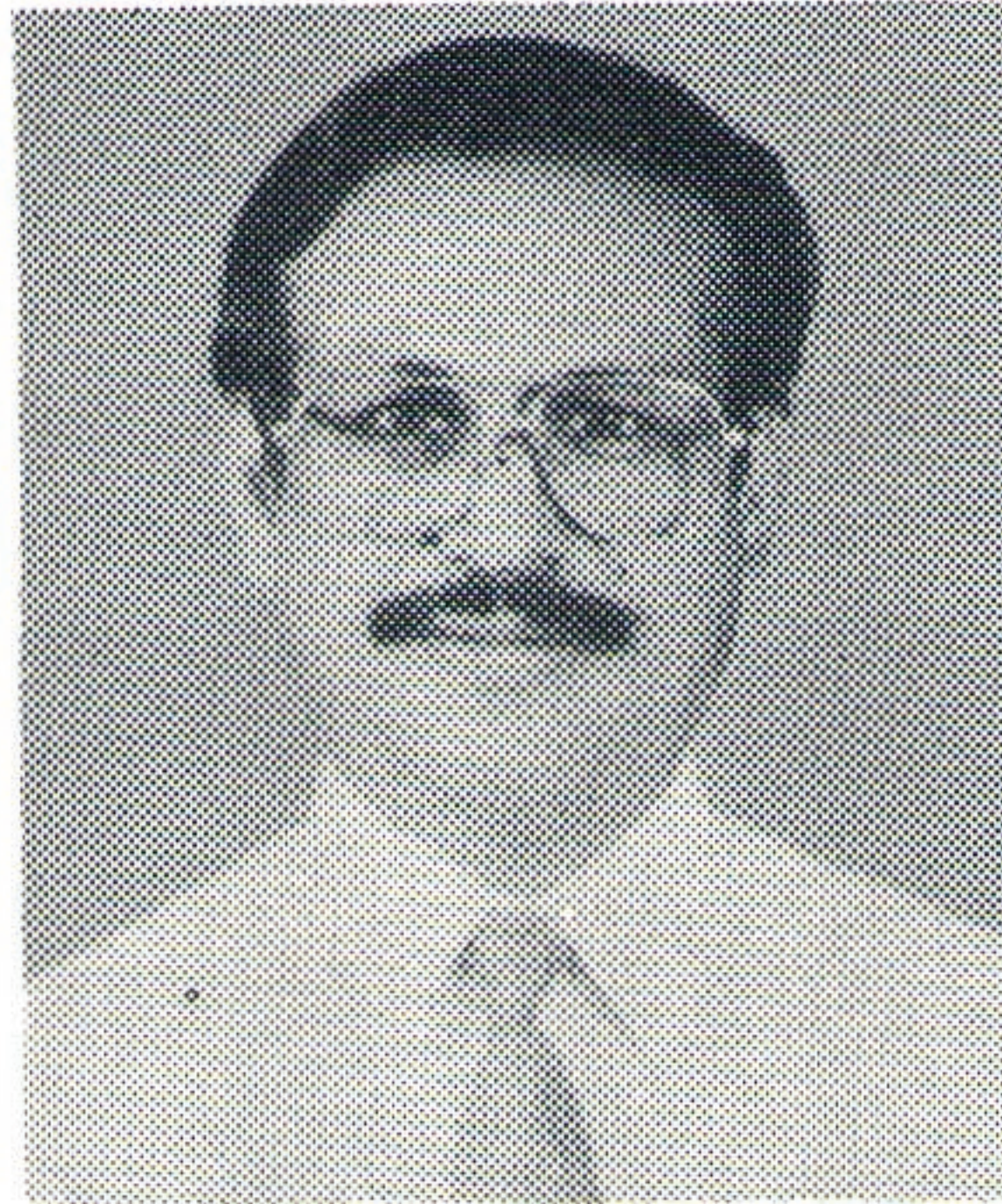
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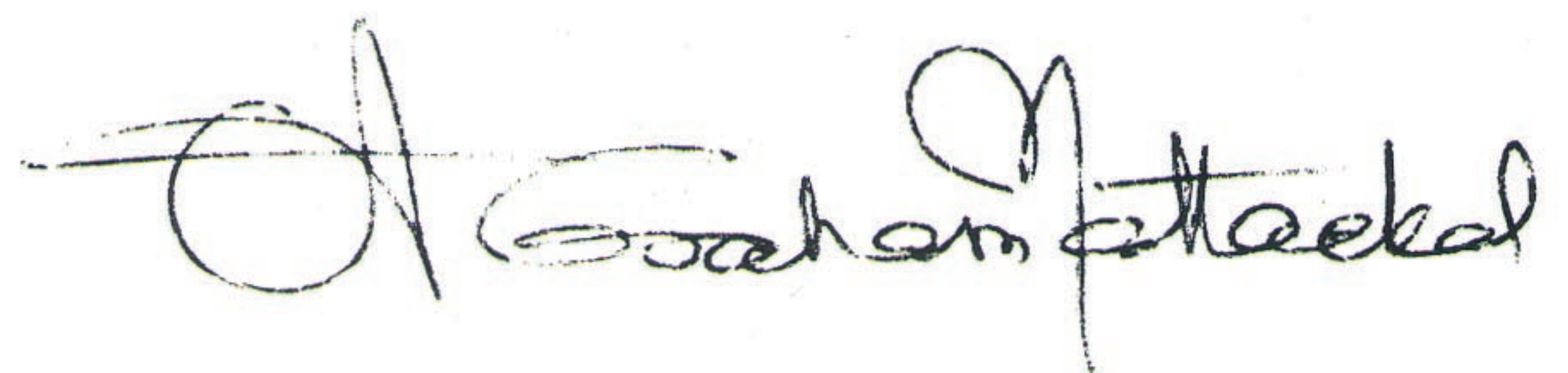
## FROM THE EDITOR:



During its last meeting held at Lubbock, Texas in July 1990 the Diocesan Assembly unanimously took a decision to publish the Mar Thoma Messenger on a regular basis. Taking into consideration our limited time and resources, the Assembly decided to publish the Messenger quarterly beginning October '90. The members of the Assembly expressed the hope that in due course of time, the Mar Thoma Messenger would be another "Sabha Tharaka" to all our families in the North American Diocese. Accordingly, we have since chalked out our plans for the publication of the first four issues. Each issue will deal with a variety of different subjects which are based on the foundation of our common experience as first generation Indian immigrants. October issue will deal with 'Pilgrims', January 1991 issue with 'Culture', April issue with 'Conflicts' and July with 'Resolution'.

Conscious of our short-comings, but, at the same time, willing to learn from our mistakes, we proudly present to you the first issue of the Mar Thoma Messenger under the new set-up. The success and failure of any publication depends largely on the contents and quality of its contributions. As was intimated to you all earlier through your Assembly Member and your Achen, our aim is to encourage parish members to bring out their hidden talents. We would, therefore, urge you to send us your articles, news items, cartoons etc. in a timely fashion for publication. Let's hear from our young and old alike, especially from our young adults and teens. Children's viewpoints may differ from that of their parents, but it's imperative that they both be voiced and heard. Let's also hear from you the readers. Your comments, opinions and suggestions about the quality and contents of the Messenger are important to us. They will be published as a regular feature under the column "Letters to the Editor". Please do remember that your brickbats to us are as welcome as your bouquets.

As we are about to embrace the season of festivities, the sense of gloom and despair created in us by the falling autumn leaves, will be displaced by the triumph and joy of Thanksgiving and Christmas. Three hundred sixty nine years had elapsed since the Pilgrims first celebrated Thanksgiving at Plymouth, Mass. They had reasons to celebrate. After a voyage that had been nine weeks of unending horror, huddled between the decks of a merchant ship "Mayflower", the pilgrims landed at Plymouth in the middle of a fierce winter. In a few months, nearly half of them died. Yet, the Pilgrims did not lose hope or their faith in God. As poet Shelly, they knew ".....If winter comes, can Spring be far behind?". In a spirit of victory over awesome odds, they held a harvest festival in the fall. It is their triumph that we all celebrate. We didn't have to go through hardships as the early Pilgrims had gone through, but we must thank God for the bountiful harvest we enjoy every year.





# Mar Thoma Syrian Church of Malabar

The Most Rev. Dr. Alexander  
Mar Thoma Metropolitan



Tel. 2313  
Poolatheen,  
Tiruvalla-689 101  
Kerala.



## MESSAGE

I am very glad to know that the Diocesan MESSENGER will have four issues published this year. The Messenger will convey not only Diocesan news, but also information covering a wide range of interests.

Each issue is to have a main theme, relevant to the life and witness of the Christian community. The first to be published in October will have articles on "Christian Community As Pilgrim Community." The following issues will deal with Cultures and their influence on the faith of the people. It is important that the themes are thus interconnected.

I believe that the MESSENGER will be of great help in co-ordinating the activities of the different groups in the various Zones of the Diocese. I pray for God's rich blessings on the service rendered by the MESSENGER.

*Alexander Thoma*

( Alexander Mar Thoma, Metropolitan )

Tiruvalla  
29-8-1990



# THE MARTHOMITES FROM KERALA PILGRIMS IN NORTH AMERICA



Dr. John Mathew FortWorth, Texas.

## The New Canaan

A pilgrimage is a religious journey undertaken to visit shrines and pray for help to achieve desired goals, or to express gratitude for attained ones. Such religious journeys are found not only in Judaism but also in other religions. For example, Muslims go to Mecca, Hindus to Benaras, and the Sikhs to Amritsar (Golden Temple). Christians even now desire to go to Jerusalem. In Judaism such religious journeys are as old as the Book of Genesis 47:9) and the Book of Exodus (6:4). Originally pilgrimage meant "sojourn". The major prophets such as Isaiah and Jeremiah vehemently denounced pilgrimages for they held that Yahweh is to be worshipped only at the Jerusalem temple. Worshipping even Yahweh at other shrines was to be discouraged, they thought. Also, the deuteronomic reformers also discouraged pilgrimages (2 Kings 23:1-25).

In some senses we may call all the people who have come and settled down in the American continent pilgrims. Unlike the Israelites, however, who settled down in Canaan because Yahweh wanted them to do so, the Asians as well as the Europeans that have come and settled down in America did so mainly because of social, economic and religious purposes. Nonetheless, I strongly believe that God has brought us to this continent to carry out his mission.

In the Middle Ages, unlike our own, pilgrimages were common all over Europe. Pilgrims went to shrines in their own countries as well as to foreign ones. Pilgrimages to the Holy Land, Spain, and Rome were very popular in the Middle Ages. In England prior to and during the time of Geoffrey Chaucer (1340-1400), people went on pilgrimages to shrines in the country as well as to those in Europe. The most popular shrine to which the people went in England was the cathedral at Canterbury where Saint Thomas was murdered in 1170 A.D. After the Catholic church declared the murdered Thomas Beckett a saint to whom people could pray, pilgrims flocked to his shrine in large numbers. Chaucer's masterpiece The Canterbury Tales describes such a pilgrimage undertaken by thirty pilgrims including the fictional Chaucer to the cathedral at Canterbury. Chaucer's pilgrims started their pilgrimage from the Tabard Inn, Southwark, London. It took two days for the pilgrims to travel on horseback from Southwark to Canterbury on the muddy, perilous roads of England.

That all Christians are pilgrims travelling from the "City of Destruction" to the "Celestial City" John Bunyan claimed in his allegorical novel The pilgrim's Progress. The hero of this novel, Christian, travels from earth to heaven. The novel describes vividly the trails, temptations, and the agonies of Christian on his pilgrimage to heaven. The first part of the novel was published in 1678, and the second volume, published in 1685, deals with the pilgrimage of Christina, Christian's wife, his children, and a few of the neighbours. The second part of the novel contains more humor and irony than the first part, which is very serious and humorless. Christina and her neighbours resemble the pilgrims of Chaucer who went on their pilgrimage for religious and social purposes.

If Chaucer's and Bunyan's pilgrimages are fictional, a real pilgrimage from Europe to the American continent took place in 1620 A.D. One hundred and two pilgrims undertook that historic pilgrimage across the dangerous Atlantic in a small ship called Mayflower.



Of those one hundred and two pilgrims, thirty-five strongly desired separation from their parent British church and were fittingly called separatists. Those people had already fled from England fearing religious persecution. These same pilgrims had already settled in the Low Countries of Europe when they hired the Mayflower to take them to the American continent. Their main purpose in travelling to the American continent was religious. They wanted freedom to workshop God the way they desired. The pilgrims reached port at Plymouth, Massachusetts. Though at that time nobody called them pilgrims, the first one to refer to the new settlers in American as "saints" was Governor William Bradford. In 1820 Daniel Webster called the pilgrims in the Mayflower "Pilgram Fathers". Since then, they have been referred to as the "Pilgrim Fathers".

All those people that have come to this continent, this promised land, have reached the end of their earthly pilgrimage, it seems. The people from India as well as those from all over the world have been undertaking this pilgrimage for a long time, though their number has increased since the beginning of this century. People from Kerala have been arriving in the U.S.A. and Canada in increasing numbers since 1945. It is worthy to remember that their main purpose in coming to this continent has been financial and social and not religious. Amongst the Kerala people who have come to this land, Marthomites number about 2500 families or about 10,000 people, babes at arms, young children, middle-aged people, and very old ones. We worship God in the traditional Kerala style on this continent. We have thirty-five parishes in this country, Canada, and in the United Kingdom, the land area of which would be definitely larger than India, perhaps as large as Asia excluding the U.S.S.R. Along with other Indians, the Marthomites on the American continent are flourishing. Our children are doing very well at schools and colleges in the U.S.A., Canada, and England.

That we are pilgrims in these lands, I am fully convinced. That God has led us to this promised land, I strongly believe. We have to think seriously about God's purpose in bringing us to this land. We have to remember that we Marthomites are "lighted to lighten". In the light of this great responsibility, we have to ask ourselves what are we going to do in this new Canaan as God's chosen people? What is your answer to God regarding your and my place in this continent as ambassadors of God?

### Pilgrims We Are

We have come to this land, this promised land.  
God's own we are, his own favorite group  
From lean land to this Canaan came this band  
His spirit led us. Here we live, his troop.  
In Fort Worth, Dallas, Detroit God leads us  
Let's prosper like trees that grow in good soil.  
Here we build our Bethel to worship in mass  
God who is our Lord. It's for him we toil.  
Our children, bright as the sun, are a new class  
That aspires to stay and flourish in our fine homes.  
The church is their mother. Children pass  
From childhood to youth, our ports in rainstorms.  
We are pilgrims on earth on our way to heaven.  
We will be His till we sleep. God is our haven.





**G O PLACIDLY AMID THE NOISE & HASTE &  
REMEMBER WHAT PEACE THERE MAY BE IN  
SILENCE. AS FAR AS POSSIBLE WITHOUT**

surrender be on good terms with all persons. Speak your truth quietly & clearly; and listen to others, even the dull & ignorant; they too have their story. Avoid loud & aggressive persons, they are vexations to the spirit. If you compare yourself with others, you may become vain & bitter; for always there will be greater & lesser persons than yourself. Enjoy your achievements as well as your plans. Keep interested in your own career, however humble; it is a real possession in the changing fortunes of time. Exercise caution in your business affairs; for the world is full of trickery. But let this not blind you to what virtue there is; many persons strive for high ideals; and everywhere life is full of heroism. Be yourself. Especially, do not feign affection. Neither be cynical about love; for in the face of all aridity & disenchantment it is perennial as the grass. Take kindly the counsel of the years, gracefully surrendering the things of youth. Nurture strength of spirit to shield you in sudden misfortune. But do not distress yourself with imaginings. Many fears are born of fatigue & loneliness. Beyond a wholesome discipline, be gentle with yourself. You are a child of the universe, no less than the trees & stars; you have a right to be here. And whether or not it is clear to you, no doubt the universe is unfolding as it should. Therefore be at peace with God, whatever you conceive Him to be, and whatever your labors & aspirations, in the noisy confusion of life keep peace with your soul. With all its sham, drudgery & broken dreams, it is still a beautiful world. Be careful. Strive to be happy.

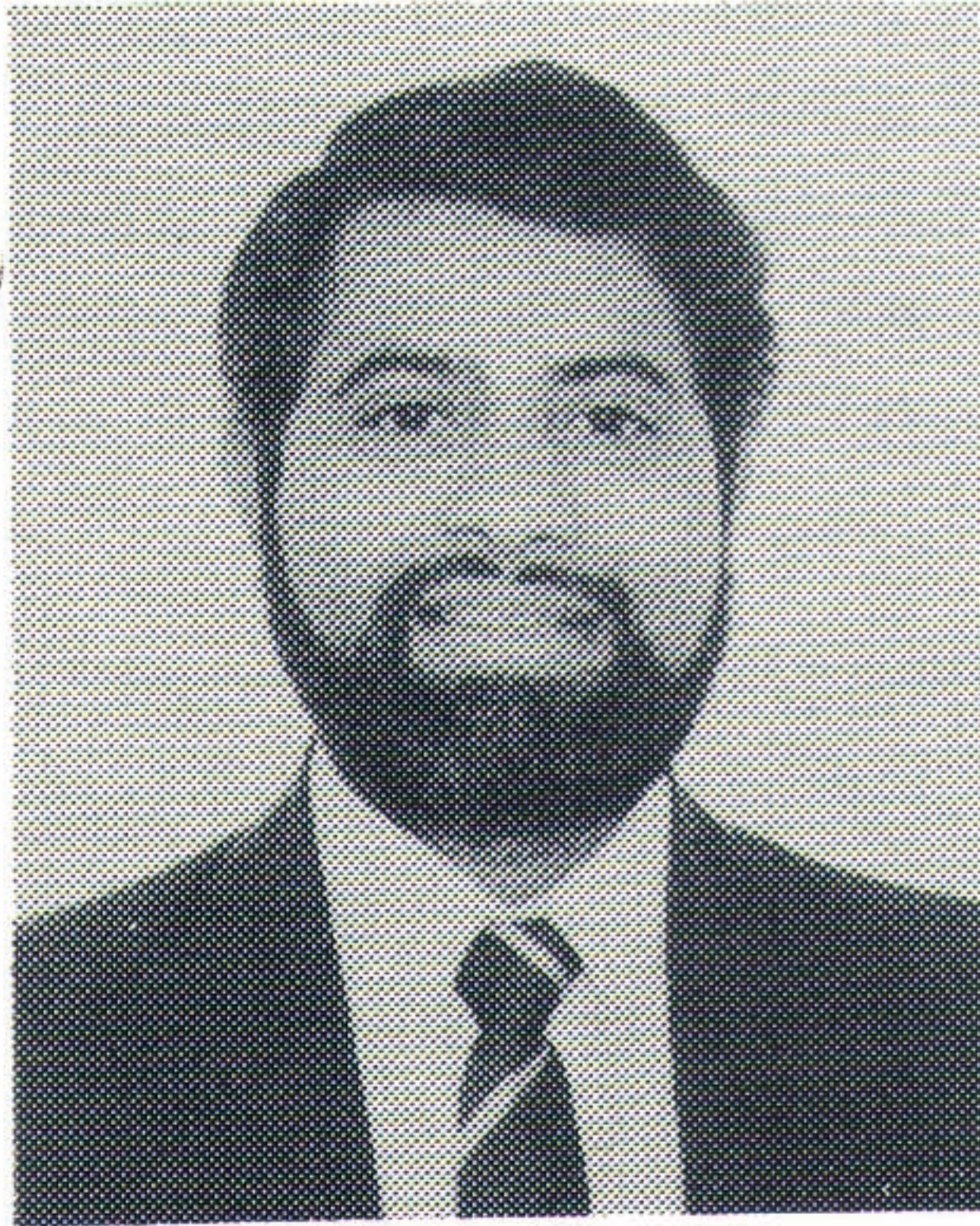
FOUND IN OLD SAINT PAUL'S CHURCH, BALTIMORE; DATED 1692

*(Space donated by Abraham Mattackal and family, Los Angeles.)*



# “ YE ARE A CHOSEN GENERATION ”

By Jacob Joseph, Toronto.



‘ YE ARE CHOSEN GENERATION’  
THE BANNER DECLARED THE THEME ,  
THEME OF THE MAR THOMA FAMILY CONFERENCE 1990  
AT LUBBOCK, TEXAS. U.S.A.

THEY HAVE COME FROM PLACES NEAR AND FAR,  
JUST TO BECOME A PART  
TO BE A PART OF THIS SPIRITUAL EVENT,  
FOR IT’S CONFERENCE TIME, ONCE AGAIN !

THOUGH HUMBLE, OUR BEGINNINGS IN THAT FAR AWAY LAND  
WHERE OUR ROOTS SO DEEPLY PLACED,  
THE CHOSEN GENERATION OF THE PAST  
LEFT THEIR MARKS SO WELL.

THE FAITH OF OUR FATHERS SO STRONG AND TRUE  
NOURISHED THE MAR THOMA CHURCH,  
BEYOND THE BORDERS OF KERALA IT GREW  
AND SPREAD IT’S BRANCHES TOO!

ACROSS THE SEAS, AROUND THE CONTINENTS  
AND TO THE REMOTEST PARTS OF THE WORLD,  
A CHOSEN GENERATION SPREAD ALL AROUND,  
WITH A MISSION IN THEIR MIND.

CONSCIOUS OF OUR MISSION HAVE WE COME;  
TO PRAISE THE LORD TOGETHER,  
TO THANK HIM FOR HIS GRACE AND GUIDANCE  
FROM THE BOTTOM OF OUR HEARTS.

TO COUNT OUR BLESSINGS ONE BY ONE,  
TO FIND THAT IT IS ALL FROM HIM,  
TO MEET SOME FRIENDLY FACES TOO  
WHO SHARE THAT SIMILAR TRUTH.

WE CLAPPED OUR HANDS AND SANG TOGETHER  
AND HEARD THE WORD OF GOD;  
OUR HEARTS SO MOVED, WE WIPED THE TEARS  
AND PROMISED TO DO HIS WILL.

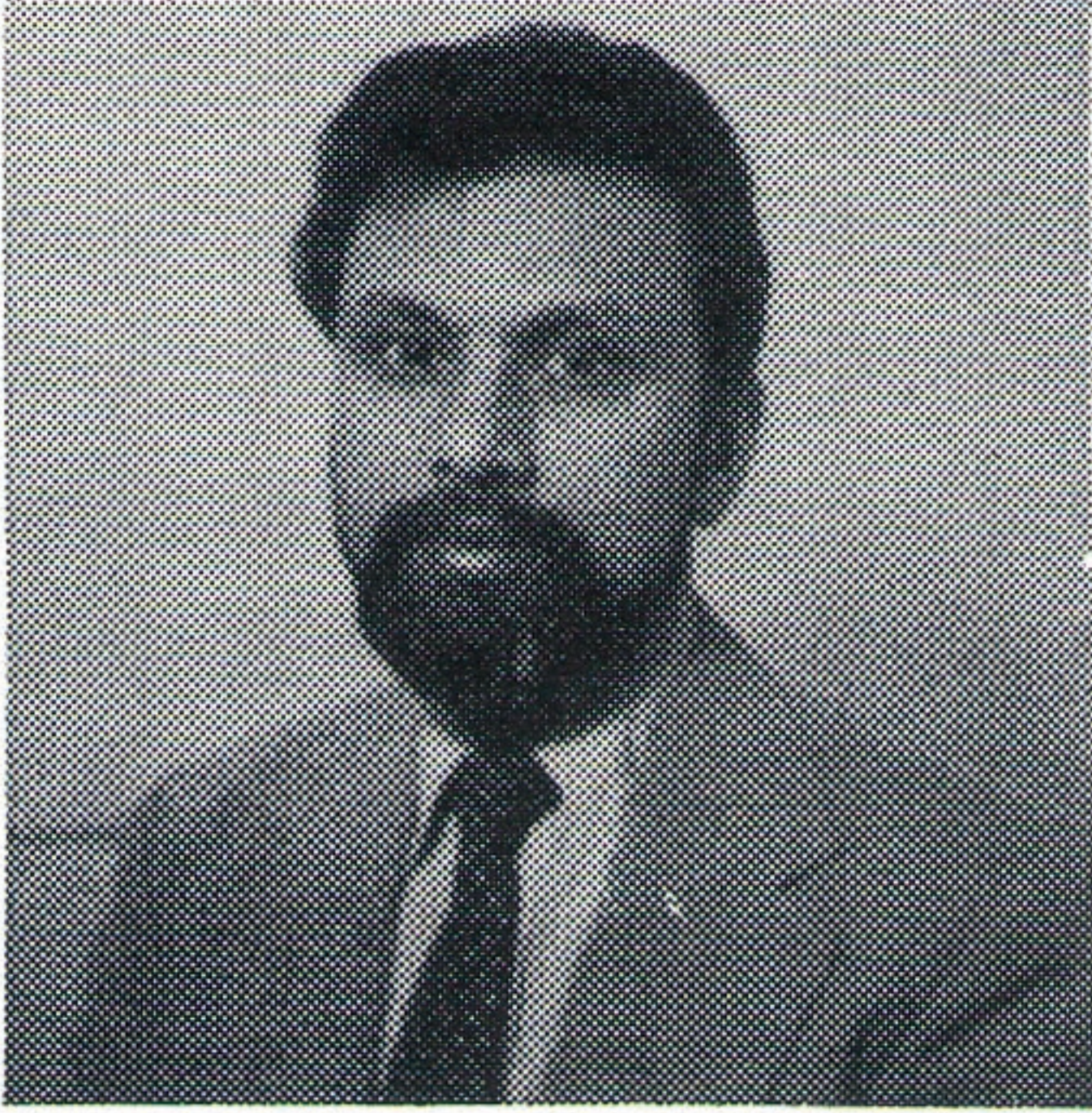
WHEN ALL WAS OVER, WE LEFT FOR HOME  
AND WAITING FOR THE NEXT  
FOR IT’S AN ANNUAL PILGRIMAGE  
FOR BLESSED MARTHOMITES !





# Rites, Sacraments And Ceremonials For The Next Century

Dr. Zac Varghese, London.



"Leave this chanting and singing and telling of beads. Whom dost thou worship in this lonely dark corner of a temple with doors all shut? Open thine eyes and see thy God is not before thee"

"He is there where the tiller is tilling the hard ground and where the path-maker is breaking the stones. He is with them in sun and in shower, and his garment is covered with dust. Put off thy holy mantle and even like him come down on the dusty soil!"

"Come out of thy meditations and leave aside thy flowers and incense! What harm is there if thy clothes become tattered and stained? Meet him and stand by him in toil and in sweat of thy brow" so says Tagore in Gitanjali.

This is what Huxley had to say about seeking God in worship:

"Theoretically any ritual or sacraments are as good as any other ritual or sacrament provided always that the object symbolised be, in fact, some aspect of Divine Reality and that the relation between the symbol and fact be clearly defined..... Human experience can be thought about as effectively in Chinese as in English or French. But in practice, Chinese is the best language for those brought up in China, English for those brought up in England, and French for those brought up in France...For persons who have been brought up to think of God by means of one set of symbols, it is very hard to think of Him in terms of others, and, in their eyes, unhallowed sets of words, ceremonies and images."

Both Tagore and Huxley had captured the essence of seeking God in worship

Worship is not only a basic human instinct it is a basic human need, bringing life to God and transforming life in God. There is a working definition of worship giving God worth or respect. But, surely worship is much more dyn-

amic than that. Ask most young people what they think of our church services and they will tell you bluntly, "boring". Many of those who have sought God in worship have failed to find God because the worship has been inappropriate or irrelevant.

There is the village church struggling to find its way in the charismatic expression of faith and speaking in tongues, thinking that good worship must be "in the spirit" or "spirit-led".

There is the city church with its Dr. Revd Vicar struggling to cope with Upanishad and Bhagavad-Gita and interfaith dialogue, with a congregation which in the rest of its life, Monday to Friday, has no use for such scholarly concepts. Such a worship is surely inappropriate.

Then there is the worship which is irrelevant to our experience and our world. The Prophet Amos, in the indictment of Israelites' worship, was not telling his people to stop worshipping but to start worshipping relevantly, taking seriously the problems of what was then a divided society. So what is the link between our Sunday worship and those starving millions in Ethiopia? What is the link between our worship and those in Kashmir Valley? What is the link between our worship and those in our country with no hope of a job or who can not provide for their loved ones? Worship which does not integrate our need for intimacy with God with exposure to His demands to do justice and love righteousness, is worship which Amos spurned as blasphemous. But that disintegration - between Sunday worship and the rest of life out there happens also in a more personal way. How often have you needed to come to church to cry with fellow Christians and the atmosphere simply has not allowed it? Or perhaps you wanted to celebrate your Gold Medal and you have not felt able to let go? And so you have wondered, "Where is God in my suffering and in my excitement if I can not bring what I am feeling into the worship service?"

People go to church in an attempt to make sense of their experience of being human, to be with God, to be with fellow Christians, to be with themselves, to prepare for birth, marriage and death. When these become possible within a loving and caring Christian community, worship becomes powerful and meaningful.

Mar Thoma Messenger



During the 16th Century in England, there had been great dissatisfaction with Anglican liturgy a strong desire to reform it. Anglicans are grateful to Thomas Cranmer for giving them a common Prayer book in which services were given a fixed and unvarying framework which is the basis of all liturgical stability, combined with enough variety to avoid monotony. Cranmer's work on the liturgy of the Church of England has given them, as he wished, a communion service which is "done by the priest and the people together" and where both bread and wine are given and received. Before Cranmer, the priest had performed the service virtually out of sight and hearing of his congregation. Cranmer succeeded in simplifying the Latin Services of the medieval church and produced a liturgy for the age in which he lived. His aim was that every part of the public worship should be in an understandable form so that people could be enlightened.

John Fenwick writing about "worship in the spirit" made the following observation:

"Liturgy, after all, is one of the marks of the continuity of the church, but we can never go back and recreate a past age. This is as true for the charismatic who wishes to recreate what he imagines to be the worship of the church of Corinth of AD 50 (without, of course its problems) as it was for former generations of the Alcuin Club who wished to recreate what they imagined to be the worship of 1549. God calls His people on, in continuity with the past. This has the rather disturbing implication that things that were once very important cease to be so or are important in a different way."

We, as Mar Thoma Christians, also can not live in the past. We also should move on. The young people in our church have been signalling for a meaningful liturgy and it is necessary to respond to their demand.

Since our worship has been sterile and dull young people have looked elsewhere to worship. If the traditional church does not provide an adequate focus others will be substituted. Many traditional Christians in the West have joined the House Churches because they found the style of worship in their Parish Churches too rigid and sterile. Another solution is to find focus for

worship in a close relationship. It may be fine to see hints of God's presence in the natural world; it is fine to discover something of this in human relationships. But there is always the danger of confusing the creature with the creator, of turning the icon into an idol. C.S Lewis wrote, "These things are not the things itself. They are only the scent of a flower we have not found, the echo of a tune we have not heard, news from a country we have never visited."

It has become increasingly clear that we are, in a multiplicity of ways, preventing the young people of our church to understand and enjoy our rich liturgy. It may be that we, ourselves, do not understand it to pass it on. Once again, those who understand it have a responsibility as stewards of our traditions, and it is undoubtedly their duty to bring in necessary reforms to make it meaningful for everyone in the church.

How, then, do we find a way through? It seems we need worship which enables us to get in touch with the depths of God and the depths of human experience. We also need discipline in worship which protects us from being overwhelmed by those depths and intensity. It is this church discipline which prevented the Early Church from being overwhelmed. Alongside the spiritual freedom came discipline—discipline of belonging to a community, discipline of attendance at the church, discipline of teaching—ensuring that the focus of worship was the suffering crucified Christ who had risen and is glorified.

*(Reprinted from August 1990 Malankara Sabha Tharaka)*

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Dr. Zac Varghese is the Associate Director of Renal research at the Royal Free Hospital Medical School, London. He is also the Director of the Tissue Diagnostics laboratory at the Hospital of St. John and St. Elizabeth, London.



## .....IN SEARCH OF ANSWERS:

### SOME REFLECTIONS ON THE NEEDS AND CONCERNS OF THE WOMEN OF THE MAR THOMA CHURCH IN NORTH AMERICA AS VIEWED BY THE SEVIKHA SANGHOM OF THE PHILADELPHIA MAR THOMA CHURCH

The Role of Women in Mar Thoma Church activities, is rapidly increasing. Women are playing an important part in all evangelistic and social service activities. Yet, the recognition given to women is inadequate. We need to develop more positive steps to increase the role of women in all levels and phases of church activities. Being a Pilgrim Community, the Syrian christian women bear tremendous responsibilities and burdens. A majority of them play the dual role of home maker and wage earner. Yet, the role models and lifestyles practiced in Kerala remain unchanged. Our women have many hopes and aspirations, fears and anxieties as they live in an alien land. Recently two surveys were conducted. The results of these surveys as well as discussions at Sanghom meetings identified some of the areas of concerns expressed by our women.

One of the major concerns relates to proper parenting of children, especially during adolescent years. Children are torn between our traditional life and liberal values of American society. Mothers, lacking the family network and support system available in Kerala, face problems in meeting these challenges. Another area of concern relates to the method of finding suitable spouses for their children. The traditional method of finding a proper partner appears to be getting increasingly difficult. Voluntary, as well as church related groups, can provide assistance in this matter. Also, counselling services before and after marriage would be beneficial.

"Lack of good communication" between family members was cited as another problem area. In the modern society, the major function of a family is relational. If the deepest relational needs of the society is not met, it will lead to family breakdowns. Many of the respondents have also expressed their fears in the following areas:

Marriage and sexual relationship

Morality and Religious values

Other factors cited were "Loneliness", "lack of spiritual feeling", "fear of growing old" and "health problems".

Another area of concern deals with the "Role of Women in the church and family". Even though the world has progressed and women are rapidly catching up with men in leadership roles, our conscious and unconscious gender stereotypes, attitudes and behaviour remains unchanged. As



we face the challenge of the 90's, it is important to view men and women as partners in the service of God. This is especially important in the developments of role models and value system profiles for our younger generation. The complimentary relationship of husband and wife as taught in the Bible, should be highlighted without fear or prejudice.

As we look into the future, more questions present themselves. As the second generation of Marthomite women emerge into young adults, there is going to be distinct difference between their mothers and their own experiences. This may reflect in educational levels, career opportunity, relationship between husband and wife, demand for greater freedom and interpretation of traditional values. Just how will these differences affect their experience with marriage and family or their leadership styles in church and community, is yet to be seen.

Having reflected on some of the concerns of the Mar Thoma Women in North America, we now turn to how Sevikha Sanghoms can address some of these issues.

\* Disseminating information through workshops and seminars, especially in an inter-generational setting.

\* Encouraging systematic study of the Bible and revitalizing prayer meetings, to strengthen spiritual life.

\* Network across lines to establish support groups whereby women are encouraged to express their thoughts, fears and concerns in a group setting.

\* Channeling separate funding for women's programmes to set up Counselling centers, Resource centers, etc.

\* Participating in social action programs in the community we live in.

In the meantime, as individuals, Mar Thoma Women may choose to negate or empower, to feel dejected or inspired. We may choose to find fault with the system or the misconstrued and misinterpreted traditional values and practices, thereby consoling ourselves with alibis, or we can stand up and express our viewpoints without fear or slander, which will go a long way towards implementing the much needed changes.... The choice is ours.





We reprint below from the September 1990 issue of the "Sabha Tharaka" a portion of the Rt. Rev. Alexander Mar Thoma Metropolitan's Inaugural address at the annual meeting of Mandalam in Tiruvalla on Sept. 5 & 6, 1990. The two subjects that are referred to in Thirumeni's address reprinted below namely "Woman's role in church" and "Our responsibilities towards our youths" have added significance because they are very much relevant to us in our lives in the United States. It is only a matter of coincidence that the preceding two articles deal with the same topics - Editor.

**സഭകൾക്ക് സമ്പ്രദായങ്ങളോടുള്ള ഐക്യഭാവം**

സമൂഹത്തിൽ അവഗണിക്കപ്പെടുന്നവരെ പ്രത്യേകം കരുതി അവരെ ഉയർത്തുന്നത് ദൈവത്തിന്റെ പ്രവർത്തനമാണെന്ന് ഹന്നായും കന്യക മറിയമും പാടി. യേശു ക്രിസ്തു അന്നത്തെ കാലത്ത് നിലനിന്നിരുന്ന പല അവശതകളിൽ നിന്നും സ്ത്രീകളെ ഉദ്ധരിച്ച് തന്റെ കൂട്ട പ്രവർത്തകരാക്കി. എന്നാൽ ഇന്നും പല രംഗങ്ങളിലും സ്ത്രീകൾ അവഗണിക്കപ്പെട്ടവരായിരിക്കുന്നു. കേരളത്തിൽ ഇൻഡ്യയിലെ മറ്റു സംസ്ഥാനങ്ങളെ അപേക്ഷിച്ച് വിദ്യാഭ്യാസത്തിലും മറ്റും സ്ത്രീകൾക്ക് പുരോഗമനം ഉണ്ടായിട്ടുണ്ട് എന്ന് വരികിലും സമ്പ്രദായ തീരുമാനങ്ങൾ കൈക്കൊള്ളുന്ന പൊതു ആലോചനാ സമിതികളിൽ അവർക്കുള്ള സ്ഥാനം ഇപ്പോഴും കുറവായിരിക്കുന്നു. മേല്പറഞ്ഞപ്രകാരമുള്ള സംവരണ രീതിയാണോ ഇതിനു പരിഹാരമെന്ന് ആലോചിക്കേണ്ടതാണ്. കേന്ദ്രഗവൺമെന്റ് പഞ്ചായത്തുകളിൽ അവർക്ക് 30 ശതമാനം സീറ്റു സംവരണം ചെയ്യുന്നതിന് ആലോചിക്കുന്നു എന്ന് പ്രഖ്യാപിച്ചിട്ടുണ്ട്. ചില ഇടവകകളിൽ ചുമതല സ്ഥാനങ്ങളിൽ അവരിൽ ചിലർ പ്രവർത്തിക്കുന്നു എന്ന് വരികിലും കൂടുതലായ പങ്കാളിത്തം ഇനിയും ഉണ്ടാകേണ്ടിയിരിക്കുന്നു. നമ്മുടെ സേവിക്കാസംഘത്തിൽക്കൂടെ ഇടവക തലത്തിലും ഭദ്രാസനം, കേന്ദ്രം എന്നിവിടങ്ങളിലും അനുഗ്രഹകരമായ പ്രവർത്തനം അവർ നിർവ്വഹിച്ചു വരുന്നു എന്ന് അഭിമാനകരമാണ്. ഇനിയും ഏതെല്ലാം രംഗങ്ങളിൽ പങ്കാളിത്തം കൂടുതലായി സാധിക്കേണ്ടിയിരിക്കുന്നു എന്ന് കാര്യമായി ചിന്തിക്കുന്നത് ആവശ്യമാണ്. പിതൃ സ്വത്തവകാശം, തുല്യവേതനം, വിവാഹ പ്രശ്നങ്ങളിൽ നീതി, ആദിയായവ ലഭിക്കുന്നതിന് പുരുഷന്മാരെ അപേക്ഷിച്ച് വളരെക്കൂടുതൽ അവശത സ്ത്രീകൾ അനുഭവിക്കുന്നു. മദ്യപാനത്തിന്റെയും ടർമാഗ്നത്തിന്റെയും ഫലമായി കൂടുതൽ കഷ്ടമനുഭവിക്കുന്നതും സ്ത്രീകളാണല്ലോ. ഇപ്രകാരം വിവിധ രംഗങ്ങളിൽ അവർക്ക് ലഭിക്കേണ്ട അവകാശങ്ങളെപ്പറ്റി സമൂഹത്തെ കൂടുതൽ ബോധവൽക്കരിക്കേണ്ടിയിരിക്കുന്നു. സഭയിലും അവരുടെ പങ്കാളിത്തം ഉറപ്പാക്കണം.

**യുവജനങ്ങളോടുള്ള കടമ**

അതിശീഘ്രം മാറിക്കൊണ്ടിരിക്കുന്ന സാഹചര്യങ്ങളിൽ വളരെ വരുന്ന യുവജനങ്ങൾ നമുക്ക് നൽകപ്പെട്ടിരിക്കുന്ന വിശ്വാസത്തിൽ ഉറച്ചുവരായി യേശു ക്രിസ്തുവിൽ ജീവിത ലക്ഷ്യവും സന്തോഷവും കണ്ടെത്തി പുരോഗമിക്കുവാൻ സാധിക്കണം. അതിന് എതിരായ ശക്തികൾ ഇന്ന് വളരെ പ്രബലപ്പെട്ടിരിക്കുന്നു. അതിനാൽ വേനത്തിൽനിന്നും സഭയിൽനിന്നും ആവശ്യമായ ബോധനവും പരിശീലനവും അവർക്ക് ലഭിക്കേണ്ടതാണ്. യുവശക്തി ദൈവരാജ്യ പ്രവർത്തനത്തിൽ ഉപയോഗിക്കപ്പെടുവാൻ ആവശ്യമായ നേതൃത്വവും കൂട്ടായ്മയും അവർക്ക് നൽകണം. ഇതിനായി സഭയിൽ സ്ഥാപിതമായ യുവജനസഖ്യം കഠിനമായി പല പ്രയാസങ്ങളിൽക്കൂടെ കടന്നു വരികയാണ്. സംഘടനാ പ്രവർത്തനങ്ങളിൽ ആവശ്യമായ മാറ്റം വരുത്തി പുരോഗമിക്കുവാൻ എല്ലാവരുടെയും സഹകരണം ലഭിക്കുമെന്ന് പ്രതീക്ഷിക്കുന്നു. കണ്ടുവരുന്നവർക്കുവേണ്ടി നടത്തുന്ന സന്ദേശപ്രവർത്തനവും വിജയകരമായിത്തീരുന്നതിന് പ്രത്യേക ശ്രദ്ധിക്കേണ്ട

തു് ആവശ്യമാണ്. അടുത്തകാലത്ത് നേഷ്ണറി വകുപ്പും ജ്യോഷ്ഠവകുപ്പും പുത്തിയാക്കിയവയായി ഇവ വകുപ്പും ആരംഭിച്ചിട്ടുണ്ട്. ഇവ പ്രയോജനകരമാകത്തക്കവണ്ണം മാതാപിതാക്കൾ പ്രത്യേകം പ്രോത്സാഹനം നൽകേണ്ടിയിരിക്കുന്നു. ഞായറാഴ്ച കട്ടികൾ സന്ദേശങ്ങളിലൂടെ പോകാതെ ട്യൂഷൻ ക്ലാസ്സുകൾക്ക് പോകുന്ന പ്രവണത ഇന്ന് ചിലയിടങ്ങളിൽ കാണുന്നു. ദൈവിക കാര്യങ്ങളിലുള്ള അനാസ്ഥ ഭാവിതലമുറയുടെ നാശത്തിന് കാരണമാകുമെന്ന് യേശുക്രിസ്തുവും നാം ഭയപ്പെടേണ്ടതാണ്. ടെലിവിഷനും മറ്റും വിനോദ മാഗ്സിനുകളും ദൈവിക ബോധനത്തിൽനിന്നും പരിശീലനത്തിൽനിന്നും അവരെ അകറ്റുവാൻ യാതൊരു കാരണത്താലും ഇടയാകരുത്. ദൈവശക്തിയും സമർപ്പണവും പഠിപ്പിക്കുന്നതിനുള്ള ശേഷിയുള്ള അദ്ധ്യാപകരുടെ സേവനം എത്രയും വിലയേറിയതാണ്. ഈ പ്രവർത്തനങ്ങളിൽ ഇടവക പട്ടാളങ്ങളുടെ കൂടുതലായ സഹായം ആവശ്യമായിരിക്കുന്നു.

മദ്യപാനവും മയക്കുമരുന്നും അനേകം യുവജനങ്ങളെ അപകടത്തിലേക്കു നയിക്കുന്നു. ഇതിനെതിരെ നിത്യ ജാഗ്രത നാം പുലർത്തേണ്ടിയിരിക്കുന്നു. യുവജനസഖ്യം ഇതിനായി പ്രതിജ്ഞ ചെയ്തിട്ടുള്ളതു് ശ്രദ്ധേയമാണ്. യുവജനങ്ങൾക്ക് ആവശ്യമായ കൗൺസലിംഗ് നല്ലതക്കവണ്ണം വിദ്യാഭ്യാസ കേന്ദ്രങ്ങളോടനുബന്ധിച്ചു പ്രവർത്തിക്കുവാൻ ചാപ്പയിൻമാരെ നിയമിക്കേണ്ടതും അത്യാവശ്യമാണ്. അപ്പണബോധത്തോടെ സ്ത്രീകളിലും കോളേജുകളിലും പ്രവർത്തിക്കുന്ന അദ്ധ്യാപകരുടെ സേവനവും വിലയേറിയതാണ്. യുവജന പ്രവർത്തനങ്ങൾ കലാമത്സരങ്ങളിലും കായിക മത്സരങ്ങളിലും മുഖ്യമായി ശ്രദ്ധപതിക്കുന്നത് അപകടകരമാണ്. ആരാധന, പഠനം, സാക്ഷ്യം, സേവനം എന്നീ ചതുർമുഖ പരിപാടികൾ സമഗ്രമായി നടപ്പാക്കണം.

**ആരാധന ക്രമങ്ങൾ**

യുവജനങ്ങൾ പലപ്പോഴും പറയുന്ന ഒരു പരാതിയുണ്ട്. നമ്മുടെ ആരാധനക്രമങ്ങൾ വളരെ പ്രാചീനമാണ്. അവ ഇന്നത്തെ ജീവിത രീതിക്കും നാം അഭിമുഖീകരിക്കുന്ന പ്രശ്നങ്ങൾക്കും വേണ്ടവിധം സംഗതമല്ല. അതിനാൽ ആരാധനക്രമങ്ങൾ കൂടുതൽ അർത്ഥത്തായി തീരത്തക്കവണ്ണം രൂപത്തിലും ഭാഷയിലും മാറ്റങ്ങൾ വരുത്തണം എന്ന് അവർ പറയുന്നു. മാതൃഭാഷാ സഭ നവീകരണ ആശയം അംഗീകരിച്ച സഭയാണ്. എന്നാൽ മാതൃഭാഷാ ആശയം താല്പര്യപ്രകാരം മാറ്റങ്ങൾ വരുത്തുന്നത് ആശാസ്യമായിരിക്കയില്ല. വ്യവസ്ഥാപിതമായ മാഗ്സിനുകളിൽകൂടെ മാറ്റങ്ങൾ ഉണ്ടാകേണ്ടതാവശ്യവുമാണ്. ആരാധന ക്രമങ്ങളെയും രീതികളെയും കുറിച്ച് ജ്ഞാനവും പരിചയവും സിദ്ധിച്ചവർ പ്രാർത്ഥനാപുസ്തകം ആവശ്യമായ മാറ്റങ്ങൾ നിർദ്ദേശിച്ചു പൊതുവായ അംഗീകാരത്തോടുകൂടെ മാറ്റങ്ങൾ നടപ്പാക്കേണ്ടതാണ്. ഇതു് വളരെ സൂക്ഷ്മതയോടെ ദൈവകൃപയിൽ ആശ്രയിച്ചു ചെയ്യേണ്ടിയിരിക്കുന്നു. ദൈവകൃപയിലും ഭാഷാശൈലിയിലും മറ്റും ഇപ്രകാരം മാറ്റങ്ങൾ ഉണ്ടാകുന്നതു കൂടുതൽ അർത്ഥത്തായി ശുശ്രൂഷകളിൽ സംബന്ധിക്കുവാൻ സഹായകരമായിരിക്കും.





# ROLE OF PARENTS IN BUILDING A HEALTHY FAMILY



Dr. Elsy Mathew, M.D. Claremont, California

In this Western society, in the midst of advanced technology and material wealth, it is quite worth taking a look at our family life - relationship within the family, type of interaction within the family, and its long term effect on children. How much time do we spend together as a family? How much time do we devote to our children with our partner in life? What do we strive for? Have we ever thought about what we want to be? What are our goals in life? Are we striving for material benefits? Money? Money? Money?! Work? Work? Work?! What do we value in life - success, good job, nice home? Whom do we value more in life - our career or our family?

We live in an era of political, economical and emotional turmoil and I think, we need to take a look at our family; level of acculturation and our responsibilities as parents to each other and to our children, things we need to know about our children's development in order to enable us to face the problems they might have during the later stages. Modern advances in child psychology and child bearing practices have focused on the increased understanding of child developments, the role of early relationships (Object Relations) and the relationship between the parents or caretaker and the child (Bonding).

**New Born** In infancy, major responsibility for parents is to meet the infant's needs in a consistent and sensitive fashion, so the child never experiences tension. Infancy ends when baby starts talking. At the age of four weeks, baby smiles preferential to mother; spontaneous social smile develops at sixteen weeks. As parents we need to know about separation anxiety and stranger anxiety in a newborn. Separation from the person to whom the infant is attached precipitates separation anxiety. Stranger anxiety occurs even when the infant is in mother's arms. The infant learns to separate as it starts to crawl and move away from the mother; but the infant constantly looks back, and frequently returns to the mother for reassurance. Parents attitudes, emotions, and their relationships within the family influences the child behavior. Anxious parents can influence the child's emotions and it can make the baby anxious, colicky and irritable. Quality of care, consistency in feeding and the way we respond to the new born influences the child development and good consistent, and affectionate care creates a healthy baby, who develops a trusting relationship with the world.

**Toddler (15 months to 2 1/2 years)** Second year of life is a period of increasing social demands on the child. As parents we have to change our tasks to meet the growing needs and tasks of the child. In American culture, too much emphasis is around the issues of toilet training. Parental task at the toddler stage requires firmness about the boundaries of acceptable behavior and encouragement of progressive emancipation of the child. Children must be allowed to operate for themselves and learn from their mistakes. But as parents we should protect them, when challenges are beyond their abilities. If the parent permit the child to function with some autonomy and are supportive without being overprotective, the toddler gains self confidence and feels the child can control himself and his world; but if the child is either punished or over-controlled too much shaming causes the child to feel evil or dirty and may pave the way for delinquency. The child feels angry, ashamed and it may lead to low selfesteem, anti-social behavior as an adult and also depression in adulthood. As parents, it is very important to show approval, when the child shows self control and it enhances the toddler's selfesteem and a sense of pride develops. Parental overcontrol makes the child feel ashamed and feel small and feeling small, the child is easily ashamed by poor parenting experiences. This is a stage of sexual



curiosity. If the child's questions are answered honestly and with age - appropriate replies, the child develops a sense of wonder of life and he is comfortable with his own role as a toddler. Through imitation and reward the child assumes the behavior that the culture defines as appropriate for sexual role. If the subject of sex is taboo and child's questions are not answered, shame and discomfort results. By the age of 2 1/2 years the child develops a sense of gender identity, depending on whether the child is a boy or girl. In general play is determined by gender. Boys play with guns and girls play with dolls and doll houses. As a toddler, we need to set realistic limits on their behavior balancing, between punishment and permissiveness. Parents need to be consistent in disciplining the kids during preschool. Parents should recognize their mode of thinking which is ego-centric and when they say No, they are not negativistic, but striving for autonomy and independence. During this period, conflicts and stressful situation may manifest as somatization, that is multiple somatic symptoms like headache, abdominal colic, nausea and low energy. Parent teaching and parental example as well as cultural and ethnic mores, teach some children to somatize.

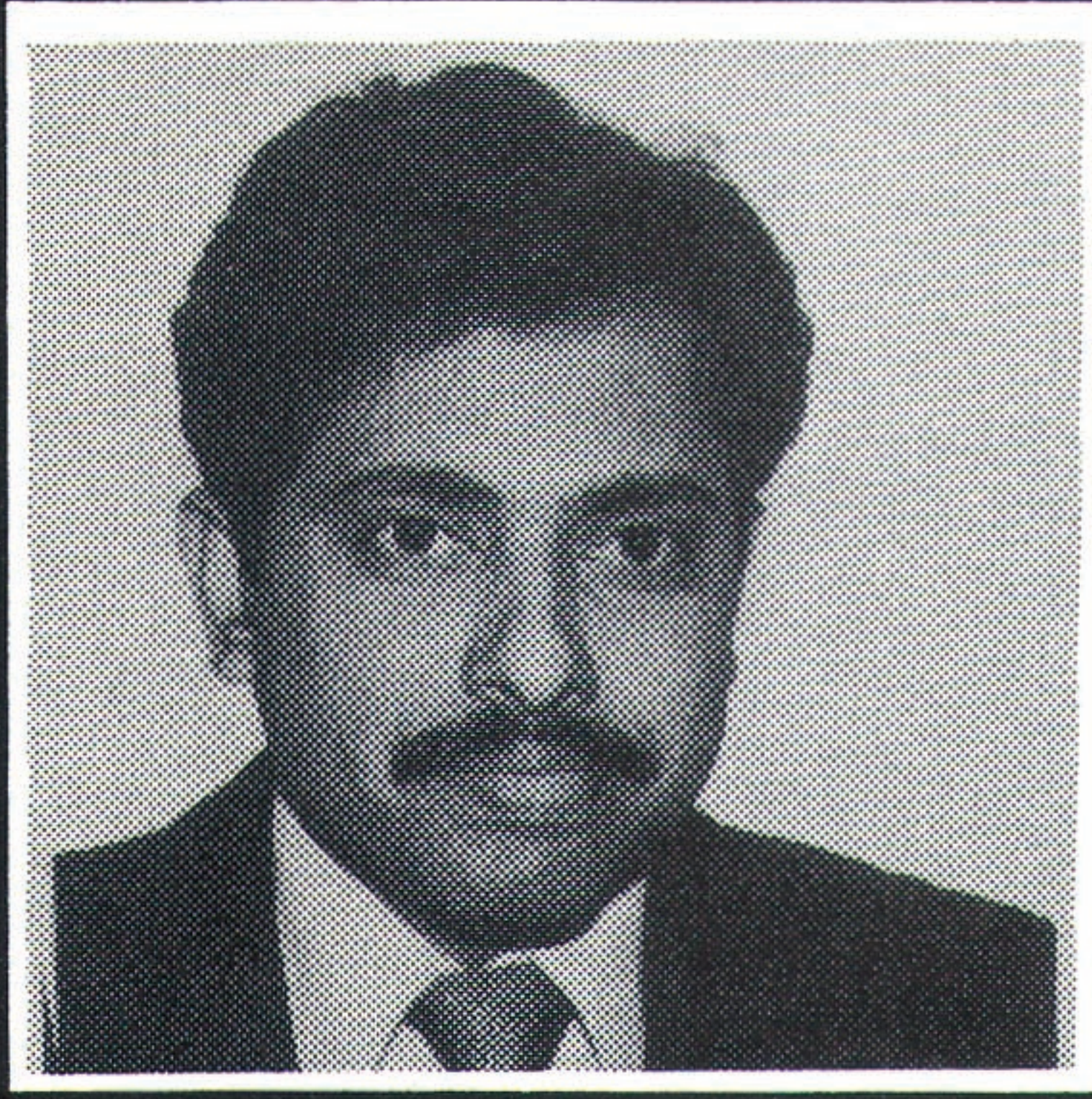
**Pre school ( 2 1/2 years to 6 years)** This is a period of playing and the development of social behavior. A child's play behavior reflects his level of social development. At this age, growth can be traced through drawings. First drawing of a person is a circular line with marks for nose, throat and eye; ears and hair added later, next arms, last to appear is a torso in proportion to rest of the body. Children during this period have imaginary companions and they do play with them. During this stage, they are preoccupied with illness or injury; every injury needs to be examined and taken care by the parent. This is called band-aid phase. At the end of third year, children are able to initiate both motor and intellectual activity. As parents, we have to encourage their initiative and we have to satisfy their intellectual curiosity. If the crisis of initiative is successfully resolved, a sense of responsibility, dependability and self-discipline develops in the personality.

**Middle Years ( 6 to 12 years)** Girls identify with mother; boys with father. In some children, refusal to go to school occurs at this stage; afraid of being separated from the mother. A fearful mother, may transmit her own fear of separation to the child. During this period, peer relations plays a vital part in their life. Biological drives are dormant, peer interaction prevails. Ability to work and acquire adult skills is the keynote of this stage. Child learns to make things and to attain mastery over the task. As parents, we need to encourage the child to be productive and encourage them to take pride in these activities. Good parents encourage their children to value diligence, productivity and hard work, which in turn, will protect the child against a sense of inferiority.

**Adolescent** As an adolescent, our kids are striving for identity. Who am I? And this is a period of drastic emotional and physical changes and our children are living in a culture different from the parent's culture and this period is as confusing to our adolescents as to their parents. Parents should understand their feelings and be patient to sit with them and talk about the issues around identity, choice of a career and future goals. And no time should they avoid answering questions on sexual issues with children. We should educate our children about the changes in the body as a teenager, educate them about sex and explain to them that our body is a God given gift and not to be misused. Our kids expect us to provide guidance and support, so be a good role model to our kids. Parent's behavior and life style influences child development. Parents should teach our cultural values and morales to our children. In this country, lack of a stable family, failure to understand the kid's feelings and lack of adequate communication within the family will create a dysfunctional family which, in turn, will open the way to drug addiction, suicidality, depression and runaways. So as parents, it is our behavior, our lifestyle, and our interaction within our family and society which may make or mar our child. Above all, Christian faith and a spiritual life, including daily family prayers is very important for a healthy family life.







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# REPORT OF THE MAR THOMA FAMILY CONFERENCE OF NORTH AMERICA 1990

The Mar Thoma Family Conference of North America has become a significant part of the life of the Mar Thoma community in North America. The importance our community attributes to the conference is evident in the eagerness with which the Mar Thomites anticipate the conference and the several months of planning, organizing and preparation on the part of the hosting parish. The conferences have proved that they can help deepen our faith, significantly shape our perspectives and values and rethink our goals.

The conference for the current year was held at the Lubbock Christian University, Lubbock, Texas from 19 to 22 July. There were about six hundred delegates including children. The conference had a team of blessed leaders. The Rt. Rev. Philipose Mar Chrysostom Saffragan Metropolitan, Bishop of the Diocese of North America and U.K. was the main leader. Besides Thirumeni there were Rev. Dr. John T. Seamands and Rev. Dr. Theodore Williams, two prominent Maramon speakers. The Youth had the leadership of Rev. Dr. Ramesh Richard of Dallas Theological Seminary, Dr. Prasad Mathew, Rev. Dr. Ipe Joseph of Mar Thoma Sunday School Samajam and Rev. K. George Pothen. Our Aghens serving in the parishes of this diocese were present through the conference.

The Mayor of Lubbock Mr. Peck McMinn inaugurated the conference at 7.15 P.M. on Thursday, July 19. Dr. Jerry Perrin, president of the Lubbock Christian University welcomed the conference delegates to the campus. The inaugural address was then given by Rt. Rev. Philipose Mar Chrysostom Saffragan Metropolitan. Thirumeni addressed the conference, on the conference theme "You are a Chosen Generation". The address challenged the delegates to reflect on the various aspects of the theme like, "Who has chosen us?", "Do we know Him who has chosen us?", "Chosen for what?", "What is the purpose of being chosen?", "The privilege and responsibility of the chosen people".

The Bible studies and addresses given by Dr. John T. Seamands and Dr. Theodore Williams were appreciated by all the delegates. The format of the conference was very similar to the earlier conferences except that there were no group discussions. The unique feature of the conference was the missionary addresses given by Dr. John T. Seamands and Dr. Theodore Williams emphasizing the need of witnessing Christ in all geographical areas and spheres of life



today. The testimony and dedication session was led by the evangelist Mr. Babu Pullad. It was a time of celebrating God's care and guidance upon the community and dedicating to the purposes of the one who has chosen us.

There were different programmes simultaneously for the children of 5-8, 9-12 and youth of 13-17. Rt. Rev. Philipose Mar Chrysostom Saffragan Metropolitan, Dr. Ramesh Richard, Rev. Dr. Ipe Joseph, Dr. Prasad Mathew and Rev. K. George Pothen led the different sessions for the children. The dedication for the children and youth was led by Dr. Ramesh Richard and it was a time of decision for many who attended.

Rt. Rev. Philipose Mar Chrysostom Saffragan Metropolitan led the closing communion service at 7.30 A.M. on Sunday, July 22. About six hundred and fifty people attended the service and about five hundred participated in the communion. Following the communion service certificates and trophies were awarded to the winners in the national Sunday school examinations. Trophies were also awarded to the winners in the games and sports competitions held during the conference.

Indeed the conference was a time of renewal and making new resolutions for the delegates. It was also a time of enjoying warm Christian fellowship and discussing common concerns. To hold any conference of this sort the hosting parishes start working several months in advance with several committees making arrangements for different matters pertaining to the conference. Parishes with large membership often find it hard to cope with the enormous work involved. In this light the work of the Lubbock Mar Thoma Church needs to be greatly appreciated. For a church with less than ten families and a few single students attending the universities, it was more than an adventure to shoulder this task and complete it well. The conference committee consisting of the Revd. T.I. Joseph, president of the conference; Dr. P. John Philip, vice president; Dr. John P. Lincoln, secretary; Mrs. Viney Philip, treasurer and members of other subcommittees worked extremely hard for the success of the conference. Their hospitality and dedication are to be praised. After providing a greatly rewarding and enriching experience the conference came to an end at noon on July 22, with prayer and benediction by Rt. Rev. Philipose Mar Chrysostom Saffragan Metropolitan.

The Editorial Board.





# DIOCESE OF NORTH AMERICA & U.K.

## Mar Thoma Church

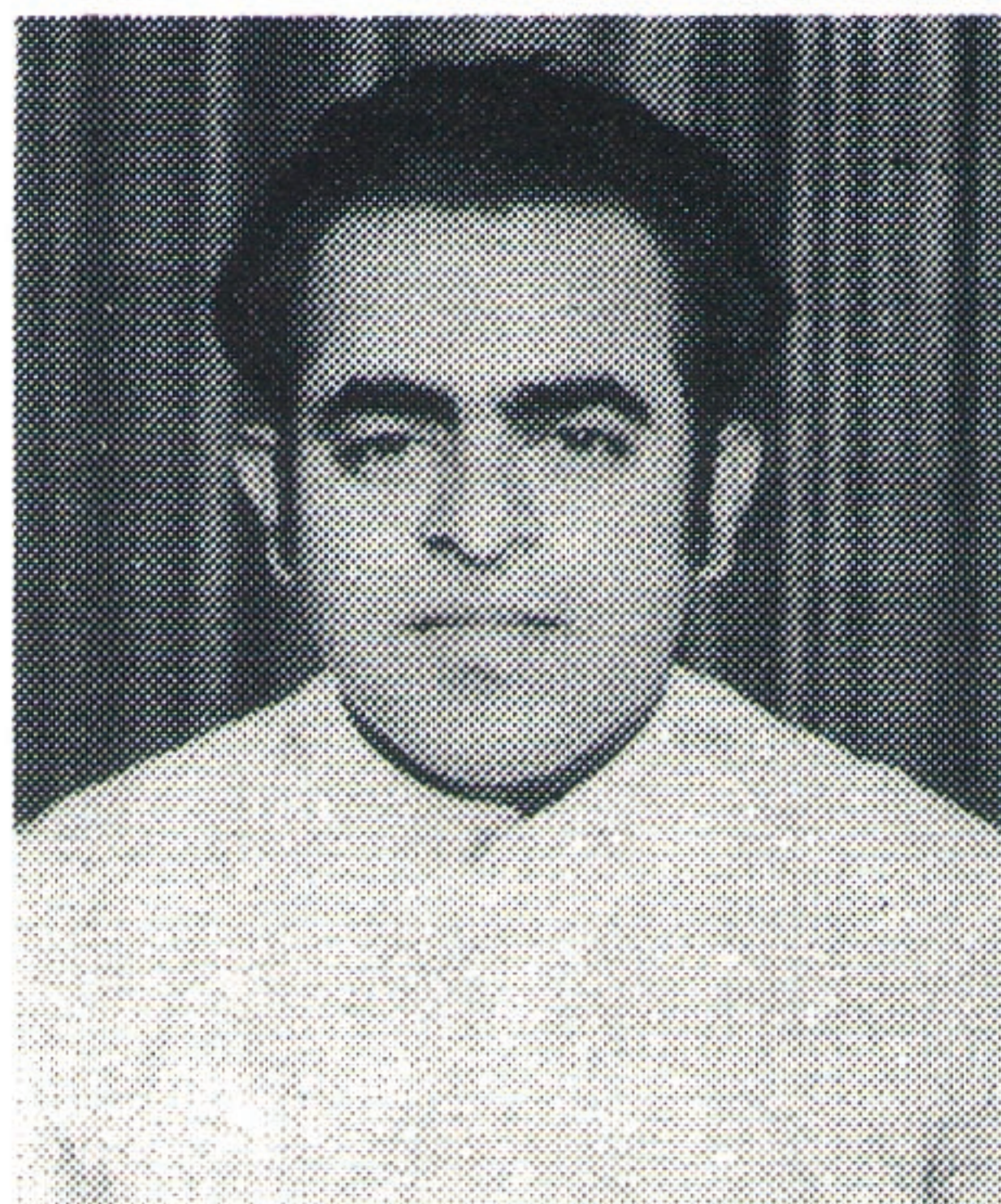
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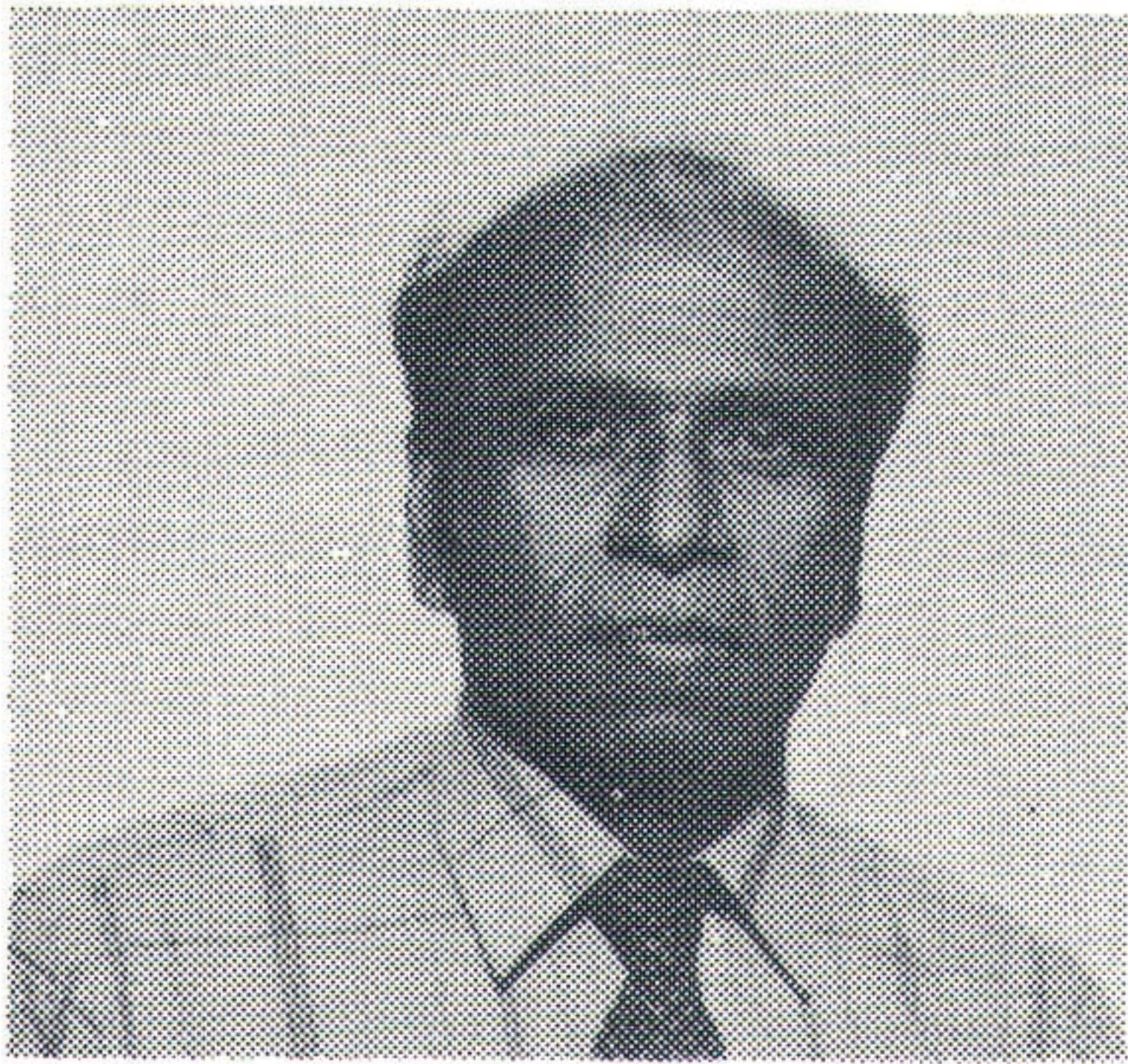
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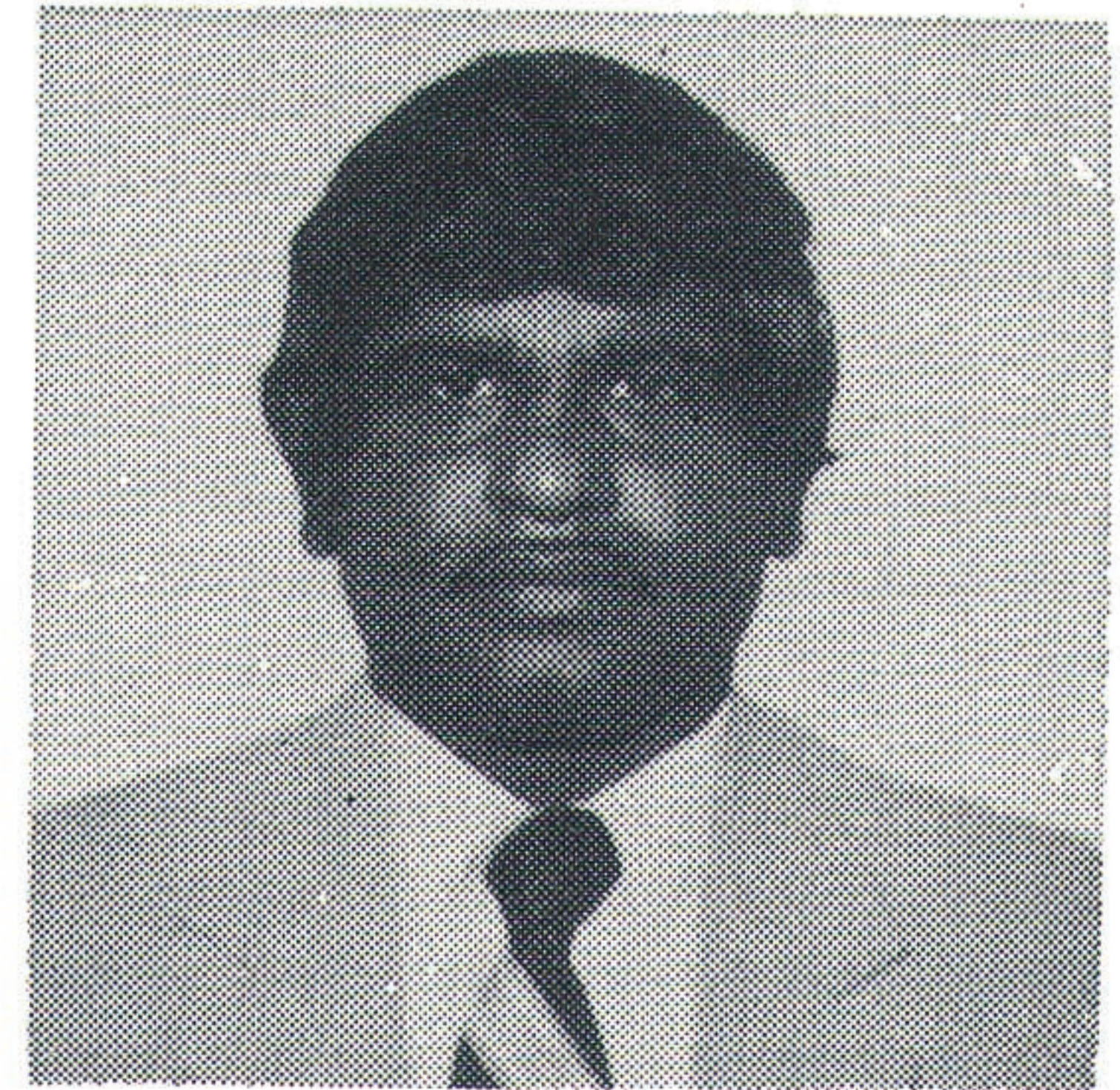
From left to right: Mr. M. K. Thomas, Mr. Varghese P. Varghese, Dr. M. V. Mathew, Rev. Johnson Varghese, Mr. O. C. Koshy, Rev. P. J. Alex (Diocesan Secretary), Rev. Joseph Jacob, Mr. Jacob Joseph, Mrs. Nirmala Abraham and Mr K. C. Cheriyan (not in picture)

**MAR THOMA MESSENGER**

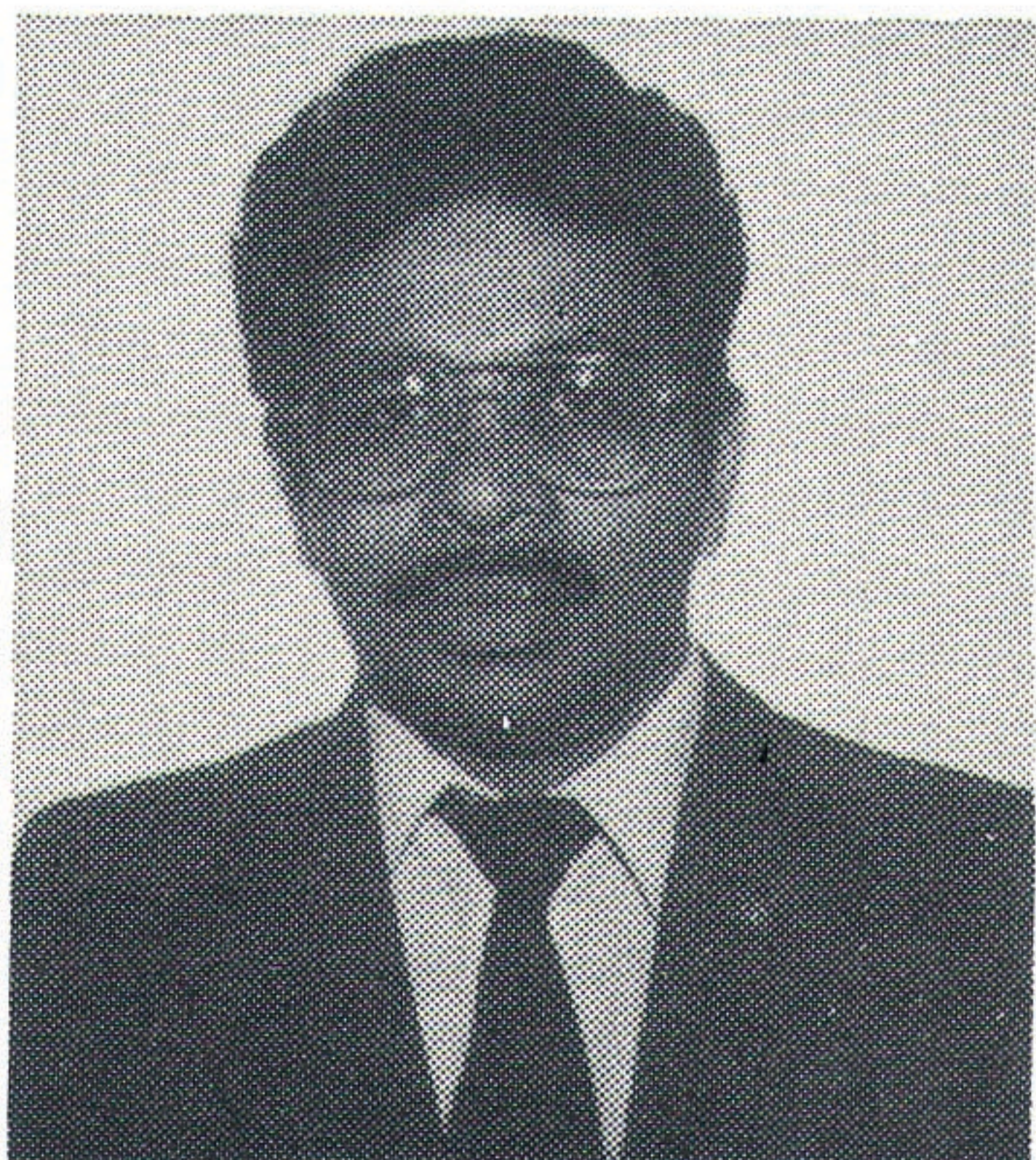
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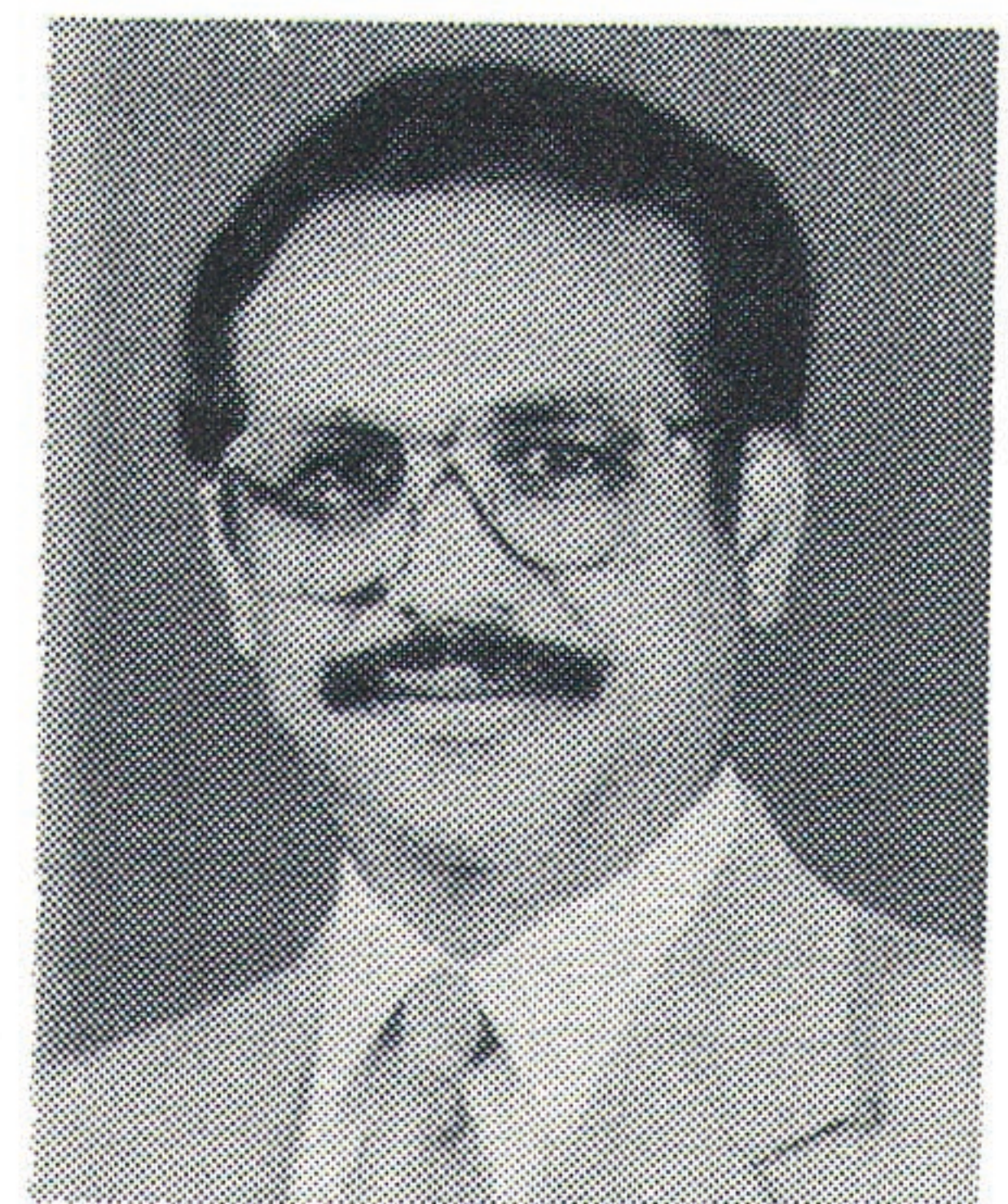
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(Los Angeles)



# Excerpts From Dr. John T. Seamands' talk on the theme " Ye are a chosen generation "

## " A Holy Nation "

We are a "chosen generation" for two purposes:

1. That we should be "a holy nation" and
2. That we should declare His name among the nations.

How can we be a "holy people"? Holiness comes through the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit. So each one of us needs an experience of Pentecost? What happened to the disciples on the day of Pentecost? There was a mighty wind, flames of fire, and speaking in other languages. But these outer physical phenomena were only symbolic of what happened within the disciples. What really happened was:

- a. "They were all filled with the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:4).

There is a difference between being "born of the Spirit" and being "filled with the Spirit." Every child of God has received the gift of the Holy Spirit, but every child of God is not filled with the Holy Spirit. He may be resident, but not president. Some area of living is not under the control of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit must be more than a guest in the house; He must be the Master of the house.

- b. Their hearts were "purified by faith" (Acts 15: 8,9)

Sin is two-fold in its nature. It is an outer action, and an inner attitude. There are the sins of the flesh and the sins of the spirit. For the sins we have committed God offers full and free forgiveness, but for the sins of the spirit we need cleansing. So inner purity comes through the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit.

- c. They were empowered by the Holy Spirit for witnessing (Acts 1:8)

From the indwelling presence of the Spirit comes both purity and power. Before Pentecost the disciples were cowards. They denied their Lord; they fled and hid themselves. After Pentecost they had boldness and power to preach the Word and to witness for Christ.

## "A Witnessing People"

We are chosen to be holy, and to declare His name among the nations. The primary calling of Every Christian is to a witness for Christ, regardless of who we are. William Carey, when asked what his business was, said, "My business is to witness for Jesus Christ, but I mend shoes to pay expenses." The Book of Acts reveals how we can be witnesses for Christ.

- a. Through our lives (Acts 4:13)

No matter how much we profess, if we don't live the Christian life, our witness will not be effective. We must be different; people must see Jesus in us.

- b. With our Lips (Acts 4:15-20)

We must take advantage of every opportunity to witness for Christ. We must learn to speak to people in their language and concepts, in accordance with their background.



c. Through our labor

Luke, the author of Acts, was a doctor. Aquilla and Priscilla were tent-makers. Lydia was a business woman, selling special cloth. They were all witnesses for Christ. No matter how menial our job may be, it can be an avenue of witnessing. Some are placed in important places, and can be public witnesses for Christ. The power for witnessing comes through the Holy Spirit.

Christian Missions and Pentecost are inseparably related, Pentecost being the essential preparation for Missions, and Missions being the logical and inevitable result of Pentecost. The great purpose of the Holy Spirit's baptizing believers is not merely for personal transformation but for world evangelization. The Spirit not only adorns us with Christian character but also arms us for Christian conquest.

Through the indwelling Spirit we are assured of the Master's perpetual presence. He will be with us "always", or at all times - on Sundays and week days, fair days and foul days, winter days and summer days. Time cannot separate us from Him. He will be with us "to the end of the world", or in all places - at home and away from home, in the city and in the village, in the sanctuary and in the person, in the air and on the high seas. Space cannot separate us from Him.

But remember, the promise goes with the command. The "Lo - I" is connected with the "Go - ye". We have no right to claim the promise without obeying the command. As we go out, we will feel Him within.



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# DIOCESE OF NORTH AMERICA AND U.K. THE MAR THOMA SUVISESHA SEVIKHA SANGHOM

*( The following is a summary of the report presented by Mrs. Nirmala Abraham, Diocesan Sevika Sanghom Secretary, at the organizational meeting during the Family Conference at Lubbock, Texas.)*

Based on the decision of the 1989 Diocesan Assembly, the Sevika Sanghom of the Diocese was reorganized in 1990 to form the Eastern region and Western region. Members and Office Bearers for the regional and Diocesan committees were elected for a term of three years.

## **EASTERN REGION:**

Parishes in the states of New York, Massachusetts, New Jersey, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Florida, Georgia, Iowa, as well as the District of Columbia, Ontario, Quebec Provinces of Canada, and the United Kingdom.

## **WESTERN REGION:**

Parishes in the states of California, Washington, Texas, Oklahoma, Illinois, Michigan, and the province of Alberta, Canada.

All Mar Thoma women in the above parishes are members of the Sevika Sanghom.

## **REGIONAL COMMITTEE:**

The regional committee of each region consists of the President (Vicar of the Parish), Elected Representative, and Secretary of the Sevika Sanghom from each parish. From the membership of the Regional Committees, the following office bearers and two representatives to the Diocesan Committee were elected:

### **EASTERN REGION:**

President: Rev. Thomas John, 103-10-104 th Street, Ozone Park,  
New York 11417 Tel: 718-845-2920  
Secretary: Mrs. Kunjumol Cherian ( Philadelphia Mar Thoma Church )  
Treasurer: Mrs. Kunjumma Simon ( Staten Island Mar Thoma Church )  
Representatives: Mrs. Mariamma Abraham ( Epiphany Mar Thoma Church )  
Mrs. Nirmala Abraham ( Philadelphia Mar Thoma Church )

### **WESTERN REGION:**

President: Rev. P. J. Alex, 4539 Preston Trail Mesquite,  
Texas 75150 Tel: 214- 613-4384  
Secretary: Dr. Annie Lincoln ( Lubbock Mar Thoma Church )  
Treasurer: Dr. Elsie Mathew ( Los Angeles Mar Thoma Church )  
Representatives: Mrs. Mary Mathew ( Chicago Mar Thoma Church )  
Mrs. Achamma Mathew ( Houston Mar Thoma Church )



**DIOCESAN SEVIKHA SANGHOM COMMITTEE:**

The President, Secretary, and the two representatives to the Diocesan Committee from the Eastern and Western region, by means of mail ballot, elected a representative to the Diocesan Assembly. The representative is Mrs. Achamma Samuel from the Houston Mar Thoma Church. At the 1990 Diocesan Assembly Meeting, a member of the Assembly was elected to the Diocesan Sevikha Sanghom Committee. The representative is Mrs. Susan Ninan from the Dallas Mar Thoma Church. The members of the Diocesan Sevikha Sanghom Committee consist of the following persons:

Rev. P. J. Alex	Dallas	Dr. Annie Lincoln	Lubbock
Mrs. Achamma Mathew	Houston	Mrs. Mary Mathew	Chicago
Rev. Thomas John	Epiphany	Mrs. Kunjumol Cherian	Philadelphia
Mrs. Nirmala Abraham	Philadelphia	Mrs. Achamma Samuel	Houston
Mrs. Susan Ninan	Dallas	Mrs. Mariamma Abraham	Epiphany

The first meeting of the Diocesan Sevikha Sanghom Committee was held on Wednesday, July 18th at Lubbock Christian University, Texas. The meeting was presided by Rt. Rev. Philipose Mar Chrysostom Suffragan, Metropolitan and Diocesan Bishop. During that meeting the following people were elected as the office bearers for a term of three years:

**President:** Rev. Thomas John;      **Secretary:** Mrs. Nirmala Abraham;      **Treasurer:** Dr. Annie Lincoln

At the first meeting of the Diocesan Sevikha Sanghom Committee, a resolution was passed to collect the Sevikha Sanghom Dinam Sunday Offertory from each parish for the Diocesan Sevikha Sanghom work. The committee members discussed various projects for the Sevikha Sanghom at the parish level as well as the regional level. The following is a summary of the Committee's recommendations:

At the parish level, the Sanghoms need to revitalize Bible study classes and prayer meetings. Visiting the sick and needy is another task that can be undertaken by the local Sevikha Sanghom. It was also suggested that the Sanghom members offer free baby-sitting services to relieve younger mothers and allow them to attend the church services. The Sanghom members could also organize Grandparent's Day.

Participating in social service activities is another way of expressing our concerns for the society. One of the ways to get involved is to contact local American churches and organizations to explore types of voluntary activities already in existence. Examples of such activities may be voluntary work in nursing homes, visiting the sick in hospitals, helping people in homeless shelters, cooking and serving meals in soup kitchens, tutoring for less privileged children, and working at senior centers.

Our local Sanghoms could also sponsor "Health Fairs" offering blood pressure screening, cholesterol testing, and other health related services. Another parish level activity could be providing an occasional open house for people residing in the neighborhood of the church. Since Family Life Education is a critical need in our parish, local Sanghoms can arrange educational programs. Also, a library can be developed with resource materials ( videos, books, pamphlets,etc..). if this is not feasible, a list of reading materials on selected topics should be developed and circulated. Along this line, each parish could organize



a family life educational day where the services of qualified counselors, therapists, psychiatrists, psychologists, etc.. would be available.

On the regional level, the Eastern region meets three times a year. One of the meetings focuses on the topic of Christian families and their concerns and is open to Sanghom members and their spouses. Each meeting is hosted by a different Sevikha Sanghom. The meetings are well attended and the participants are very pleased with the sessions. Since the parishes within the two regions are geographically extended, it is difficult to get the participation of all Sanghom members from all parishes at the Regional Meeting. In order to resolve this problem, Regional Sevikha Sanghom Committees may plan the topics and other details, and conduct some of the meetings at the "center" level. Furthermore, a "Need Assessment" can be conducted at the regional meetings. Based on these findings, suitable topics can be chosen for future regional and national meetings..

The Mar Thoma Messenger will be published quarterly beginning October, 1990. A separate page will be assigned to report news from the Diocesan Sevikha Sanghom. Individual Sevikha Sanghom will take responsibility for sending articles and news for the specific quarter to the Messenger. This effort will be coordinated by the Secretary, Mrs. Nirmla Abraham.



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**SUMMARY OF THE DELIBERATIONS AND DECISIONS TAKEN AT THE MEETING OF THE DIOCESE COMMITTEE FOR MAR THOMA SUNDAY SCHOOLS IN NORTH AMERICA, HELD AT LUBBOCK, TEXAS ON JULY 18, 1990, AS REPORTED BY REV. JOHNSON VARGHESE AND MR. DANIEL THOMAS.**

The following officers were elected.

Diocesan Sunday School Chairman	-	Rev. Johnson Varghese
Diocesan Sunday School Secretary	-	Mr. Daniel Thomas
Diocesan Sunday School Treasurer	-	Mr. P.M. Jacob
Sunday School Rep. to the Diocesan Assembly	-	Dr. T. M. Thomas

**Diocesan Sunday School Examination -1991**

**Classes:** Junior Class ( Grades 5&6) Junior High Class ( Grades 7&8)  
Junior High Class should include only grades 7&8. Grade 9 should be part of Senior Grade.

**Books:** David C. Cook Series for 1990 Sept., Oct., Nov. quarter and 1990 Dec., 1991 Jan., Feb. quarter ( all chapters)

**Reg. Fee:** The registration fee will be at the rate of \$1.00 per student for each class ( Junior and Junior High ).

**Chief Examiner:** The Diocesan Sunday School Secretary will be the Chief examiner for the Diocesan Sunday School Examination.

In addition to the Diocesan Sunday School Examination, there will be another examination at the local level for Junior and Junior High classes.

Names of the first prize winners (both classes) shall be reported to the Diocesan Sunday School Secretary. The prize will be awarded by the Diocesan Sunday School on behalf of the Diocesan Bishop.

**World Sunday School Day:** November 1st Sunday as world Sunday School Day shall be celebrated in all Sunday Schools in our Diocese. Envelopes should be distributed to collect Sunday School Day offertory. 50 % of the collection will go to the Mar Thoma Sunday School Samajam, Kerala, India and the balance 50% of the amount will be sent to the Diocesan Sunday School Treasurer Mr. P.M. Jacob 3918 Thistledown, Pasadena, Texas 77504. Tel. 713-487 - 3831.

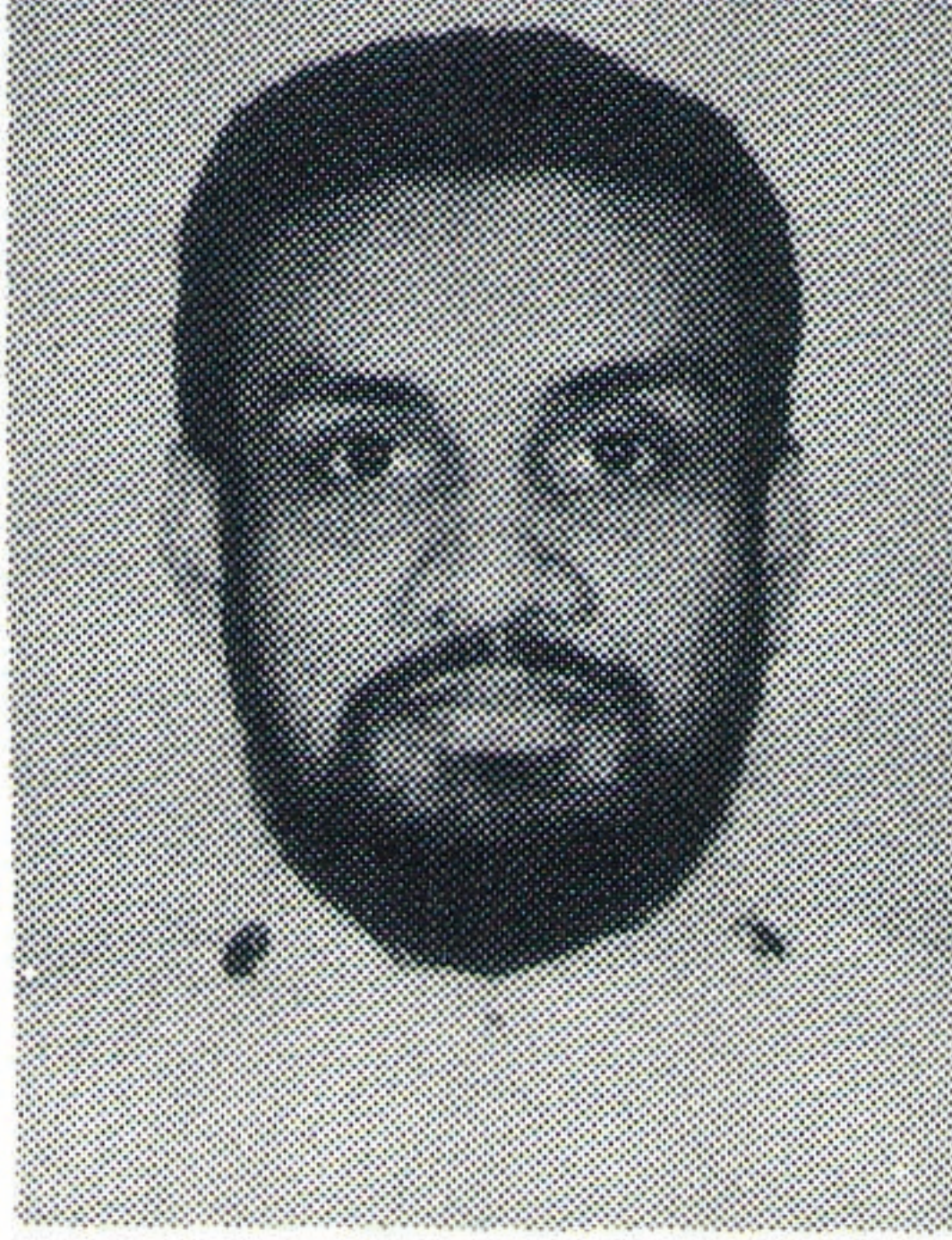
**Vacation Bible School (VBS):** Vacation Bible School materials, published by Augsburg Fortress Publishing will be used for the 1991 VBS throughout our Diocese.

**Teacher Training:** It was suggested that resource persons should be selected and properly trained. In turn they will train teachers in their Sunday Schools.





# THE HOLY SPIRIT IN THE ORDINATION RITES OF THE WEST SYRIAN TRADITION



Rev. George Mathew, London.

The aim of this short paper is to investigate the references of the Holy Spirit in the ordination rites for priests of the West Syrian tradition. Here we are not attempting a theological discussion but only pointing out the references about the Holy Spirit. The texts under review are the rite for the ordination of priests in the Mar Thoma Syrian Church and the Syrian Orthodox Church of India.<sup>1</sup>

The ordination service begins by the Metran (Metropolitan) saying:  
the Holy Spirit invites you to become priest in the Church.<sup>2</sup>

It is obvious that the very calling for ministry is from the Holy Spirit. In the responsory chant after the initial prayer, the Metran and the priests sing that:

O God the Holy Spirit who by the tongues of fire endued the apostles with wisdom, sanctify by your grace these your servants who wait for your Holy Spirit to be sanctified.<sup>3</sup>

While reading the Gospel from John 20:19-23, the Metran breathes on the candidate in the form of a cross at verse 21 'and when he said, he breathed on him and said to them receive Holy Spirit'. This is a symbolic act through which the candidate is empowered with the Holy Spirit to do the ministry in the Church. The next chant is a supplication for the descending of the Holy Spirit upon the candidate as follows:

May the Holy Spirit who spoke by the prophets and abode on the apostles come and abide upon these servants and sanctify them.

May the Holy Spirit who rested upon the apostles in the upper room, come and rest upon your servants and sanctify them.

May the Holy Spirit who descended in the form of a dove and rested upon the head of the Son come and rest upon your servants and sanctify them.<sup>4</sup>

The following prayer after the Nicene Creed is a prayer for the celebrant himself:

replenish us with your power with the grace of the only begotten Son and with the working of your Holy Spirit, that we may fit for the ministry of your New Covenant.<sup>5</sup>

The Archdeacon with pastoral staff standing at the entrance of the chancel, facing west and say the following exhortation:

Let us pray for these that are present here with awe at this moment, that the grace and the influence of the Holy Spirit may rest upon them from this time and evermore and say three times with a loud voice 'Kyrie eleison' (Lord have mercy).<sup>6</sup>

After the Archdeacon's bidding, and a prayer, the prayer for the invocation of the Holy Spirit follows:

O our saviour, may the Holy Spirit come and rest upon each of them according to your promise. O Lord deprive them not of the gift of the Holy Spirit. O Lord who receive prayers, we ask you for the Holy Spirit. Therefore we raise our voice and say:

O Spirit the Paraclete You are Holy

O Spirit the creator of life You are Holy

O Spirit whom we have obtained You are Holy

Glory be to you O Lord of all for the gift of the Holy Spirit and for the great and unspeakable mystery and for your wonderful works to our race.<sup>7</sup>



In the prayer with laying of hands on the candidate the Metran again asks for the gift of the Holy Spirit to the candidate as follows:

Choose this your servant to the office of priest and grant that he may receive the great gift of your Holy Spirit.<sup>8</sup>

In the thanksgiving prayer after the proclamation of ordination also we see the request for the sending of the Holy Spirit:

O Lord, we pray and beseech you, hear us according to the multitude of your mercies that you will be pleased with the ordination of the priesthood of your servants and send upon them your Holy Spirit who is holiest of all.<sup>9</sup>

After the vesting of the new priest, in the concluding chant of the ordination rite the clergy sing that:

O God the Holy Spirit, bless all the services they do in the Church of God, by your Power. <sup>10</sup>

Through the analysis of the texts for the ordination of priests, we see that the ordination service is the act of the Holy Spirit. It is the Holy Spirit who calls and appoints one to the ministry of the Church, it is the Holy Spirit who empowers and bestows gift to the priests. In short, the ordination ritual is the collective prayer of the Church for the operation of the Holy Spirit upon the priests and their ministry in the Church which loves Christ and loved by Him.

*( Rev. George Mathew, M.A.B.D. is the vicar of the Mar Thoma Church, London U.K. and is a student at Trinity Theological College, Bristol, England, doing post-graduate studies in Liturgy. Rev. George Mathew presented this paper at "The Society for Liturgical Study" Conference held at St. John's College, Nottingham, England, from August 28-30, 1990.)*

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# Best Wishes To Mar Thoma Messenger

*From*



Dr. P. John Lincoln  
Dr. Annie Lincoln  
Anil, Sunil & Leena



**Lubbock, Texas.**



# THE CHRISTIAN HOME

By Raphael K. Davies, Detroit.

In our society, there are four basic institutions - the state, the school, the church and the home. The home has a profound influence on the state, school and church. When the home is genuinely Christian, the church can maintain a spiritual atmosphere on society; the educational institutions can build up an intellectual society, and with this result, the state can be in a beneficial and better status. The message of importance of the home is repeatedly communicated to world by sociologists, psychologists, and journalists through their variety of publications. Still it would be most helpful for us to examine what the Bible has to say concerning the home.

“God created human beings, making them to be like himself. He created them male and female. They were blessed to have many children, so that your descendants will live all over the earth. Not only that, the human beings were given the wisdom and power to control the earth.”

From this message, it is very clear to mankind that the marriage and family is very much a part of the divine plan of God for the stability and the well-being of the human society. God's divine plan was not stopped by the creation of mankind. In his plan, home is the first institution for the welfare of society. As we read in Exodus Chapter 20:12

“Respect your father and your mother, so that you may live a long time in the land that I am giving you”.

The mankind's primary duty is to maintain a proper relationships within the circle of the family. The proper respect and right relationship to his parents are the first responsibility of a child. This was not the arrangement of the mankind, but the will of God for each of us. Similarly by his divine law, the sacredness of the home is maintained. In Exodus Chapter 12:14

“Do not commit adultery”.

From the very beginning, God has tried to instill within the heart of mankind, a concept to preserve the moral purity in their personal life. Those who are guilty of disregarding the commandment will not only break the holy law, but also will they strike a destructive blow at the foundation stones of a stable society.

According to the divine plan, the homes were originated and safeguarded by God. Then surely, he wants each family to witness him too. As mentioned in the Bible,

“The Lord - and the Lord alone - is our God. Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength. Never forget these commands that I am giving you today. Teach them to your children. Repeat them when you are at home, and when you are away, when you are resting and when you are working.”



It is very clear, the parents should assume the sacred responsibility for the teaching and training their children, the word of God; both in the home and in the daily walk of life. In the hearts and minds of their children, the spiritual and moral truth are to be deposited at their younger age. But it is unfortunate that the modern families have abdicated this responsibility. Many think that they take their children to Sunday school and Sunday morning worship and by doing so they have provided adequate moral and spiritual training. The church must do what it can to provide guidance for Bible study and the principles of Christian life, so that the parents can understand their responsibility to nurture their children in a spiritual way.

A Christian home is a home where Christ is loved and trusted and obeyed sincerely. As a member of a Christian family, are you making progress toward the ideal of a Christian home? Each one of us has a contribution to make. You can be sure that God will work with you to help you achieve his ideal for your home.



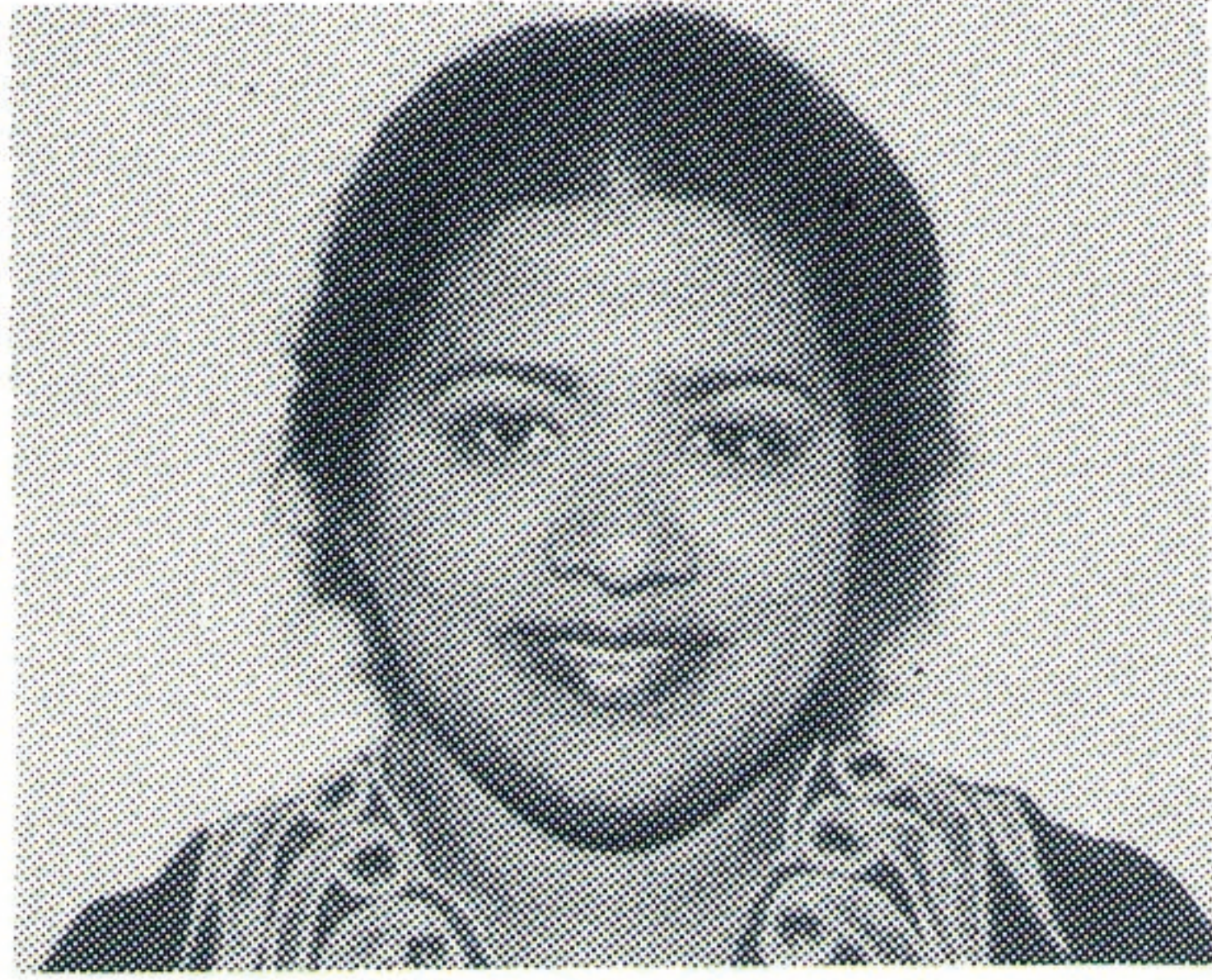
## CRISIS IN THE GULF

Ever since Iraq invaded Kuwait on August 2, 1990, life in Kuwait became increasingly intolerable. Thousands of people have become innocent victims. Many have left their possessions in Kuwait and decided to go back to their own countries. Driving through the scorching desert heat and dust, many of the refugees have become sick and disabled by the time they reached Amman, Jordan, where they have had to be moved from one camp to the other.

A large segment of our Malayalee population in Kuwait have already left Kuwait or are now en-route to Kerala. Thousands of our brothers and sisters are stranded in Amman for whom life remains extremely precarious. Yesterday they all led a pleasant life-style in Kuwait, but today some of them have become paupers, stuck in refugee camps, begging for food and unsure of their future. The Government of India is doing everything it can to evacuate the refugees by air and sea. Our Mar Thoma parishes in Bombay are helping the evacuees in many ways once they reached Bombay. Dr. Alexander Mar Thoma Metropolitan has asked us through our Diocesan Secretary to uphold them in our daily prayers and contribute liberally for helping the voluntary work that is going on in India and elsewhere. Your contributions may be sent directly to the Diocesan Treasurer Mr. M. K. Thomas 1219 River Road, Teaneck, N. J. 07666 or may be handed over to your Achen who would than forward it to the treasurer.



# NO MATTER WHAT YOU ARE, GOD CAN MAKE YOUR LIFE EXCITING



Mrs. Mariamma Abraham, New York.

Have you ever said to yourself that you were now too old to do anything to change your circumstances, to solve your particular problems?

Have you ever said: Yes, I'd like to make certain things different, but it is too late. I could have done something with my life if I had started twenty years ago, but now I'm passed my prime.

You may truly think, Dear Sisters and Brothers, that you are too old to begin life anew, but God asks only that only you start with Him now to make your life exciting.

Do you remember how God spoke to Abraham? "And when Abraham was ninety nine years old, Jehovah appeared to Abraham and said unto Him: I am God Almighty, walk before Me and thou perfect."

Yes, Abraham was ninety nine years old when God called upon him and bade him walk with Him. God didn't regard Abraham as too old. He saw youthfulness, strength and vitality in him.

God is looking into our hearts right now, and He sees all the qualities in us.

Oh, my dear Sisters and Brothers, the Lord doesn't care how old you are - whether you are nineteen or ninety. He doesn't care how much education you have - whether you went to college or didn't complete grade school. All God asks - no matter what your age is that you begin right where you are and how you are. All He asks is that you step forward now - to begin to be happy and enjoy this life which He has given unto you.

When you get to thinking that you are too old for anything new and joyful to happen for you, speak to God in prayer, and tell Him you want to live His way. Tell Him that you know He can renew your life and bless you in ways of which you never dreamed. Trust God in everyday, everystep and everything you do.

We are experiencing the marvelous mercy of God day by day, so we have to be thankful to God. We are making promises, but the promises should be everlasting. We are going to be tempted more after our promises. Find out these temptations and try to avoid these temptations.

Expect wonderful, exciting thing to happen to you, no matter what your age, and they will happen. There's absolutely no "expiration date" on blessings so long as you keep on trusting in Him.







## A WOMAN'S ROLE - THE EMBODIMENT OF SACRIFICIAL LOVE

Cheriyam K. Cheriyam, Long Island, New York

Amidst strifes of existence life may seem a battle; yet it is not such. A struggle it is, struggle against challenges; the story of obstacles of untold nature and of human effort to surmount them. However, the very charm of life consists in the process of facing unprecedented situations in order to overcome, of disciplining our faculties to achieve. So we consolidate and advance. Instead of taking a few steps we stride a thousand paces. Just to face debate we prepare scholarly arguments. We learn to use knowledge and the ways of living to gain success. We learn to acknowledge heritage as we distinguish ourselves, not just to make ends meet, but to contribute. Man has been unique in his will to survive, and human effort is always so motivated that success is the inevitable portion of what he expects. If we try, if we fail, we still consider ourselves great because our spirit, we believe, is unbeaten! Yet seldom the aftermath of effort is success; but sadly the result of accidental concurrence, concurrence between opportunity and occasion.

When we fail we often fail to pause and ponder what we failed from. Failure is the incongruence we cannot muster up to reconcile with. That it does not manifest as failure so long as we refuse to recognize its significance is a philosophical contention that demarcates the mundane from the spiritual and emphasizes the superiority of the spirit. I am no philosopher and I am not inclined to dwell upon the magnificence of the spirit at this moment, but would rather like to view failure as the result of all the happenings that preceded it. Among the varied cause and effect manipulations, it may later dawn upon us that sense of success or failure is rather relative. Failure in one could be victory in another. For the Jews, Jesus the Messiah was a political failure. For us Christians, He is the symbol of eternal spiritual victory. Success and failure lose their significance unless we exercise our ego to evaluate them. As for Jesus, He had so transcended His own ego He cared for neither. He intended to sacrifice himself for mankind and His was the world of love. And love is the absolute reality where all evaluations become meaningless. Love encourages, enhances, replenishes. Love assuages afflictions and invokes the good in others.

Love provides us with a rare perspective to look at woman. As daughter, sister, wife or mother what she radiates is love and whatever she does is gracious sacrifice. As the expendable cog of the indispensable family wheel her life revolves, and as time passes she realizes that she cannot claim, cannot achieve or even covet anything but for the sake of her family, that she cannot liberate herself from the shackles of family life, that she cannot take credit for even what she did because of the knowledge that the act of giving gets tarnished of its love when it covets. Her passive nature helps her reconcile with her fate and thus quite inadvertently she transcends her own ego. It is often after her death her kith and kin would realize that she was the true head of the family, that she was the one who really held the bonds of family ties together, while the others like chariot horses run amuck galloped, leaving beaten track and racing field, up hills of misty woods, down slopes of green toward a lost horizon of red where, in the wind, a cumulus cloud vainly tried to construct its own figurative presence.





# MANDALAM 1990: A NORTH AMERICAN PERSPECTIVE

By Abraham J. Manaloor, Dallas.

Representing North America in the Sabha Mandalam, the highest legislative body of the Mar Thoma Church, was a worth while and unforgettable experience. The Mandalam was held at Kuttapuza, a suburb of Tiruvalla, in the Mar Thoma residential school on September 4-5.

Onam, the most joyous festival season in Kerala, was the setting for the momentous occasion. However, this year there was no celebration. The somber sound of India was filled with mourning and despair. The pain was easily visible in the eyes of the people. The cause of all this heartache was the missing relatives and friends caught in the midst of the Kuwait crisis. Here in this country the situation is analyzed in economic and political terms, but in Kerala the Kuwait invasion hits closer to home. Dreams are shattered and survival is difficult due to lost contact with loved ones who are the financial source of the family.

With this in mind, the Mandalam members assembled uneasily. However, Thirumeni's announcement of the opening of a reception hall in Bombay for the incoming Kuwaiti refugees brought some encouragement. The uncertainty of the future of Kuwait and its people continues to hang ominously in the air. This foreign crisis caused the Mandalam members to focus their attention on world issues rather than on India. This gave me an added opportunity to present the North American perspective. Growing concerns for our children, caught between two different cultures, were presented to the assembly. It is the parents' responsibility to guide, motivate, and lead the children in this respect with the help of the church.

The first day of Mandalam meetings opened with a question and answer session. Only fifteen of forty-five questions were answered in the allotted one and a half hours, an insignificant amount of time for voicing the concerns and problems of the church. Raising issues that pertain to our church's existence is most important for our future, so improvement is extremely necessary in this area. In the future, the reports, accounts, and budget must be presented comprehensively in the given time to allow the average Mandalam member to evaluate the church's effectiveness in its administration policies.

The election of office bearers to the Sabha Council for the next three years was one of many highlights for the new Mandalam members. The Mar Thoma Church made history in this year's Mandalam by expanding its representation to the North American diocese. The newly elected representatives for this diocese are Dr. Jacob Mathew from Los Angeles and myself, Abraham Manaloor from Dallas. The present constitution must be amended to accommodate the needs of North America and its representatives.

Another highlight concerning our diocese was the recognition by the church hierarchy of the need for a Thirumeni to permanently reside in North America. This can only be accomplished when the entire diocese makes a commitment to meet the needs for his effective functioning.

To fit the demands of the twenty-first century, the Mar Thoma Church constitution must be amended. This topic will be addressed and discussed extensively by the Sabha Council in their future sessions. Now is the time to voice your concerns and opinions about the future of the Mar Thoma Church in North America. Decentralization of our church and extensive research and planning are necessary for our growth. The new constitution must reflect this ideal, so we must work together to achieve this goal. I will work in the Sabha Council on your behalf to make the voice of North America heard.





# On Pilgrims and Pilgrimages

Vinu G. Iype Dallas, Texas.

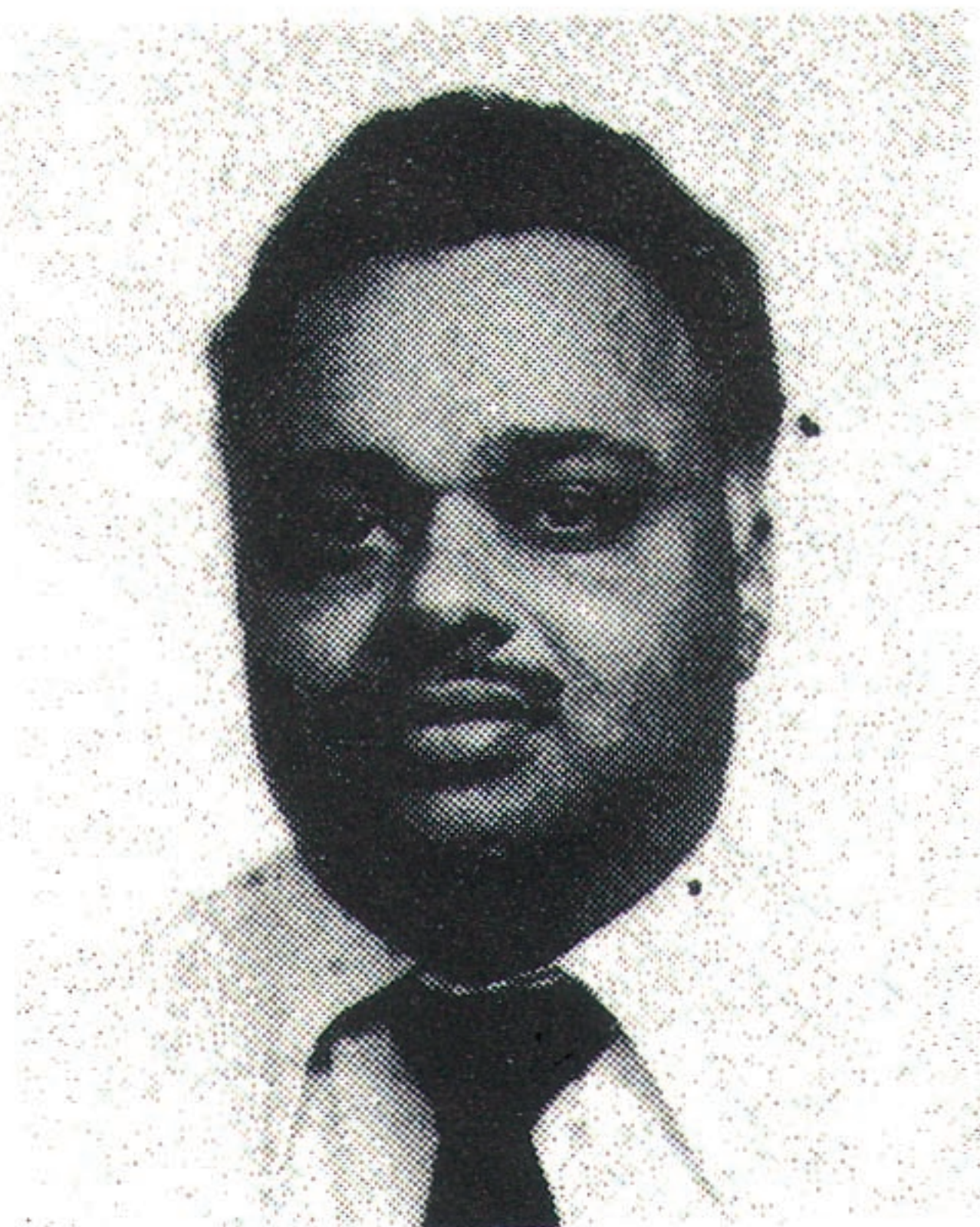
According to Islamic tradition, Father Abraham and his son, Ishmael, raised the foundations of the ka'bah Shrine at Mecca in modern Saudi Arabia. Muslims would turn their faces toward Mecca during their five daily prayers, and visit it on the required pilgrimage known as Hajj. For centuries, Muslims have traveled there on pilgrimages. Even today, millions of pilgrims faithfully journey there in search of religious enlightenment. To be a true pilgrim, it is not enough to make a long, arduous trip to a holy place but to find spiritual fulfillment for oneself.

We Christians don't have a Mecca to make a pilgrimage to. But we do have our own sacred places, holy sites, and promised lands. One of the finest examples of great Christian pilgrimages is to be found in the Middle Ages, during the time of the Crusades. During the eleventh century, there was an extraordinary increase in Europe of pilgrimages - numbering in the hundreds of thousands - to the Holy Land. In some respects, the Crusades against Muslim occupation of Jerusalem were pilgrimages with the military aspect of the expeditions emphasized. These European pilgrim-knight Crusaders journeyed to free the Holy Land from the Muslims. They felt they owed it to their God and fellow Christians, to face the Holy Land from Muslim domination.

We Mar Thoma Christians in America have also made a pilgrimage - of sorts. We have all made a pilgrimage from India to a new "promised land" - a "land of opportunities" - whether it be for educational, financial, or other opportunities. It is up to us as modern - day pilgrims (immigrants) to stay true to the new creed of the pilgrim: that is, to take advantage of the bounties this country has to offer, and to live a true and holy life in God - in our Promised Land.



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# KIDS' CORNER - BIBLE QUIZ

- QUESTIONS:
1. Who was blessed with long life in the Bible?
  2. Who got the grace to walk with God?
  3. The two people who could complete their journey from Egypt to Canan?
  4. The one who blessed the Pharaoh?
  5. The cave where the patriarchs were buried?
  6. How many people went to Egypt with Jacob?
  7. How many years Israelites stayed back in Egypt?
  8. The Priest and the King who has no genealogy?
  9. Roman Caesar at the time of Jesus' birth?
  10. The first one who died of Jesus?
  11. How many women mentioned in Matthew's genealogy?
  12. Twin brother among the apostles?
  13. The place where Jesus couldn't do any miracles?
  14. The tribe of John Baptist?
  15. Sons of Noah?

- ANSWERS:
1. Methuselah
  2. Enoch
  3. Joahua, Caleb
  4. Jacob
  5. Maeh-Pelah
  6. 66
  7. 400
  8. Melchizedek
  9. Augustas
  10. Children of Bethlahem
  11. 5
  12. Thomas
  - 13.
  14. Levi
  15. Shem, Ham, Japheth

Rev. Joseph Jacob, Edmonton, Canada.

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60. Mr. V. T. Abraham (London)  
Bethel, 30 Dane Park,  
Bishops Stortford,  
Herts CM 232PR, U.K.  
(0279 - 654107)
62. Mr. Cherian Varghese (Ebenezer)  
7 Sunset Trails,  
Croton On Hudson, NY. 10520



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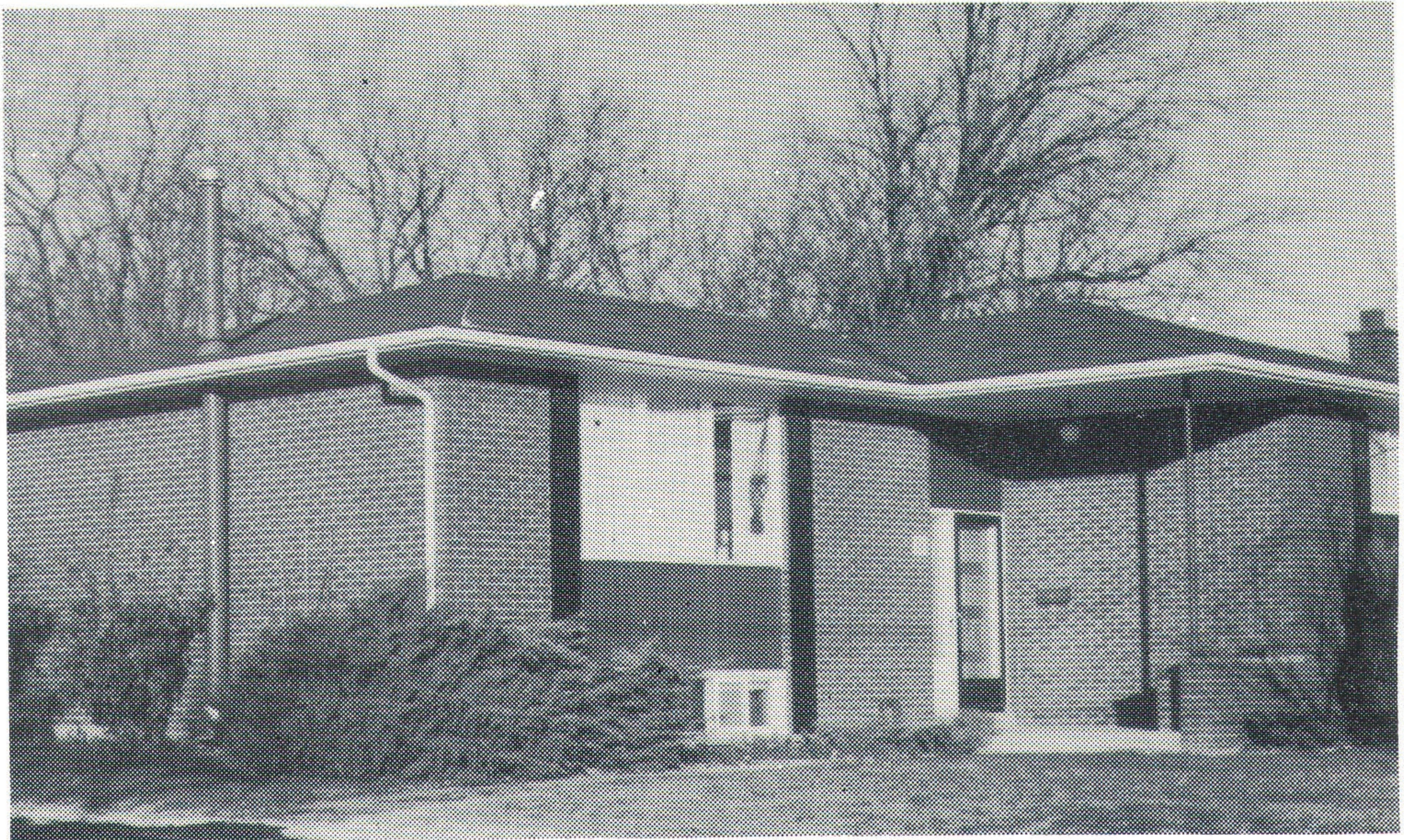
# NEWS FROM PARISHES

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## THE CANADIAN MAR THOMA CHURCH TORONTO

The Canadian Mar Thoma Church Toronto bought a parsonage adjacent to the church building in Markham at a cost of \$250,000.00 and it was dedicated by our Diocesan Bishop Rt. Rev. Philipose Mar Chrysostom, Suffragan Metropolitan on June 23, 1990. The new address of the vicarage is 50 Wales Ave, Markham, Ontario L3P2C5. Tel. (416) 472-4191.



The Parish Day of the Toronto parish was celebrated on September 9, 1990. The programme included Holy Communion, Community lunch, talent competitions and variety entertainments.

A revival Meeting was arranged by the Edavaka Mission of the Toronto Parish from September 5-9. Mr. Babu Pullad was the guest speaker. A large number of members of the parish as well as members from other sister churches attended the meetings and it was a time for dedication, renewal and revival for all those who participated in it.

The fourth Mar Thoma Regional Junior Youth Conference was held at the Carleton University, Ottawa from May 19 - 21. The conference was hosted by the Mar Thoma Congregation in Ottawa. About 80 youths from Toronto, Kingston, Ottawa, Montreal, New Brunswick and Deep river, between the age group of 13 to 17 years attended the Conference. The theme of the Conference was ME AND MY FAMILY. Rev. Joseph Jacob, Edmonton, led the Conference with Rev. M. J. Joseph. Next year's conference will be in Montreal.

Rev. M. J. Joseph

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## MAR THOMA CHURCH OF OKLAHOMA

With only two dozen families as its members, Oklahoma parish has been successful in building their own Church facilities. The building has over 5200 sq.ft. including an area of 1600 sq.ft. set apart for Sunday School classes. The dedication of the church building was done by the Rt. Rev. Philipose Mar Chrysostom, Diocesan Bishop on Sunday August 12, 1990.

Rev. P. J. Alex, Vicar of the Mar Thoma Church of Oklahoma and Rev. Jayan Thomas, outgoing Diocesan Secretary were also present on the occasion.

George Varghese

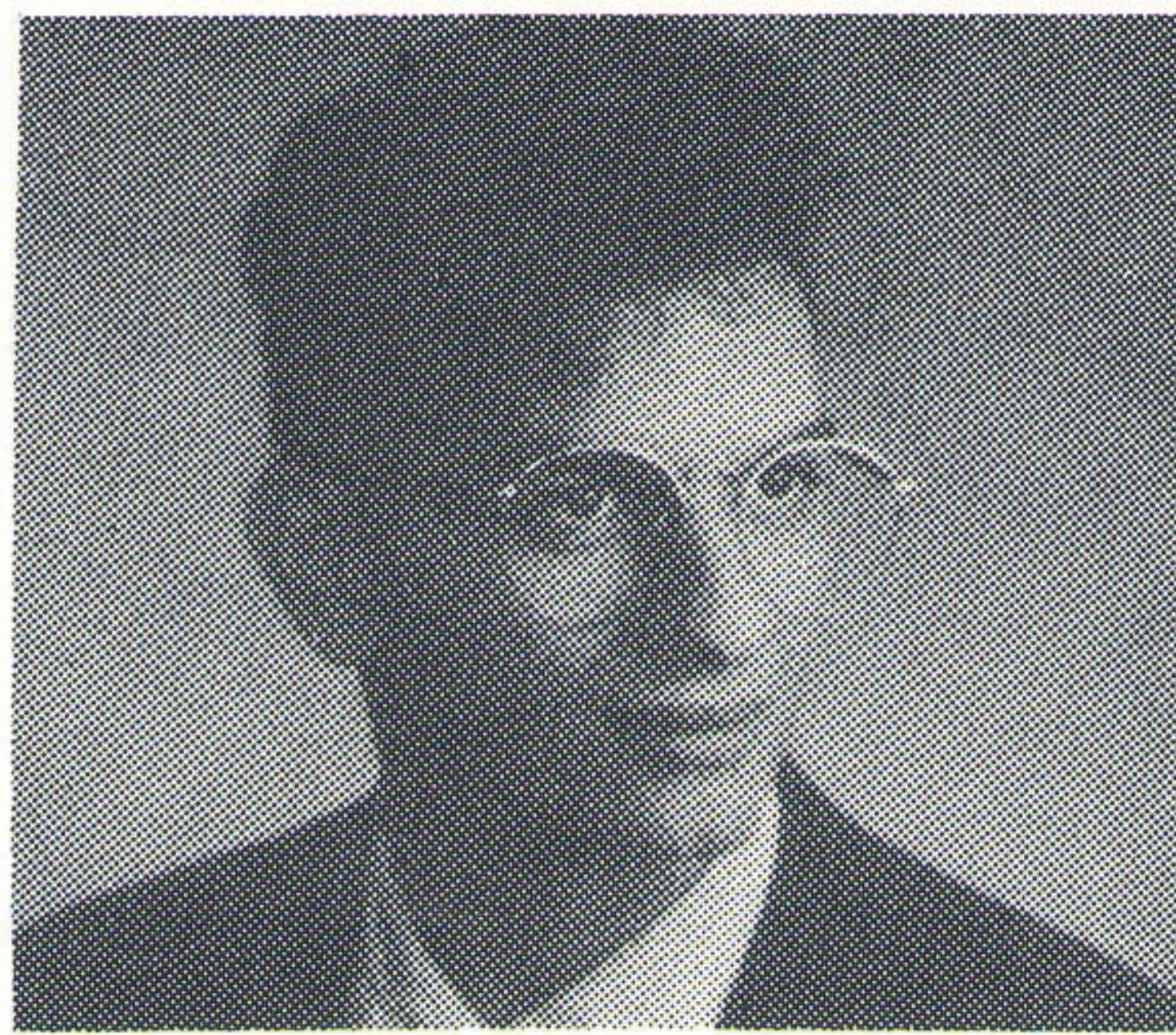
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## DETROIT MAR THOMA CHURCH

**ANNUAL CONVENTION:** The annual convention of Detroit Mar Thoma Church was held from 31st August to 2nd September, 1990, at the St. Peter's Episcopal Church. The main speaker was Mr. Babu Pullad. The meetings were well attended and the witnessing and dedications at the concluding session have touched many hearts.



**DEMISE:** Shelby Thomas (17) beloved son of George and Daisy Thomas and brother of Sharon Thomas passed away on 9th August, 1990. Shelby touched the hearts of many people, young and old alike. Our Church has truly lost a very talented young person. Please pray for the bereaved family.



**FAMILY RETREAT:** A Family retreat led by Rev. E. J. Joseph was held on 8th September, 1990, at the St. Peter's Episcopal Church. Rev. Sam K. Thomas of Canadian Anglican Church was the guest speaker. About 20 families attended the retreat.

P. M. George

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### TRINITY MAR THOMA CHURCH HOUSTON

**YOUTH LEAGUE ONE-DAY SEMINAR:** Youth League One-day Seminar for the youth of the Parish was held at Trinity Mar Thoma Church, Houston on July 7th, 1990. Diocesan Bishop Rt. Rev. Philipose Mar Chrysostom was the main speaker. The theme of the Seminar was "Responsibility of a Christian Youth growing up in a diverse cultural context." Dr. Ninan T. Mathew & Dr. (Mrs.) Vivy Susan Daniel were guest speakers. Seminar ended with a combined session of Youth and Parents. Mr. George Philipose led the singing sessions. About 125 youth of the parish attended. President Rev. Jayan Thomas welcomed the participants and Secretary Miss Bindu Alexander proposed the vote of thanks.

**LAY MEN TRAINING AND STUDY CONFERENCE:** Lay men training and Study Conference will be held on Sept. 29th and 30th, 1990. The theme of the study is "Christian Baptism". Rev. Geevarghese Mathew (Drew University) is the main leader. This is the second conference in this series. Last time the theme was "Holy Spirit".

**ANNUAL CONVENTION:** Annual Convention will be held on October 18 to 21, 1990. at the Church. Maramon Convention Speaker Dr. John T. Seamonds will deliver the messages.

**DEMISE:** Mr. Mathew K. Chenthittai (Achenkunju), 45 years, 12802 New Brook, Houston, Texas 77072, died of a heart attack at 1:00 P.M. on October 2, 1990. He is survived by his wife Molly and Children, Anil (13), Sheena (11) and Sheeba (9). His home town is Kozhencherry.

Rev. Jayan Thomas

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### THE DALLAS MAR THOMA CHURCH

On the first of May, 1990 The Rev P. J. Alex took charge of the Parish relieving the Rev. C.K. Mathew. The Rev. C. K. Mathew received his Doctor of Ministry degree from Perkins School of Theology, Southern Methodist University on the 21st of May and left for India to take charge of the Mar Thoma Parish of Pathanamthitta.

Chrisostom Thirumani visited our parish from the 12 through 14 of July. While staying in Dallas, Thirumani had meetings with the youth league, Sevika Sanghom and other organizations of the church. A well attended qurbana was conducted on that Saturday morning.

Dr. John Mathew

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### WESTERN CANADA MAR THOMA CONFERENCE

The first Western Canada Mar Thoma conference was held in Edmonton at the Holy rood Mennonite Church from 29th June to 1st July 1990. Our Diocesan Bishop Mar Chrysostom Suffragan Metropolitan and Rev. K.U. Abraham (Boston) were the leaders. Calgary and Fort Mc Murray Parish members along with Edmonton members participated. The theme for the conference was "You are a chosen people". Ecumenical gathering, group games, picnic, youth meetings were the other attractive items. Twenty four first communicants were there at the celebration of Holy Qurbana.

### MAR THOMA CONGREGATION VANCOUVER

The first Mar Thoma Holy communion was celebrated at Vancouver on Sunday 11 March 1990 at Richmond United Church. Rev. Joseph Jacob was the celebrant. The Rt. Rev. Philipose Mar Chrysostom,



Suffragan Metropolitan visited VanCover and celebrated at Gillmore Park United Church on Monday 2nd July 1990, the first celebration by a Mar Thoma Bishop in VanCover. A small congregation was formed with Mr. Jacob Mathew as the Convenor.

Rev. Joseph Jacob.

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### MAR THOMA CHURCH, UNITED KINGDOM, LONDON

The Rt. Rev. Philipose Mar Chrysostom, Suffragan Metropolitan visited the parish from August 16 - 26, 1990. Thirumeni celebrated Holy Communion on Sunday August 19, at St. Katharine Cree Church where our worship is usually held.

The eighth Mar Thoma conference was held at Highleigh Conference Center, Hoddesdon from August 24-26, 1990. The Rt. Rev. Philipose Mar Chrysostom, Diocesan Bishop for the United States, U.K. & Canada, Mr. Vijay Menon, Lay preacher and member of the Church of England General Synod and the Rev. George Mathew, President and Vicar of the Mar Thoma Church, U.K. were the main leaders. The theme for the Conference was "Watch and Pray".

The Harvest Festival and Sale was held on September 9, 1990 at St. Mathias Church Hall, North London. About 200 people attended the function. 50% of the proceeds would be sent to evangelistic work of our Church.

The fourth Kerala Christian Convention organized by the U.K. Mar Thoma Church will be held at St. Katharine Cree Church from October 19-21, 1990. Dr. P. P. Job (New Delhi) will be the speaker at the gospel meetings.

Rev. George Mathew

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### EPIPHANY MAR THOMA CHURCH, NEW YORK

We have arranged a parish picnic on August 18th at Belmont Lake Park, Babylon. The Convention this year was held from August 22nd to 25th and the speakers were Rev. K. Abraham (Sastri Achen) and Mr. V.T. Abraham (Vayalathala). The ninth year Parish Day was celebrated on August 26th and the occasion was blessed by the presence and messages of Rt. Rev. M.C. Mani (Bishop of C.S.I.) and Rev. K. Abraham. The Sevika Sanghom have conducted a food sale at the church on September 16th.

George Yohannan

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### MAR THOMA CHURCH OF LOS ANGELES

**CONVENTION** Our convention this year was held from June 1-3. Main Speaker at the Convention was the Rt. Rev. Michael John of the C.S.I. Church.

#### PARISH DAY CELEBRATION

"We are not searching Christ in places where Christ was lost, but we are searching Him in places of convenience to us". As the deer runs after mirages in the desert sun, "we are running after the echoes not knowing where the sound comes from." Speaking at the Parish Day celebrations of the Los Angeles Mar Thoma Church, on Sunday September 30, the Rev. M.J. Joseph, Vicar of the Canadian Mar Thoma Church, Toronto reminded the audience that out in the community where they lived and worked, there were thousands of fellow human beings, longing for a helping hand, or even a moment of sharing and caring. "We often boast about our 2000 years old Christian tradition, but we seldom take time to spread the word of Jesus's love to the millions in this land of our choice or in India where most of us were born and brought up".

"In order to achieve progress in our Christian faith and values," Rev. Joseph continued, "we should examine the areas of dissatisfaction and then have a definite action to materialize the dreams that we have envisioned. In our struggle to amass wealth we often tend to forget our responsibility to our family and to our children. We are so blinded by the forces of materialistic desires and tendencies that we cannot understand the slow but steady erosion of our family unity and love." Citing the example of Kuwait City which until August 2, 1990 was one of the most prosperous cities of the world, Joseph Achen called upon the listeners "to lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven" as the treasures on earth are like moving clouds which we see for a moment and then we lose sight of it.

As part of the Parish Day celebrations, there were food sale, auction and entertainments by Sunday School children Youths and Adults. The Parish Day celebrations were presided over by the Vicar Rev. Alexander A. Thomas.

Jacob A. Mathew



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### To Our Readers:

We have received suggestions from a few people that it would be nice if we start a Malayalam Section in the Messenger. We will be glad to publish well written articles or stories provided they are sent to us well in advance so that we would have sufficient time to get them printed in Malayalam.



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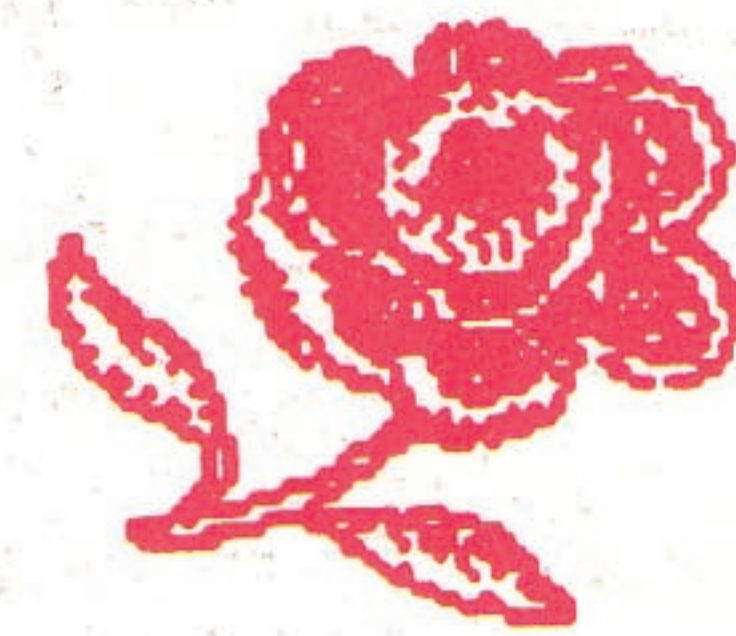
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