



M A R T H O M A
MESSENGER

VOL. X NO. 1

JANUARY 1991

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



CULTURE





MAR THOMA MESSENGER

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

VOL. X No. 1
January 1991

EDITORIAL BOARD

Mr. Abraham Mattackal, Editor, Los Angeles
Tel: 213 - 431 - 0046

Rev. K. George Pothen, Los Angeles
Tel: 714 - 626 - 0395

Dr. John Mathew, Dallas
Tel: 817 - 498 - 7549

Mr. Thomas Mammen, Los Angeles
Tel: 714 - 596 - 9715

Mr. P. T. Thomas, New York
Tel: 914 - 362 - 3763

MAILING ADDRESS

3105 Claremore Ave
Long Beach, CA 90808

*Cover designed by
Saji Abraham
Cypress, California
&
Cherian K. Cherian (Babaloo)
Long Island, New York*

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Editorial	2
Message from the Diocesan Bishop	3
Letters to the Editor	5
Cultural Pluralism	7
The MTC and its Mission	10
The Impact of Culture	16
Men, Women and Culture	17
Culture	20
To Acculturate or not to Acculturate	22
The MTC - A mission envisaged	24
Sevika Sanghom Section	
The eyes of mankind	26
Hannah - A woman of prayer	27
Kids' Corner	30
Malayalam Section	31
Sunday School Activities	37
Mar Thoma Youth Conf. Report	38
Diocesan Assembly Report	39
News from Parishes	41

To our readers

When we numbered the October 1990 issue of the Messenger as Vol. 1 No. 1, we didn't have the slightest intention of obliterating all the good work done by the previous Editorial Committees nor did we ignore the existence of the Messenger from 1982. In fact we salute the previous Editorial Committee Members for their vision and commitment. However, we now realize that we should maintain the continuity of the publication and therefore, the current issue is Vol. X No. 1.

Editor.

ആകർഷണീയമായ സ്വർണ്ണാഭരണങ്ങൾക്കും

ജപൽസ് ഇന്ത്യ ഇൻകോർപ്പറേഡ്

JEWELS INDIA INC.

at Sam & Raj

The Trendsetters in diamond & Gold jewelry

ന്യൂയോർക്കിൽ നിങ്ങൾക്കുവേണ്ടി ഒരു വിശ്വസ്ത സമാപനം ജപൽസ് ഇന്ത്യ ഇൻകോർപ്പറേഡ്

24 KT. Bangles

CHAINS & KARA BARS & COINS

22 KT. Jewelry

CORAL JADE PEARLS ETC.



Gold \$20.00 oz over the London Closing Rates

All merchandise sold will even be guaranteed & approved in India by Jewels de paragon Bangalore - 560 001

GOLD LINES
(718) 507-1222
(718) 507-1523

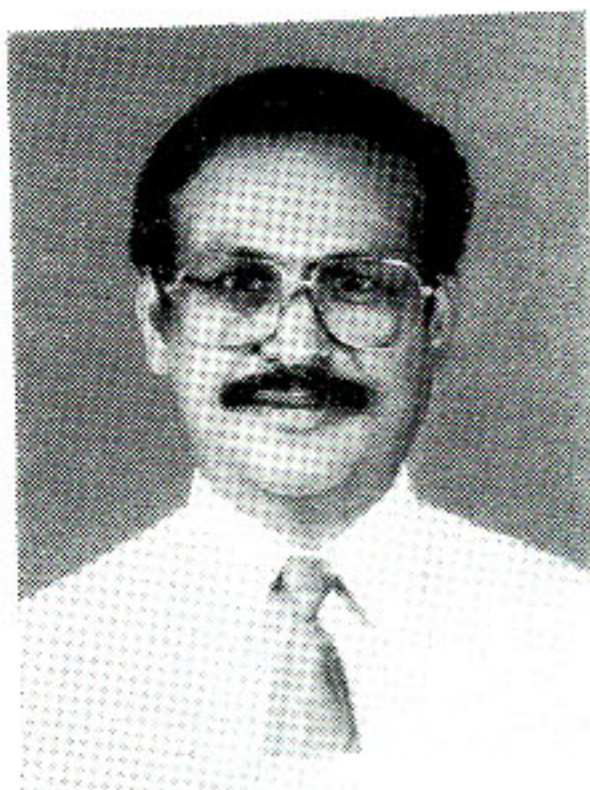
In case of any problem, just tell us and we will make good your loss even after you return from India.

We trust and respect your word why go somewhere else? DO NOT SETTLE FOR LESS—BUT THE BEST

MAIL ORDERS
ACCEPTED
Closed Tuesdays

37-08 74th Street, Jackson Heights, NY 11372

FROM THE EDITOR



In a world of have-nots, God has abundantly blessed us. While we enjoy all the luxuries of modern living, perhaps more than many other ethnic groups in these affluent countries, we are as a Church and as individuals, in my opinion, oblivious to the plight of the poor and the homeless in the society. As we live here, earn here, and our family grows and progresses here, we have to give something back to the less fortunate ones in our midst. God allowed us to improve our standard of living, thereby giving us the opportunity to improve the lives of others too. God did not expect us to be owners but only caretakers of all that we possess in this world.

One of the decisions taken by the Diocesan Assembly in July 1990 was that each parish should associate with one local church for service to the local community. Mark Hatfield once said that if each church in the United States adopted three street people, the homeless problem would be solved. During the holiday season when we are feeling more generous - or more guilty - it would make a lasting difference in the lives of the homeless, if each Mar Thoma parish, nay each individual, makes an effort to help these unfortunate ones. We sit long hours in our General Body Meetings and Executive Committee Meetings most of the time arguing about subjects that have no real substance or meaning. How much more useful would it be if we could spend two or three hours in a month for the homeless. If a Hindu Bengali Doctor and his family in Washington D.C. could spend a few week-ends every year collecting and distributing clothes to the homeless, if a shoe repairman, his wife and two little children in Huntington Beach could collect old clothes from house to house, food items from supermarket chains and convert his living room and garage into a warehouse with such things and then distribute the items to the most needy in the town, we too could certainly spend a few hours of our time for the benefit of the homeless.

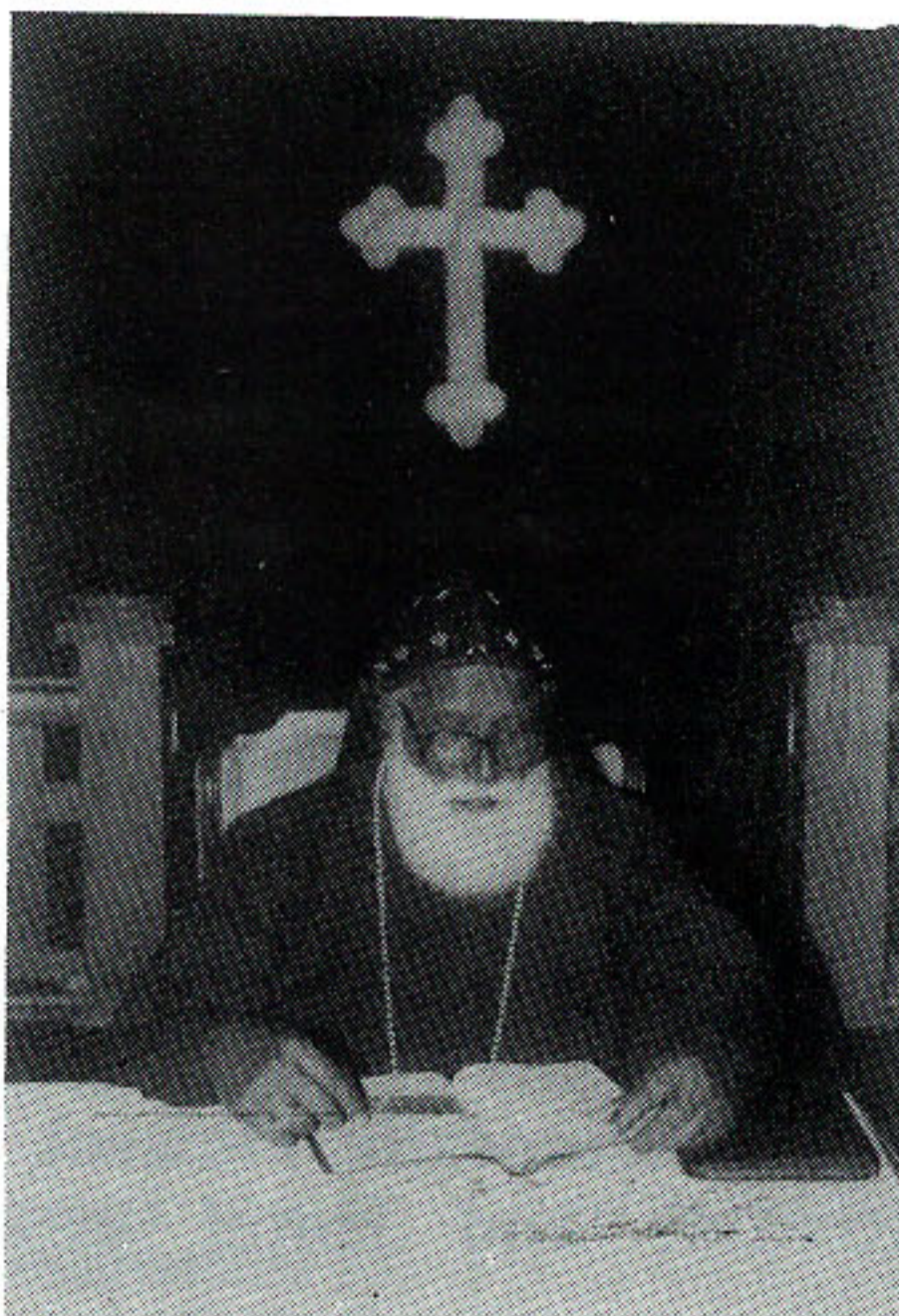
There are many ways in which we can help the homeless. We can give money to local organizations such as Salvation Army, Love Inc., United Way etc. As individuals we can also keep food in our car - food which does not require a can opener, and does not need refrigeration, such as raisins, nuts, fruits, granola bars etc. Or we can ask a homeless what food we can buy him or her while doing our own shopping. It does not make much difference to us if a quart of milk or a dollar's worth of bread or oranges are included in our purchase but it does make a difference to the homeless who doesn't know where the next meal comes from. We can take a homeless person to lunch at the nearest fast food outlet, one to which we can walk together. We are giving more than food here, we are giving ourselves and our time. On cold nights we can throw a couple of old blankets, some disposable cups and a thermos of coffee or hot choc-olates in our car and offer them to people huddled in door ways or street corners. The Bible says "Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by this some have entertained angels without knowing it." But at the same time we have to "be shrewd as serpents". I am not suggesting we invite every homeless that we meet to our home. We have to strike a balance between caution and callousness.

Voluntaryism is a notable facet of the Western Society. Hundreds of thousands of men and women set apart a significant amount of their time and resources for voluntary work, helping the poor and needy. As a Church we can join hands with a local Agency or parish for collecting and distributing used clothes and food items. Rather than devoting most of our attention and time to achieving wealth and status, we should channel more of our effort into meeting the basic needs of people directly around us - people that we pass by everyday but seldom notice. In turning our attention to this ever increasing problem in the American Society, we should always be reminded that when we do this unto the least of them, we are doing this unto the Lord.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ashram Pattackal". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

**DIOCESE OF NORTH AMERICA & U.K.
MAR THOMA CHURCH**

PHILIPOSE MAR CRYSTAM
BISHOP



Tel: Ranni: 511
Mandiram P.O.
Ranni - 689672
Kerala, India.

Congratulations to the editors of Mar Thoma Messenger on the new life given to this publication. I am glad to find that the magazine is informative, educational and interesting. The editors have decided to focus each issue on a theme which itself is part of general frame work. The success of this useful and needy publication would depend on the cooperation of the members. Atchens, officers of the parish and Assembly members should ensure that every home in our diocese gets a copy of the Messenger. This would help to create a sense of belonging and oneness.

I understand this issue is devoted to 'Culture'. One understanding of culture is, 'it is a social organization, a complex of ideas and conceptions, developed qualities of organized relationships and courtesies that are necessary for the well being of a well organized society. Culture is necessary for ministering to the total welfare of the whole society'. Culture emphasizes relations and so deals with community of thought, similarity of conduct, shared common traditions and inherited common general approach to fundamental problems. Upholding of values basic to the inner life and free growth of the community and the preservation of universal quality which mingles with the common inheritance of man are the two legs of culture. As culture progresses it will be complex in pattern and heterogeneous in outward form. The inner dynamism of culture provides the healthy dialectics of change and stability. Religion has been a potent force in the development and transformation of culture. Religion is the expression of the faith in the cultural pattern.

When this Messenger reaches you, you will have celebrated another Christmas, the assurance of the redeeming and strengthening presence of God with man. In a world torn asunder with selfish plans and parochial outlook the God who empties himself for others and who is the message of peace and joy for all people, has entered and is active. May our lives as individuals, as parishes and as a diocese proclaim loudly to the world that the peace and joy in Christ is a present reality.

Let us give up what we can, so that others may have what they should have.

Wish you all a very blessed New Year.

Yours in Christ
P Crystam
BISHOP,
DIOCESE OF NORTH AMERICA & U. K.

November 17, 1990

Thomsons Travel & Tours, Inc.



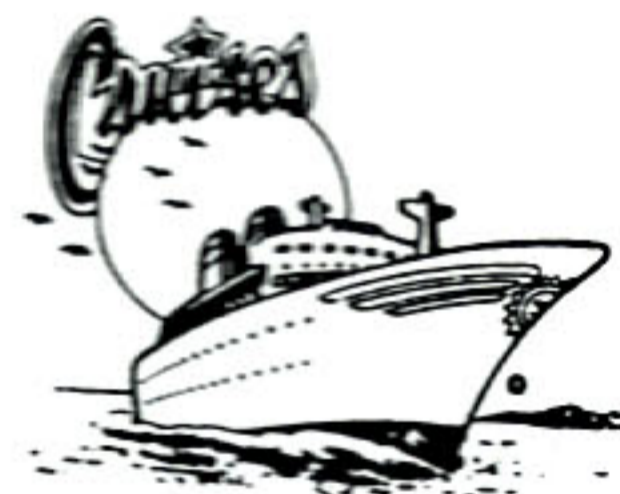
International and Domestic Travel, Cruises, Tours,
Car Rentals and Hotel Reservations.

Fully Computerized Reservation and Ticketing Facility.
For best rates and prompt service

Please call



SHAJI



for all your professional needs

THOMSONS TRAVEL & TOURS, INC.
216-02 HILLSIDE AVENUE
QUEENS VILLAGE, N. Y. 11427

PHONE: (718) 468 - 4200

FAX: (718) 468 - 4909

LETTERS

To

THE EDITOR

Congratulations to all of you on the Editorial Board for an outstanding job. The quality of the October issue is superb! I like your idea about focusing on a theme each quarter. Also, Malayalam articles would be a welcome addition! Letters to the Editor is excellent, but I do hope that it will not turn into a forum for too much negative criticisms or attack on personalities. In view of Messenger's published policy of welcoming constructive criticisms and suggestions, may I offer the following suggestions:

1. A page could be devoted to questions on family issues, child rearing, teenage conflicts, choosing a career etc. The questions can be answered by a panel consisting of Psychologists, Psychiatrists, Social Scientists, Educators, Vicars etc. Each quarterly issue could focus on a different topic. This would help to bring out some concerns of the Marthomites in North America and U.K.

2. A survey to be conducted and the results published in the Messenger regarding readers' responses to questions like Role of Women in the Church, improvements if any, to be made on our Liturgy, Family/Student Conference etc.

3. A Report of the Diocesan Assembly decisions should be published in the Messenger for the benefit of all our parishioners.

Mrs. Nirmala Abraham, Hockessin, Delaware.

The publication of the Mar Thoma Messenger on a regular basis from October 1990 is definitely a welcome move by the Diocese. Although Diocesan news were short, the articles in the messenger were informative and useful. However, it would really be beneficial to all our Mar Thoma families living in this North American continent and U.K. if the following items are also included in the Messenger:

1. A brief history of our Parishes, date of formation, membership past and present, Sunday services, vicars etc. This would create a better understanding amongst our various parishes and families.

2. A continuous series of articles on the history, faith and practices of our Mar Thoma Church are to be published in the Messenger. This would immensely help our younger generation to have a fairly good knowledge of the Mar Thoma Church and its traditions.

3. Report on Youth activities at various parish level and Diocesan level should be published. Youths should be encouraged to voice their ideas and suggestions through the Messenger.

Let this Messenger be the voice of our Diocese and its people.

Abraham Philipose, Cypress, California

Congratulations for publishing the October issue on time. It was great. You and other members of the Editorial Board deserve a lot of appreciation. Certainly, the first issue started with some unique features and I am sure that the subsequent issues are going to be even better as a result of the feedback from members. The articles were well selected, especially the one by Cherian K. Cherian of Long Island. What a beautiful reflection on women's role as embodiment of sacrificial love. I hope that every Mar Thoma family in the United States, Canada and U.K. will subscribe to receive a copy of the Messenger. I see a great scope of this publication becoming another 'Sabha Tharaka' particularly aimed at the English speaking young generation. Keep up the good work.

Thomas Ninan, Washington D.C.

I am well pleased and proud to see such a great Messenger published on the scheduled date. The publication has given equal representation from our Diocese. The materials printed are choice articles from all walks of life. I am sure if we can maintain this quality, the Messenger will serve our needs. Please encourage articles from new people every time as much as possible. May God bless your sincere efforts.

Dr. P. John Lincoln, Lubbock, Texas

I congratulate the new Editorial Board for publishing another issue of the 'Mar Thoma Messenger' which matches with some of the early issues both in form and content. Yes, it looks good and there are fine articles worth reading. Among them I enjoyed reading Dr. John Mathew's article which discusses the theme of this issue 'Pilgrims'.

Let me make one correction and it is the numbering of this issue. The first issue of 'Messenger' was published in December 1982. There is continuity in publication with at least one or two issues in a year, though the goal was three or four issues. I remember the first meeting of the Zonal Council held in 1982 at Philadelphia when all the members under the guidance of Thomas Thirumeni were considering several names before selecting 'Mar Thoma Messenger'. With ups and downs both in the number of issues and the quality, publication continued all these years. I propose that this continuity be recognized by assigning the appropriate number for the next issue.

Dr. T. M. Thomas, Assembly Member for Sunday Schools.

I very much would like to congratulate you all for your hard work in arranging the publication of this very useful Quarterly. I noticed a general enthusiasm and appreciation about this publication in the congregation here. It may be useful to include some book reviews and a yearly list of good books.

Dr. Zac Varghese, London, U.K.

Letters to the Editor

The Messenger encourages readers to write letters on important Diocesan issues in addition to comments on published articles or suggestions made in letters to the editor. Because space is limited, letters submitted for publication should be no longer than 300 words.

Best Wishes To Mar Thoma Messenger

From



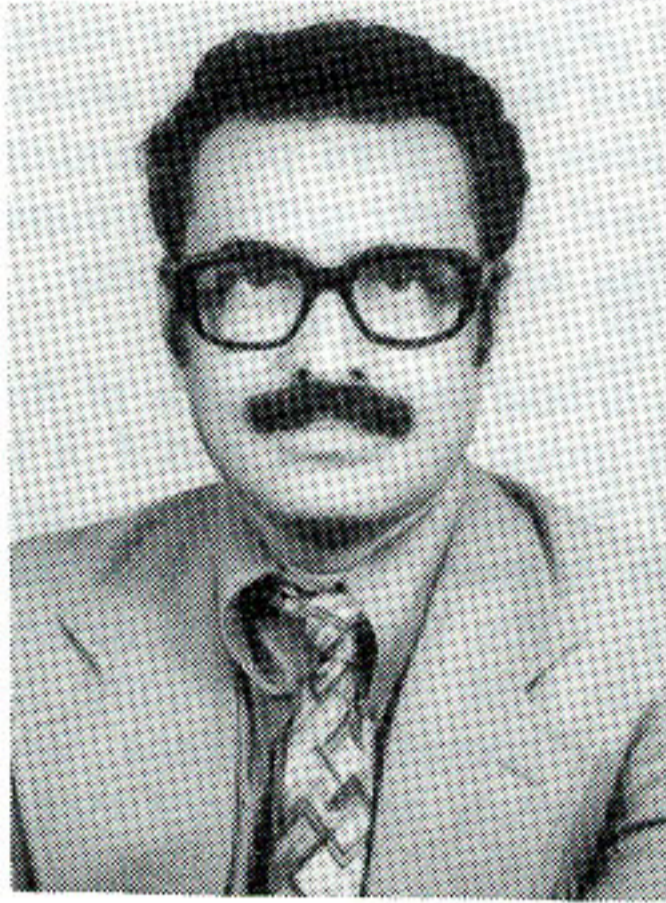
**Dr. P. John Lincoln
Dr. Annie Lincoln
Anil, Sunil & Leena**



Lubbock, Texas.

CULTURAL PLURALISM : THE ONLY OPTION

Dr. T. K. Oommen, New Delhi.



On Understanding Culture

The concept of culture is one of the most widely used and therefore abused. In fact, as early as 1952 two U.S. anthropologists, Kroeber and Kluckhohn, identified as many as 164 definitions of culture. I have no intention to add to this Babel of Tongues! rather I would call attention to the different dimensions and conceptualizations of culture.

Broadly speaking culture has three interrelated but distinct dimensions: the cognitive, the conative, the normative. The cognitive dimension refers to thinking; it views culture as an instrument of constructing a world-view. The conative aspect implies acting; it provides a design of action for those who share the same culture. The normative dimension necessarily connotes judging; it is evaluative in its content. The evaluative dimension proposes a hierarchy of values: high, refined, elite culture as against low, subaltern, mass culture. Familiar terms such as primitive, barbarian, heathen and infidel, are epithets invoked to label the religion of the people who belong to the latter variety of culture. This mode of cognition, in turn, gives birth to three conceptions of culture.

The universalistic conception of culture separates the Homosapiens from the rest of the animal kingdom as they are endowed with the ability to symbolize. This is useful at the very general level to identify the differentia specifica between human beings and other animals. But this notion of culture does not tell us why some cultures are dominant and others decried; why some are preserved while others are liquidated; why some are fostered while others are assimilated. To understand the differential treatment meted out to different cultures we should refer to the hierarchical conception of culture.

The normative dimension of culture gives birth to the hierarchical notion of culture; it is essentially evaluative in tenor. The thrust of this mode of conceptualizing culture is hegemonic. That is, those who define themselves as the dominant, high or mainstream culture would pose two options before the dominated, subaltern or minority cultures; assimilation or liquidation. If the first option is purportedly voluntary, the second is visibly coercive. In contrast, the pluralist conception of culture holds the view that to be different does not imply inferiority or superiority. Pursuantly, the need and the possibility of the coexistence of cultures within the same nation-state is accepted. The pluralist conception of culture, then, projects a new understanding of the mode of constituting nation-states and incorporating the different constituent elements within it.

It is necessary to provide two caveats lest this advocacy of cultural pluralism be misunderstood. First, the European tendency was to establish an exclusive 'political roof' for each culture; the dictum being one-nation, one-policy. In contrast, cultural pluralism plumbs for multi-national, multi-cultural, multi-religious polities, wherever they are feasible and necessary. Second, it categorically rejects cultural relativism, the advocacy to maintain purity of cultures which often unwittingly tends to defend and justify slavery, racism, untouchability, sati, etc. In contrast, cultural pluralism unambiguously attests to the strategy of selective retention and rejection of cultural items because it endorses the position that all cultures and traditions have both positive and negative dimensions. It believes that the dynamism of a culture depends on retaining its assets, rejecting its liabilities, selectively borrowing from other cultures and judiciously synthesizing the native and the alien aspects.

Conditions for maintaining cultural pluralism.

Before identifying the conditions conducive for the maintenance of cultural pluralism it is necessary to make one clarification. Modernization, it is argued by many, leads to a great deal of standardization of cultures and life-styles: modern technology and market are great solvents of traditional cultures and diversity. To start with the argument itself is not correct, modernization often gives birth to incessant search for roots, the rediscovery, even invention of tradition. At any rate the change brought about by modernization affects all cultures and modernization in turn creates new cultures. The problem arise when the state policy and/or the cultural mainstream attempt to establish cultural hegemony over the weak and minority cultural groups. Cultural pluralism, that is, dignified co-existence of all cultures, is the only insurance against such a policy.

To maintain cultural pluralism several conditions need to be met. First, a critical minimum size of the population and its concentration at a specific locale are important. If the size of a group is small and if it is dispersed over a wide territory, the usual option to it is assimilation. To maintain its culture, religion, and language under these conditions it should have a deep psychological disposition toward its collective identity, which in turn should be nurtured by its collective experience and memory. The tendency to assimilate may be pronounced among those migrants who occupy marginal positions in their home country or those who fled their country due to political or religious persecution. While the St. Thomas Christians are small in number and dispersed in North America they have a strong collective memory and are not marginalized in India.

Second, the constitution of the country should not only explicitly disapprove cultural hegemony of particular groups but it should have provisions to ward off the tyranny of the majority. Constitutional provisions, however, are necessary but sufficient conditions to foster cultural pluralism. Happily, the situation in the U.S. is favorable in this respect. But the thrust of the U.S. motto, "from many to one" is geared to assimilation and integration and not pluralism. While the Canadian policy of multi-culturalism is more conducive to cultural pluralism, though immigration policy Canada restricts its cultural mosaic.

Third, notwithstanding the constitutional guarantees and legal provisions, the creation of an appropriate climate for cultural pluralism would not be possible unless the attitudes and value orientations of the cultural mainstream foster the same. The cultural mainstream of the U.S., drawn predominantly from the Protestants, has a long tradition of religious tolerance. English, which is the *lingua franca* of the U.S. is perceived as a global language. Celebration of diversity in life-styles has come to be a credo in North America. All these foster cultural pluralism.

The Sensible Option

From what I have said so far it is evident that neither clinging to the traditional life-style nor recklessly inculcating the American ethos is a viable option for the Mar Thoma Syrian Christians or for others who value their tradition. But they should adapt to the new situation. Perhaps an example would help understanding the argument. The family life among Indians was, and is to a large extent, characterized by authoritarian relationships between parents and children and spouses. And yet, there was a great deal of security provided to the young as well as the old and affection between the spouses. In the North American context authoritarianism is absent but so are the security and affection. Cross individualism prompts the young to leave the parental household much before they should and the old to live a lonely life when they need not. What we need is a balanced blend of the security and emotional bond of the family and freedom and autonomy of the individual. Thus the assets in both cultures should be carefully harnessed to improve quality of life, which cannot be achieved through mad, mad rush for riches.

Dr. T. K. Oommen is the dean of the School of Social Sciences, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi and also the President of the International Sociological Association. Dr. Oommen has recently completed a term as visiting Professor at the University of California, Berkely. He is the recipient of many national awards and has authored many books such as "Charisma, Stability and Change", "Social Transformation in Rural India", "Social Structure and Politics", "From Mobilization to Institutionalization, etc.

**The Mar Thoma Family Conference
of
North America, 1991**



JULY 25th thru 28th 1991

at

THE DIPLOMAT HOTEL

**3515 South Ocean Drive
Hollywood, Florida.**

For further information please contact:

**John Varghese
(Convenor, Souvenir Committee) OR
305-772-9708**

**Thomas Samuel
(Secretary)
305-424-3346**

We, the members of the Mar Thoma Church of South Florida, cordially invite all the members of the Mar Thoma Churches in North America and U.K. to attend the conference and enjoy the beauty of the "Sunshine State". We also would appreciate your valuable prayers and support.

One day cruise and sightseeing trips will be available at reasonable rate.

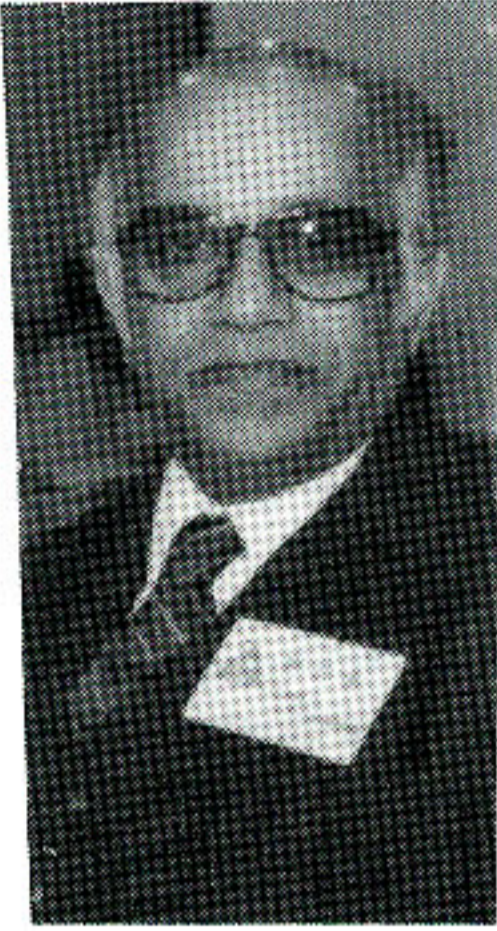
The Theme of our conference is:

"If any man be in Christ, he is a new creation".
(2 Cor. 5: 17)

**Mailing Address:
P. O. Box # 292411
Fort Lauderdale, FL 33329**

THE MAR THOMA CHURCH AND ITS MISSION IN NORTH AMERICA

WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE ?



Dr. George K Zachariah, Washington D.C.

Since the establishment in New York of the first Mar Thoma parish in 1976, there has been a phenomenal growth of our church in North America. Substantial growth of our population and their wide spatial distribution necessitated formation of many congregations. We have now thirty-five parishes with a membership of 2500 families and it is steadily growing. We can legitimately be proud of our growth as a community in North America and the development of our church during the past fifteen years. However, the pattern of growth has been haphazard. A few years ago a pertinent question was whether we should function as a Mar Thoma Church in North America or should we be members of local American churches and have only occasional services using our liturgy as and when our bishops or archbishops were available. At that time our bishops encouraged the Marthomites to join local churches, be they Episcopalian, Methodist or Presbyterian, while actively discouraging movement towards forming our own congregations. But that is not an issue any more. The question now being asked is how many people should there be before we can formally organize a parish. One of the reasons for encouraging people to join local churches was the perception that most of us will be returning to India after a brief sojourn here. The climate has changed drastically. Now the prevalent feeling is: we came and we have come to stay.

What criteria are we going to use in assessing the growth? In the past we have measured growth in terms of the number of persons on the rolls, the size of the budget and organizations within the church, acquisition of our own property and buildings. These are peripheral to the ultimate test of our growth. The real test is how far we have come in terms of internal and qualitative change, how we perceive the true nature of its identity and mission. In the final analysis, what matters most is the life-style of the Marthomites and the nature of our witness. How alive is our church? Do we engender a climate open to faith? Or are we burbling through the ecclesiastical routine and let it go at that? The church as in the past will continue to be challenged to adjust to the changing situations and realities of modern life.

How much readiness is there for change? Do we fear it or are we eagerly waiting for it? How do we creatively work change into the church's faith and life? Or are we saying that the structures and practices of our church have been good enough for our forefathers and that is fine with us also? Are we complacent with the thought that everything is o.k? Have we become timid even in contemplating need for change? Or are we cynical in that we are overwhelmed by a sense of futility that nothing we do can and will change the landscape? Have there been any abuses which lingered because nobody has taken the time to look to see if anything was wrong? Is there any wind of change blowing through our church at this time?

The need is not for more activity but for a new spirit, a special instrument for His transforming activity. Do we have a clearer understanding of the concept of 'priesthood of all believers'? Each of us is aware of how easily we make religion a matter of rite and ceremony by confining religion to a service of worship on a Sunday morning. Aren't we a busy and preoccupied people, a resourceful and affluent people, that we let someone else to take care of the church while we take care of the business of the world? Is there not a many-sided confusion about the nature and mission of our church in North America? What appalls me is that there is a lack of systematic criticism, let alone a strident or restrained criticism. We are afraid to talk about our church's failures and shortcomings.

We, Christians of all people, ought to be at home in a world of change. It is part of our faith. It is the quintessence of growth. Our church is not a young church any more. We celebrated our sesquicentennial couple of years ago. The truth with being an adult is neither less nor more than intellectual, moral and spiritual *riger mortis*. I am afraid that it is applicable to our church as well. And yet, we know, that 'the dead

can be resurrected and the quick can be redirected'. Miracles of this kind are the bailiwick of the Spirit. The collectivist hardening of adult arteries especially in churches, ours not exempted, has been described by someone thus: "The real trouble is that God and the *status quo* are worshipped at adjacent altars." This may be an overgenerous assessment. It would often be truer to say that they are worshipped at the same altar.

What is the perception of the church and its role? The church is destined to be forever a minority movement, functioning as light or salt in the world. Do we have the courage to stand for those values which Christ has demonstrated through His life regardless of the consequences? The church is here for the sake of the world, not for its own sake, and is more the community of the saving than the saved. Do we have the willingness to sacrifice our institutional interests for the well-being of the community-at-large which we have to serve? The church is the *people-laos*, laity of God, His royal priesthood, and no ultimate privilege or prerogative adheres to ordination other than they have been called to serve us providing guidance and spiritual leadership. In this business of serving God in the world we are all "priests without distinction". This does not mean, however, 'in the church anyone can do anything and anyone can do everything.' It is unfortunate that most of our people see a polarity between them and the clergy. But this has been a strange phenomenon because most of them evidence a genuine affection for and loyalty to our bishops and priests. It has been amusing to some observers when certain Achans have given the impression of being threatened by strong lay leadership. The priests must yield the need to control and be involved in everything that goes on in the parish. We should perceive the church as where gifted persons minister to gifted persons and become the vehicle for the Spirit's work. There must be a shift from pedestal style of leadership to what has been termed 'servant leadership'. It is leadership such as that of the one who came as suffering servant and gave his life that the world may have life. Having influence does not mean calling all the shots. Making decisions by consensus, pruning one another, must be the order. Many have experienced the church as a bureaucratic and hierarchical institution rather than as a Christian community, as a catalyst in the lives of individuals and in the corporate life of the community? Is the ministry of the whole people of God an important theme in its life?

As we look toward the future of our church here in this part of the world, it is imperative that we discern the distinction between 'The Mar Thoma Church in North America' and 'The North American Mar Thoma Church'. Much of the confusion has been the result of viewing our status as that of transplanting the church traditions and practices in vogue in Kerala over here without giving credence to the different environment. If I may extend the analogy, there is a good chance of rejection in the long run if we do not appreciate the above mentioned distinction and adjust accordingly. Our attention therefore must be directed to what kind of structures would serve that purpose well. There is no harm in imitating the schema in Kerala provided that we do not go too far. The Mar Thoma church here is not an accident. It is here by divine design. It is a special instrument of God for His transforming activity among the Americans. We must have a clear and consistent sense of purpose and a contagious feeling of identity. What plan of action shall we take? Interestingly the specific word *plan* does not appear in the Bible. Neither does scheme, strategy, program or schedule. Instead we read of God's purpose, a much broader word and one rich in possibilities. Our church must encourage and emphasize lifestyle stewardship. Our stewardship, i.e. the church's ministry is four-fold: (i) worship; (ii) study; (iii) sharing; (iv) service.

1. **Worship:** "To worship is to quicken the conscience by the holiness of God, to feed the mind with the truth of God, to purge the imagination by the beauty of God, to open the heart to the love of God, and to devote the will to the purpose of God." (quoted in *We Have One Future*, p. 42, Commission on Ecumenical Mission and Relations of the United Presbyterian church in the USA) This is the best definition of worship that I have come across. Everything that is part of the stewardship is based on the spirit of worship as outlined here. How can we offer worship as an experience that is connected to our daily lives? Ready for a liturgical experiment? How can we make our worship services more attractive and meaningful? To meet the needs of our members a question to be resolved is the medium of worship. Whether it should be in Malayalam or English? Or should we have separate services for the two groups of people, those who prefer Malayalam and/or who cannot understand English, and those who prefer English and/or those who cannot read Malayalam? Temporary arrangements must be made to meet the expressed needs of the congregation with a clear understanding that these will be reviewed periodically. The litanies and prayers must refer to the ministries of all believers. Not only the linguistic medium is the issue. Using the insights from the communication revolution of today, we must seriously think of modifying our worship modes not to limit ourselves to the traditional patterns. Music, videos, dances to list only a few should be utilized. Different patterns of worship services must be experimented with and insights drawn must be used in better forms of worship.

Uniform liturgy has its value. However, realistically the routine is a distracter. The young people and women must be involved more in leading worship services. Systematic planning and more order is necessary to have the proper atmosphere of worship. The inertia of long years of past practice must be overcome.

ii Study: The biblical illiteracy in the church today presents frightening possibilities. It is almost unbelievable that, in a time when we are blessed with the best facilities, the widest knowledge of good teaching methods, good curricula, well-trained teachers, and libraries stocked with books, maps, pictures, and audio-visuals, we, for the most part, remain ignorant of the Christian faith and its foundations. If we do not study and don't learn all we can about the Bible, the history of the church and our church in particular, Christian doctrines, and theological developments, then who is going to take us seriously? Or how can we live as Christians in the world? We will indeed, be 'tossed to and fro by every wind of doctrine'. As someone remarked: "Twentieth century problems demand churchmen who have more than a fifth-grade understanding of God."

iii Sharing: - in all its aspects must be encouraged. Most of us are unwilling to talk about our personal faith. No gift is really a gift unless the giver gives a bit of himself with it. We have to give as God has prospered. Have we set aside or dedicated a specific proportion of our income for the work of Christ? Our church has been diffident in challenging its members for such giving. Give God the priority. In doing that, we first acknowledge his claim on our lives.

iv Services: We have a mandate to serve. In a very real sense, the only thing we can really give to God is our service. Everything else is given to us: our time, our energy, our mind, our strength. The only gift we have to offer God is what we do with our lives. God invites us to be a fellow-worker with him.

Plan of Action

Church renewal programs

1. Establish annual regional conventions(project of adjoining cities)
2. Periodic retreats of 'challenge and response' in the Parishes.
3. Establish prayer cells, sharing groups and Bible circles. Establish prayer meetings on a regional basis in each parish.
4. Encourage daily family prayer at least once a day.
5. Develop a family prayer and Bible reading book for use by families. Such aids encourage practice of family prayers.

Church growth programs

1. Consider extending membership to non-marthomites who accept the faith and order of our church including Christians from United States and other parts of the world. The issue has been raised that some of us want to keep our Kerala identity.
2. Consider having a new category of membership - associate membership - for those who cannot accept our doctrines but are desirous of fellowshiping with us. Hopefully this will not be interpreted as diluting our church to a social club!
3. Contact on a regular basis Marthomites who are living in isolated areas where we do not have our parishes.
4. Reach out to individuals (Marthomites) who are not part of any of our Parishes.
5. Each parish must have a communication network (Individuals to contact a given number of people for informing special events or happenings and to be in touch on a regular basis - telephone chains?)
6. Develop a church directory for each parish - uniform format, names of individuals, their home address in India, Parish in India, children, their names, birth dates, wedding dates etc.
7. Develop a data base - information on members and the parishes - census type data, profession etc.
8. Establish policy regarding the size of the parish.

Lay leadership

1. Effective, competent and efficient lay leadership should be identified and encouraged for lay ministry.
2. Establish a Human Resources Task Force. Awareness of need must lead to commitment of

resources. Time, energy, skill, imagination, and money are all involved in meeting these needs. We have to celebrate the gifts of our people. Identify gifts, affirm them, cultivate them through small achievable steps of successful ministry and match them with possibilities for ministry. Emphasize partnership in ministry.

3. Provide lay leadership training through regular institutes.
4. We must give special attention in the matter of selecting or electing the people best suited to serve in any given position. What we normally do is to invite nominations and someone's name is suggested without even considering the position requirements or whether the individual will match those. Once a name is suggested usually people do not want themselves to be considered even if they have better skills and commitment in that area. I think we must institute better nomination and election procedures so that we can get the proper persons for the respective positions.

Role of women

Any strategy within the church that does not give women an important place would be short-spirited indeed. Consider ways by which they can be involved more in our ministries.

Ecumenical Involvement (relationship with other denominations)

1. Seek guidance from the Episcopal Synod regarding the extent of our relationship with the churches such as the Episcopal, Methodist, Presbyterian, Baptist etc.
2. Clarify the role of our Achan in functions and services where these churches are involved, for eg. in officiating at the wedding of persons who may select their spouses from among these churches.
3. Define specific areas in the liturgy for marriage ceremonies and funeral services which can be modified (without losing or changing the meaning of) to suit the cultural environment here.
4. At the Diocesan level we should seek membership in ecumenical bodies such as the National Council of Churches.
5. We should explore avenues of cooperation with local churches, local council of churches and other religious organizations.
6. Review the Agreement between the Episcopal Church and our church and make changes as warranted. There have been criticisms that our group has relegated to the status of another ethnic minority alongside the Filipinos, Koreans and the Chinese and that the Episcopal church's attitude is paternalistic to these groups.
7. There is nothing more powerful than an idea whose time has come. Coming together of Christians is such an idea.
8. Looking back, it seems to me a good opportunity was missed when approval was withdrawn from the functioning of a Mar Thoma - CSI Congregation in New York.
9. We must encourage similar experiments and they are consonant with our ecumenical vision and certainly with our avowed plans of dialogue with CSI and CNI towards church union.
10. We are becoming a veritable ghetto. We are moving backward. In the early days of our people in this continent there were fellowships including people representing different denominations.
11. We acknowledge that our Metropolitan and bishops cannot and will not take any decisions contrary to the constitution and bylaws of our church. It is our responsibility to review areas where amendment to the constitution and bylaws of our church are warranted taking the North American context into account and seek such changes.
12. In short, we must maintain the ecumenical vision without losing our distinct and unique heritage.

Community and Social Involvement

1. We must encourage our people to be active in party politics by taking membership in a political party and contributing to political Action Committees in time and money.
2. The church must launch its own outreach programs in addition to working with community organizations. In that regard especially the work of voluntary organizations which are too numerous to list should be noted. Some examples: prison ministry, soup kitchen, hospital visit, visiting the shut-ins, care of the elderly, transporting the elderly and disabled, tutoring, counseling, day care centers, helping the poor, home-less and the oppressed, working with the retarded.

Evangelistic Mission

1. Identify some mission field in North America needing great help. For example some Indian communities and Appalachia are fertile grounds for such missions. The Diocese must sponsor some such fields.
2. Each parish must be encouraged to choose a mission field of its own or sponsor a missionary or missionaries for specific ministries.

Worship

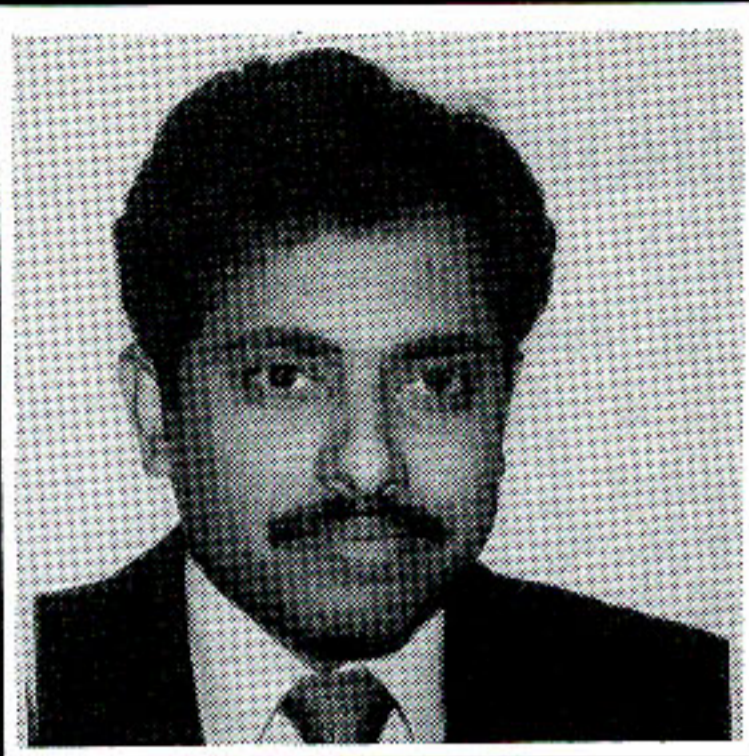
1. A modified English worship book incorporating order for Holy Communion must be made available. An attempt in this regard has been made. But that is quite inadequate.
2. A modified liturgy in English be made available for conducting services for baptism, marriage, funeral and other special services. We must request the Episcopal Synod and the Sabha Council for such modification.
3. A prayer book for use in family worship must be prepared with Bible readings, hymns, and prayer lists.
4. Our Sunday worship of all things seems to be the cultural glue, holding all things in place at present. Therefore we have to give closer attention to ways of making it more effective and attractive to our young and old.

Diocesan Affairs

1. A full-time secretary is needed to coordinate the work of the Diocese. As a first step, for the present, the secretary should be relieved of parish duties for at least one week every month.
2. Establish an Archives for the Diocese. Start collecting information from each parish about its own history and contributions of individuals and other pertinent matters.
3. Plan documenting the history of our church in North America.
4. Every year let the Diocese choose a theme for special study by parishes.
5. Review church regulations in the light of state laws and make necessary adjustments. (a) with regard to the age for marriage, the respective state laws should be honored; (b) The age for voting rights in the church should be on a par with the age for voting rights in USA and Canada. The age for representative of the youth league to the Executive Committee of the parish be changed accordingly.
6. Review our constitution and see any adjustments are needed to meet our needs.
7. Recognizing the prophetic mission of the church, it is necessary that we issue position papers and occasional statements on public issues of national and international import. This must be taken very seriously. The Diocesan Assembly and the Council must take it as an important responsibility.
8. Plan for the growth of our church: We have to locate the Marthomites living in North America in isolated parts and must chalk out a plan whereby their needs are catered to. A central registry must be established which gets information regarding people who are living in and moving to various places.
9. Establish an expert arbitration panel for resolving conflicts within the parishes between individuals. As needs arise individuals can be assigned for particular cases from this list. This will ease the load of our bishops and archbishops.

Our influence as a church in this continent can be phenomenal if a handful of us provide the kind of leadership in public life. This has been proved beyond any doubt through experiences of other communities and certain celebrated lives whom we admire and seek to emulate. It might be helpful to us to remember the Spanish proverb: "Whoever is not called upon to struggle is forgotten by God." We must recognize the importance of our Diocese in the scheme of things that it can be a beacon light and can be a catalyst for needed change in the whole Mar Thoma Church.

Dr. George K. Zachariah is currently Professor of Philosophy at the University of the District of Columbia. The above article is an abridged version of the paper presented by Dr. Zachariah at the leadership conference prior to the Mar Thoma Youth Conference of North America 1990.



Abraham C. Mathews

*The Best Compliments from
Our Entire Companies and
Abraham C. Mathews*

SCHMITZ MACHINE INC.

40-09 21st Street, Long Island City, N.Y. 11101
Tel: (718) 784-0619

Fax: (718) 392-8019 Toll Free: 1-800-543-6724

Largest Machine Shop in New York City
Manufacturing Elevator & Escalator parts
Custom made Worm & Gears, Sheaves, Platforms,
Slings, Sidewalk Elevators, Sidewalk doors etc.
Specialized in Elevator & Escalator repair work.
Expert Metalizing, Welding and Fabrication work
Complete plant facilities to do any type of machine work

ANNA MARIA *Pizzeria & Restaurant*

1685 First Avenue, New York City
(Between 87th & 88th Streets)
Tel: (212) 722-7725

Custom *Auto Sound & Security Ltd.*

43-02 Hunter Street, Long Island City, N.Y. 11101
Tel: (718) 472-0600 * Fax: (718) 786-9264

Sales & Installation of

AUTO STEREOs * ALARM SYSTEMS
CELLULAR PHONES * RADAR DETECTORS



NORTH AMERICAN ELEVATOR PRODUCTS INC.

40-09 21st Street, Long Island City, New York 11101

Tel: (718) 784-2840

Fax: (718) 392-8019 Toll Free: 1-800-541-2939

Elevator Escalator replacement parts to serve the Industry
Brushes, Rollers, Rectifiers, Printed Circuit Boards, Coils,
Spirators, Miniature Lamps, Fuses, Assorted Nylon & Cast
iron gibbs, Aluminum & Bronze safety plates, Machine &
Cable babbit, Babbitrite, Graphite & teflon packings,
Gasket papers, Lead seals, Elevator hardwares etc.

ANNA MARIA TOO *Pizzeria & Restaurant*

1592 First Avenue, New York City,
(Corner of 83rd Street)
Tel: (212) 734-8800



M & J
Designer



ee's Ltd.

"Say it in Style"

40-09 21st Street, Long Island City, N.Y. 11101
Tel: (718) 784-9372

Professional Printing on
T Shirts, Caps, Jackets, Uniforms etc.

Custom Computerized Embroidery

THE IMPACT OF CULTURE ON THE CHURCH

Dr. Zac Varghese, London.

Some English Parish churches undertake a thorough review of their property and other assets every five years. This policy is intended to ensure that necessary repairs are done in good time, that major problems are anticipated and budgeted for, and the church buildings are in a fit state to meet the present and future needs of the congregation and the wider community. Just as church buildings and professional activities can be taken for granted, so too our religious activities such as fellowship, worship and mission can often go unexamined. If it is important that some take so much care for their church property, how much more important is it that we periodically take time and effort to review the life and work of our congregations, both individually and collectively. If the church is to continue to have an impact on the society it must periodically look at itself, review its work, and examine its influence on the society and culture in which it operates. This vision might have prompted the Editorial Board of the "Mar Thoma Messenger" to devote a whole issue on "Culture".

Did I get the title the right way round? Which way is it? Is it the impact of culture on the church or is it the influence of the church on culture? We often talk of Eastern and Western churches. Shouldn't we be talking about churches in the East and in the West? An investigation into the relationship between religious beliefs and its impact on human behavior may help us to understand this conundrum. Let me explain my problem in a very simple way; does our lifestyle set the agenda for our beliefs and religious practices? Or does our faith drive us in attaining a compatible lifestyle? My understanding is that both Jesus and His church transcend cultural and national barriers, making our faith simple and universal. Our response to God's intervention in our life finds its expression in forms of human activities. The ethos and ethics which are the characteristics of such a faith response will be found in "His Kingdom", and only in "His Kingdom". There has been a change in our understanding of the relation of Christian faith to social concerns and realities which has been reflected in the development of Liberation Theology, Feminist Theology, and Liturgical Movement. These are sincere efforts in presenting Christian faith to changing attitudes of various social groups around the world.

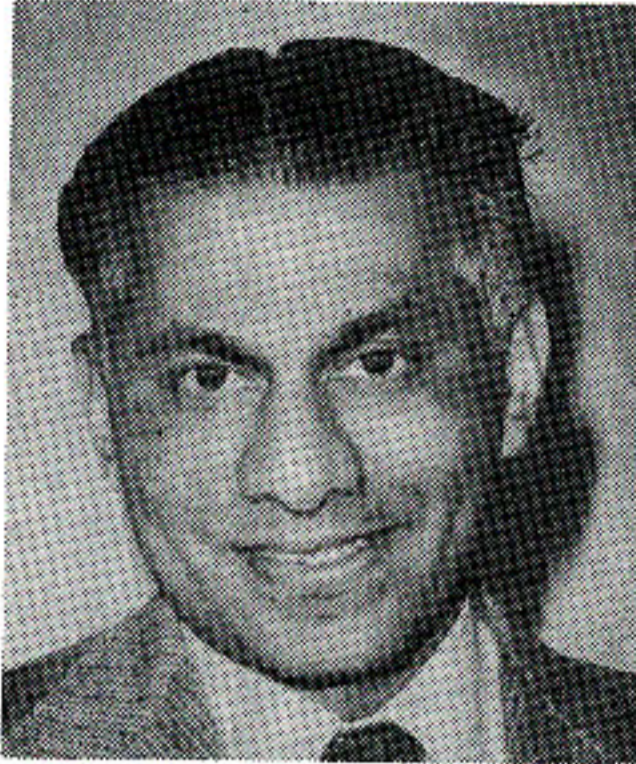
Nowadays, seeking God in worship, and music, culture seems to have a muted appeal. These days we talk about caring and sharing, about community and unity - all important, but not by any means all there is to Christian life. Perhaps part of the trouble is that we do talk so much about social concerns and forgetting the importance of seeking God in worship. There is a long tradition, stretching back into the Old Testament, that sees beauty both as a sign of and a way of God. Psalms 19 concentrates on how beautifully all things work together in accordance with the design of the Father. In the Middle Ages this theme was followed through even more closely. Every great cathedral was a representation of Heaven - its design based on a set of geometric proportions of symmetry that were believed to reflect the principles underlying the design of the universe. Everything was thought to be based on these proportions: patterns of stars in the sky, all beautiful works of art, the human body, trees and flowers, and musical harmony. It is unfortunate that with Protestant Reformers' suspicion of visual images, this sense of the importance of beauty in worship was lost. There is still great beauty in some liturgies and especially in music, but it had become marginal to the spoken words in prayer and preaching. Perhaps part of the trouble is that we do talk too much and the appeal of beauty is rather to look and listen. There is an urgent need to bring order, structure, and beauty in worship to experience the presence of God.

We live in a culture that gives importance to the concept of value for money and market forces. The emphasis is on manipulating the environment and exploiting all the natural resources. This attitude contracts human life to a narrow range of physical wants and immediate self-preservation. Our task as Christians can be seen then as learning both to discern the natural pattern and bring ourselves into harmony with it. We must allow the beauty of nature and human art forms to reveal to us something of God who is beyond and yet in the created world. As St. Irenaeus wrote, "You do not create God, God creates you. Therefore, if you are God's work, wait patiently for the hand of your artist". This is allowing us to be his canvas and allowing God to work on us. This requires not intellectual investigation but contemplation. In our rhetoric we make it hard for other voices to be heard. Beauty balances this by requiring silence and listening. "Be silent and know that I am God". Let the experience of God in our silence help us to respond to Him in such a way to enrich the society with an abundant Christian Culture.



MEN , WOMEN AND CULTURE: HUMAN GROWTH IN SOCIAL GROUPS

Dr. T. M. Thomas, Bridgeport, CT.



Imagine that a baby is brought up without any human contact for about 15 or 20 years. Describe the behavior of this individual in terms of the use of language, knowledge, values, customs etc. Certainly very hard! Are there real examples? Yes, though rare. Anthropologist A. L. Kroeber reports the example of Akbar, the 16th century Mughal ruler in India, who brought up a few children in his palace for some years without anyone talking to them. He wanted to find out what language a person would learn if none is taught. His expectation of learning God's language, namely Urdu for this Muslim emperor, did not happen. Also, there are stories of "wolf children" brought up by wolves for years after which they are caught by people. But these children died soon before they learned much. Based on such instances, we can say the following:

"I am what I am because of many others." A person is shaped by human contacts. A human being is a social being whose growth takes place in relating with one another. It is in identifying with a group that a person finds his or her own identity. Here we note the paradox of becoming one with the group by learning from others, while at the same time becoming unique by differing from all others. Both tendencies of agreeing (say yes) or disagreeing (say no) with other human beings are found in each individual. These opposite tendencies result in human growth as a social being.

Anthropology, the study of culture, or sociology, the study of human groups, and other social sciences are rooted in the above understanding of men and women as social beings. There are many other explanations of human nature. The Greeks subscribed to the view that "man is a rational being", a dominant view followed throughout all these centuries. Another explanation of human nature focuses on the non-rational abilities, namely, imagination and emotions. Existentialism places emphasis on feelings and emotions: human beings experience both joy and sorrow in their existence. The Judeo-Christian understanding placed "faith" at the core of human nature because man basically is a moral and spiritual being. There are several other views on human nature that are not discussed here. Here we have mentioned four: human being as social being, rational being, emotional being and being of faith or spiritual being.

There are periods in history when one or more views of man earn greater acceptance though other beliefs do not completely disappear. The centrality on reason placed by the Greeks finds its rebirth at the beginning of Modern Times with Renaissance. Following the Age of Reason and Enlightenment (17th and 18th century) here is a reaction to it in the romantic movement of the 19th century with its emphasis on emotion. With the influence of the religions, the spiritual nature of human beings is always recognized. A real challenge emerges in the modern times when secular thinking permeates the culture. The focus of attention has shifted from God and religion, to man and this material world. Human nature is explained as basically good (Rousseau, for example) and hence, progress is achieved by conquering nature with the new tools of technology. The central reality of man is found when he relates with others (man in the generic sense). Thus, the understanding of man in social relationships (social being) has ignored the spiritual nature of human beings. This weakening of the spiritual aspect of man in the modern times is of great concern to religiously oriented people.

What is the answer to the problems raised above? We shall try to place these explanations of human nature in some priority. Without doubt we bring spiritual nature at the core and then give a secondary place to all other explanations. A person is always shaped by the social forces of a particular time and place. The cultural context enables a better understanding of the personality formed in the culture. However, a person transcends his or her culture by challenging the accepted practice and beliefs followed in it. Now we look at the lives of Kerala Christians in the context of the above theoretical considerations. The spiritual orientation to life is growing and hence people look at one another and formulate values from a consumer culture. Looking to God in the decision making process has to be strengthened in modern times. In the busy routine life of our times we need quiet moments to be in the presence of God when we see us and others differently. Such a new perspective will strengthen our bonds with others and enable us to move forward by the right path that God wants us to follow.

Kerala culture has several distinctive features. Kerala is known not only in India, but also over the world for its remarkable ways of living. The recent article in New York Times discusses the communal relationship in this state (Trivandrum Journal, Saturday, Dec. 1, 1990). A few months ago, (March 1990) the same newspaper published the "Ernakulam Journal" which presented Ernakulam as the first district in India that achieved almost full literacy. Last year there was a television program which discussed the successful food distribution system in Kerala. Within walking distance one can find a fair price shop and a small library which is used well by people, according to this TV program. Another article analyzed the success of population control in Kerala and argued that it is because of the role of women. When women are educated they find employment at which time the family is kept small. In the last three decades Kerala has been known in other countries for its elected communist government and high level of political awareness. Also, Kerala is considered as a problem state perhaps the price we pay for its high literacy rate and education.

People, born and brought up in Kerala culture, have arrived in America during the last couple of decades. Do they show any cultural distinctiveness as they organize their common life in America? Like most other immigrant groups that reached America in the last 350 years, Keralites formed their churches within which they found their identity. Following it, Malayalee cultural associations were formed. All these groups enabled people to find their identity while identifying with others in a group. Perhaps, a sense of independence (more correctly, saying "no" or individualism) made group formation difficult, as group loyalty is only secondary. The conflict between independence and group loyalty resulted in numerous groups by divisions within each. There are church and cultural groups more in number than what is necessary among Keralites in America.

Family, the primary group in all cultures, shows several distinctive qualities in Kerala culture. Since the family closeness is more intense than American families, children are taken to worship, parties and other such places. The support and encouragement given by other family members to children, especially for their learning, enable the latter to be good students in schools and colleges. Studies indicate that Japanese and other Asian cultures are characterized by parent involvement in children's education. This is considered as one of the main reasons for the outstanding performance of Asian-American students in schools. In general, Kerala youngsters do extremely well in schools and family closeness can be one of the reasons for this success. Family and religion are two powerful agents of culture in preserving cultural heritage and this function is most crucial in various immigrant groups. However, transplanting of one culture in another culture usually is harmful because changes are needed in the "Old World" cultures. Human growth takes place in both continuity and change of a culture. The crucial question of what to change and what not to change is finally a matter of wisdom which comes from God. The Christian style of living to be kept, is really transcending many cultural practices. Some of these practices are bound to change in a new culture, but we will hold on to the style of living shown by Christ which can be followed in all different cultures. The Kingdom of God as conceived by Jesus was not a rival Roman Empire though many Jews expected such a worldly rule. Jesus' teaching of the Kingdom transcends any particular culture which has a secondary role to play.

Let me conclude by pointing out the need for family togetherness, when family members spend time together and build a meaningful family unit. People in America recognize this need, though not achieving it. Perhaps, it is our duty as a cultural group, consisting of people born and brought up in Kerala Christian family, to grow with our strength in family relationship and contribute a living style to other Americans around. Are we clear of our strength and weakness of our families? Why is divorce rate low though both husband and wife are employed? Have we adjusted to the new situation of both parents working? Is the conflict level between parents and children serious or not? What about the issues of dating, marriage and others? Such questions should be addressed with all its seriousness at our family conferences and small seminars to be arranged by our diocese. These efforts will enrich our growth as a cultural group and contribute much to American culture.

The family prayer seems to be the most important cultural habit that we have to continue in spite of the difficulties to practice it. It has its special style though simple. Family members come together in the presence of God. We live in a modern culture which assumes that human relationships can be strengthened just by human efforts and specific skills training. There is a deeper aspect of human relationship which is to be found in its roots upon God. The Judeo-Christian tradition has recognized this secret of the "personal" aspect of human relations toward others and toward God. We can grow in this personal relationship as a family through our family prayers.

Dr. T. M. Thomas is associate professor of Sociology at the University of Bridgeport, Connecticut and a member of the St. Thomas Mar Thoma Church, New York. Dr. Thomas is the author of the books "Kerala Immigrants in America" and "Global Images of Peace".

DIVERSIFIED FINANCIAL RESOURCES

ONE STOP

TOTAL FINANCIAL SERVICE CENTER

*Personalized and Confidential
Services in Tax, Financial
Planning, Retirement, Mutual
Funds, Mortgage Loan Services,
Annuities, Tax shelter plans,
Life and Health Insurance.*

THOMAS M. THOMAS, CFP

Give Yourself TAX FREE RETIREMENT INCOME.

Low Rate Disability Income Plan \$ 1,000 to \$ 10,000 monthly income.

Education FUND, IRA and SEP - IRA.

Five, Ten and Fifteen year fixed Low Premium Term Insurance.

Age 39 Preferred Non-Smoker \$ 1,000,000 (One Million)
Term Annual Premium guaranteed Fixed for 10 years\$ 1,070.00

Age 45 Non-Smoker preferred \$250,000 - 15 year term
Annual Premium guaranteed fixed for 15 years \$ 595.00

Age 40 Preferred and Non-Smoker \$ 150,000.00
Universal Life. Monthly Premium\$ 59.00

DIVERSIFIED FINANCIAL RESOURCES

Suite 500, "Oxford Square"
370 Middletown Boulevard
Laughorne, Pennsylvania 19047

Phone: (215) 757 - 8110

Evenings: (215) 934 - 7087

CULTURE

P. T. Thomas M.A., M.Div. New York.



Culture is a very deep term. Many people have tried to define it, yet more complex questions surround it. This is particularly important to the Mar Thoma Christians in North America and U. K. since many of us believe that we live in an "alien culture". Culture can be broadly divided into four types.

1. DEEP CULTURE: The attitudes, beliefs, values and behaviors acquired during socialization over a lifetime, which become essential elements of a person's identity and influence interaction with others. They work largely unconsciously, routinely and automatically. Deep culture is seldom questioned because the person

assumes it is natural to believe, feel valued and behave as he/she does and that all other people maintain similar views of themselves and the world around them. Deep culture is like the air we breathe- it is entirely automatic.

2. FORMAL CULTURE: Visible and obvious expressions of culture which influence and support deep culture. People generally consider formal culture as the actual culture they live in. It includes language and religion along with literature and the arts. It also includes characteristic styles of dress, customs and food habits.

3. HISTORICAL CULTURE: This is what people associate with Festivals and Holidays. It also includes a social group's common origin and experience, monuments and plaques on the buildings, streets and particular places that help to recall historical events and continuity of the group's identity with the past.

4. SITUATIONAL CULTURE: Characteristic of the group that currently reflect their present life circumstances and experiences. It is the reflection of the groups "coping" behavior. A life style is often viewed as situational culture.

Culture can also be divided into Micro and Macro Culture. In general Macro culture is the behavioral pattern of the people of a community as a whole. When we speak of the Indian Culture we mean this Macro Culture. Micro culture is the behavioral pattern of a particular community, region, subsection, group or clan, with their own notion and belief apart from that of the people in general. For example Onam is celebrated as the National Festival of Kerala. This is Macro Culture of Kerala. However, in my home, we never celebrated Onam. To us Onam was street corner meetings that our church organized. This is Micro culture, specific to my family, which of course, is a part of that State which celebrates Onam as a State festival. This understanding of the multitudes of micro cultural influences on our people are very important, in dealing with the cultural issues of Marthomites in North America, as each one of us is a product of one or more micro cultural influences which has a direct effect in our coping capacity. When transplantation is done, from one soil to another, others look only at our Macro Culture, but it is often our micro elements which come into conflict with the situational elements. For some, adapting to the new situation is easy, but for others, depending on the micro characteristics deeply rooted in them, it becomes very difficult.

It may also be noted that formal and situational elements are dynamic while deep and historical elements are static. It is the dynamics in culture which make us feel that the culture is changing. For example, the dress style in Kerala today is not what it was 20 years ago.

But why do we discuss culture in a publication like the Mar Thoma Messenger? Primarily because we and our children are drawn into cultural tensions. Our children have part of our deep, formal and historic elements in them, but their situational elements is entirely different from ours. We still think ourselves as Indians, while they want to be identified as "Americans". We are aliens to this land while they belong here. Many of us are here for years, but we brought with us our own food habits, clothing styles and patterns of worship. Many of us became citizens only to enable our immediate relatives to join us in this part of the world. But for all practical purposes we remain "aliens" while our children grow up belonging to this part of the world.

Let's face it. When confronted with the question, "Who are you?" a second question follows, "What are you doing here?". It is true that many of us came here for economic reasons and we had a definite plan (at least in our mind) that we would return to India after five years. However, after five years, we thought of staying for some more time and all the while, our children were growing up. From schools and peers, they learned their way, while we still remained Indians. As children completed high school, they found better educ-

ational opportunities here and we postponed our return till they finished college. Some of us tried to go back to India, but many had to return because they say, "Children didn't like it". We still want to go back, but the question is "Will we and when?".

During our stay here, we have also brought our church. The Mar Thoma Church can very proudly say that it has very prospering parishes in North America and U.K. One of our primary intentions was to bring up our children as Marthomites just as we are. But in the final analysis, have we succeeded? If not, where is the problem?

All our parishes have English Services. This English Service, enables our youngsters to become familiar with Mar Thoma Culture. However some of us don't go to church on English Service days, because we don't feel comfortable with English Services.

Also we live in a society in which we do not really participate. All our contributions are still aimed at the poor and needy in Kerala or in India. Ask our youngsters. They want to participate in American Hearts Association, United way, American Cancer Society etc. Can and will our children look upon as role models? We have to come out of our limited space to open areas where we can work with our next door neighbor, who might be from Italy or Dominican Republic. Only then, will we able to understand the situational culture our children adhere to.

We live in this Society and we must belong to this Society. Only by belonging to a Society, can we actually contribute to the society. Always remember, Culture is the pattern of behavior of a people and as our society become more heterogeneous, we are exposed to more patterns of behaviors. Our own culture can give a rich contribution to this sum total of behavior. As a matter of fact, we are in the process of doing it. But to do it more effectively and to enrich the culture with our contribution, we should actively participate in the mainstream of life of this culture. Then our children will understand and appreciate us more and our churches and organizations will have a more glorifying future.



Associated Engineering

Specialists in Mica, Coils & Transformers



5253 Via De Mansion
La Verne, Calif. 91750
Tel: (714) 596 - 4487



ENGINEERS - ELECTRONIC

TO ACCULTURATE OR NOT TO ACCULTURATE ?

THAT IS THE QUESTION

Mrs. Susan Ninan, Dallas.

Culture is learned as people transmit their knowledge from one generation to the next. But cultural traditions vary greatly based on environment, religion, values, necessities etc. Some of the basic ingredients that make up culture is technology, institutions, language, and arts.

Cultures need a certain amount of conformity in order to keep groups of people working together. But they also need new ideas to allow for progress. When people of one culture meet those of another culture, such contact may be friendly or hostile. Now we as Syrian Christians from similar backgrounds in India find ourselves in a new 'Western' culture. How do we adjust to our new environment ?

In attending a class called 'Psychology of the Culturally Different', I studied the culture of a North American tribe. Permit me to elaborate on some aspects of this tribe. Their abodes have at least one shrine which is kept clean and exotically scented with an abundance of perfumes and other sweet scents. They take pride in decorating their shrines with ornaments, lights, mirrors, and other colorful trimmings. Above the altar hangs the image of their deity or deities. Every morning, most of the family members especially the women of the household, start their day only after a ceremonial service in their shrine. Their ceremonial washings and cleansings are followed by the application of magical potions and paints on their faces and bodies. This ritual is religiously kept every day. Even the men observe this ceremony, to a lesser degree, every day. This may seem primitive to you because in this fast-paced society that we live in today, who can find the time for ceremonies and rituals, and that too everyday ? Would it surprise you if I say that we are looking at the 'Western' culture? The shrine is the American Bathroom and the ceremony is the daily ritual of cleansing and applying make-up.

The altar, of course, is the countertop and the deity is none other than the person's reflection seen in the mirror.

Coming here with our own set of values it may be difficult to adapt to some of the values and customs of this country. But still when it comes to competing in the job market we do take on as much of their customs as we feel comfortable with and adjust very quickly to Western conveniences.

Let us also look at some harder issues that face each family here. Most of us women and mothers are compelled to work outside the home for one reason or the other. Compare this with our own upbringing, especially if we are 30 years or older. Our mothers may have worked hard but they did so at home. They did not have to wake up each morning to get dressed, get all the children situated, and go off to work, put in a hard day's work at their jobs and come back home to find a whole day's housework to be done in the few remaining hours of the day, before they drop into their beds out of sheer exhaustion. Isn't it unfortunate that we have these lovely houses with all the comforts, but cannot afford the luxury of staying home to enjoy them ? How many of our children feel the security of a good Christian home and Christian values once we get into this rat race of working so hard in order to provide the best for them ? We hear of spending 'quality' time with the children in order to make up for the lack of time. But I wonder after all the 'busy-ness' does anyone have the energy or disposition to give this kind of time to their children. Yes indeed, you can have it all - a career, a family and material wealth, but in order for one thing to go well, something else has to take second place. And honestly it almost always seems like the family is the one that has to take second place. It seems almost impossible to circumvent this problem. It places an even greater burden on the traditional Indian family, where the husband is the head of the

house and the wife has to do all the housework plus carry on her career or job outside the home. In running a home there are so many things to take care of. There is the cooking, the cleaning, the washing, the ironing, the putting away of things in their proper places, the grocery shopping, shopping for other needs of the family, the church activities, the looking after of children, children's disciplinary problems, children's sibling or peer problems, the school activities, the extra-curricular activities and on it goes ad infinitum. If the husband thinks that he is too tired to help after his regular job or traditionally it is the woman's work or is not willing to learn some of these homemaker's jobs, the entire burden of the household chores and taking care of the children falls on the wife and of course she has to tackle all her career problems also just to hold the family together. If on the other hand, the two spouses pitch in and work hard to take care of the various chores, maybe some of the pain of living in such a fast-paced society can be alleviated.

When our children grow up and have their own families and when they think back about their

own childhood and adolescence, their parents relationships and their family togetherness, what would they have observed and absorbed from their own backgrounds which they could use in their family lives? Would they be able to draw on family conversations and fellowship, family Bible study and family prayer times? Or would they remember only sitting in front of the television or playing Nintendo where conversation was almost nil?

We have to admit that families are shrinking in size and even extended family relationships are a thing of the past. There does not seem to be any time to get together with our relatives to really get to know each other. What is happening to our culture and traditions? Are we going to lose it by the next generation? While we strive to adapt to our new life and environment and in the process outgrow, some of our old traditions which are not suitable to life here, we must strive to cling on to some of our old traditions and culture to keep a balanced life that would truly give us the best of an 'Eastern' family settled in a 'Western' culture.



Thinking to Buy or Sell REAL ESTATE...think about



ABRHAM MANALLOOR

MULTI MILLION DOLLAR REAL ESTATE BROKER

(214) 238-7745

YOUR PROFESSIONAL SINCE 1978

LICENSED BOTH IN THE U.S.A. AND CANADA



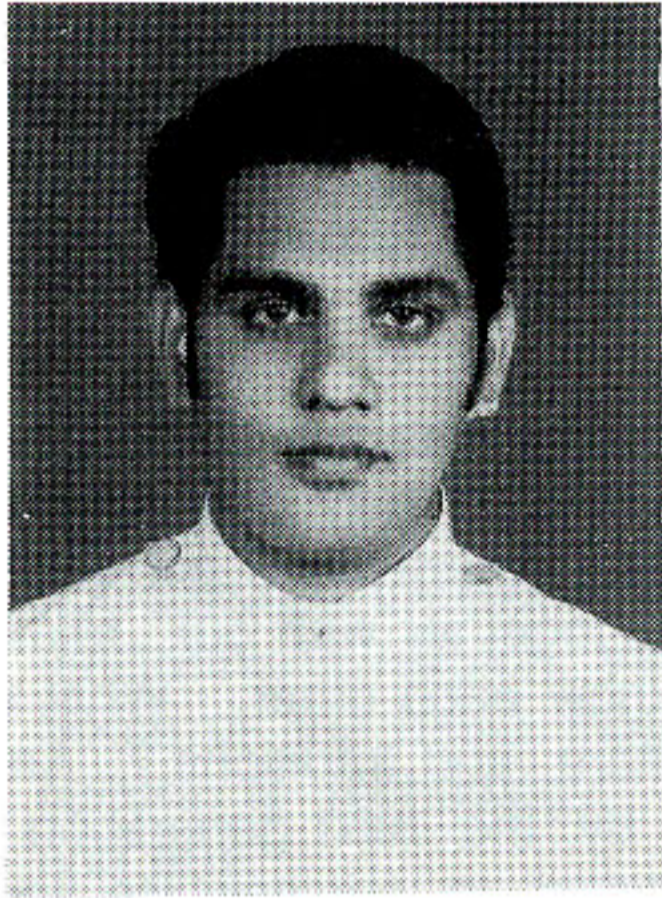
I will work hard till you find your dream house

TEX-STAR PROPERTIES, INC.

2002 Mistletoe Drive
Richardson, Texas 75081



THE MAR THOMA CHURCH - A MISSION ENVISAGED



Rev. Joseph Ayrookuzhy, Philadelphia.

Incarnation of Christ is the communication of God to Man. Christ is the good news for all people. Communicating this good news to different cultures demands much planning. To pose this issue and not to propose a solution is the scope of this article which I consider relevant.

Christian Mission is a mission for renewal. In this process we struggle to share the message of Christ to other world cultures. In the incarnation Christ becomes the part of a given culture to make the whole world as the realm of God's activities. Culture is the way people live, understand themselves, relate to one another. An inner dynamics operates in every culture by which it sustains itself, and retains its identity. Cross-cultural mission cannot ignore the specifics of the given culture, its language, symbols, concepts, and rituals etc. Mission as a package pro-gram exported on "piggy-back" is not desirable at all.

Jesus started his cross-cultural mission during his public ministry. Often he crossed the boundary of the Jewish culture to reach out to people beyond the gates of that religion. On different occasions Jesus commended the faith, gratitude, love and services of the 'gentiles'. He put to shame the narrow mindedness of his disciples when He appreciated the faith of the Canaanite woman, the loyalty of the Centurion etc. In the Luken account of the feast in chap. 14, it seems that Jesus is widening the fence of the Kingdom of God so that people from the high-ways and the by-ways may also gain entrance.

As an immigrant community the Mar Thoma Church has been planted by God in North America not just to make a living but also to fulfil a mission. Our mission validates the existence of our church here. The Britishers went to India for trade and business but their presence in India helped us to end many life denying beliefs and customs like *sati sambradaya* (widow burning), *devdasi system* (temple prostitution), *Narabali* (human sacrifices) etc. Now it is our turn to facilitate and empower the North American Community to end many of their false cultural life-styles that are against God and against humanity. Our efforts in this direction will authenticate our presence here as a church.

Western Culture

An all-pervasive relativism and syncretism has brought the American culture into a state of confusion. Their view of the world and philosophy of life are entirely entangled with the production process. They prefer profit over person, pursuit of pleasure as the goal of life. Their philosophy of life in a nutshell is consumerism. They think science is the key to all truth and technology is the solution to all human suffering. Individualism, cutthroat competitions, craving for power, exploitative mentality etc., plague the society. In Visser T. Hoofft's words this is 'neo-paganism of the West'. They stopped worshipping God, instead started Satanic worship and worship of religious hawks from the orient. They have lost sight of the value of family life and the virtue of faithfulness at home and outside. It will take still more time to know the fact that science and technology no longer bear meaning in itself. Only transcendence can save them from their destructive tendencies. This culture seems to replace God by MAN. Man thinks that he is the owner of everything and that he can exploit nature in any way he pleases. Cooperation is replaced by manipulation and stewardship by ownership. Emilio Castro, the general secretary of the W.C.C. once said "the scientific minded men have become missionary territories".

The Mission Field.

The first generation Indian Christian community in America stands in double privilege for a mission here. Being born and brought up in India they are the product of the *Arsha Bharatha Samskaram* (Indian culture). Being Christians for generations, they have imbibed the Christian values. Now as an immigrant com-

munity they are aware of the pluses and minuses of the American culture. God has assigned this field to us.

The Mission Content.

1. An authentic spirituality.

Asian culture is essentially a religious culture. Kesub Chandra Sen once remarked "A Hindu is the most religious being in existence." For him even the little things he does has a religious significance. Rabindranath Tagore in one of his discourses in China in 1924 pointed out that no Asian can be wholly taken to materialism for a number of reasons. The Hindu spirituality is represented by the Bhakti Mysticism, Yogic discipline etc. For Mahatma Gandhi it demands the realizing of truth through struggles and suffering-through *Satya* (truth) *Ahimsa* (noninjury) and *Tapas* (sacrifice). The *Bhagavad Gita* enunciates the highest values in life: self restraint (*dama*), forgiveness (*kshama*), giving (*dhana*), compassion (*daya*), gentleness (*mardava*), harmlessness (*nirdosha*), and peace (*shanti*), selflessness (*nirahankara*) and love (*sneha*). In close analysis one can conclude that these are the fruits of the spirit that St. Paul describes in Galatians 5:22. The spirituality that is exemplified in Christ and preached by the Christian churches goes along with Indian spirituality. It can never be effectively preached from a pulpit but is to be practiced in a given culture.

2. An authentic Dharma.

Dharma is the right relationship which upholds the social life. Indian Gurus taught us that the *Kurukshetra* (battlefield) is the world itself where dharma is to be exercised. Indian *Dharma* demands *Nishkama karma* (Desireless action) and *Nishphalartha karma* (without attachment to the fruit of the action). St. Paul speaks of the incarnation of Christ as a kenosis in Phil. 2. He desired nothing for himself. In fact he left everything for the world. Ghandhiji's theology of liberation based on *Satyagraha* is his version of *Dharma*. According to him the individual must be ready to die for his family and the family has to die for the village..... even so the country has to be free in order that it may die if it is necessary for the benefit of the world." The consumerist culture will not mind sacrificing any one or any country if it improves their prospects. That is what we see today everywhere. The Indian Philosophy showed the world the power behind renunciation. Our culture taught how to respect even the one who possesses nothing. The extreme renunciation and the crucifixion of Jesus is the greatest form of Christian *Dharma*. It stands for equality, justice, peace and love for all.

3. An authentic community.

The word Integral Humanism coined by Deen Dayal Upadhyaya means that individual, society and nature are one unit. This philosophy calls for a new social order. Contrary to the Marxist and rationalist views which reduce man to machine, here individuals are representatives of human society in mutual interaction with each other and with nature. Then no one can manipulate life, pollute nature, exploit nature or deplete the world's resources for his selfish ends. Man is accountable for his misdeeds. This is *sarva dharma sama bhava*. In the creation account Adam was entrusted with the Garden and was asked to till, dress and rule over it and never asked to exploit it. A social order based on the principles of integral humanism will always be a community that is based on love, justice and peace. This is the characteristic of the Kingdom of God.

The church is the foretaste of the Kingdom. As a community within the community, the church can enter into a dialogue with the given culture. In this process of sharing, the church as well as the community will be benefited. This demands a reciprocal willingness to listen and learn and a challenge to practice what we preach.

The Mar Thoma community cannot stand in isolation anymore from the mainstream of the American society. Now it is time to cast our net deep into the waters, not to get lost but to haul this society to God. Our concepts of Spirituality, Dharma and Community will surely help better the life of the society here.



THE EYES OF MANKIND

Mrs. Susamma Philip Keerikattu, Chicago.

One of the most valuable things given to us by God is free. No worldly power or technology can make, give, or estimate it. It is called "The Eyes"; God has given us two kinds of eyes; physical eyes and eye sight, and eternal eyes and vision.

Natural eyes are given to both believers and non-believers. They are entities which are temporal and not everlasting and which help us to see the things of nature. No matter how careful we are, one day we will definitely lose our natural eyesight. Natural eyesight is given to us for three purposes. First, to observe the things of nature which are the creation of God and to see God in them. Second, to see the good and bad within ourselves. Third to see the good or bad in others. But we rather are more eager to see and enjoy worldly man-made things first and not to see God, or the beauty of His creation. Secondly, we eagerly and desperately look for the bad in others, especially in our leaders and rarely see good things in them. Thirdly, we try to see good things in ourselves and don't want to see, or think about the bad within ourselves. So most of us are partially blind.

Eternal eyesight is given to believers. For non-believers, the eternal eyes are "blind", they have no eternal eyesight until God gives it to them. Eternal eyesight is given to those who truly believe, study and practice the teachings of Jesus Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit. Eternal eyes are able to see things which the natural eyes are not able to see. It is given in order to see the promised land and the everlasting life to come. The eternal eyesight comes through the power of the Holy Spirit: it is everlasting and helps us to acquire wisdom, awareness, knowledge of justice, and of the final judgement. It never fails.



LATEST NEWS FROM

INTERNATIONAL CHRISTIAN LITERATURE MINISTRY

In Malayalam:

Thomas Thirumeni's Life and Ministry (Memorial Edition)...\$ 5.00

Bibles - Thin, gilt-edged, leathered and zipped.....\$ 13.99

Bibles - Ordinary (Bible Society Edition).....\$ 7.50

In English:

The Cross and the Switch Blade

By David Wilkerson (hard bound).....\$ 7.95

The Confessions of St. Augustine (hard bound).....\$ 7.95

Josephus 37 B.C. to 70 A.D.

(understanding Jewish thought and history, hard bound)....\$ 7.95

Who's Who in the Bible

(250 biographical sketches, hard bound).....\$ 7.95

Send in your orders

International Christian Literature Ministry
1105 Mondrian Terrace, Silver Springs, MD 20904
Telephone: 301 - 236 - 4184

Announcing A New Travel Agency Dedicated to Prompt Reliable Service



EAGLE TRAVELS , INC.
Domestic & International

378 Meigs Street, Rochester, N. Y. 14607

TERRY M. MATHAI

For Best Service and Low Fares,
Leave your Travel Plans to
EAGLE TRAVELS INC.

CALL (716) 244 - 8336
FAX# 716 - 244 - 8368

HANNAH - A WOMAN OF PRAYER

(A meditation on Hannah's prayerful life)



Mrs. Leelamma Johnson, Teaneck, N.J.

It was Passover time. As usual the Temple priests were busier than at any season. All day long they offered the people's sacrificial victims as God had prescribed, for the forgiveness of sins. Eli, the aging high priest, sat beside a post of the temple in Shiloh. The grey-bearded priest was startled when a veiled woman rushed into the temple court. He watched the weeping woman stop a short distance away from where he sat. No sound came from her moving lips. Hannah poured out her petition silently to the Lord God from her sorrowing heart, weeping bitterly. As Hannah went on praying from her heart, old Eli rose from his seat and moved close enough to watch her lips moving to make sure his ears were not deceiving him. They were not; the sorrowing woman made no sound at all when she prayed. "Woman! How long will you behave as though you are drunk? Get rid of your wine!" Eli's raspy old voice shattered her concentration.

Hannah raised her head, her large dark eyes blurred and her high-boned cheeks wet with tears. "Oh no, my master, I am a deeply grieved woman. I have drunk no wine or liquor, but I have poured out my soul before the Lord. Do not consider your maid a good-for-nothing. I have spoken all the while under stress of provocation and distress! Believe me, my Lord, I am not drunk!"

Eli stared at her a moment questioning her purity and sincerity of heart. When he spoke again, his voice had gentled. "Then go in peace daughter, and the God of Israel will grant you what you have prayed to him for" (1 Samuel 1:17).

The woman stood to her feet and slipped quietly out of the sanctuary. Eli shook his head as he watched her steady step. "Was that a smile of peace I saw on her lips?" he pondered aloud. Then, seating himself once more beside a post of the temple of God in Shiloh he added, "If that kind of praying brings such relief, may God help more of His people practice it"

When Hannah's husband Elkanah went in to Hannah again upon their return to their home in Ramah, the Lord remembered her and she bore him a son, whom she named "Samuel" because, she said "I have asked him of the Lord."

What is Prayer ?

Prayer, like a finely cut diamond, is a many-sided treasure. In this brief study, we shall not uncover all its secrets. But looking at the life of Hannah we will consider how prayer can be a meaningful and rewarding experience for a woman.

Prayer - A Self exposition

Childlessness was considered in Bible days to be a sign of God's displeasure. Understandably then, no amount of her husband's love could erase from Hannah's heart the grief of feeling rejected by God. Often God forces us, by the pressure of circumstances, into a place of desperation. If we allow these trials to press as close to him in prayer, they will lead us to a rich, full life built on confidence in Him. If however, we rebel and accuse God of injustice, we develop into bitter, cold, shriveled souls. Hannah broke the laws of custom by praying alone in the temple because her need had broken her heart. True prayer is essentially conversation with God. It is not limited by set forms, places, times, postures or words.

Childless Hannah was not prayerless. Barren, she still believed and her pain found a refuge in

prayer. She bargained with God and kept her part of the bargain. She took her particular sorrow to God and prayed. She gave herself to prayer and in the presence of God, her sorrows burst their bonds.

"Prayer is the sigh that comes from the inner heart of a believer." Her prayer was of a peculiar kind. It was a supplication without external speech. Her lips moved but there was no sound. Her prayer was internal. She had learned that prayer is a believer's native breath, unuttered or expressed. While she never said a prayer, she breathed a wish in her soul and sent it up unspoken to the throne of God.

Prayer : A Promise

Hannah had a promise in her prayer. When her prayer was answered, she quietly redeemed her promise. More than anything in the world, she wanted a son and God gave her one. She gave him back to God. Her vow was an expression of devotion. She was blessed with three more sons and two daughters. If we sacrifice anything we hold precious to God, He will give us something far better in return. The sincerity of her prayer, the purity of her motivation, and the stability of her character is remarkable.

Prayer : A Sharing

Hannah had an openness to share in her prayer. She shared all her strains and agonies, joy and happiness. In her family life also she enjoyed the experience of sharing. She had a devout husband who loved her and bestowed rich gifts upon her. He was a mild-mannered man who never teased her in her barrenness. He consoled her by sharing in her agony. Very often her sister Peninnah grieved Hannah with her cruel and scurrilous tongue. Today many ladies complain about their family life. There is no proper caring or sharing between husband and wife. Everybody has their own way. Especially in this foreign country, our ladies are suffering with various problems. In the long run of life, everyone wants money. They are together under the same roof without any proper communication. The husband or wife is least concerned about their spouse's problems. Like Peninnah, they often employ a cruel and scurrilous tongue. But in Hannah's case, the God-fearing Elkanah cared for her in her agony and consoled her by asking "Hannah! Why cry and why not eat? Oh Hannah, why are you so down-hearted? Do I not mean more to you than ten sons?" (1 Samuel 1:8) In most situations when failure comes one spouse become bitter. Can you console each other in your problems? Can you accept the weaknesses of your partner? Can you kneel down together and share your problems in prayer?

Prayer : A Pouring

If we pour liquid from one glass to another, the first one will lose its quantity. Pouring on one side is a reduction. Hannah herself says, "I am desperate, I am pouring out my troubles to the Lord." (1 Samuel 1:15) Let us think of ourselves. We have so many problems, frustrations, barrenness, diseases, and many other things. We all want to get rid of these situations. The nature and quantity of problems may vary. Can you be a praying, pouring Hannah? Your problems will be reduced. The heart of God is a comforting retreat for a sorrowful soul. Whatever our particular sorrow may be, 'the man of sorrows' waits to undertake them for you.

Prayer : A Thanksgiving

Hannah's song of thanksgiving at the end of her story marks her as a poetess and prophetess of no mean order. With her desire fulfilled, she bursts into song and pours forth her gratitude to God for his goodness. (1 Samuel 2: 1-10) The spiritual lyricism of Hannah is equal to any of the Psalms and is eloquently filled with the divine attributes of power, holiness, knowledge, majesty and grace.

Hannah is a beautiful example of how the most unpleasant and untoward circumstances can produce a character that is a blessing to the world. "The outline touches of her life" says John F. Jurst, "seem sombre and mournful at first, but radiant with faith and hope at least, forming a fitting introduction to the narrative of the career of her great son Samuel in his combined character of judge and prophet of Israel."



Best Compliments From Friendly People

AT NARMADA

Mr. Joy A. Phillipose, Tel: (405) 495 - 4776

NARMADA SAREES

Best selection of Japanese and Indian Sarees, Salwar Kamiz, Ready Made Blouses and much more..



NARMADA UNIFORMS

Finest Medical Uniforms for Men and Women
Lab Coats, Pant Suits, Pants, Tops
Dresses, Scrubs, All Colors and Sizes.



Group Discounts Available

NARMADA APPLIANCES

220 V. appliances, T.V's, VCR, Converter, Rechargeable Flashlights, Luggage etc.

We also sell Major Household Appliances (Washer, Dryer, Freezer Refrigerator etc.)

We Convert Video Tapes
PAL - NTSC AND NTSC - PAL



Mail Orders Accepted: We Honor All Major Credit Cards

**Fast and Friendly Service, Large Selection
& Low Prices**

Business Hours: Tue - Sat 10 - 7 PM, Sun 1 - 7 PM (Closed Monday)

Telephone: (405) 495 - 4776

6834 N. W. 23 rd Street, Bethany, Oklahoma. 73008

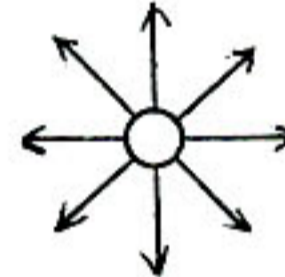
KIDS' CORNER

BIBLE WORD SEARCH

```

R S U T F V W P M J N Z B C N W Z
M D C H I D B R N O A H M E X S V
Q A V O P I E G H N T J V K P O Q
M J D M C V J S I A F A P W B E M
U F P A E A G T X T E M U O K S A
S P N S Z D O R E H N H S P E I R
V M C B A W H U C A A N B M N D Y
Z H K N B U I V B N I R V F O P C
B J I M T U L W O P E U H Q R W B
P E D E N V O J D Q B H G Z U E A
L X P G R Y R A E M D V E H S R X
P F H V N I A C R S W D B M T D G
J R B S W T D O V O U C Z J I N D
T E P U Q Z D B W N X S M K V A F
X G M V I C T O R Y P F N L W Z H
  
```

The words go in all directions.



Questions

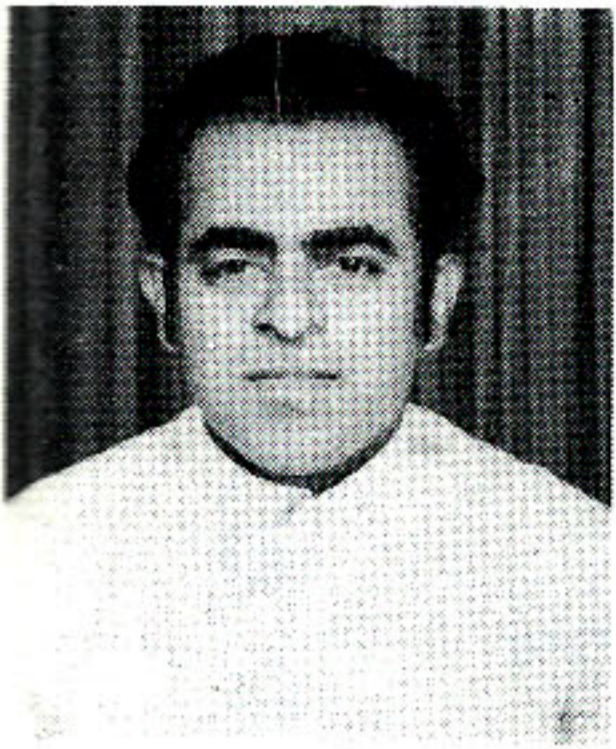
1. He built an Ark.
2. The second king of Israel.
3. The person who helped to build the wall of Jerusalem.
4. The king who tried to kill David.
5. Son of the first king of Israel.
6. He killed Abel.
7. The garden where Adam and Eve lived.
8. He was in the lion's den.
9. God gave the Israelites _____ over Philistines when David was king.
10. Jesus went to be with his heavenly Father in _____ .
11. The first man whom God created.
12. Jesus' disciple who went to India.
13. The father of Joseph.
14. The mother of Jesus.
15. Brother of Simon Peter.
16. Son of God.

You may send your answers to Bible Word Search, c/o The Editor of Mar Thoma Messenger. You may make a copy of this page to send your answers. The names of children who give all correct answers will be published in the next Messenger. Please give your name, address and the name of the parish. The deadline for all entries will be March 15, 1991.

Sajina and Sajeev Pothan, Los Angeles.

ധ്യാനപാഠം:-

Rev. P.J. Alex, Dallas



1991-ലേക്ക്, ഒരു പുതുവർഷപുലരിയിലേക്കു നാം പ്രവേശിക്കുകയാണ്. എന്തെല്ലാം പ്രതീക്ഷകളുമാണ് പുതുവർഷം നമ്മെ സ്വാഗതം ചെയ്യുന്നത്. ഐശ്വര്യപുണ്ണവും അനുഗ്രഹപ്രദവുമായ നവവർഷം, സമ്പത്തും സുഖസൗകര്യങ്ങളും സ്വാധീനവും സമാധാന സന്തോഷ സമൃദ്ധിയും വർദ്ധിക്കുന്ന നാളയെ നാം സ്വപ്നം കാണുന്നു. ഇതിലധികമായ ദർശനം നമുക്കുണ്ടായിരിക്കേണ്ടതല്ലേ?

നീതി, സമാധാനം, സന്തോഷം, സംപ്രീതി-ദൈവരാജ്യ അനുഭവമാണ്. ദൈവകൃപയുടെ പരിണതഫലമാണിത്. മണിയിൽ മനുഷ്യനായി വന്ന യേശുക്രിസ്തുവിലൂടെയാണ് നാം ചൈതന്യമുള്ളവരായി ജീവിക്കുന്നത്. ഏതു മനുഷ്യനെയും പ്രകാശിപ്പിക്കുന്ന സത്യവെളിച്ചമായി യേശുവന്നു. നമ്മിലൂടെ ക്രിസ്തുവിന്റെ തേജസ്സ് എല്ലാവരും ദർശിക്കാൻ ഇടയാക്കണം. ദൈവപത്താടും, തമ്മിൽ തമ്മിലും മനുഷ്യനെ സംയോജിപ്പിക്കുന്ന വശ്യശക്തിയായി ക്രിസ്തു എവിടെയും പ്രവർത്തിക്കുന്നു. പഞ്ചേന്ദ്രിയങ്ങൾക്ക് ഗ്രഹിക്കാവുന്നവിധം ദൈവം മനുഷ്യനായി. ആ മനുഷ്യപുത്രനോടുള്ള ബന്ധത്തിൽ മനുഷ്യൻ ദൈവത്തിങ്കലേക്ക് പ്രവേശനം ലഭിച്ചിരിക്കുന്നു.

'ആദിയിൽ ദൈവം എന്ന പ്രഖ്യാപനത്തോടെ ദൈവപുസ്തകം ആരംഭിക്കുന്നു. സകലത്തിന്റെയും കാരണവും അടിസ്ഥാനവും ദൈവമത്രെ എന്നാണീപ്രഖ്യാപനത്തിന്റെ അർത്ഥം. ലോകാരംഭം ദൈവഹിതത്തിൽ അടിസ്ഥാനപ്പെട്ടിരിക്കുന്നു. ദൈവം നല്ലതെന്നു കണ്ടുസൃഷ്ടി അയഥാർത്ഥമല്ല (മാനയല്ല) സൃഷ്ടിക്കപ്പോരുന്ന സൃഷ്ടിയെക്കുറിച്ചുള്ള ദൈവതാല്പര്യവും നാം ഗ്രഹിക്കണം. സൃഷ്ടിയുടെ ഉദ്ദേശ്യം ദൈവമഹത്വമാണ്. ആകാശം ദൈവത്തിന്റെ മഹത്വത്തെ വർണ്ണിക്കുന്നു... (സങ്കീ. 19. റോമ. 12:0) പ്രകൃതിദൃശ്യങ്ങളിലൂടെ ദൈവിക മഹത്വം ദർശിപ്പാനുള്ള പരിശീലനം നമ്മുടെ അദ്ധ്യാത്മികതയുടെ ഭാഗമായിരിക്കണം.

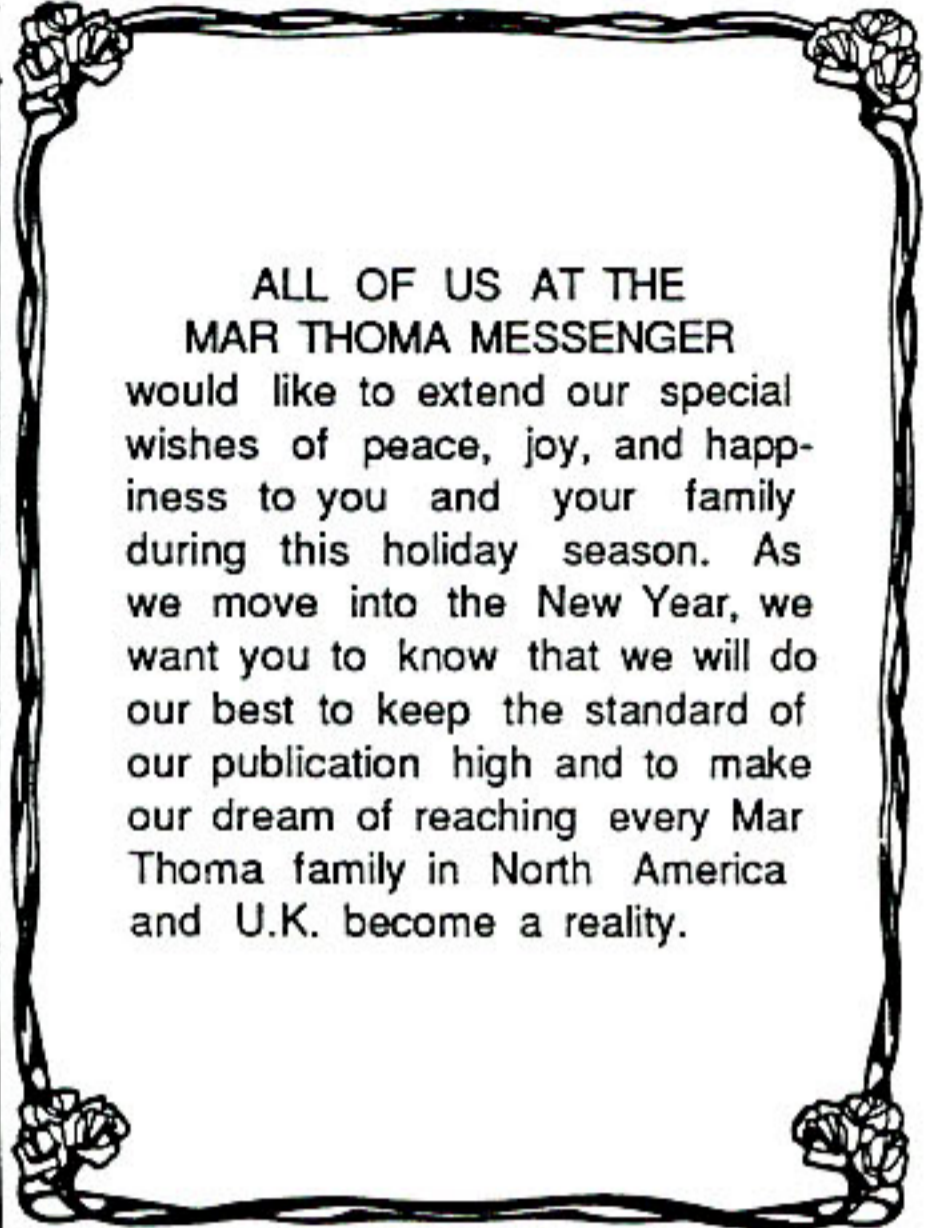
മരിച്ചവരെ ജീവിപ്പിക്കുകയും ഇല്ലാത്തതിനെ ഉള്ളതിനെപ്പോലെ വിളിക്കുകയും ചെയ്യുന്ന ദൈവത്തിലാണ് നാം വിശ്വസിക്കുന്നത് (റോമ. 4:17). പാഴായും ശൂന്യമായും കിടന്ന ഭൂമിയെ ക്രമീകരിച്ച് (Chaos-to Cosmos) വ്യവസ്ഥ ചെയ്യുന്ന പ്രവർത്തനത്തിലൂടെയാണ് ദൈവത്തിന്റെ സൃഷ്ടിപ്പു പുത്തിയാകുന്നത്. ആഴിയും ഇരുളും പ്രതിനിധാനം ചെയ്യുന്ന അവ്യവസ്ഥയുടെ ശക്തികളെ വ്യവസ്ഥയ്ക്കു വിധേയമാക്കി ദൈവം പ്രപഞ്ചത്തെ ക്രമീകരിക്കുന്നു. അവ്യവസ്ഥകൾക്കു വിധേയപ്പെട്ട് കഴിയുന്ന നമ്മെയും ദൈവവ്യവസ്ഥയ്ക്ക് അനുരൂപമാക്കി പുന:സൃഷ്ടിക്കുവാൻ ദൈവം നമുക്ക് പുതുവർഷത്തിൽ സംഗതിയാക്കട്ടെ.

ദൈവത്തിന്റെ പരിശുദ്ധാത്മാവ് പരിവർത്തിക്കുമ്പോഴാണ് വ്യവസ്ഥ സംഭവമാകുന്നത്. ഇന്ത്യതയുടെ, അവ്യവസ്ഥതയുടെ തകിടംമറിച്ചിലിന്റെ മദ്ധ്യേ ക്രമം സമാധാനം സൗന്ദര്യം കൈവരുത്തുവാൻ പരിശുദ്ധാത്മാവ് പ്രവർത്തിച്ചുകൊണ്ടിരിക്കുന്നു. ദൈവാത്മാവിന്റെ പുതുക്കാനുശക്തിയെക്കുറിച്ചുള്ള അർത്ഥത്തിൽ മനുഷ്യനും പ്രപഞ്ചവും ക്രമരാഹിത്യത്തിന്റെയും ഇന്ത്യതയുടെയും (മാനയ) ഇടയായി അനുഭവപ്പെടാനിടയുണ്ട്. വ്യക്തികളുടെ ജീവിതവും ഇന്ത്യതയുടെയും തകിടം മറിച്ചിലിന്റെയും ഇടയായിത്തീരുന്ന അനുഭവം തന്മൂലം ഉണ്ടാകും. ഈ കലശൽക്കിടയിൽ മദ്ധ്യത്തിൽ ക്രമം സൃഷ്ടിക്കുന്നത്, ജീവിതത്തെ ക്രമ നിബദ്ധമാക്കുന്നത് ദൈവാത്മാവിന്റെ ഇന്നും ഇടനാകാണ്ടിരിക്കുന്ന പ്രവർത്തനം ആകുന്നു.

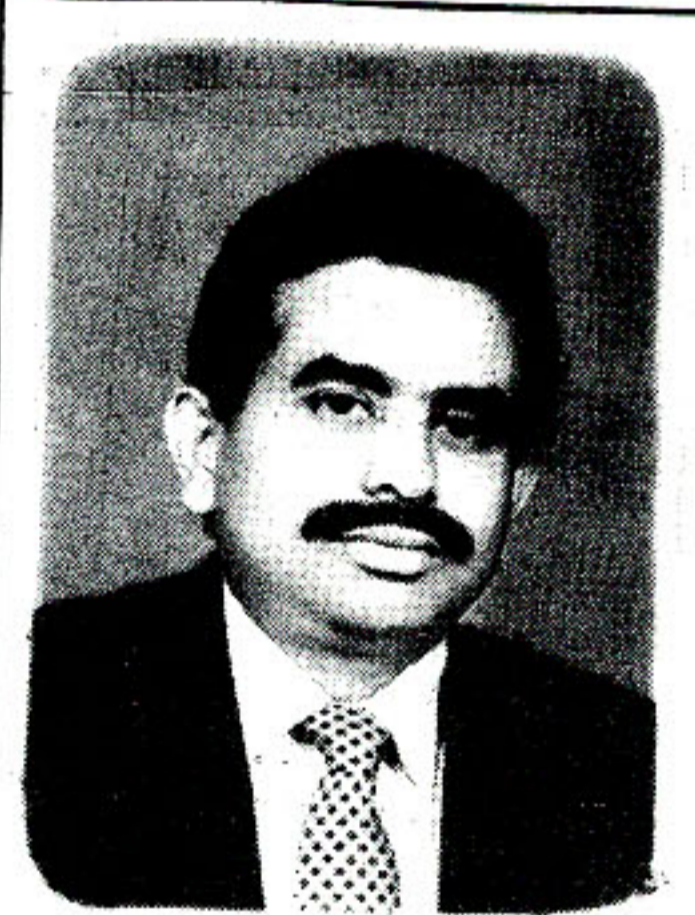
ജീവിതം തളംകെട്ടി നില്ക്കുന്നതായി, അർത്ഥശൂന്യമായി തോന്നുന്നുണ്ടോ? ദൈവം പുതിയ ആരംഭങ്ങളിലേക്ക് പ്രവേശിപ്പാനുള്ള ക്ഷണവും അതിനായി ധൈര്യവും പകരുന്നു. ഇരുട്ടിന്റെ ഗർഭത്തിൽ ജന്മപ്പെടുന്നുവോ? ഏതു മനുഷ്യനെയും പ്രകാശിപ്പിക്കുന്ന സത്യവെളിച്ചം ലോകത്തിലേക്ക് വന്നുകൊണ്ടിരിക്കുന്നു. അന്ധകാര ഗർഭങ്ങളുടെമേൽ ദൈവത്തിന്റെ വിജയ പ്രഖ്യാപനമാണ് ക്രൂശിതനായ യേശുക്രിസ്തുവിന്റെ ഉത്ഥാനം. രാത്രി നിഷ്കാർജ്ജനം ചെയ്യപ്പെടുന്ന പുതിയ ആകാശവും പുതിയ ഭൂമിയുമാണ് ദൈവത്തോടുള്ള നാം ലക്ഷ്യംവെച്ചിരിക്കുന്നത് (വെളി: 21:1-7) ആ പ്രത്യേക നമ്മെ മുസ്വാദനയിക്കട്ടെ. We are called not for great faith in God, but for faith in great God.

അനുഗ്രഹകരമായ ഒരു പുതുവർഷം ജീവന്റെ ഉറവയായി സൃഷ്ടിക്കുവാൻ ഏല്പുവർക്കും ദൈവം ചെയ്യട്ടെ.

—oOo—



ALL OF US AT THE MAR THOMA MESSENGER would like to extend our special wishes of peace, joy, and happiness to you and your family during this holiday season. As we move into the New Year, we want you to know that we will do our best to keep the standard of our publication high and to make our dream of reaching every Mar Thoma family in North America and U.K. become a reality.



Abraham Philip

As one of New York LIFE's leading agent, Abraham Philip has the experience and the knowledge to help you achieve your financial goals.

Abe's commitment to excellence is reflected in the many honors bestowed upon him by New York Life and the Insurance Industry.

For professional advice and personal service call Abraham Philip [215] 543-6320; [0] [609] 488-6900; [609] 488-6922



THE COMPANY YOU KEEP

ജിജ്ഞാസ

Mrs. Rachel Abraham, Los Angeles



പായുന്ന മിനൽ വേഗത്തിലിതാ തീവണ്ടി
റെയിൽപ്പാളത്തിലൂടെ
സ്നേഹ്യനിലെത്തും വണ്ടിയെക്കാത്തുനില്ക്കും യാത്രക്കാരെ
കയറിയുടൻ കൂട്ടിത്തടഞ്ഞു വാതിലുകൾ

യാത്രക്കാരാ! നിൻയാത്രയും മിനൽ വേഗത്തിൽ നീങ്ങുന്നു
അറിയുന്നോ നീ, നിൻ അന്തമെപ്പോൾ?
അന്തരാത്മാവു സ്നേഹ്യനാം തുറമുഖത്തെത്തുമ്പോൾ
സ്വീകരിപ്പാനാരുവന്നിടും?

എത്രയത്ര യുഗങ്ങളായോടുന്നീ തീവണ്ടി!
നിലക്കില്ലേ നിൻചലനം? ഇല്ലില്ല-
നിലക്കിലും വീണ്ടും പൂർണ്ണസ്ഥിതി പ്രാപിച്ചിടും
ശക്തിയായോടീടും വിദ്യുച്ഛക്തിയാൽ

നിലച്ചിടമോ നീയും മർത്യാ ഈ മണ്ണടഞ്ഞിടുമ്പോൾ
അതോ വീണ്ടും പൂർണ്ണസ്ഥിതി പ്രാപിച്ചിടമോ?
മനുഷ്യരാശിതൻ ചിന്തകമെപ്പൊരാണോചോദ്യം
ഉത്തരമേകട്ടെ മനുഷ്യാ നിൻസൽ-ദൃഷ്ടിമുഖങ്ങൾ

പിറവിക്കൊരിടം *

മാലൻ മത്തോടെ, ചേപ്പാട്

മണ്ണിലിമർത്യന്റെ പാപമകരവാൻ-
വിൺവിട്ടിറങ്ങിയ ദൈവപുത്രാ.
കാർമ്മേല പടലങ്ങളയരുന്നവാനിൽ-
തെളിയുന്നു ശാന്തിയായ് നിൻതാരകം.
അന്തരാത്മ കനിതിന്നിട്ടേണിൽ നിന്നത്യ-
മായോരൻ പൂർവ്വ ജന്മജന്മങ്ങളെ-
സ്നേഹമാലയുത്തിലൊരു പുവായ് കൊരുക്കുവാൻ-
നരജന്മമേന്തിയ ദൈവപുത്രാ.
പൊന്നില്ല, മുരില്ല, കത്തുകുരുമില്ല-
നിൻമുന്നിലായ് കാണിക്കയർപ്പിക്കുവാൻ.
മണ്ണിലെൻ ദഃഖങ്ങളൊക്കെയും നിൻമുന്നിൽ
കാണിക്കവെച്ചു സംതൃപ്തനാകട്ടെ ഞാൻ.
മർത്യരിന്നിവിടിലില്ല-ജാതിപ്പിശാചുക്കൾ
താണവ നൃത്തം ചവുട്ടിത്തിമിർക്കുന്നു.
ഹോരാദേശിന്റെ കല്ലന കേട്ടവർ
തലകളുടുക്കുവാൻ വാൾകൈയ്യിലേരുന്നു.
ഉൻമാദ നൃത്തത്തിന്തത്സാഹമേകവാൻ
ശിരസുരുത്തവർ സമ്മാനമേകുന്നു.
ഇല്ല പിറവൊന്നൊരുക്കില്ലൊരിക്കലും
സമ്പന്ന വർഗ്ഗത്തിൽ മാളികകൾ
പട്ടിണിപ്പാവത്തിൽ ചോരുന്നകൂരയിൽ
മോചന കാവ്യമായ് നീ പിറന്നിടുവാൻ
പുൽകൂട്ടവിട്ടെന്റെയുള്ളിന്റെയുള്ളിലെ
മാനസകൂട്ടിൽ പിറക്കുകില്ലേ.

* (Reprinted from December 1990 Malankara Sabha Tharaka)



CREATIVE VIDEO VISION

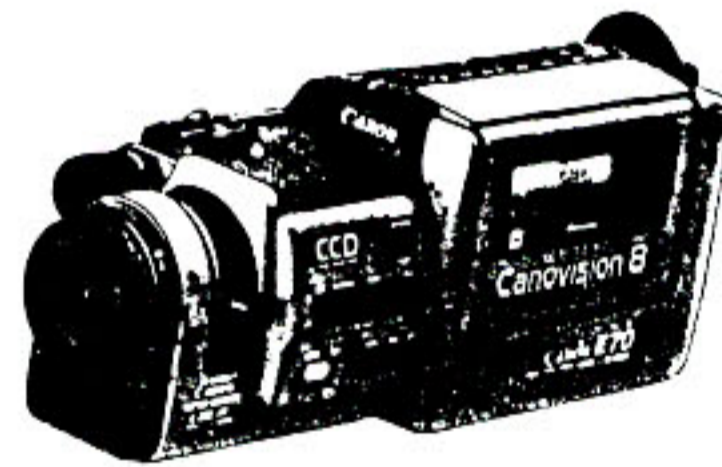
VIDEOGRAPHY BY SODHARAN

SPECIALIST IN

- * WEDDINGS
- * PARTIES
- * AND OTHER FUNCTIONS

WITH THE LATEST

- * VIDEO GRAPHICS
- * SPECIAL EFFECTS
- * AUDIO/VIDEO EDITING



FOR REASONABLE RATES AND FURTHER DETAILS

CONTACT

SODHARAN VARUGHESE

TEL: 213-936-5285

പത്രാധിപർക്കുള്ള കത്തുകൾ

സഭാകൗൺസിൽ തിരഞ്ഞെടുപ്പ്

1

ജനാധിപത്യ രേഖ സമ്പ്രദായത്തിൽ, ഭൂഷിച്ച രാഷ്ട്രീയ പ്രചരണ മാധ്യമങ്ങൾ സഭയിലും സംഘടനകളിലും സ്ഥായിയായ സ്ഥാനം ഉറപ്പിച്ചിരിക്കുന്ന ഇക്കാലങ്ങളിൽ നമ്മുടെ സഭാ തിരഞ്ഞെടുപ്പുകളെ അത്യന്തം പിടിച്ചിടാനിരിക്കുന്നു. വിട്ടുവീക്കേണ്ടത് സഭാംഗങ്ങളുടെ കർത്തവ്യമാണ്. അതിനായി ചില നിർദ്ദേശങ്ങളും അഭിപ്രായങ്ങളും ചുവടെ ചേർന്നു. സഭയിലെ വിവിധ ഭദ്രാസനങ്ങളെ പ്രതിനിധീകരിച്ചാണല്ലോ സഭാ കൗൺസിലിലെ അംഗത്വം ഭദ്രാസനങ്ങൾക്ക് കൂടുതൽ അധികാരം നൽകുന്ന പന്മാവിലാണ് സഭയിൽ.

1. സഭാപ്രതിനിധിമണ്ഡലം കൂട്ടുന്ന തിരഞ്ഞെടുപ്പിനെ എല്ലാ ഭദ്രാസന അസംബ്ളികളും കൂടേണ്ടതാണ്. അതുമൂലം സംഗതമായ തീരുമാനങ്ങൾ മണ്ഡലത്തിൽ വിഷയിവേദിപ്പിക്കാം.
2. ഭദ്രാസന കൗൺസിൽ അംഗങ്ങളെ തിരഞ്ഞെടുക്കുമ്പോൾതന്നെ, ആ ഭദ്രാസനത്തിൽനിന്നുള്ള സഭാ കൗൺസിൽ അംഗങ്ങളെ, ആ ഭദ്രാസനത്തിലെ മണ്ഡലാംഗങ്ങൾ തിരഞ്ഞെടുക്കേണ്ടതാണ്.
3. സഭാ കൗൺസിലിലേക്കുള്ള ബാലറ്റ്കൾ പ്രത്യേകം പെട്ടിയിൽ നിക്ഷേപിച്ച്, വോട്ടെണ്ണി ഫലം ഭദ്രാസന എപ്പിസ്കോപ്പാ പ്രഖ്യാപിക്കേണ്ടതാണ്. എന്നാൽ സഭാ കൗൺസിൽ അംഗത്വം, എല്ലാ ഭദ്രാസനങ്ങളിൽനിന്നുള്ള വോട്ടുവിവരം ലഭിച്ചശേഷം, ഭദ്രാസനങ്ങൾക്കുള്ള സംവരണ പ്രകാരം മണ്ഡലയോഗത്തിൽ മെത്രാപ്പോലീത്താ പ്രഖ്യാപിക്കേണ്ടതാണ്.
4. സഭാ സെക്രട്ടറി, വൈദിക ട്രസ്റ്റി എന്നിവരെ ഏകാലവും മണ്ഡലയോഗത്തിൽ തിരഞ്ഞെടുക്കേണ്ടതാണ്.
5. M.T.—S.I.—N.I. Joint Council—ലേക്ക് ആനുപാതികമായി ഭദ്രാസന അസംബ്ളികളിൽ തിരഞ്ഞെടുപ്പു നടത്താവുന്നതാണ് — മണ്ഡലാംഗങ്ങൾ വേണമെന്നില്ലല്ലോ.
6. പട്ടക്കാർ ബാലറ്റ്കൾ മത്സരിക്കുവാൻ എപ്പിസ്കോപ്പൽ സിനഡ് അനുവദിച്ചുകൊടുക്കുന്നതാകുന്നു. ജനാധിപത്യ രേഖരീതിയാണ് സഭയുടെതെങ്കിലും, സഭയിലെ പട്ടക്കാർ സിനഡിന്റെ നിർദ്ദേശങ്ങൾക്കും ശിക്ഷണത്തിനും വിധേയരാണെന്ന സത്യം സിനഡും പട്ടക്കാരും മറന്നുപോകുന്നില്ല എന്നു സംശയിക്കുന്നു.
7. പട്ടക്കാർ അവശ്യംവേണ്ട സമിതികളിലേക്ക് ഭദ്രാസന എപ്പിസ്കോപ്പാമാരോ, സിനഡോനോമിനേഴ്സ് നടത്തുകയോ, നൽകാവുന്ന പട്ടക്കാർക്കു ധാരണയിലെത്തുകയോ ചെയ്യണം.

8. സഭയുടെ ഔദ്യോഗിക സ്ഥാനങ്ങളിൽ മത്സരിക്കുന്നവർ 1000രൂപാവിതം സഭാ ട്രസ്റ്റിലും, സഭാ കൗൺസിലിലേക്ക് മത്സരിക്കുന്നവർ 500 രൂപാവിതവും, ഭദ്രാസന കൗൺസിലിലേക്ക് മത്സരിക്കുന്നവർ 250രൂപാവിതവും ഭദ്രാസന ട്രസ്റ്റിലും ഡിപ്പോസിറ്റ് ചെയ്തിരിക്കണം. ആകെപോൾ ചെയ്തതിന്റെ നിശ്ചിത ശതമാനം വോട്ടു ലഭിക്കാത്തവരുടെ നിക്ഷേപത്തുക ട്രസ്റ്റിൽ മുതൽ കൂട്ടേണ്ടതാണ്.
9. ഭദ്രാസന അസംബ്ളി ദിവസംതന്നെ, ഭദ്രാസനത്തിൽനിന്നുള്ള സഭാ കൗൺസിൽ അംഗങ്ങളെ തിരഞ്ഞെടുക്കുന്നതാണെന്നു കാണിച്ചുകൊണ്ടുള്ള വിജ്ഞാപനം സഭാസെക്രട്ടറി ഭദ്രാസനത്തിലെ മണ്ഡലാംഗങ്ങൾക്ക് അയച്ചു കൊടുക്കേണ്ടതാണ്.
10. ബാലറ്റ് പേപ്പറിന്റെ ചുമതല ഭദ്രാസന എപ്പിസ്കോപ്പാ നിർവഹിക്കണം.

ഇവയ്ക്കുവശ്യമായ രേഖാഘടനാ ഭേദഗതികൾ ചെയ്ത് 'തിരഞ്ഞെടുപ്പ് ഭാന്തി'ൽനിന്നും സഭാ ജനങ്ങളെ വിട്ടുവിക്കണമെന്ന് അഭ്യർത്ഥിക്കുന്നു.

—റവ. തോമസ് ഡാനിയേൽ,
പേരയം മാർത്തോമ്മാ ചർച്ച്, മുളവന.

2

ഇന്നു നിലവിലുള്ള സഭാ കൗൺസിൽ തിരഞ്ഞെടുപ്പ് സംബ്രദായം മൊത്തത്തിൽ സഭയുടെ അന്തസ്സത്തയ്ക്കു കളങ്കം ചാർത്തുന്ന ഒരു പ്രക്രിയയായി മാറിയിരിക്കുന്നു. പട്ടയാ സമൂഹത്തിന്റെ വോട്ടുകൾ ഏറെക്കുറെ സൂചിതീതവും സഭയുടെ ഉത്തമ താല്പര്യങ്ങൾക്കനുസൃതവുമാണ്. എന്നാൽ നിർണ്ണായക ഭൂരിപക്ഷംവരുന്ന പട്ടക്കാർ പണത്തിന്റെയും ശക്തിയുടെയും സ്വാധീനത്തിൽ വഞ്ചിക്കപ്പെടുന്നു. ഉദാഹരണമായി, കനം കളത്തുള്ള ഒരു സ്ഥാനാർത്ഥി തണ്ണിത്തോട്ടിലുള്ള ഒരു മണ്ഡലം പ്രതിനിധിയെ ഒന്നോ അതിലധികമോ തവണ ചെന്നു 'മുഖഭാവത്തിൽ' കാണുമ്പോൾ അയാൾ സ്വാഭാവികമായി കീഴടക്കപ്പെടുന്നു; ആ അപരിചിതൻ വോട്ടുചെയ്യുന്നു. 'Single Voting' സമ്പ്രദായം അടിമുട്ടിച്ചിട്ടുണ്ടെന്ന്. മറ്റു സ്ഥാനാർത്ഥികൾക്കെതിരെ ഭൂഷ് പ്രചാരണങ്ങൾ കെട്ടിച്ചുവിടുന്നു! ഇങ്ങനെയുള്ള പ്രചാരണ തന്ത്രങ്ങൾ വഴി സാമൂഹ്യ ഭോഷങ്ങൾക്കടിമകളായ കറേപ്പേരെങ്കിലും നേതൃ സ്ഥാനത്തേക്കും അവരോധിക്കപ്പെടുന്നു. ഈ പ്രക്രിയ സഭയുടെ ഭാവിയെ സംബന്ധിച്ചിടത്തോളം ആപത്തായി പരിണമിച്ചിരിക്കുകയാണ്. ഈ ദുരന്ത നാടകം എന്താവസാനിക്കും?!

ചില നിർദ്ദേശങ്ങൾ താഴെചേർക്കട്ടെ:—

1. ശ്രീ. ജോയി തെക്കംപുറം സൂചിപ്പിച്ചതുപോലെ ഭദ്രാസനത്തിലെ മണ്ഡലാംഗങ്ങളുടെ അഥവാ ഇടവകകളുടെ എണ്ണത്തിൽ ആനുപാതികമായി കൗൺസിൽ അംഗങ്ങളുടെ എണ്ണം ക്ഷീപിക്കേണ്ടതാണ്.

2. ഓരോ ലഭാസനത്തിലുള്ള മണ്ഡലാംഗങ്ങളും ലഭാസന അസംബ്ളി മെമ്പറന്മാരും അതതു ലഭാസന കേന്ദ്രങ്ങളിൽ കൂടി ക്ളിപ്തപ്പെടുത്തിയിട്ടുള്ള സഭാ കൗൺസിൽ അംഗങ്ങളേയും ലഭാസന കൗൺസിൽ അംഗങ്ങളേയും തിരഞ്ഞെടുക്കുക. പട്ടക്കാക്ടം മണ്ഡലാംഗങ്ങളും ലഭാസന അസംബ്ളി മെമ്പറന്മാർക്കും രണ്ടു കൗൺസിൽ അംഗങ്ങളും വേട്ടു രേഖപ്പെടുത്താവുന്നതാണ്. (സഭാ കൗൺസിൽ & ലഭാസന കൗൺസിൽ)

3. ഒരേ ദിവസംതന്നെ എല്ലാ ലഭാസന കേന്ദ്രങ്ങളിലും തെരഞ്ഞെടുപ്പ് നടത്തേണ്ടതാണ്. കേന്ദ്രത്തിൽനിന്നും നിരീക്ഷകരേ അതതു കേന്ദ്രങ്ങളിലേക്ക് നിയോഗിക്കുകയും വേണം. ഈ സംവിധാനത്തിൽ കൂടി മാറ്റ ലഭാസനത്തിലേക്കുള്ള പ്രചാരണ പ്രവാഹം ഒഴിവാക്കാവുന്നതാണ്. സഭാ സെക്രട്ടറി, ട്രസ്റ്റികൾ എന്നിവരെ മാത്രം തിരുവല്ലായിൽ കൂടുന്ന മണ്ഡലം തിരഞ്ഞെടുക്കുക.

4. ആവശ്യമായ ഭരണഘടനാ ഭേദഗതികളും മാറ്റ ചട്ടങ്ങളും സ്പെഷ്യൽ മണ്ഡലം കൂടി പാസ്സാക്കേണ്ടതാണ്.

ഈ രീതിയിലുള്ള തെരഞ്ഞെടുപ്പ് സമ്പ്രദായം കൂടുതൽ പ്രാതിനിധ്യ സ്വഭാവമുള്ളതും സർഫലങ്ങൾ പുറപ്പെടുവിക്കുന്നതുമായിരിക്കും. സർവ്വ സമ്മതരും ഉത്തമരമായ സ്ഥാനാർത്ഥികൾ വിജയിക്കുന്നതിന് സാധ്യതകളേറെയുണ്ട്. കൂടാതെ മൂന്നു വർഷത്തിലൊരിക്കൽ തിരുവല്ലായിൽ നടക്കുന്ന 'മേള'യ്ക്കും വിരാമമിടുന്നതിനും സഭാ മണ്ഡലത്തിന് കൂടുതൽ കാര്യക്ഷമമായ രീതിയിൽ പ്രവർത്തിക്കുന്നതിനും സാധിയുന്നതാണ്. രാജ്യമാസകലം 'നെട്ടോട്ട'മോടുന്ന സ്ഥാപിത താല്പര്യക്കാരും സ്ഥാനമോഹികളും ചിലവാക്കുന്ന പണവും ഇന്ധനവും ഇന്നത്തെ പരിതസ്ഥിതിയിൽ സഭയുടെയും രാജ്യത്തിന്റെയും പ്രഖ്യാപിത ലക്ഷ്യങ്ങൾക്ക് കടകവിരുദ്ധവുമാണ്.

—പി. റ്റി. കുരുവിള, പന്തളം
(മുൻ സഭാ കൗൺസിൽ അംഗം)

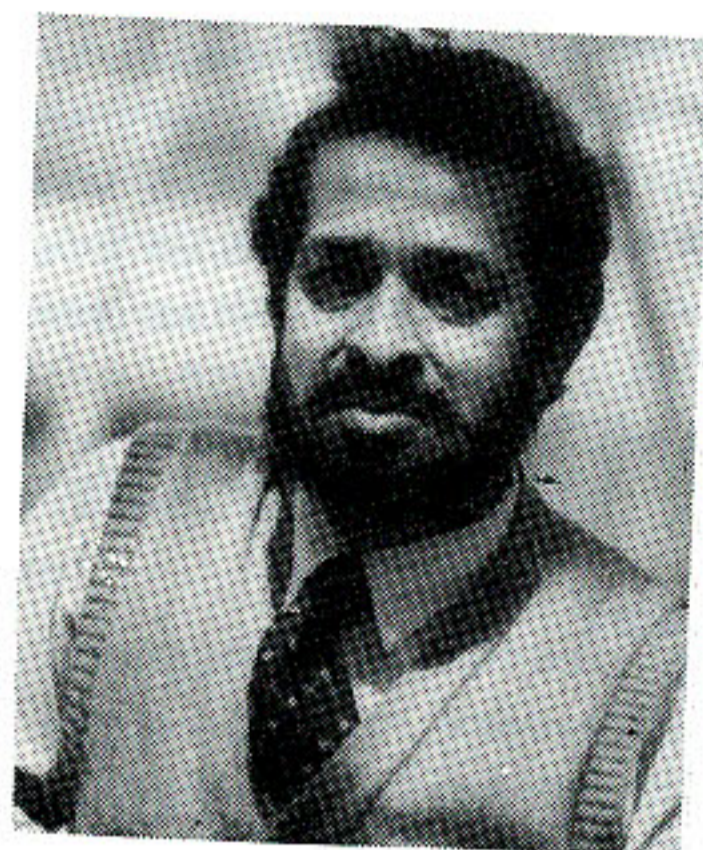
(Reprinted from December 1990 Malankara Sabha Tharaka)

MATRIMONIAL		
<p>Parents invite proposals for an attractive Syrian Christian Mar Thoma girl, 28, U.S. Citizen 156 CM employed in USA as Medical Doctor, from suitably qualified boys</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Reply Box No. MCC626 C/o The Editor</p>	<p>Correspondence invited with details and full size photo from parents of good looking and professionally qualified girls with pleasant personality for a Marthomite Boy, 28, Ht. 5' 11", Electrical Engineer (MS), U.S. Citizen, well employed in Texas.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Reply Box No. CM 551, C/o The Editor</p>	<p>Matrimonial correspondence invited for 23 year old 5'5" daughter B. S., R. D. professionally employed. Please send details and photograph (returnable) to</p> <p style="text-align: center;">P.O. Box 19761 Florida 32245-9761</p>

To Our Matrimonial Advertisers

The Messenger assures you of strict confidentiality of your ads and the replies received thereto. Replies addressed to Box Nos. shall be forwarded to the advertiser unopened.

Editor .



കോഴി കൂവുന്നതിൻമുമ്പ് ഞാനിടകൊടു-
 ഭീതിയിൽനിന്നൊന്നായിർത്തണിററീടുകിൽ!
 പാവനപ്രേമപ്രപഞ്ചത്തിലേക്കെന്റെ
 ചേതന ചെന്നാപ്പടി തുറന്നീടുകിൽ!

മുറാനില്ലാത്ത മനസ്സിലി ചുണ്ണിന്റെ
 മുഖസങ്കല്പവും തിക്തയാമാർത്ഥ്യവും,
 മഗ്ദലമേരിയും, കാമലോങ്ങുകളിൽ
 മഗ്ദമാമാത്താവെഴും പരിതാപവും,

നല്ല ശമരിയക്കാരനും, അല്ലലിൻ
 തല്ലാലുണർന്ന മുടിയനാം പുത്രനും,
 കാണാതെപോയ കഞ്ഞാടും, മണാളനെ-
 കാണാൻ കൊതിച്ച കഴിയുന്ന കന്യയും,
 ഹോശാനയും, കരുത്തോലയും, വ്യർത്ഥമാ-
 മാഗ്ദാവികാസങ്ങളും, വികാരങ്ങളും,
 നിശ്ചലം നിസ്സലാഭം നിഷ്ഫലംനിന്നൊ-
 രത്തിവൃക്ഷത്തിൽ തളിരണിപ്പിച്ചയും,
 മന്നിന്റെ നേർക്കായന്ത്രഗ്രഹം വർഷിച്ച
 പുണ്യതാരത്തിൽ പ്രഭാമയസ്മേരവും,
 പാതിരാവിന്നിരുളുടെ വന്നെൻ ദിവ്യ-
 രാഗമേ, നിന്നെക്കവർന്നൊരാശ്ലേഷവും!

ഇങ്ങിതാ തീ കാഞ്ഞിരിക്കും ടേർ തന്റെ
 പിന്നിലായ് നിൽപ്പ് ഞാൻ രാഗരോഗാതുരൻ,
 മന്ദമായ് പൊന്തിത്തുടിക്കുന്നു ജീവിതം-
 സ്വന്ദനംപോലെ പിണഞ്ഞു തീനാമ്പുകൾ,
 കത്തിയാളുന്ന വിറകുകൾ, ചുണ്ണിതിൽ
 പൊട്ടി വളർന്നു വരണ്ട ജീവാശകൾ,
 ചുറ്റിയടിക്കുന്നു ദുഃഖസമ്മിശ്രമാം
 വ്യർത്ഥതപോലെ കോടകൊടുകാറ്റുകൾ,
 ഇത്തിരി ചുടിനായ് കയ്യടയ്ക്കുന്നീട്ടിയീ
 മുറഞ്ഞിരിക്കയാണെൻ സുഖവൃക്ഷകൾ.

'അവർ കർത്താവിനെ പിടിച്ചു മഹാപുരോഹിതന്റെ
 വീട്ടിൽ കൊണ്ടുപോയി. പത്രോസും അവരെ പിൻതുടർന്നു.
 അവർ നടുമുറ്റത്തു തികഞ്ഞുകൊണ്ടിരുന്നപ്പോൾ പത്രോ
 സും അധരങ്ങൾ ഇടയിൽ ഇരുന്നു. ഒരു ബാല്യക്കാരത്തി
 അവനെ കാണുക, ഇവരും അവനോടു കൂടെ ആയിരുന്നു എന്ന്
 പറഞ്ഞു. അവനോ, സ്ത്രീയേ, ഞാൻ അവനെ അറിയുന്നി
 ല്ല എന്ന് തള്ളിപ്പറഞ്ഞു. കർത്താവു കഴിഞ്ഞിട്ട് മറ്റൊരു
 വൻ, നീയും അവന്റെ കൂട്ടത്തിലുള്ളവൻ എന്ന് പറഞ്ഞു.
 പത്രോസോ, മനുഷ്യാ, ഞാൻ അല്ല എന്ന് വിണ്ടു തള്ളിപ്പറ
 ഞ്ഞു. ഏറെ നേരം കഴിഞ്ഞശേഷം വേറൊരുവൻ, ഇവരും അവ
 നോടു കൂടെ ആയിരുന്നു, സത്യം എന്ന് നിഷ്കർഷിച്ചു പറ
 ഞ്ഞു. മനുഷ്യാ, നീ പറയുന്നത് എനിക്കു തിരിയുന്നില്ല എന്ന്
 പത്രോസ് പറഞ്ഞു. അവൻ സംസാരിക്കുമ്പോൾത്തന്നെ
 പെട്ടെന്നു കോഴി കൂവി. അപ്പോൾ കർത്താവു തിരിഞ്ഞു
 പത്രോസിനെ നോക്കി. ഇന്നു കോഴി കൂവുകയും മുമ്പേ
 മുന്നോട്ടു നീ എന്ന് തള്ളിപ്പറയും എന്ന് കർത്താവു തന്നോടു
 പറഞ്ഞ വാക്ക് ഞാൻകൊ പത്രോസ് പുറത്തിറങ്ങി അതിദുഃഖ
 തോടെ കരഞ്ഞു.'

ലൂക്കോസിന്റെ സുവിശേഷം: അധ്യായം 22, വാക്യം 54-62

മർത്യനിതിയ്ക്കു പരാധിയായ്ത്തീർന്ന നിൻ
 ദുഃഖമാരായ് കയാണെന്നിലെച്ചിന്ദകൾ.
 നീ, ഹാ, വിനക്രശിരസ്സനായ് മുകനായ്
 ന്യായാധിപാകണത്തിങ്കൽ നിന്നീടവേ,
 കാണാമെന്നിടേ നിൻ കൺകളിൽ വിണ്ണിന്റെ
 നൂറായിരം നിത്യസത്യദുഃഖാധികൾ,
 ഏതോ മതത്തിൽ മേങ്ങും, ജറുസലേം
 ദേവാലയത്തിൽ പരീശർ, പുരോഹിതർ,
 ഹോമയാഗങ്ങളും, ഹനനയാഗങ്ങളും, വി-
 കാശവിശ്വാസനിശ്ശൂന്യമാം ചിന്തകൾ,
 ഏതോ സലോചിതൻ നർത്തനം, ഹെരോദി -
 യാവിൻ നൃപോചിതമാം കലാസാദനം,
 ഏതോ 'ഗതസ്തു' ത്തോട്ടത്തിൽ മാനവ-
 സ്നേഹം ജഡത്തോടൊടുങ്ങു വിങ്ങും മനം.

നീചമോചി പ്രപഞ്ചത്തോടു ധീരമായ്
 പോരാടുവാണെൻ മനം കൊതിച്ചിട്ടില്ലും
 ഞാനാകുമി ദീനജീവൻ നിരാശ തൻ
 വാതായനം ചാരിനിൽക്കയാണിപ്പൊഴും.
 ചേതോയേത്തിന്റെ പാഴ്ക്കടൽ നീന്തുവാ-
 നേത്തുമാവാത്തതാണെൻ ജഡിയേച്ചുകൾ,
 സോദോമിലെന്നപോൽ ഗന്ധകവും കൊടു-
 തിയും പതിച്ചു കരിഞ്ഞിതെന്നോർമകൾ.

.....Cont'd Page 43

SUNDAY SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

The World Sunday School Day was celebrated throughout the Diocese on November 4th. Sunday School students as well as teachers took an active role in this special service. The 1991 Diocesan Sunday School examination for Junior (Grades 5&6) and Junior High (Grades 7&8) is scheduled for May 5, 1991. Registration deadline and other relevant details will be mailed to all Sunday Schools in our Diocese shortly. A curriculum for the Post-Graduate Course (Sunday School) is being developed and will be ready for distribution shortly.

WESTERN REGION

The Western Regional Sunday School Teachers' Retreat/Teachers' meeting was conducted on November 10, 1990, hosted by the St. Paul's Mar Thoma Church Sunday School, Dallas. At this teachers' meeting, Mr. P.T. Mathew, Mar Thoma Church of Dallas, was elected as Sunday School Supervisor for the Western Region.

EASTERN REGION

The Eastern Region conducted a Teacher Training Workshop for the Sunday School teachers of the Eastern Region on Sept. 8, 1990, led by Dr. T.M. Thomas of the St. Thomas Mar Thoma Church Sunday School. This program was sponsored by the St. Peters Mar Thoma Church Sunday School, New Jersey. The workshop was well received by the teachers. The 1990 Eastern Regional Sunday School Competition (for students of Grade 1 to 10) was conducted on November 10th at the St. Thomas Mar Thoma Church, New York. The items included Singing (English/Malayalam), Story Telling, Elocution, and Bible Quiz. Contestants from 10 Sunday Schools of the Eastern Region participated. Over 450 people attended this program. The winners were awarded prizes.

The Committee of the Eastern Regional Sunday Schools met on Dec., 8 to review and implement the decisions taken at the Diocesan Sunday School Committee meeting on July 18 in Lubbock. It was decided amongst other things to conduct a teacher training program for a limited number of teachers (2 or 3) from each Sunday School in the Region, so as to use them as resource persons in their own Sunday Schools.

Daniel Thomas, Secretary Diocesan Sunday Schools.

WESTERN REGION - YOUTH WORKER

Mr. George Philipose, 10610 Chapel Hill, Houston, Texas 77079 has been appointed honorary Youth Worker for the Western Region, by the Diocesan Bishop Rt. Rev. Philipose Mar Chrysostom. He is permitted to visit parishes in the region and organize youth activities in consultation with the vicars and youth leaders of the parishes.

Mr. George Philipose will work as secretary in a committee consisting of Rev. Jayan Thomas, President, one representative each elected by the parishes in Western Region and one person nominated by the Diocesan Bishop. This committee will be under the control of the Diocesan Bishop. Rev. Jayan Thomas is authorized to make the nomination on behalf of the Diocesan Bishop for the formation of this first committee.

Houston parish has placed the facilities of their parish for the use of the Regional youths, with the permission of the Vicar. The four thousand dollars donated by the Sevika Sanghom of Houston parish will be available for the work of the Regional Committee. Other parishes in the region should also contribute towards the expenses.

Rev. Jayan Thomas, Houston.

Report of the Mar Thoma Youth Conference of North America - 1990

The XI Mar Thoma Youth Conference of North America was held at the beautiful campus of the University of Maryland Baltimore County, Catonsville, Maryland, USA from August 8 to 11, 1990. The Conference was co-hosted by the Youth Fellowships of Baltimore and greater Washington congregations. About 250 youths participated. This was probably the largest Mar Thoma Youth Conference in North America.

The main theme of the Conference was "Living a life worthy of our calling", taken from Ephesians 4:1. Our Diocesan Bishop, Rt. Rev. Philipose Mar Chrysostom Suffragan Matropolitan gave the main talk on the theme. Bible study sessions were led by the Rev. Michael Livingston of Princeton Theological Seminary. Both these leaders were present throughout the Conference and participated in various other sessions giving guidance and inspirational messages. A one-day preparatory leadership conference of about sixty youth leaders and resource people preceded the Conference. Chrysostom Thirumeni, Rev. Livingston, Rev. K.U. Abraham, Dr. T.M. Thomas and Dr. George Zachariah provided the leadership.

The opening ceremony of the Youth Conference was a moving event which included worship service, mostly musical, led by the St. Thomas group from New York, introduction of the Conference's theme song, a slide presentation on Washington and Baltimore, several youth groups and ceremonial candle lighting. Thirumeni declared the conference open. Dr. Colleen T. Evans, a one time Hollywood actress, who has authored a dozen Christian books, gave the keynote address reminding the participants of the challenges they face in their personal and collective lives and their responsibilities.

Every morning the proceedings started with meditation and group prayer in the lounges of the residence hall. Morning and evening plenary sessions started with worship service led by different parish youth groups. The bible study sessions led by Rev. Livingston were followed by sixteen bible circles each led by a youth leader assisted by a resource person. The main talk by Thirumeni was followed by a feedback session when Thirumeni and Rev. Livingston responded to questions and comments from participants.

In a plenary session for 'Dialogue on Social Action' moderated by Rev. Ranji Varughis, Ms. Laura Cabell of the Episcopal Youth and Young Adult Ministry of the Diocese of Maryland, Mr. Harold Moss from the Center for Creative Nonviolence in Washington, Mr. Robert Riggers of the Habitat for Humanity, and Dr. Joseph Mathews from United Theological College, Bangalore spoke eloquently. That was a very challenging session. During one afternoon the Toronto Youth Fellowship presented a role play depicting two fictional societies, a good society and a bad one and what happened when there was an interaction between the two. This was followed by a lively discussion from the audience. A special feature of this year's Conference was a two hour cruise on the Potomac River with lunch on board and live entertainment by the boat staff. We also had the customary choir competition one evening and 'Harambee' (getting together) for entertainment one night.

A highlight of the Conference was the dedication service held on Friday evening. Rev. Geevarughese Mathew, President of the Conference, led in meditation. Ms. Manju Kurian led the sharing with challenging words. Thirty participants shared their thoughts and experiences. The open sharing of some of the experiences moved us all. During the Holy Communion service led by our Thirumeni, Mr. John John, the first Marthomite in North America chosen for theological studies for serving the church as a minister delivered the sermon.

The closing session of the Conference entitled 'Reveille for Public Service' was moderated by Dr. Mathew T. Thomas, Senior Advisor of the Conference. The very Rev. Van H. Gardener, Canon of the Episcopal Cathedral of Baltimore, Dr. Joy Cherian, a member of the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunities Commission, Mrs. Mercy Methrate, an artist and an active social worker, and Mr. Anil Abraham, a youth representative from Baltimore gave challenging talks summoning participants for serving Christ in the public arena. Thirumeni gave the closing remarks. He reminded the gathering that in the early part of Jesus' life, he challenged people to come to Him and in the latter part to go out into the world. He reiterated that we are to be involved in the rhythm of coming to Christ and going out to the world as His disciples to serve the humanity at large. He then dedicated his appointees, Ms. Leena Mathew, Mr. George Philipose, and Ms. Liza Mathew as Youth Directors for Canada, Western region, and Eastern Region respectively. Thirumeni concluded the Conference with benediction. An excellent souvenir was published in connection with the Conference. On the whole, from all indications and reports, the Conference, by the grace of God, was a great blessing and success.

Mohan Zachariah, Secretary.

DIOCESE OF NORTH AMERICA & U. K.

MAR THOMA CHURCH

THE DIOCESAN ASSEMBLY, DURING ITS LAST MEETING AT LUBBOCK (JULY 17-19, 1990), TOOK DECISIONS ON VARIOUS MATTERS PERTAINING TO OUR DIOCESE. DETAILS OF THESE DECISIONS, WHICH WERE APPROVED BY THE SYNOD ON SEPTEMBER 7, 1990, ARE GIVEN BELOW FOR THE INFORMATION OF OUR READERS.

Report of the Diocese for the year 1989 was approved and the audited Statement of Accounts for 1989 was passed.

The report of the Youth Committee was received. The Assembly recognized the need to minister to the youth including the recent immigrants. There should be a committee to bring proposals for ministering among them.

Sevika Sanghom report was received. It was suggested there should (a) be local/parish programs to strengthen the spirituality and commitment to Christ. (b) be Bible Study to understand the word of God, (c) prayer life should be strengthened and (d) be discussion on parish and family needs.

Report of the Voluntary Evangelistic Association was discussed. It was decided to organize units in all the parishes. Rev. Johnson P. Mathew was nominated as the President of the Diocesan Voluntary Evangelistic Association Committee.

Mr. Rajan Thomas presented the report of the Western Area Committee. The convener reported that the Houston parish had agreed to donate land for the Diocese. Decided to develop the Regional Centre or Diocesan Centre at Houston. The Assembly accepted the offer made by the Houston parish to use its facilities for the activities of the Region. The Assembly authorized the Western Region Committee to make use of this offer.

The President also informed that Dr. P. John Lincoln and Dr. Annie Lincoln had transferred the ownership of the properties to the Diocese of North America and it was recorded in the County Clerk's office Lubbock, Texas. The Diocese decided to permit Lubbock parish to construct a church building on this land by their efforts.

The Eastern Regional Committee was authorized to start useful activities for Youth League, Sevika Sanghom and Sunday School in different parishes and use different church facilities according to their availability.

The Sunday Schools are given freedom to make experiments with the methods to make the religious education institutes more effective.

Resolved to have quarterly publication of the Mar Thoma Messenger. The annual subscription will be \$ 6.00. Mr. Abraham Mattackal, Los Angeles was elected as the Editor. Rev. K. G. Pothan, Los Angeles and Dr. John Mathew, Dallas were elected with the Editor as a Committee for the Messenger publication. They were authorized to Co-opt two more members on the Editorial Board. Resolved to open an account in the name of the Mar Thoma Messenger and be jointly operated by the Editor and Rev. K. G. Pothan.

The discussion on the bye-laws were postponed to the next Assembly. The Assembly decided to divide the Diocese into five centers. All these centers shall be represented in the Diocesan Council.

1. North East: Epiphany New York, Long Island New York, St. Thomas New York, St. Andrews New York, Ebenezer New York, Boston and Rochester, (8 parishes)
2. South East: St. Peter's New Jersey, Philadelphia MTC, Philadelphia Bethel, New Jersey MTC, Baltimore and Washington (6 parishes)
3. Mid - West: Chicago, Detroit, Florida, Atlanta and London U.K. (5 parishes)

4. Western: Dallas MTC, Dallas St. Paul's, Houston, Lubbock, Oklahoma, Los Angeles, San Francisco and Seattle (8 parishes)
5. Canada: Toronto, Ottawa, Kingston, Montreal, Edmonton, Ft. McMurray and Calgary (7 parishes)

Resolved to raise a loan of \$500,000.00 from the Diocese. The Diocesan Council is authorized to plan and implement methods of raising the amount. This money will be used in the following manner for the purpose indicated. 60% as loan to parishes for construction or buying church building or parsonage. 20% for programs such as counseling services. 20% for social projects for the community. The loan to the parishes shall be returned with interest to the Diocese. The Assembly is authorized to plan for the repayment of the loan. The Diocese will pay 5% interest to the loan taken and charge 7% interest on parishes receiving the loan. The parish should repay the loan in four equal instalments beginning from the second year of taking the loan. The Council is authorized to make rules and guidelines for the disbursement of the loan. The fund will be known as "The Diocesan Development Fund", to be jointly operated by the Diocesan Secretary and the Treasurer.

Each parish should associate with one local church for service to the local community. The Diocese will pay the salary of an evangelist in a new mission field to be sponsored by our church in India.

The Family Conference fee will be decided in consultation with the Diocesan Council. Speakers for the Conference will be decided only with the approval of the Diocesan Council. The following were elected to represent the Diocese on the Diocesan Organizations.

Dr. Mary Joseph, Chicago	Sunday School
Mrs. Susan Ninan, Dallas	Sevika Sanghom
Dr. P. John Lincoln, Lubbock	Edavaka Mission
Mr. Mathew Kurian, Atlanta	Youth League

Rev. M. J. Joseph (President), Dr. M. V. Mathew (Convener), Mr. K.C. Cherian, Long Island, Mrs. Susan Ninan, Dallas, and Mrs. Mariamma Abraham, Epiphany. were constituted as an adhoc committee for developing program for choir in each parish in the Diocese.

Resolved to give \$4000.00 from T.M.A.M. Endowment Fund to Rev. K. G. Pothan as he has no scholarship. The revised budget of T.M.A.M. Endowment Fund was approved. The Council will make decisions for the disbursement of the interest from the Fund. The budget was approved. Next year a balance sheet also should be presented.

The Diocesan Council is requested to make a feasibility study and report to the Assembly to start an elementary school with boarding facilities. The parishes are to set apart the offertory on Sevika Sanghom Sunday for the work of the Diocesan Sevika Sanghom.

The Assembly also resolved to request the Synod for permission to set apart 50% of the offertory of Yuvajana Sakhyam Sunday, Sunday School Sunday, and Voluntary Evangelistic Association Sunday for the Diocesan activities of the respective organizations.

The Council is authorized to spend 50% of the 1990 budget in 1991. The Bishop is authorized to nominate an auditor. The Eastern and Western regions members will meet separately to discuss activities of the regions. The Diocesan Bishop nominated Dr. John P. Lincoln as Convener for Western Region and Rev. Johnson Varghese as Convener for Eastern Region. Dr. T. M. Thomas (New York), Dr. John Mathew (Dallas), and Mrs. Mariamma Abraham (Epiphany) were constituted as a Committee to make a list of books for use in parishes in Christian Education Department. The Following persons were elected to the Diocesan Council.

Secretary:	Rev. P.J. Alex, Dallas	Treasurer:	Mr. M. K. Thomas, New Jersey
Members:	Rev. Johnson Varghese, New York.		Rev. Joseph Jacob, Alberta.
	Mr. O. C. Koshy, Seattle.		Mr. Jacob Joseph, Toronto.
	Mr. K. C. Cherian, Long Island.		Mr. Varghese P. Varghese, Staten Island.
	Dr. M. V. Mathew, Chicago.		Mrs. Nirmala Abraham, Philadelphia.

NEWS FROM PARISHES

CHICAGO MAR THOMA CHURCH

With 210 families as members, the Chicago Mar Thoma Church is progressing as a strong witness of Jesus Christ in the Mid-west. In addition to the regular services on Sundays various retreats, conferences and programs have all helped in making a qualitative change in the parish life during the course of the year.

A three day parish retreat was held at the Inspiration Center in Lake Geneva, Wisconsin. The theme of the retreat was 'parenting in this generation'. The participants used this opportunity to study in depth the nature of Christian interpersonal relationship within the family.

Dr. John T. Semands was the main speaker of this year's Parish Convention held from 21-23 September. All his messages were inspiring and spiritually enlightening. Using simple language Dr. Semands was able to forcefully communicate the message of Jesus Christ, thus touching the lives of many people.

The Edavaka Dinam celebrations were held on November 11, 1990. Rev. Sajan Varghese, Princeton Theological Seminary and Mr. K. J. Francis, Dy. Counsel General, Indian Consulate in Chicago, were the Guests of Honor. In addition to having Services alternatively on every Sunday in English and Malayalam the eight prayer groups of the parish meet at least twice a month in their respective areas and once a month on second Saturday in the Church for prayer and fellowship. On the third Saturday we have fasting prayer in the church. On the last Sunday of the month there is an opportunity for individuals to share the experiences of their Christian life during the worship service.

The Christmas rounding of our parish began on November 23. Along with sharing the Christmas message of divine love and peace, donations were collected from parish members to pay off the existing bank loan and also to construct additional parking facilities in the church property. Out of the target of \$150,000 an amount of 125,000 has been collected so far. By the end of the Carol Rounding we hope to collect the target amount.

Rev. Ranji Varughis

ST. PETER'S MAR THOMA CHURCH, NEW JERSEY

Though our parish is only two years old, within the short period of time, our parish came on the front line with other Mar Thoma parishes in the North American Diocese in all spiritual and social activities. Our parish was formed in October 1988 with 65 families, mainly concentrated in Bergen County, New Jersey. But as of now we have on record 92 families and the membership is increasing. Our parish is more like a village type church, whose 80% of the members live in three mile radius.

Our first Vicar was Rev. John Mathew and Rev. Geevarghese Mathew was our celebrant achen. Rev. Johnson P. Mathew took charge as our Vicar as of April 15th 1990. These achen's hard work, efforts and our members' active participation together led this parish upto this stage.

We have Communion services and two worship services every month. One of the Communion services is conducted in English with our Youth's leadership. We have active participation of our members in our various organizations, such as Sunday School, Sevika Sanghom, Youth Fellowship and Edavaka Mission. Our Youths and Sevika Sanghom collected and sent money on several occasions to support poor and needy in India. Also during last Thanksgiving our Youths collected food and donated to the needy people in the local communities. Our Sunday School children are also very active and they participate in all Regional level competitions and win awards constantly. Our Sevika Sanghom is not behind in winning prizes in the Regional level competitions.

On the Diocesan level too, we were able to make our mark. We are proud to point out that our achen Rev.

Johnson P. Mathew was elected as the President of the Voluntary Evangelistic Mission of our diocese and Mr. M.K. Thomas, our Diocesan member, was elected as the Diocesan Treasurer for the next three years. We are not behind in local political field. First time in the history of Malayalees, our member, Mr. John Abraham was elected to the Teaneck Council on May 8, 1990, in a tough contest, through ballot, for the next four years. This was indeed an inspiration and recognition for Indians generally and Malayalees in particular. Our next goal is to buy a church building of our own and we hope to fulfil this task in the near future.

George Philip

MAR THOMA CHURCH OF DALLAS

The Rev. P.J. Alex assumed the secretaryship of the North American Diocese of the Mar Thoma Church.

On the 15th of December, the Diocesan Assembly members of the Western Region of the Diocese met at our church to talk about and chalk out plans for future activities in the Region.

Our Sunday School anniversary was celebrated on the 16th December. We are proud to announce that our Sunday School has more than two hundred and twenty students and thirteen full time teachers. We have Sunday school every Sunday from 10:15 AM to 12:30 PM. It is also gratifying to announce that our Sunday School superintendent Mr. P.T. Mathew was elected in the Regional Sunday School teachers' meeting as the inspector and supervising superintendent for the whole region.

Dr. John Mathew won a poetry award at the Poetry Contest offered by the Fort Worth Poetry Society at their annual meeting held on October 13, 1990.

Dr. John Mathew

MAR THOMA CHURCH OF LOS ANGELES

Parish Sevika Sanghom sponsored a one day seminar on "Recognizing and Releasing Women's Ministry Gifts" led by Dr. Mrs. Saki Athyal on Saturday November 10, 1990.

The Anniversary meeting of the Sevika Sanghom was held on Sunday, December 2, 1990. Mrs. Laly Thomas delivered the keynote speech. Office Bearers for 1991 were also elected.

Christmas Carol Service featuring music and special presentation by Sunday School Children, Youths and Adults choir groups was held at 6:00 P.M. on Monday December 24. A special song presentation by an "Ammachie's Choir" brought old time memories to the minds of the full audience. Dr. Saphir Athyal delivered the Christmas message. Visit by the Santa Claus brought joy to all the little ones. Miss Sherna Mathew, Mr. Jacob John and Mr. Jacob A. Mathew were the general convenors for this colorful special program.

New Year Watch night and Holy Communion Service was held on Monday December 31, at 10:30 P.M. led by the Vicar Rev. Alexander A. Thomas.

Jacob A. Mathew

THE CANADIAN MAR THOMA CHURCH, TORONTO

The Harvest Festival day was celebrated on Sunday the 14th October. Members donated their one day income to the church. The Family Sunday was celebrated on Sunday the 11th November. Rev. M.J. Joseph gave an inspiring message based on the theme "12 Rules of Marital Fighting". It was worth seeing all the members participating in the Holy Communion as families.

The Canadian Mar Thoma Church actively participated in the Ecumenical Christmas celebration organized by the Kerala Christian Committee on Saturday, the 8th December. The Sunday School children presented a beautiful Christmas dance and the Church Choir presented a few melodious Christmas carols. Rt. Rev. Henry Hill (Bishop, Anglican Church of Canada) and Rev. Fr. Louis Campbell (Catholic Arch Diocese of Toronto) were the guest speakers. Our Vicar Rev. M.J. Joseph served as the president of the Kerala Christian Committee 1990.

House to house Christmas carol singing was conducted in all the areas and it was an opportunity for the members to strengthen their Christian fellowship. The Carol Service was conducted on Saturday, December 22nd. Various skits and carols were presented by Sunday School, Youth Group and Area Prayer Groups. Church Choir and Youth Choir also presented a number of beautiful Christmas carols. Rev. Fr. Joseph Kuntharayil was the guest speaker. Refreshments were served to all the participants.

Christmas Holy Communion service was conducted on December 25th. Watch night service was conducted on December 31st 1990. Members actively participated in the dedication service and the Holy Communion Service.

MAR THOMA CHURCH, KINGSTON

New Year service was conducted on January 1, 1991 at St. Luke's Anglican Church, Kingston. Members from other churches also participated in the service.

MAR THOMA CHURCH, OTTAWA

Christmas Holy Communion service was conducted on the evening of Tuesday, the 25th of December 1990. Members from sister churches also attended the service.

Rev. M. J. Joseph

TRINITY MAR THOMA CHURCH , HOUSTON

This year's Christmas celebrations included week-end carol singing in December which raised about \$10,000.00. This amount will be utilized for establishing a library at the church. The carol service was held on December 24, 1990. Father Zac P. V. Zachariah of the Orthodox Church gave the Christmas message.

The year end retreat was conducted on the 29th and 30th of December. The Rev. K. U. Abraham (Boston) led the retreat. Houston parish will be the venue of various Regional Conferences planned for the early part of 1991.

Rev. Jayan Thomas

XX

പത്രോസും

എൻ നേർക്കു ചുണ്ടിപ്പിടഞ്ഞൊരാറോപണ-
 ഞിൻ വിരൽ കണ്ടു പതുങ്ങിയോനാണു ഞാൻ.
 എൻ നേർക്കു സംശയോപേതം വിടർന്നതാം.
 കൺകളെക്കാൺകേ നടുങ്ങിയോനാണു ഞാൻ.
 'ആരിതു' നീയാ നസരേന്റെ കൂട്ടത്തി-
 ലായിരുന്നില്ലേ?'—തളർന്നു പോയെൻ മനം.
 'ഞാനറിയില്ല', യെന്നുത്തരം മൂലമെൻ
 നാവുച്ചരിക്കെ, തകർന്നുപോയെൻ സുഖം.
 ലാസറെ പ്പോലെ ഊതമെന്റെ ജീവിതം
 ഹാ, ശവക്കല്ലറയ്ക്കുള്ളിൽക്കിടക്കയാം.
 ലേവ്യനെപ്പോല, പ്പരോ മിതൻ പോൽ, യെരി-
 ഹോവിലേയ്ക്കല്ലെ കൃഷിക്കുന്നതെൻ ജഡം?
 നല്ല ശമരിയക്കാരനേ, നീയെന്റെ
 അല്ലലിലുടന്നുടുത്തണഞ്ഞീടുകിൽ!
 എന്നിൽ നീ ഞാനായ് പിറന്നെന്നെ മന്നിന്റെ
 മുന്നിലേക്കൊന്നു ദൃശം നടത്തിടുകിൽ!

നാളുകളെന്നെക്കുശിക്കുവാൻ പാതി-
 രാവിൽ നിഗൂഢമാരാലണഞ്ഞീടിലും,
 ക്രൂരമാം മാനവനീതികൾ മുളളിൽ കി-
 രീടൊന്നെന്റെ ശിരസ്സിലേററീടിലും,
 സ്വാർത്ഥപ്രലോഭനസഞ്ചയം തീക്ഷ്ണമാം
 ചാട്ടവാറാലെൻ മനം തകർത്തിടിലും,
 കലുഷം മുളളാണിയാലെന്റെ ജീവന്റെ
 കയ്യകൾ ക്രൂശിൽത്തറച്ചുനിർത്തിടിലും,
 പാപത്തൊടൊന്നുമെതിർക്കുവാൻ വിണ്ണിന്റെ
 ചേതസ്സു നെഞ്ചിലുണർന്നെന്നീററീടുകിൽ!
 നല്ല ശമരിയക്കാരനേ, നീയെന്നെ
 മന്നിന്റെ നേർക്കായ് ദൃശം നടത്തിടുകിൽ!

കോഴി കൂവുന്നതിൽ മുമ്പു ഞാനിക്കൊടും-
 ഭീതിയിൽനിന്നൊന്നായിർത്തെന്നീററീടുകിൽ!
 പാവനപ്രേമപ്രപഞ്ചത്തിലേക്കെന്റെ
 ചേതന ചെന്നപ്പടി തുറന്നിടുകിൽ!

(Mr. Cherian K. Cherian is the Diocesan Assembly and Council Member from the Mar Thoma Church, Long Island. This Poem was originally published in the 'Mathrubhumi')

THE MAR THOMA MESSENGER

I, Rev. / Mr. / Mrs./ Miss _____
would like to subscribe to the MAR THOMA MESSENGER for one year at the
rate of \$ 6.00 (4 issues. January, April , July & October 1991).

ADDRESS _____

SIGNATURE _____
DATE _____

PARISH _____

You are encouraged to send the subscription form through your Vicar / Assembly Member. However,
if you want to send it directly, you may send the form to the following address with cheque
(U.S. \$ 6.00) drawn in the name of Mar Thoma Messenger.

MAR THOMA MESSENGER
3105 Claremore Ave
Long Beach, Calif. 90808

Mar Thoma Messenger Advertisement Tariffs

	<u>One Issue:</u>	<u>Four Issues:</u>
Back Cover	300.00	1000.00
Inside Cover	200.00	700.00
Inside Full Page	100.00	350.00
Inside 1/2 Page	60.00	200.00
Inside 1/4 Page	35.00	125.00
Matrimonial Column	25.00 for maximum 25 words, each additional word 0.75 c per word.	

To Our Readers:

You are welcome to send in
articles in Malayalam for publi-
cation in the Messenger. Please
arrange to get them printed first
before they are sent to us for
publication. The deadline for
receipt of articles and /or news
items for publication in the next
issue is MARCH 15, 1991

Editor.

Best Compliments

from

Babu, Kusumam, Joby
Jeena & Julie



Titus Family
Kent, WA



**Airlines have a
commitment to quality...
Aero Controls has built a
reputation on it.**

Aero Controls was established in 1985 with emphasis on providing the highest quality repairs and overhauls for hydraulic, pneumatic, mechanical, electro-mechanical and electronic components utilized in Boeing and Douglas aircraft.



AERO CONTROLS, INC.

1602 Pike Street N.W. • Auburn, WA 98001 • Phone: (206) 735-3350
Fax: (206) 939-0530 • Telex: 62897575

Best Compliments from all of Us:

Mr. O. C. Koshy
Sara Koshy, M.D.
of Seattle, Washington

Vinu Simon Abraham, M.D.
Sherin Susan Abraham, M.D.
of Baltimore, Maryland

and

K. Simon Abraham, M.D.
Annie Abraham, Phd.
Prema Abraham, M.D.
Mathew Abraham
Jacob Abraham



of



Abraham Medical Center, P. A.
Route 4, Box 10
Mountain Home, Arkansas 72653