

MAR THOMA

# MESSENGER

A PUBLICATION OF THE DIOCESE OF NORTH AMERICA & U.K. OCTOBER 1992

*"What happened to  
your hand?"*

**Our Church Life - *Children***



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# MAR THOMA MESSENGER

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# FROM THE EDITOR

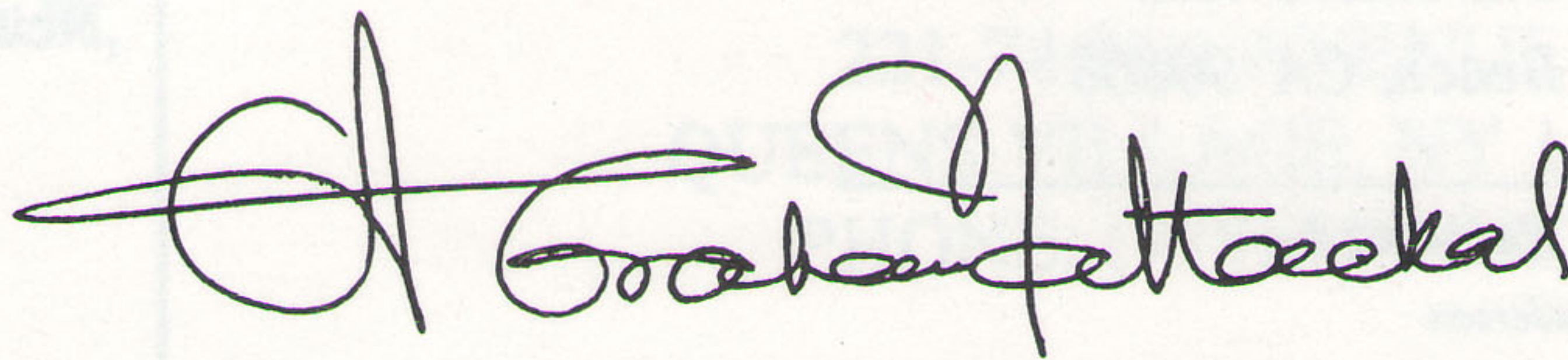
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When four or five families gathered together in Queens, New York at the end of every week, in the early seventies, to sing and pray together, little did they realize then that their small group would grow into a full-fledged congregation within a short period of time which would ultimately become part of a larger diocese. Our growth as a diocese has been gradual but swift and our priorities as a community changed even though our basic faith and beliefs remained unaltered.

Our little children of the seventies have grown into responsible youth and adults. Yet, only a few of the 4000 or so youth in our diocese are actively involved in the church activities or its administration at the parish level. Perhaps, we as parents ought to take a second look at what, if any, role we played in suppressing our youth's enthusiasm and excitement in taking up responsible positions in the parishes. Everyone who participated at the diocesan assembly meeting in Detroit was excited at its decision to give top priority to youth in the diocese for the next five years. The assembly also suggested that there should be combined meetings between the youth and executive committee members in order to foster a continuous dialogue between the youth and parents and also to encourage them not only to take up responsible position at the parish level but also to serve the church and their fellow youth as priests.

I wonder how many of our youth were really excited when they heard of the assembly's decisions about them. Some of us had informal discussions with a number of youth at the Students' Conference in New Jersey and it appears they are happy about the decisions but not excited as we are. Some of their comments could be summarized in a few sentences. As children, they sat through the entire Malayalam services without any grumbling even though they understood neither the wording nor meaning of the chanting or symbols. They still do not know the meanings as we haven't so far taken any concrete steps to teach them in a systematic and understanding way. Parents want children to sit with them during the Malayalam services, but many parents do not sit with the children during English services. Youth also feel that most of our "Edavaka Yogams" could be fun and interesting if parents stop the bickerings and gripings, shoutings and finger pointings for anything and everything. They just cannot understand as to why we raise our voice in the church even when we discuss an ordinary subject with no far-reaching consequences. Perhaps the most important reason the youth could offer us for being in a subdued state of excitement is that we parents underestimate their capabilities and devalue their opinions when expressed in public meetings.

While no one is suggesting that we parents should en-masse leave the stage to make room for our youth, it's time that we encourage and help our boys and girls in taking up responsible positions in our parishes. When they realize that we are genuinely interested in them and we want them to come forward and work with our achen in all aspects of our church life, they would look forward to our guidance and experience and thereby creating mutual respect for each others' view points and opinions. After all it's their church too and sooner or later we would fade away from the scene and the new will replace the old as the night is sure to be followed by the day.



A. George Mathew



**L**

## etter from the Diocesan Bishop

### *Blessings to the Members of the Diocese of North America and U.K.*

I believe you are in receipt of the letter I have sent communicating the decisions of the Diocesan Assembly as approved by the Episcopal Synod.

May I invite your attention to two important decisions taken at the Assembly. The proposals the Assembly has made are some suggestions. The parishes should explore and implement plans and programs for more effective and meaningful participation of youth in the active life of the church.

Another important decision is the starting of a Diocesan Center. In incarnation the universal and particular have become one. So in the church which is the extension of incarnation the parishes and the diocese should grow together. Now that we have formed into parishes it is necessary for the growth of the parishes to strengthen the diocese. For this we have to have a diocesan center. The first stage is acquiring land and constructing a building. This requires at least \$ 500,000.00 The sincere and full support of every member of the diocese is necessary in this effort. I am sure you all will rally behind the Diocesan Center Committee to expedite and realize this urgent need of the diocese.

The basic requirement for us to be a parish and a diocese is the renewal of the family and the people by the Holy Spirit into the new community in Christ. Family prayer, study of the Bible, experiencing the grace of God in the unity of corporate worship and sacraments are essential to such an experience. Seek you first these experiences of the Kingdom and then the others will follow.

We are the body of Christ. Our conduct is to be controlled and guided by Christ through the Holy Spirit. Personal rivalry, groupism, past hostilities, etc. are indications of rebellion against God; love of brother, desire for unity, the joy of fellowship, doing the will of God are the marks of the lordship of Christ. Let that mind be in you which was in Christ Jesus. Do not allow differences to deteriorate to separation. May God help us to forsake all groups and forge ourselves into the joyous fellowship of the people of God.

I understand people of different theological shades, ecclesiastical color, and religious persuasion visit North America under different banners. Besides drawing away the resources of the parishes, they carry on teachings which indirectly are unhealthy for the life and progress of our people. I would urge the achenes and people not to encourage such people. It is good to insist on a recommendation from the Metropolitan or the diocesan bishop if they are to hold meetings or preach in the parish. May I point out that holding special prayer meetings in the houses of the Mar Thoma members without the permission of the vicar is not a healthy practice and is not to be encouraged. Attending prayer groups organized by groups with whom we do not at least have informal fellowship is a bad example and erosive practice.

I returned to Kerala on 6th August. May I use this opportunity to thank you all individually and corporately for the love, care, and goodwill you have showered on me during my visit. My visit to the parishes strengthens and exhilarates me in my ministry of the Mar Thoma Church. I thank God for you all and pray you all be richly blessed with the unspeakable mercies of God.

Our Metropolitan and Mar Coorilose returned from Vellore on 12th. We had a meeting of the Synod on the 13th. Mar Athanasius and Mar Theodosius are asked to rest for some time and they are all to go slow in their work. The Metropolitan is going to Trichur for a short rest. He will be returning on September 2nd for the Mandalam meetings on the 8th and the 9th. Please continue to pray for all the bishops.

With good wishes and prayers.

Mandiram, Ranni  
August 17, 1992

Yours in Christ  
Sd- Philipose Mar Chrysostom  
Diocesan Bishop



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

**PHILIPOSE MAR CHRYSOSTOM  
BISHOP**

September 18th, 1992

*Blessings to the members of the Diocese of North America and U.K.*

Greetings to you in the name of God. I know you are all looking forward to October 11th- our Diocesan Sunday. It is a time of thanksgiving. How wonderfully God made it possible for each one of us to be in the country of our adoption. More wonderful is the formation of the Mar Thoma Parishes and now the Diocese. We can see the God who led the Israelites leading us. As in their case we too have our periods of setbacks. But the loving God has always been with us.



It is a time of commitment. We have to renew our commitment to God, to the Church - the body of Christ - to the mission of the Church in preaching the Gospel and making it real through the services of the people. We are to be related to the people in our Diocese and to all the people in the community we belong to.

Our main concern is the youth of our Diocese. The Junior Conference and the Youth Conference have opened our eyes to the urgent and wide tasks before us. The youth are more responsive than we thought. Are we sensitive enough. I am glad the Diocese has given the priority to the youth.

We need a place and a person to co-ordinate and activate all our deep desires. The Diocesan Centre we have embarked on is the beginning for the realization of our co-ordination and galvanizing us into action. The Sabha Mandalam has decided to consecrate three more bishops. Very likely one of them will be placed in our Diocese.

So please **ARISE AND BUILD**. The collection our committee is planning for October and November demands the full and instigated support of all members. **I want every member in the diocese to participate in it. I am sure you will. Please be as generous as possible in supporting the project.**

The Diocesan Center Committee will give you necessary directive about the collection. Please co-operate with them fully. It is not a collection but the expression of our commitment to the cause.

**PLAN - PRAY - PAY - PERSUADE - PARTICIPATE**

May God bless you all and lead you in His ways.

---

*"Never deprive someone of hope; it might be all he or she has."*



# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

## MAR THOMA FAMILY CONFERENCE - A PARTICIPANT'S VIEW

I have attended our annual Mar Thoma Family Conference (MTFC) several times in the past. My view about the conference and some improvements required to be made in certain areas are stated below.

MTFC is held every year in North America. One of our parishes hosts this conference. Our members attend this conference with their family. If the conference is held in a state far away from the residence of the member, the average expense for a family of four would come out to about \$2,000, which include airfare, registration fee, food and accommodations charges.

The conference is usually held in a luxurious hotel in the city. The committee appointed by the church hosting the conference select such costly hotels, ignoring the financial affordability of the participants. The purpose of a person coming to the conference is not only for his spiritual uplift, but also a chance for sight-seeing, meeting some old friends and relatives, and spending his vacation away from home in a joyous atmosphere. But it is very clear that many of our members do not show much interest for attending the conference. According to the 1992 Directory published by the Diocese of North America and U.K., there are about 12,000 members in this diocese. But the average number of persons attending the annual conference is less than 800, which is about 7% of the total membership. The 1992 conference had only about 500 participants. The main reason for this poor attendance is the high cost involved. In this connection I may bring to your notice the following points:

1) The authority for fixing the conference charges and the responsibility for collecting that charge from the participant rests with the hosting church. MTFC is not a recognized body by the IRS for tax exemption purposes. By paying this conference fee to MTFC, the participant loses his legitimate claim for monetary relief as the payment goes to the body not recognized by the government. But if that payment is

made to the host church, the participant can get some benefit by claiming deduction for his payment from his total income when he files a Tax Return to State and Federal agencies. As all our churches are non-profit religious organizations approved by the IRS and therefore, payment made to the church qualifies for tax exemption. Many of our members are under the wrong impression that payments made to MTFC qualify for tax exemption.

The holding of an annual conference can be considered a part of the program of church hosting the conference. All receipts and payments of the conference can be accounted by that church as part of its activity. So the church by using its own name in the receipt book could issue receipts to the participants who pay the conference charges. If this procedure is followed, the participant can have the benefit of legal tax deduction. The Diocesan Council will have to consider this change for the benefit of our members.

**Abraham Philipose, Cypress, CA**

*( A new set of by-laws for the Family Conference have been adopted at the business meeting of the Family Conference held in Detroit in July 1992. Please see page 30 of this issue - Editor )*

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I would appreciate if anyone would elucidate the need for three or four professional associations in a Mar Thoma parish.

I am unaware of any professional association among the early believers in our church or any other church. Obviously present day professions must have existed during that time.

**Easo Daniel, Hillside, NJ**

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*"Instead of using the word problem, try substituting the word opportunity."*



# OUR CHURCH LIFE - CHILDREN

Rev. Dr. P.G. George,  
Long Island, New York



North American Diocese is witnessing a phenomenal growth in its infrastructure and population. It is a matter of great pride that the Mar Thoma members gather together wherever they are "dispersed" for worship and prayer. Religious (spiritual) and social needs are met with in this process.

A cursive glance at the community will show us that it is made up of young family units with children brought with them from abroad or children born in this country. The influx of relatives due to the immigration policy, helped to maintain the "extended family" structure to a certain extent. Mar Thoma community is blessed in many ways, but it is not immune to the pathos of this society. Just as the survival and growth of a plant uprooted and planted depends on many and varied factors, our community's survival and growth depends on many factors on which we have very little control. One of the areas we do not have much control is over the forces that take our children away from us.

Traditional image of a father and a mother still looms large in parents' minds, where the parents control and direct the lives of their children. Outside interference in this matter is negligible and we consider this as the "perfect model." Children, on the other hand, are faced with both the traditional "Authoritarian Model" and the "Liberal Model". They are taught through the school system and the media about "You decide your life" Model. In the American system children are given opportunity to choose what suits their taste, if they do not like something, they'll leave that and pick up something else. The system affords choice to a certain extent, if they are still not satisfied and do not make up their minds, they are considered a social misfit

## Theological Basis.

"Honor your father and your mother, so that your days may be long in the land that the Lord your God is giving you" (Ex 20:12). One of the Ten Commandments and St. Paul's exhortation, "Children obey your parents in the Lord" (Eph 6:1) are examples of biblical commands that make obedience

to parents part of our spiritual life. But, at the same time, parents cannot forget their duty to their children, not just providing for their material and physical well-being, but also for their growth as a total person. Parents, often in their busy life-style and in the process of making their life and that of their children secure in the new land, fail to fulfil this vocation. It is the divine duty of parents to communicate the gospel to their children. The community of faith (Church) will foster and reinforce that faith.

"Keep these words that I am commanding you today in your heart.

Recite them when you are at home and when you are away, when you lie down and when you rise. Bind them as a sign to your hand, fix them as an emblem on your forehead, and write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.'

If the children are not taught faith while they are young; they'll depart from the faith of their parents as they grow older. (Prov. 22:6)

## Children in the Church

Children form the most important part of our church life, but their role is not fully recognized or accepted. Children, though come from different families, belong to the church. Church at their baptism takes over the responsibility of providing them with opportunity for learning the word of God and the children grow in His grace through its fellowship. Children should experience the love of God permeating into their lives, i.e. they should know that they are loved by God through the fellowship and sharing of the church.

But, often parents stand in the way of children's experiencing the fuller grace through the church. Parents, when they were of the same age in India, were not allowed to fully participate in church life, so they feel that their children are not old enough to manage things of the church. Our over-protection and fear alienates them from the church. Let us look at certain stages and scenarios that would explain this crisis.

## "Good Boy/Girl" Stage

At this stage children come regularly to church.



They look forward to go to church. Though reasons may vary, in each case, the religious reason may not be the foremost. Parents are very happy that their children "so far" are good. They go to church and they do not have any bad habits. They feel complacent and overconfident about their children in comparison with children of other parents in the church, but this feeling may be short-lived.

### **"I am grown up" Stage**

Parents continue to think and dream about their children in the New World. Soon the children pick up certain habits or fashions- their hair or dress or certain friendships, week-end party, etc. They'll try to persuade parents to get money and allow them to go places of their choice. If the parents cannot be bent that way, they'll try to "break off" and assert their own identity; still living in the same house. At this point they may not be regular in church or even if they come, they choose to sit at the back, away from their parents.

### **"Mother Tongue " Confusion**

The liturgical language of the Mar Thoma Church is Malayalam, but there are English transliterations of the liturgy. Parents would like their children to know and use Malayalam and enjoy the liturgy in Malayalam. If the children are trained to participate in the Malayalam liturgy from a very early stage, they may take interest in following the same. In our Community enough attention is not given for the regular use of English liturgy or to include the children meaningfully in the Malayalam liturgy. We thought that by coming with their parents, they would imbibe Malayalam language and in turn begin to appreciate the liturgy. In many cases the opposite is true.

### **"Senior Youths are bad examples"**

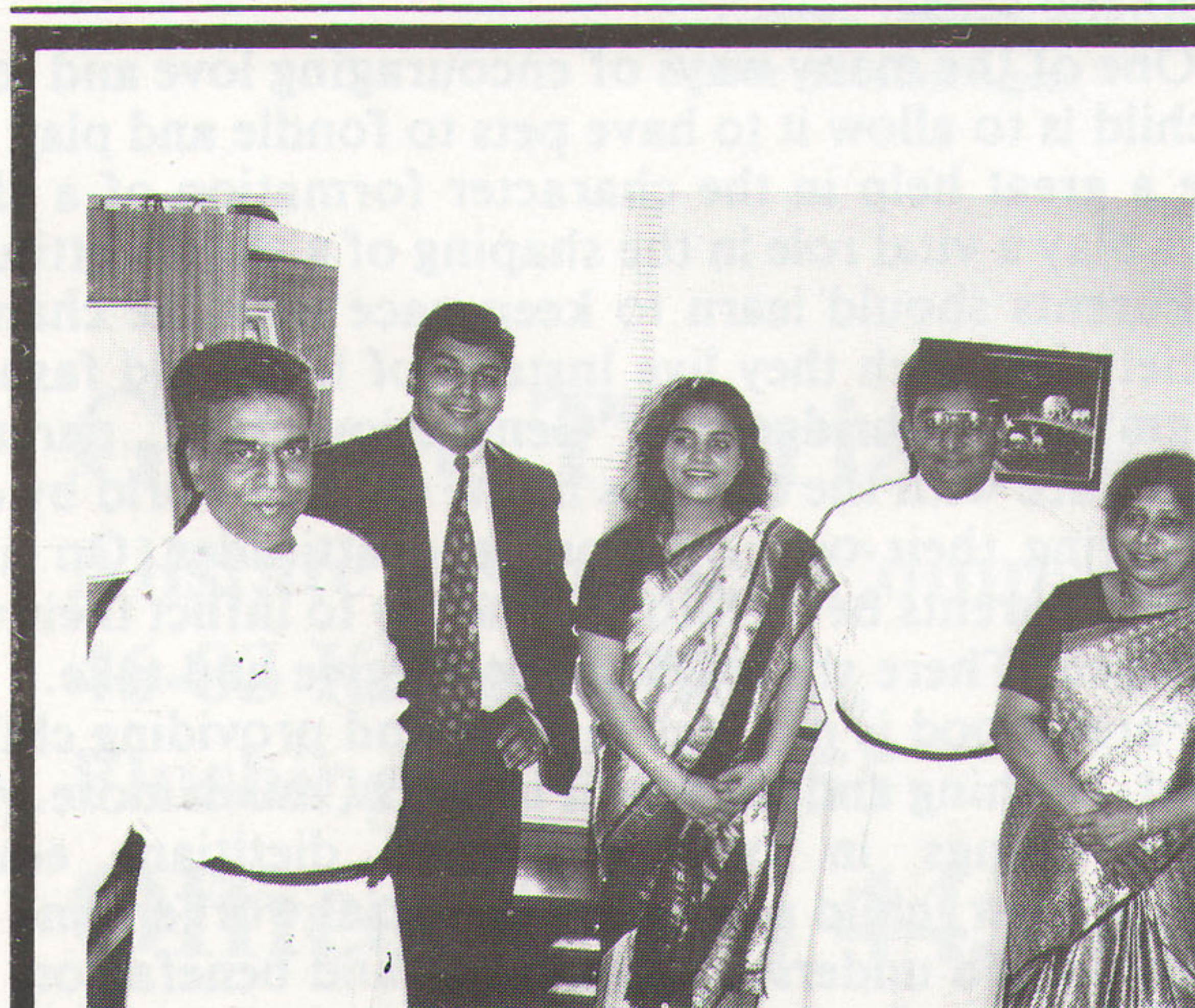
Children look up to their parents as role models, but as they grow older they begin to look around. Senior Youths in a parish could have great influence, positively or negatively, on the growth of our children. Usually parents with small children do not give proper support for Youth Ministry, but the truth of the matter is that the future of their children could be fashioned with the positive influence of the senior young people in the local parish.

### **"I hate coming to church" Syndrome**

When the children say that they hate coming to church or Malayalam service, they are expressing more than their frustration in sitting through the Malayalam service without understanding much. It is a spiritual crisis! We do not practice what we profess - hypocrisy. We are not able to give our children a spiritual/worship atmosphere in our churches. When we learn to respect our institutions and its leaders, place of worship and fellow worshippers, our attitude to church will be radically changed. Our children will learn to respect and feel comfortable to be part of this spiritual community.

### **Conclusion**

We have our church established in the North American and European soil. Let us not forget or under estimate the place of children in our church life. Our churches must be their "spiritual home," where they will feel at home. Let us help our children to grow as strong Christians, so that they'll live as children of God in this land and bear witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Let us seek among our children future leaders for our church and cultivate a spirituality which transcends all barriers to behold the glory of God together as a church.



*(L to R) The Very Rev. K.K. Chandy, Anil, Anita, Rev. Kuruvilla Chandy and Mrs. Saramma Chandy.*

### **OBITUARY**

The Very Rev. K.K. Chandy, 743 Hillsdale Ave., Hillsdale, New Jersey died of heart failure on October 7, 1992. He was 54 years old and is survived by his wife Saramma, sons Rev. Kuruvilla Chandy (25), Anil (22), and daughter Anita (21).

The Very Rev. Chandy was one of the founding members of the Mar Thoma-C.S.I. Congregation in New York and later when C.S.I. parishes got established in the New York-Philadelphia areas, he was appointed as Vicar of the C.S.I. Congregation in Philadelphia, in which capacity he served until 1991.

Realizing the need for a younger priest to work amongst the youth of the community, the Very Rev. Chandy encouraged the desire of his eldest son to become a priest. Kuruvilla Chandy was ordained as a deacon on March 25, 1992 and a priest on September 20, 1992 in New Jersey by the Rt. Rev. M.C. Mani, Bishop of the C.S.I. Church.

The mortal remains of the Very Rev. Chandy will be taken to Kerala on October 11, 1992 for burial at the Mundiappally C.S.I. Church cemetery.

**Abraham Mattackal**





## BRINGING UP YOUR CHILDREN

By Dr. (Mrs.) Stella Soundararaj

Director of Education  
Government of Tamil Nadu (Retd.)

**B**ringing up a child is an art as well as a science. In these days when the world has made enormous strides in all walks of life, the home front is not what it was a few decades ago. To keep up with the times, the family has to play a vital role in the socialization of the child. The dynamic role of the parents shows to advantage in the cultured upbringing of a child. The attitudes, values, and prejudices which shape the human personality are mainly acquired by the child through its parents. As the family, so the child.

The personality of a child consists of its physical, mental, spiritual, and social growth. Rousseau says, "Man is good, but if he is bad, it is the environment that has made him so." A child's first and foremost environment is the parental abode, wherein its emotional and psychological aspects are developed along with all its other faculties. Abnormalities in the household will have a telling effect on the child. Parenthood does not stop with procreation, but also includes responsibilities for the development and growth of the child in all dimensions. So parental behavior should be exemplary and unimpeachable.

Love and affection are the mainstay of the family. Parental love and affection assures the child that it is *wanted*. Children will feel safe and secure, and have a sense of belonging if they find their parents to be loving and interested in their well-being. Lack of parental warmth can cause severe emotional disturbances in a child.

Children feel the need for understanding and appreciation. Therefore parents should have good rapport with the child. For this, parents need to spend more time with their children. Children love adventure and would love picnics and outings with the parents. These activities will cement the family together.

Children look to their parents for everything. They also love to *imitate* their parents. If parents do not practice what they preach, it will have a deleterious effect on the character building of the offspring. If parents wish to inculcate a spirit of cooperation and accommodation in their children, it should be shown in their day-to-day home life. Successful parents are those who command love and respect from their children without departing from parental discipline.

While dealing with children, parents should exhibit patience, tolerance, tenderness and a high quality of restraint. The parental role should be supportive, helpful, appreciative and nurtural rather than coercive, authoritarian, controlling or outright condemnation. Parents should learn to correct the children without being hasty in reprimanding the actions of a

child. They should avoid unhealthy comparisons of their children with others. An errant child should be carefully handled with psychological insight as to what motivates a particular behavior of a child, and handle the problem with utmost care. Parents who are perfectionists often make their youngsters insecure without being aware of it. It is almost as if they are afraid to compliment their offspring. This is apt to leave the children with a poor self-image, and the view that their parents, their role-models are chronically disappointed with them.

When there is more than one child in the family, the parents should be cautious as not to be partial and over-indulgent with one at the expense of the other.

Parents should always praise the child's sincere efforts at learning and be ready to guide it whenever necessary. When the child goes to school, parents should evince a keen interest in their studies, after school hours. Supervising a child's studies at home will strengthen the infant's interest in learning. Children should be allowed to study at their natural pace, without any fear and unhealthy competition. Education is a two-way process — primarily at school and secondarily supplemented at home. Education is not the job of the school only, but also that of the family, as it is a continuous process. Parents have the duty of making the child develop an integrated personality through education, so that the child is endowed with healthy attitudes, desires and a sense of civil and moral responsibility. The foundation laid at home will help a child to stand up to life's trials.

Parents should make sure that they never kill the child's curiosity. Their curiosity should be channelized in the right direction. Experimentation does not mean that they should be allowed to find out for themselves, "fire burns and hot water scalds"! Grown-ups should try to recollect their childhood experiences and try to enter into the children's world while they deal with them. Children should be given a chance to express themselves and express their innate potentialities. Parents should be particularly careful not to destroy the child's delight and enthusiasm or ridicule its budding aesthetic sense.

One of the many ways of encouraging love and tolerance in a child is to allow it to have pets to fondle and play with. Pets are a great help in the character formation of a child. Even toys play a vital role in the shaping of a child's attitude to life.

Parents should learn to keep pace with the changes in the society in which they live instead of being old fashioned and dogmatic. To bridge the "Generation Gap", parents should keep pace with the changes in the outside world by constantly reviewing their own opinions and attitudes. On no account should parents be dictatorial and try to inflict their will on the children. There should be a lot of give and take.

Parenthood is not just earning and providing children with food, clothing and shelter. It is much, much more. A parent is many things in one: provider, dietitian, educationist, philosopher, child psychologist, social worker, and above all, a loving and understanding friend and benefactor. If parents realize this and act accordingly, many of the maladies of the present-day civilization can be eradicated. ■

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*This award winning article, one of a series of its kind arranged and paid for by 'INDIA SARI PALACE', New York, is published for the benefit of our readers. It blends well with our theme for the current issue — "Children"*

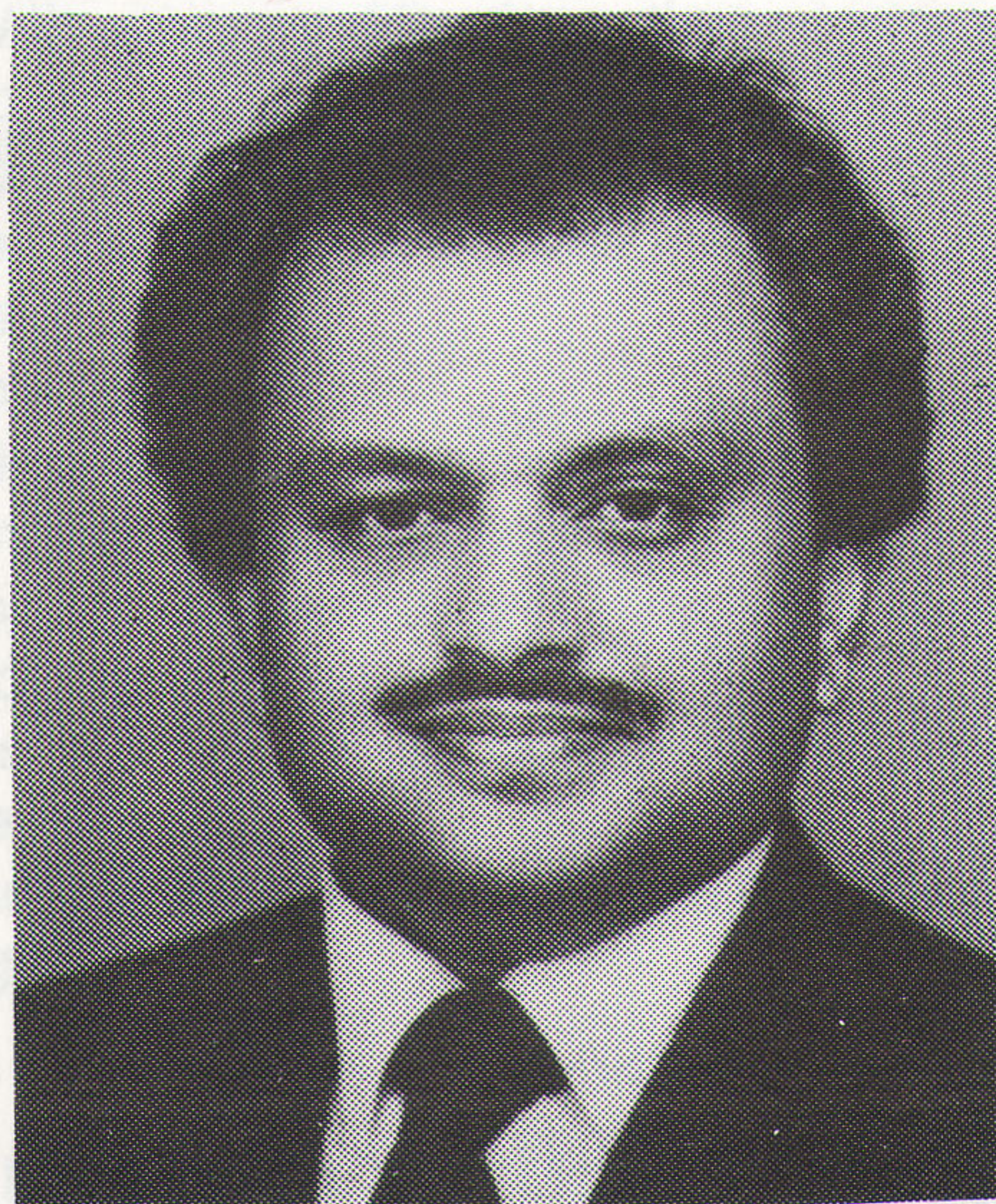
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With a gentle smile, shining through the silvery hair  
He greets the young and the old alike,  
Colorful vestments, and a symbol of the cross worn in many styles  
Is this the portrait of a prophet or a king?

Words of wisdom, like green pastures, leading towards still waters  
From the shepherd to his dear flocks, for he cares for them all  
A guardian of the church, faithful servant of God  
He humbly does his divine task very well indeed.

"The people's Thirumeni" , as he is affectionately called  
Youthful and fervent in spirit, he carries on his mission for Christ.  
At SEVENTY-FIVE he is strong, determined to do greater things  
For he loves his Church and his people so dearly.

A simple, personable, affectionate, loving and caring spiritual father  
Yet strong and determined; never to surrender! Or to simply compromise  
'Convince me," he commands! I will listen; "talk to me, for I am your bishop! "  
Determined to win, like an attorney, he argues each case with class.

A humorous spirited man, who loves to see his people laugh  
An intellectual man , with insights which inspires all  
An architect of the Mar Thoma Church, Diocesan Bishop of Western hemisphere  
We love you Thirumeni, so dearly, for you are our pride and joy.

**AS YOU TURN SEVENTY-FIVE, WE WISH YOU A VERY HAPPY BIRTHDAY**  
And we pray for your good health, to serve the Church many more years  
As our beloved Thirumeni, of the Great Mar Thoma Church  
You are our shepherd father, please lead us further more.

Jacob Joseph  
The Canadian Mar Thoma Church  
Toronto, Canada



## DIOCESE OF NORTH AMERICA & U.K. 1992 ASSEMBLY MEETING

This year's Diocesan Assembly meeting was held in Detroit from July 21st to 23rd under the chairmanship of the Diocesan Bishop, Rt. Rev. Dr. Philipose Mar Chrysostom. Decisions taken at the meeting and later approved by the Synod are given below for the information of our readers:

### REPORT & ACCOUNTS.

Rev. P.J. Alex, the Diocesan Secretary presented the Annual Report and Statement of Accounts for 1991. Mr. M.K. Thomas, the Treasurer presented the statement of expenditure over budget sanctions. It was ratified. Questions were asked followed by discussions on the report and the accounts. With some modifications, the report was received and the accounts were passed. The Assembly resolved to keep our accounts on cash basis. The budget for 1992-93 was presented by the Treasurer.

The Assembly resolved:

Mar Thoma Messenger account should be included in the diocesan account.

Allocation for Messenger and Directory should be part of the budget.

Health Insurance should be maintained as a separate item.

Salary adjustment Fund should be included in the budget.

### YOUTH.

On the basis of the Youth Work Committee report presented by the Rev. K.U. Abraham, the Assembly decided:

1. For the next five years, the top priority of the diocese will be the youth.
2. To exhort the parishes to make efforts in getting a young person elected as one of the officers of the parish from next year on.
3. To request the Diocesan Bishop to take steps for more representations to the youth in the Assembly.
4. There should be joint meetings of the parish Executive Committee and Youth Committee to promote dialogues between the youth and the adults.
5. Efforts should be made to ordain five people as priests from our diocese within the next ten years.

The Assembly resolved to plan and implement

programs for developing and equipping leadership and also training the youth. The planning should be done and implemented in consultation with the Youth Selection Committee and the Youth Committee of the Diocese.

### DIOCESAN DEVELOPMENT FUND.

On the basis of a proposition moved by Mr. O.C. Koshy on behalf of the Council, the Assembly resolved:

1. Collection of the D.D.F. be suspended. The money collected would be returned to those who want it back before the end of October 1992. (They should ask for it in writing before the end of October 1992)
2. The Treasurer would inform all those who lent the money about the suspension and refund of the amounts collected, before October 1992. Any money left will be used for loan purpose only. Any expenditure that is incurred in this connection will be paid from the general funds of the diocese.

### DIOCESAN CENTER

On a motion presented by Dr. M.V. Mathew on behalf of the Council, the Assembly decided:

1. To establish a Diocesan Center with 3 to 5 acres of developed land which should be within a maximum distance 45 miles from an airport, preferably with a suitable house and near to one or two parishes.
2. An amount of \$500,000.00 is to be collected for the first phase of the project. About 50% of the amount will be spent for land and 50% for the buildings.
3. Efforts should be made to complete the first phase before December 31, 1994
4. Resolved to elect an ad hoc committee consisting of 15 members - ten members to be elected by the Assembly, two officers of the diocesan council, two members to be nominated by the committee and one by the diocesan bishop.

Members of the Diocesan Center Ad hoc Committee-

**Elected by the Assembly:**

Mr. Philip Abraham (Houston)

Mrs. Nirmala Abraham (Philadelphia)

Rev. Dr. P.G. George (New York)

Mr. Jacob Joseph (Toronto)



Dr. M.V. Mathew (Chicago)  
 Mr. P.T. Mathew (Philadelphia)  
 Mr. Abraham Mattackal (Los Angeles)  
 Dr. T.M. Thomas (New York)  
 Mr. Varghese P. Varghese (Staten Island)  
 Mr. Mohan Zachariah (Washington D.C.)

**Officers of the Council**

Rev. P.J. Alex, Diocesan Secretary  
 Mr. M.K. Thomas, Diocesan Treasurer.

**Nominated**

Mayor John Abraham (Teaneck, New Jersey)  
 Mr. O.C. Koshy (Seattle)  
 Mr. C. Varghese Simon (New York)

Dr. T.M. Thomas was elected as the Convener and Mr. Philip Abraham as the Treasurer. Mr. K.K. Varghese (Houston) was elected as the auditor.

5. The Committee should give periodical reports to the diocesan council and major decisions would be implemented with the approval of the diocesan bishop.
6. The center will be known by the name '*The Mar Thoma Center of the diocese of North America and U.K. of the Mar Thoma Church.*'
7. Resolved to operate a checking account in the name of Mar Thoma Center on behalf of the diocese of North Americas and U.K. of the Mar Thoma Church at the Texas Commerce Bank. Mr. Philip Abraham, Treasurer of the Mar Thoma Center Committee and Rev. P.J. Alex, the diocesan secretary are authorized to operate the above account jointly.

**MISSION WEEK**

The assembly resolved to celebrate the first week in September as Mission Week every year. The Diocesan Voluntary Evangelists' Association will work out the details. Exhibitions, seminars, lectures and teachings should be arranged at parish level. Local leaders, involved in mission work, are to be invited.

Each of our parish should get related to a mission field in India.

The Assembly authorized Dr. George Zachariah to coordinate sending of a few youth to COYA (Community Oriented Youth Action) in Washington D.C. this year.

**REPRESENTATION OF WOMEN IN THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.**

The Assembly recommended that besides the Sevika Sanghom representative, an additional lady member be elected to the parish executive committee with 50 families or more, two additional lady members for parishes with 100 families or more and three additional lady members for families with 200 families or more.

**MAR THOMA MESSENGER.**

Following the discussion on the report presented by Mr. Abraham Mattackal, the Editor of the Messenger, the Assembly resolved:

1. To appoint an ad hoc committee to study and report about the future of the Mar Thoma Messenger.  
 Rev. P.J. Alex (Dallas), Rev. Varghese Thomas (Staten Island), Mr. John Kunchandy (Philadelphia), Mr. K.C. Cherian (Long Island) and Mr. Abraham Mattackal (Los Angeles) were elected as members of the ad hoc committee.
2. To introduce a two year subscription of \$15.00 (\$18.00 for Canada & U.K.) for Messenger.
3. Messenger account should be included in the diocesan account. Allocation for Messenger and Directory should be part of the general budget. The accounts should be audited by the diocesan auditor.
4. To write off the ad amount of \$100.00 from U.K. parish.
5. Mr. P.T. Thomas will collect the balance due from Jewel India and Mr., M.K. Thomas from Thomson Travels.
6. The council should look into the questions and issues raised in the Assembly.
7. The budget should be presented through the council.
8. To allow the Messenger Board to return the loan of \$4000.00 in 1993-94 instead of 1992-93.

The budget for the Messenger with an income of \$10,500.00 and expenditure of \$10,500.00 was passed.

**DIOCESAN DIRECTORY.**

The Diocesan Bishop released for sale the Diocesan Directory. The price of a copy of the directory was fixed at \$10.00 and for those attending the Family Conference, the price was fixed at \$7.00 per copy.

The Assembly resolved to give a token reward



for those who helped Mr. Mattackal in the publication.

#### OTHER DECISIONS

The Assembly ratified the nomination of the Rev. Johnson P. Mathew as a member of the diocesan council in the place of the Rev. Johnson Varghese who was transferred to Kerala.

The Assembly resolved to celebrate the tenth anniversary of the Zonal Council during the Family Conference and the Students' Conference.

The revised constitution of the Family Conference presented by Mr. Jacob Joseph on behalf of the Council was accepted with some modification. The constitution was approved.

The president read a letter from the Metropolitan about the collection for D.S.M. Assembly au-

thorized Dr. George Zachariah to present the matter in the youth conference for collection.

Resolved that Clergy Assistance Fund be merged with TMAM Fund.

Resolved to write off the unusable computer belonging to the diocese.

Resolved to authorize the council to spend 50% of the budgeted amount for 1992 for the first six months of 1993.

Resolved to give the balance \$2800.00 and any amount collected under 'Aramana Chapel' fund for Thulappally church in Ranni-Nilackal diocese as requested by the diocesan bishop.

The Assembly ratified the appointment of Mr. Jacob Joseph to the D.S.M. Committee in the vacancy caused by the resignation of Mrs. Susan Ninan from the Assembly.

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## “Heaven's Grocery Store”

*(Contributed by Mrs. Mariamma Chacko, Washington D.C.)*

I was walking down life's highway, along time ago. One day I saw a sign that read "Heaven's Grocery Store." As I got a little closer the door came open wide, And when I came to myself, I was standing just inside.

I saw a host of Angles, they were standing everywhere, one handed me a basket, and said, "My child, please shop with care."

Everything a Christian needed was in that Grocery Store, and all you couldn't carry, you could sure come back for more.

First I got some PATIENCE LOVE was in the very same row, further down was UNDERSTANDING, you need it wherever you may go, I got a box or two of WISDOM, a bag or two of FAITH, I just couldn't miss the HOLY GHOST, for it was all over the place.

I stopped to get some STRENGTH and COURAGE, to help me run this race, by then my basket was getting full, but I remembered I needed some GRACE, I didn't forget SALVATION, for SALVATION that was free, so I tried to get enough of that to save both YOU and ME.

Then I started up to the counter to pay my grocer bill, for I thought that I had everything to do my MASTER'S will, but as I went up the aisle, I saw PRAYER, and I just had to put that in, for I knew that when I stepped outside, I'd run right into SIN, PEACE and JOY were plentiful, they were on the last shelf, SONG and PRAISES were hanging near, so I just helped myself.

Then I said unto the Angel "How much do I owe?" He smiled and said, "Just take your basket wherever you may go", again I looked at him and said "How much do I really owe?" He smiled again and said, "My child, Jesus paid your bill a long time ago."

(Author unknown)



# DIOCESAN SUNDAY THOUGHTS

Rev. P.J. Alex, Dallas

The Malankara Mar Thoma Church is the reformed section of the ancient church founded in India. Our fore-fathers have undergone great sacrifice to maintain and preserve the Episcopal tradition, autonomous, indigenous, and democratic character and evangelical outlook of the Church through the centuries. With the expansion of the Mar Thoma Church beyond the borders of Kerala, a new generation of our members is growing up who have to be told the history of the Church in a way that they can understand and appreciate- its values and principles which it stands for.

The Mar Thoma Church combines evangelical and reformed doctrines with ancient forms of worship and practices. The Church is maintaining the oriental nature of the ancient church and keep as much of the old traditions as were consistent with Biblical doctrine. So we continue the episcopal tradition, ancient forms of worship, liturgy, and rituals. Therefore, we have more in common with other sister churches than any other church. This gives us opportunity to enter into closer relationship with other churches. The full communion relationship that has been established between Mar Thoma Church and the Anglican Communion all over the world is the result of this special nature of the Church.

The Church values episcopal tradition, at the same time it considers the laity as equally responsible in church affairs. The laity share in this as much as the clergy and bishops, though different people are called to exercise different ministries. All are called to share in the royal priesthood of Jesus Christ. In all aspects of church affairs, men and women have an equal voice. The Mar Thoma Church is a people's movement, her people build the church and parishes. The laity have the special advantage of being on the frontiers of life in the secular world and can witness to people in different walks of life.

The ministry of the church is traditionally carried on through the three main offices of the deacon, priest and bishop. The Metropolitan being the head

of the church, is the custodian of faith. To be with him is the essential task of the Bishops and clergy. The diocesan bishop is the supervisor of the entire church; he is called to be the custodian and teacher of true faith in his diocese.

Beginning as small prayer groups in the basement of houses in the early seventies, congregations began to be established in various places. The diocese of North America and U.K. is the youngest of all our dioceses. Majority of the Marthomites migrated to North America in the seventies and early eighties. From its humble beginnings to its present stature, the church has grown by the grace of God, by the sacrificial services of her people,

clergy and bishops. In 1982 Zonal Assembly was formed which has since grown as a Diocese. The first meeting of the Zonal Assembly was held in Philadelphia on the Indian Independence Day of 1982. This year we celebrate its tenth anniversary.

We are remembering with great gratitude the late Rt. Rev. Thomas Mar Anthanasius

Suffragan Metropolitan. He gave leadership to the parishes and congregations of this diocese in its early days. The last months of his life were spent in organizing and developing the parishes in North America and England. Our beloved Valiya Thirumeni, Most Rev. Dr. Alexander Mar Thoma gave valuable contributions to the developments of this diocese. The able leadership of our Diocesan Bishop Rt. Rev. Dr. Philipose Mar Chrystostom Suffragan Metropolitan helped us to grow to the present stature. His guidance and the special effort in nurturing the parishes contributed immensely to our growth. We got timely help and fellowship from the Episcopal Church of America and its Asiamerica Ministry.

On the tenth anniversary we took a major decision to build a Mar Thoma Center in North America. The Center will be used as the residence of the Diocesan Bishop and as the diocesan office, a center where people can come together and discuss and plan the future missions of the diocese and the church.

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*Irenaeus, the great  
Church father said,  
"Where the Bishop is,  
there is the church."*

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The Diocesan Center must be the collective effort of each and every Mar Thoma family of this diocese. This is a great step we are taking, looking in to the future of the church in this great land of opportunities. We need the presence and leadership of a bishop in our midst. Irenaeus, the great Church father said, "Where the Bishop is, there is the church." Bishop symbolizes the unity of the church. He brings together all the parishes for the common cause and the mission of the church. This year our Sabha Mandalam decided to consecrate three more bishops. A bishop will be stationed in our diocese in the-not-too distant future. So we have to accomplish our plan to build the Mar Thoma Center within a short time.

The Diocese affirmed the whole objective of the tenth anniversary celebration as the spiritual renewal for the fulfillment of the mission of the church. As a long term objective, efforts should be made to ordain five people as priests from our diocese. For the next five years the top priority of the diocese will be youth. We should encourage

youth to take leadership positions in our parishes and diocese. Arrangements must be made to have a dialogue between adults and youths on an on going basis . One way we can accomplish this is by holding combined youth committee and executive committee meetings. Anniversary is an occasion to look back to the heritage that we cherish, and to evaluate the present situation in the light of the vision and sacrifices of our forefathers. It also presents to us challenges for fulfilling our mission in this great continent in the days to come. We have to grasp the opportunities and work with urgency.

This year we are celebrating October 11th Sunday as the Diocesan Sunday. It is a special day to pray and plan for the diocese. It is a time for rededication for its causes and to support morally and financially its projects. We have many opportunities and challenges ahead of us. We should prayerfully, patiently, and tirelessly work to achieve our dreams and goals. 'LET US ARISE AND BUILD.' May God bless our Diocese.

## *Matrimonial*

Proposals invited from parents of Malayalee girls for a Marthomite boy of age 27, B.Sc in Botany, completed M.A., studying for Diploma in Computer Science. Now residing in India. Please send replies to:

Box 092/AC,  
C/o The Editor

Parents invite proposals for a Mar Thoma Syrian Christian, God fearing girl, 27 years old, U.S. citizen, graduate in Business Management, employed in California living with her parents. Want correspondence from suitable Mar Thoma or C.S.I. Christian boys. Please send details with returnable photo to:

P.O. Box 4885  
Santa Clara, Ca 95056

Parents seek suitable alliance for their Canadian immigrant daughter, holding Ph.D. degree in English Literature, 35 years old, innocent divorcee, from Syrian Christian men 35-40 years old.

Apply with details to:  
Box No. BJ/092  
C/o The Editor

Correspondence invited from good, mature Christian men between 35 and 42 years of age (bachelors or widowed) for a Marthomite widow (34 years old) with children (10 and 8 years). All are well established Canadian citizens . Please reply with details to:

BOX # LM/092,  
C/o The Editor

Parents invite proposals for a Mar thomite girl, religious, 24 years old, fair, 5'2", M.A. student in Kottayam, parents awaiting migration to USA.

Please send replies to:  
Box # 092/SP,  
C/o The Editor

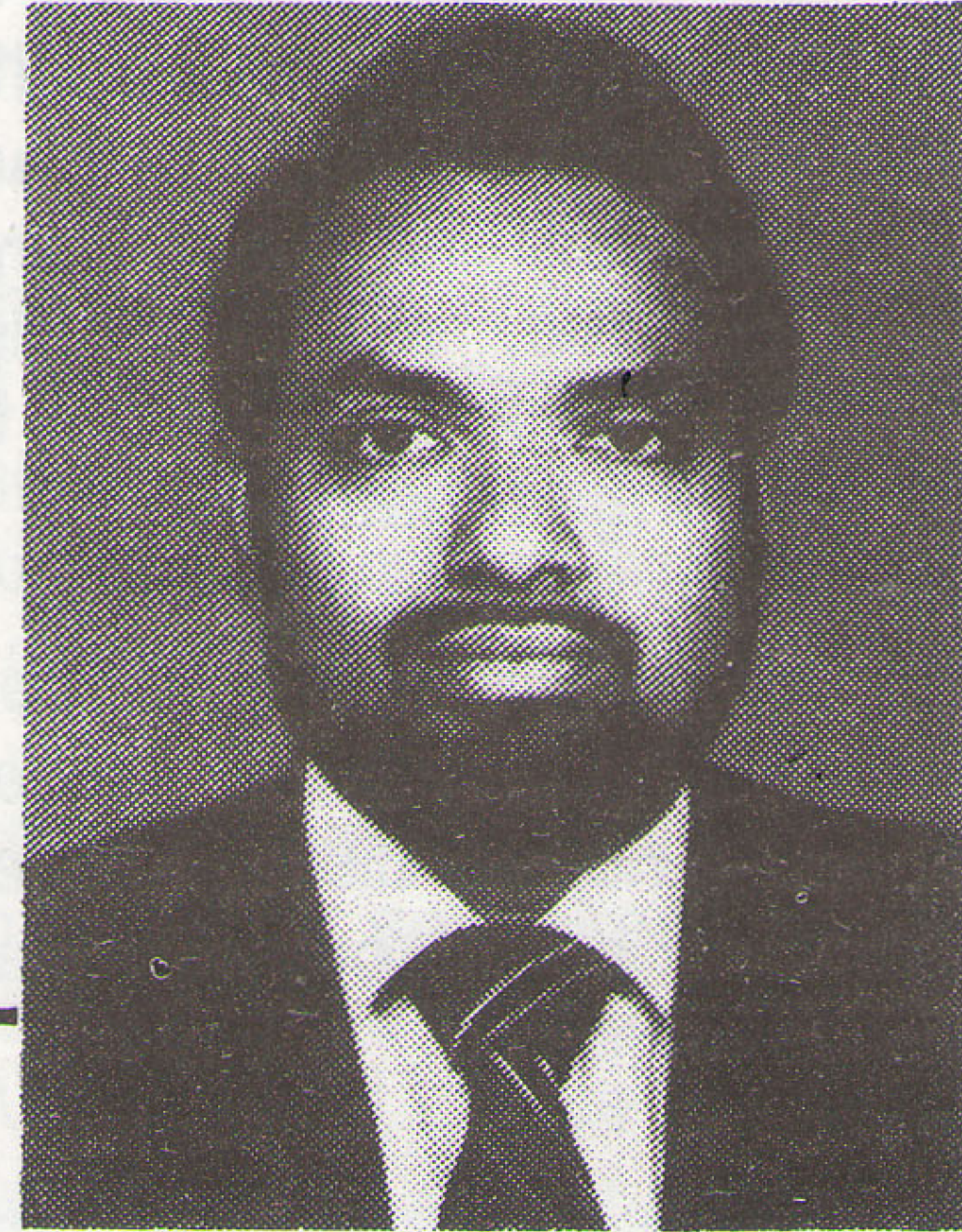


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# A REPORT ON THE MAR THOMA FAMILY CONFERENCE OF NORTH AMERICA & U.K.

P.M. John, Convener - Mar Thoma Family Conference

The 10th Mar Thoma Family Conference of North America and U.K. 1992, hosted by Detroit Mar Thoma Church, was held at Novi Hilton, Novi, Michigan, from 23 -26 July, 1992. The conference was blessed with the guidance and leadership of our beloved Diocesan Bishop Rt. Rev. Dr. Philipose Mar Chrysostom Suffragan Metropolitan. The theme of the conference was "Living the days wisely" and the main speaker was the Rev. Dr. A. Leonard Griffith from Toronto, Canada, a three time main speaker at the largest annual Christian gathering in Asia "The Maramon Convention." Other leaders of the conference were Rev. A.T. Zachariah, Vicar, Mar Thoma Church, London, England (Bible study and talk for adults), Rev. Sam Thomas, Canadian Anglican Church, Toronto, Canada, (Bible study for teens), Rev. Dr. P.G. George, (Bible study for children ages 4-7), Rev. K. Thomas George, (Bible Study for children ages 8-12), Rev. Johnson P. Mathew, New Jersey (dedication service for adults), Rev. Geevarghese Mathew (dedication talk for teens and children), Rev. Y. George (devotional talk for children ages 4-12) and Rev. K.U. Abraham (classes for first communicants).

All achenes present at the conference were involved in various activities of the conference.

The conference commenced at 7:00 pm on 23rd July, 1992, with opening worship by Detroit Mar Thoma Church, followed by welcome address by Rev. E.J. Joseph, Vicar, Detroit Mar Thoma Church and welcome skit by Detroit Mar Thoma Church Sunday School Children. The Rt. Rev. R. Stewart Woods Jr., Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Michigan, inaugurated the conference with a short message on "Value of the Family". Rev. Fr. Joseph Nagaroor, Catholic Church, Detroit, Rev. Fr. John Meyers, St. Peter's Episcopal Church, Detroit and Rev. Itty Mathew, CSI Congregation, Detroit, also felicitated the occasion with brief messages.

Dr. Griffith in his theme talk emphasized the

need to build the family on unshakable foundation, i.e., Jesus Christ (Mathew 7:24). As our days are numbered we have to live as wisely as possible (Mathew 25:2), live a complete life each day and commit each day to Jesus Christ. The Bible study materials were provided to the participants well before the conference day and it helped to make this year's conference more meaningful. Dr. M.V. Mathew, Chicago, presented a topic on Diocese of North America and U.K., for the group discussion by adults. Topics for group discussion for teenagers were presented by Dr. T.M. Thomas, New York (Learning to be Wise) and Dr. P.V. Cherian, Detroit (Growing up Wisely). Musical concerts by Bruce and Brenda Jackson from Nashville, Tennessee, and Gospel songs in English, Hindi and Malayalam by Stan and June Abraham, son and daughter of Mr. and Mrs. V.T. Abraham, U.K. Mar Thoma Church, London, England, were added attractions to the conference.

One hundred and fifty families (500 members) attended the conference, among whom there were delegates from the United Kingdom, West

Germany, and India. The dedication service was very touching. The presence of the Holy Spirit was felt everywhere. We thank God that many of our participants, both adults and children, witnessed and dedicated their lives to God.

Other activities of the conference were Quiz and Choir competitions and Talent Night. Many Parishes took part in these programs. Detroit Mar Thoma Church won prizes for Quiz and Choir competitions. Among the many Talent Night programs presented, "Ottam Thullal" by Philadelphia, was marvelous and hilarious.

Two important highlights of this conference were the celebration of the 10th anniversary of the Zonal Council and the 75th birthday of our beloved Thirumeni, Rt. Rev. Dr. Philipose Mar Chrysostom

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Suffragan Metropolitan. We are grateful to the Lord for giving us the privilege and honor to be the host for these celebrations. The 10th anniversary celebration was held on July 25th, 1992. The celebration started with a candle light procession lead by Thirumeni followed by Council and Assembly members. During the introductory speech, Rev. P.J. Alex, Secretary, Diocese of North America, explained in brief the beginning of the Mar Thoma congregations in North America and its gradual growth to the present stage. Rev. Dr. Winston Ching, officer of the Asiamerica Ministry, New York, Dr. T.M. Thomas, New York, Ms. Susan John, Detroit, representing the youth, spoke on the occasion. The celebration was closed with a message by Thirumeni during which the Thirumeni announced details of the proposed Diocesan Center to be built in North America. The Holy Communion Service on Sunday, 26th July, 1992, was followed by a cake cutting ceremony and the presentation of a cash gift to Thirumeni in con-

nection with his 75th birthday. Thirumeni donated this amount towards the Mar Thoma Center fund.

We praise God for the multitude of blessings showered on us during the last two years in our preparation for this great event. The conference was very successful spiritually and socially. We express our heartfelt thanks to our beloved Thirumeni for his blessings, leadership, and guidance. We thank all those parishes who helped us in worship and sing-along.

We also thank all the speakers, Achens, and participants for their active support and participation that lead to the success of this conference. The Conference was concluded at 11:00 AM on July 26th, 1992 with a vote of thanks by Mr. P.M. George, Vice President, Conference Committee. As Dr. Griffith reminded us, "Let us live one day at a time, as wise as we could, committing ourselves to Jesus Christ."

**“അതിരാവിലെ തിരു സന്നിധി അണയുന്നോരു സമയേ.....”**

**P.T. Chacko, Malaysia**

ശാന്തമാം പ്രഭാതത്തിൽ കളിർമയുടെ പുളകത്തിൽ സുഖവും ഭദ്രവുമായ ഉറക്കം ഉണർന്ന ഭക്തകവി പാടുകയാണ്. “അതിരാവിലെ തിരുസന്നിധി അണയുന്നോരു സമയേ.” സന്നിധിയേ കുറിച്ച് ബോധവാനായിട്ടാണ് ഉറങ്ങുവാൻ കിടന്നത്. പകലത്തേ പ്രയത്നങ്ങൾക്കു ശേഷം സന്ധ്യാ സമയം കളിയും ഉറണം കഴിഞ്ഞു, ഉറങ്ങുമ്പോൾ തിരുസന്നിധിയാനത്തിൽ ധ്യാനവും പ്രാർത്ഥനയും കഴിഞ്ഞാകണം ഉറങ്ങിയതും.

സകല ചരാചരങ്ങളെയും സൃഷ്ടിച്ച ദൈവത്തിന്റെ സന്നിധിയിൽ സ്വന്ത സാദൃശ്യത്തിൽ മെനഞ്ഞെടുത്ത മനുഷ്യൻ സ്വാതന്ത്ര്യ സ്നേഹ ബോധവാനായിട്ടാണ് അടുക്കുന്നത്. അപ്പനും-മക്കളും എന്ന ബന്ധത്തിന്റെ ഔത്സുക്യത്തോടെ, അടുക്കുക, അവകാശപ്പെടുക, വാങ്ങുക, സങ്കടം രേഖപ്പെടുത്തുക, സന്തോഷം പങ്കിടുക- ഊന്നിത്യമാർന്ന ആ സാമീപ്യ സുഖത്തിൽ ലയിക്കുക. ഭക്തിയുടെയും, യേശുവിന്റെയും, സ്നേഹത്തിന്റെയും അന്തരീക്ഷത്തിൽ അല്പസമയം അടുക്കുക ദൈവവുമായി. അതാണു തിരു സന്നിധി: ഉയർന്ന നിലവാരത്തിലേക്കു ഒരു കടക്കൽ.

അതിരാവിലെ തിരു സന്നിധി വിട്ടു പോകുന്ന മനുഷ്യനെ ചില ചിന്തകൾ ഭരിക്കാതിരിക്കുമോ? എന്റെ വാക്കുകൾ, ചിന്തകൾ, നീക്കങ്ങൾ, പ്രവർത്തനങ്ങൾ, ഇവ ഒക്കെയും ദൈവം ശ്രദ്ധിക്കുമല്ലോ. അതിനാൽ അച്ചടക്കവും, സമന്വിയും നിർമ്മലതയും പാലിക്കുക: അവയ്ക്കു തക്ക പ്രവണതകൾ ഉള്ളിന്റെ ഉള്ളിലുണ്ടാകും. വൈകിട്ട് അരേ തിരുസന്നിധിയിലേക്കു മടങ്ങി വരണമല്ലോ വിശ്രമത്തിനായിട്ട് എന്ന ചിന്തയും, കണക്കുകൾ സസൂക്ഷ്മം ബോധിപ്പിക്കണമല്ലോ, തദനുസരണം ചിട്ടയും നിഷ്ഠയും കൈവരുത്തുവാൻ “അതിരാവിലെ തിരുസന്നിധി” വാഗ്ദാനം സഹായിക്കും.

തിരു സന്നിധി ബോധത്തിന്റെ ചാരുത കൈവെടിയാതെ, ഉഷ്മളത ഉൾക്കൊണ്ട് സൗഹൃദത്തോട് ദിനചര്യകൾ തുടരുവാൻ ഈ ഗാന ശകലം സഹായിക്കട്ടെ. അത്ഥവും ആഴ്ചവുമുള്ള ഈ ഗീതം ചിലപ്പോഴെങ്കിലും പതുക്കെയെങ്കിലും പാടാം.



# FAMILY CONFERENCE THROUGH PICTURES



**Assembly in session**



**Dr. T.M. Thomas raising a point at the diocesan assembly**



**Sale of Diocesan Directory being inaugurated by Thirumeni by giving a copy to Mr. V.T. Abraham from U.K., while Mr. Abraham Mattackal, the editor, looks on.**



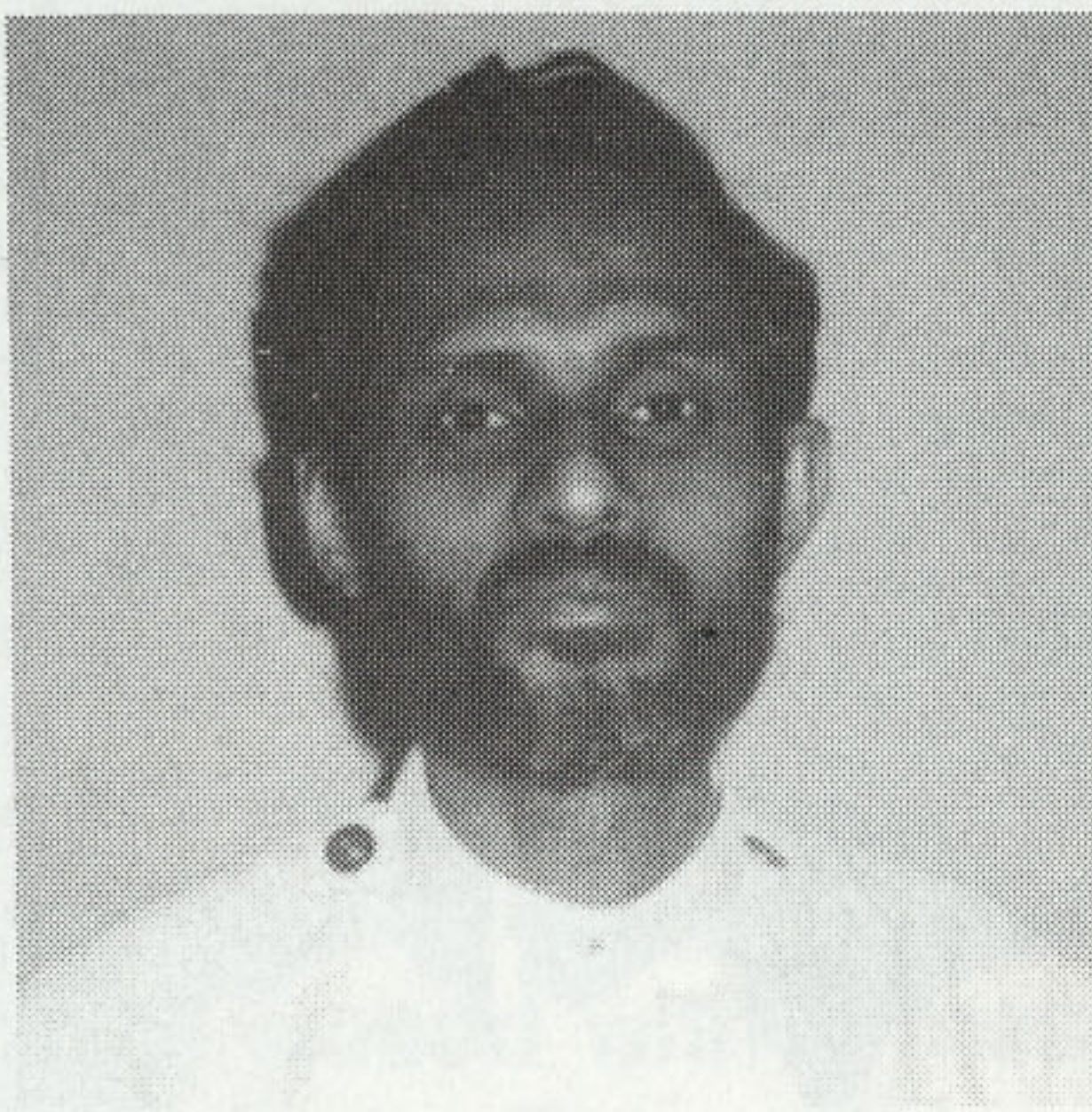
**A section of the audience**



# MAR THOMA FAMILY CONFERENCE - BIBLE CLASSES

## "LIVING OUR DAYS WISELY"

Rev. A.T. Zachariah, London, U. K.



Living (existence) of human beings is a unique one. John Macquarie calls it an 'existence apart'. He argues that man's existence is special as he or she can decide for himself or herself to a

great extent. Deciding wisely will lead to an authentic and wise existence. Wrong decision will lead to meaningless and unauthentic living. Apart from other organisms, human life is to be shaped on solid decisions. There are various references in the bible about wise and foolish livings. In every reference, the subjective decision was the criterion for the type of existence they had.

Mathew 7:24

*A man is wise because he builds up the mansion of his life on the strong foundation of God and His word.*

Mathew 25:2

*Wise are a group of watchful and diligent people who are ready to wait for the Lord, believing in God's wisdom rather than their own conclusions.*

Luke 12:42

*Wise are those who do have the divine work with an unforgetting feeling of the master's presence. Physical absence for sometime will not tempt them to go away from the masters policies.*

Luke 11:40

*Fools are those who have no inward implication of faith. They have only outward expressions.*

Luke 12:20

*Jesus calls one the fool who considers the material wealth as the basis of his happiness. He forgets that he is a mortal and he has to leave his possessions.*

Psalm 53:2

*God looks down from heaven to see whether there is a wise man who seeks God. By seeking God one tries to align with God's purposes and plans. The Bible very well explains what was the purpose and plan of God about man in creation. Looking in to the*

*Word of God will help us to decide for a wise existence.*

Genesis 1: 26-28, Genesis: 2:7, Psalm 8 will be enough to give us a good picture about the authentic man and his role in the universe.

### 1. MAN CREATED IN GOD'S IMAGE

The basic statement about man in the description of creation is this. This concept of image cannot be a concept of wax modeling. Instead, it explains the correspondence between the total being of God and the total being of man; the sum of personal being as a self conscious, self directing vitality in relation to God. As Lord is the Lord of the universe, man is the lord of the created earth. He is asked to have dominion over the whole of creation as God's steward and vice regent. As a personal being, human being can respond to God's directions. When man existed in that proper relationship, the balance in creation was properly kept; and everything seemed good. The concept of image of God in man very well states that man's lordship is to be exercised in the context of God's Lordship. God has the right to command, while man must obey. This places a limit up on man's freedom, yet only within this limitation can man find the meaning of his freedom and of his real life. When man was in communion with God, everything seemed very good in the sight of God. When man lost that relationship man's mastery became polemical and autocratic. Humans, being the crown of creation, need to keep up the image of God in them.

### 2. HUMAN EXISTENCE IS PERFECT ONLY IN PARTNERSHIP

No human can be an island. God wanted them to relate with Him and also with nature, especially with fellow human beings. Person to person relationship was very much emphasized. A suitable partner could be found only in another human person. Hence God created a woman. God created and blessed the community life by blessing a family. Family is the basic unit where intimate affiliations are possible. It is the basic unit over which the entire social structure is built up. Losing the family concept will lead to the loosening of the social fabric. Communion in the family in relation to God will lead to an authentic possibility of a balance in social



relationship and mans relationship in nature.

### **3. HUMAN EXISTENCE AS PART OF NATURE BUT BEYOND NATURE (TRANSFORMED EXISTENCE)**

Man was created out of dust of the ground. But no human being is mere dust when he lives. God's breath in him transformed him. This shows that human relationship in this material world need to be a transformed existence. He cannot say that matter is illusion. It is so real to him. Human beings are part of nature and they need to take the material world very seriously. Any spirituality that denied the material world is not Christian. At the same time man cannot be a slave to materialism which advocates that only matter is the real. Materialistic thoughts shall not kill the authentic man in us. A transformed presence of man in nature will lead to the authentic concept about him.

### **4. MAN - A BEING OF FREE WILL**

Man was created in the garden of Eden with a free will. It is true that he was asked not to eat the fruit of the tree which was in the middle of the garden. It is interesting to note that no Cherub or an angel was asked to guard the tree. There was no physical barriers to check him. Only the obligation to God was the controlling factor. A willful decision on the part of human persons was asked for. A unforgettable feeling of the presence of God was always necessary. As a result of free will and the possibility of breaking it, man always experiences certain tensions in existence. John Macquarie classifies them like this.

**a. Possibilities and facticities.** Man is born with immense possibilities but is always limited by facts. Birth, nurturing, family backgrounds, financial position etc., may become limiting factors. Out of human urge to grow, man may feel, at times, frustrated.

**b. Rationality and irrationality.** A person knows how to act rationally in a context but many often he acts irrationally. He may say "I was not myself at that time".

**c. Society and individual.** A person knows that he is part of the society and his existence is as part of the society. But many often he withdraws to the island of individualism.

**d. Anxiety and hope.** At times man may feel that he can control his destiny and shape the future. But because of the complexities of existence he feels rejected and becomes a victim of anxiety.

A man in communion with God in his authentic self,

will keep up the balance and will be positive in out look. But as a result of seeking his own ways to realize the possibilities (like the plucking of the fruit of the tree in the middle of the Garden) human position becomes very pathetic. It becomes:

**1. Lost and estranged.** In the parable of the prodigal son both sons are under judgment. The elder son did not go away but he could not understand the father's loving heart. He was estranged. The younger son was lost but he could understand the fathers heart. Both needed reconciliation.

**2. Lost and estrange dead** (Eph.. 2: 1-5) Dead means not sensitive to God and His initiative. Lost and Godless Romans 1: 18-32.

As a result of lacking a real concept of God they began to make idols. An idol can never speak and challenge the worshiper. Godless man opted for a God who will be passive. As a result moral laxities took place. Homo-sexuality and other human abuses were the results.

The modern civilization is under divine judgment. We have lost the authentic human-hood. Who will deliver us from this punishment of death? Who can give us back our authenticity? If through Adam we lost our authenticity, through Jesus we are guaranteed its gaining back. "Thanks to be God through JESUS CHRIST, OUR LORD (Rom. 7:24)".

### **GLORIOUS FREEDOM OF THE CHILDREN OF GOD ROMANS 8:12 -25**

Man is liberated from the slavery of sin and evil through Jesus Christ. (Romans 7:24). Slavery to sinful passions is death. But the glorious freedom of the children of God is to die to the sinfulness by decision. There are certain salient features for this direction.

### **1. LIFE WILL BE REALIZED THROUGH DEATH (ROMANS 8:10,11)**

Man at the cross roads has to decide for accepting Jesus. But the acceptance is risky and dangerous to the carnal man. When Jesus invites somebody to follow him he is invited to die so that much harvest is promised. (John 12: 23-26) Eternal life is promised to them who are prepared to mortify their passions. History has proved beyond doubt that this was real to many a great soul. Men and women who lived beyond the time like Socrates, Gandhi, St. Paul, Polycarp and other countless martyrs and confessors bear witness to this fact. To a dying world the only way is to find a rebirth through death by which the evil passions are mortified.



## 2. LIFE IS POSSIBLE ONLY THROUGH FAITH IN JESUS CHRIST THROUGH HOLY SPIRIT

Salvation and eternal life are impossible by human efforts. God's scheme for the same is Jesus. Belief in the name of Jesus is the basis of son-ship (John 1:12). Through faith in Christ Jesus (Gal 3:26) both the Jews and the Gentiles are potential sons of God (Gal 3:28). Life that was manifested in Jesus cannot be inherited. It has to be possessed through faith in Jesus and in His cross. Holy Spirit has been granted to the church to be the counselor in this respect.

## 3. SON-SHIP IS A PRIVILEGE AND RESPONSIBILITY

Privilege of son-ship through Jesus Christ has made us all co-heirs of all the heavenly heritages with Jesus. (Eph 1:3) We are a holy people and a royal priesthood. Along with every privilege there is responsibility. It is to partake with Jesus in the redemptive process. Redemption of the universe will be realized through the revelation of the sons of God. What are the practical dimensions of this participation with Jesus?- A glorification of the universe through participation in suffering. We hear about different types of sufferings. All sufferings will not lead to glorification of the creation. Sufferings created by materialistic and consumeristic philosophy of life

may not be redemptive. Sufferings according to the will of God like the pains of St. Mary, Paul Stephen and others proved to be redemptive. It is a freedom to taste humiliation and shame out of the desire to serve God. It is a freedom to liberate oneself from the bondage of self justification. It is a freedom to enjoy the freedom from self love. It is a willful decision to be salt and light of the world possible only through burning and melting. *THIS IS POSSIBLE AS THE FUTURE HAS PENETRATED INTO THE PRESENT.*

Only through a valid philosophy of life and history one can give himself away for this kind of a sacrifice. Glory that will be revealed in us in the future make our mundane experiences less discouraging. (Rom 8:18) The sons of God have experienced the first installment of the future glory. The spirit in them helps them in their weaknesses (Rom 8:26). The Holy Spirit testifies in them the presence and the purposes of God in them. Hope is maintained and nurtured in the believer by the Holy Spirit.

Living our days wisely is to live in son-ship. Authentic human existence is guaranteed by aligning with Jesus. As a Christian community our challenge is to suffer with Jesus so that we will rejoice with Him.



*Staten Island delegates with the Diocesan Bishop*



*The V.T. Abraham family from U.K. along with the Rev. A.T. Zachariah*



## TENTH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS OF THE ZONAL COUNCIL DETROIT- JULY 25, 1992

(Speech given by **Miss Susan John, Detroit**  
with contributions by  
**Miss Minni Matthew, Chicago**)



I appreciate this opportunity that I was given to represent our youths and try and express our feelings and concerns about our Mar Thoma Church.

As we celebrate the 10th anniversary of the Zonal Council, we should remember that this Family Conference began as a result of the Students' Conference, which started in 1980. The Students' Conference of 1980 was a trend setter for many of the denominational conferences held today. The Family and Youth Conference help to unite and support families and friends, practicing and believing in the same faith of the Mar Thoma Church all over North America and the United Kingdom.

When we look back at the past decade, we as a church, have so much to be proud of. The growth of our parishes have resulted in us now being grown as a diocese- the diocese of North America and U.K. As we look to the future of our Church and this Conference, let us keep in mind the theme of this year's Conference, "Living the Days Wisely". Are we as a diocese, as a Church, living each day wisely as we are planning for the future. Is the Church meeting the needs of all its members? But more importantly, is the Church meeting the needs of the youths, the future of the Mar Thoma Church?

Majority of the parishes have their own church building, or are in the process of buying or building one very soon. What is the use of having a building but no one to worship in it? Will we be able to gather together for another celebration as this, ten years from now, or even five years from now? Honestly, I feel that if the needs of the youth are not met, our

parishes have a very good possibility of diminishing in size. We will begin to lose the youths to the American churches or even from fellowship.

One way to maintain our desire for our Church is to answer all our questions regarding certain rituals performed in Church. For example: the use of incense, drawing the cross and chanting, to name just a few. We know that this is a sign of worship to God, but if we continue to do this without understanding, the worship will be meaningless. The only way to understand is to learn, therefore, we need to be taught about the symbols used during the service and importance of them. The Church should hold a class in which all our questions can be answered.

As we grow up in this country, our needs are different compared to the needs of those youths in

India. We are living with two very different cultures. The Church should meet not only our spiritual needs but also our mental needs. Each day we are confronted with situations that are acceptable to the American society but not our own. The Church should try and place themselves in our situations so that they can try and get a better understanding of the struggles we face.

As I was looking for ways to express my thoughts clearly, I came across an article in the 10th Anniversary Special Issue of the *Mar Thoma Messenger*. The article was written by the Youth Worker of the Western Region, Mr. George Philipose. In it he also spoke about the future of the Mar Thoma Church in this country. He not only spoke about the future of the Church but also about ministering effectively to the youths in this country. As we have grown physically, we have also grown spiritually. Our faith be-

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*Each day we are confronted with situations that are acceptable to the American society but not our own. The Church should try and place themselves in our situations so that they can try and get a better understanding of the struggles we face.*

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gan as a spark and through the Holy Qurbana and prayer meetings, it has now turned into a fire. **We need different programs to help fuel the fire, to keep it burning throughout our lives, so that someday it may turn into a raging inferno, and that it may be a witness to our Lord Jesus.** The programs should include: more meaningful services in English, more discussions and Bible studies where youths can express their feelings and troubles they go through.

Statistics say that we have 37 parishes in this diocese with approximately 3000 families listed. That means approximately 6000 children with 4000 youths between the ages of 14-25. This indicates that our diocese has the potential to grow very strong, but if the church can not provide us direction and strong guidance then our diocese will not be so strong.

We all would like to stay as Marthomites to witness the Lord in this land of ours.



*Our achenes with the Diocesan Bishop and the Rev. Winston Ching*



*Winning Detroit Choir*



*Thirumeni at the Mar Thoma Literature Society Booth*



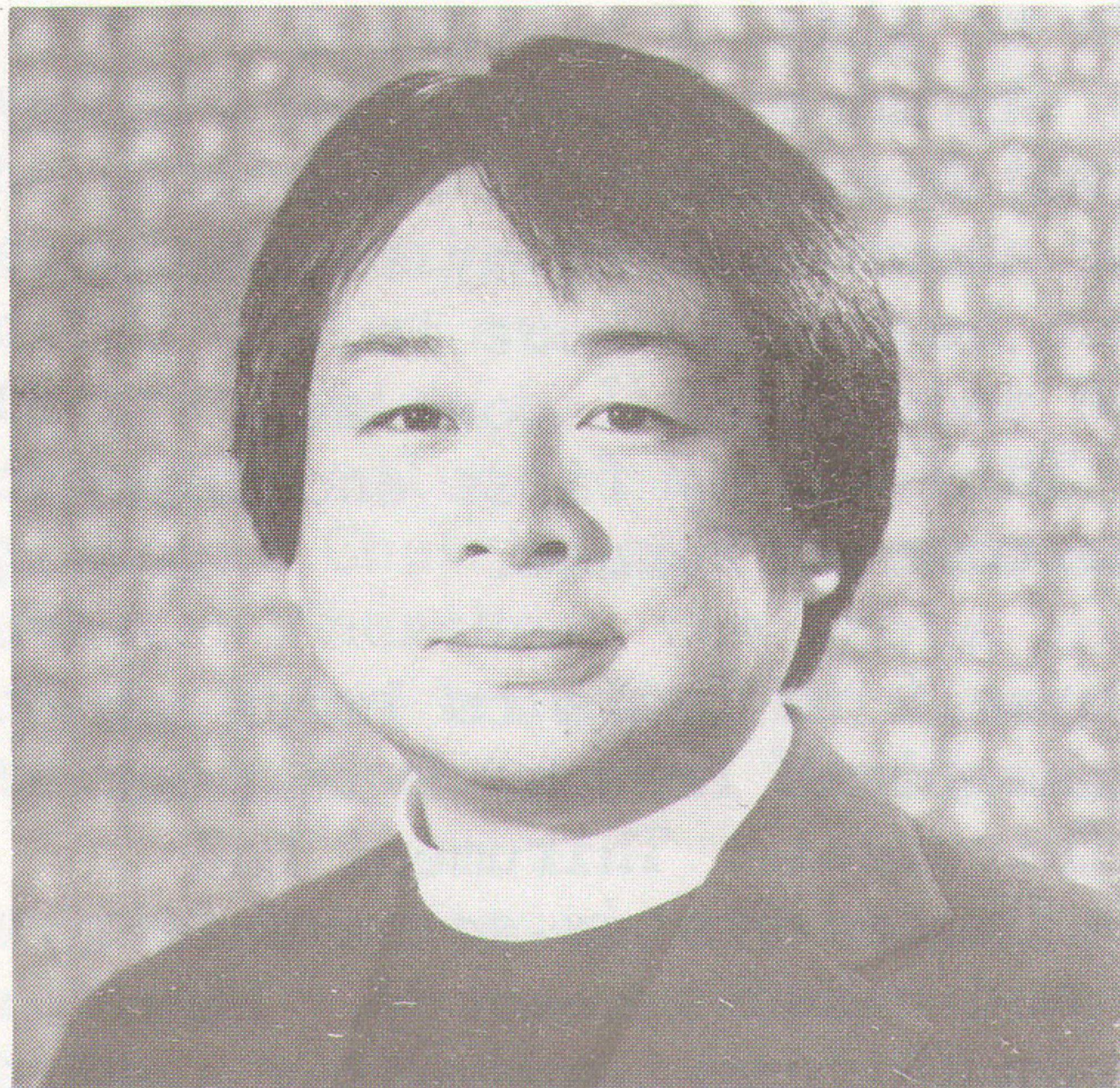
*Thirumeni at the Mar Thoma Messenger Booth*



FELICITATION MESSAGE ON THE OCCASION OF THE TENTH ANNIVERSARY  
CELEBRATION OF THE ZONAL ASSEMBLY

BY

the Rev. Winston Ching, New D.D. – Asiamerica Ministry  
Officer for Asiamerica Ministry of the Episcopal Church



*Rev. Winston Ching with Chrysostom Thirumeni  
in Bangalore - 1979*

Beloved Thirumeni, Achens, brothers and sisters, I bring you greetings from the Most Rev. Edmond Browning, Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church, and from your brothers and sisters in the Episcopal Church.

It is my privilege and great pleasure to be part of the tenth anniversary celebration of the formation of the Mar Thoma Zonal Council in North America which has now grown into the Diocese of North America and the United Kingdom. I understand that this is also the tenth anniversary of the institution of the Mar Thoma Family Conference of North America and the United Kingdom and I am glad to help celebrate this occasion as well.

Please allow me some personal reflections on the relationship of our two churches for a little more than the past ten years.

The Episcopal Church is the name of the branch of the Anglican Communion in the United States. As a member of the staff of the Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church, I attended the meeting of the General Convention of the Episcopal Church in Denver, Colorado where the matter of the agreement between the Metropolitan of the Mar Thoma Syrian Church of Malabar and the Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church was discussed and voted upon by the House of Bishops of the Episcopal Church. I believe it was in September of 1979.

Shortly after the bishops of the Episcopal Church voted to support the agreement proposed by the Mar Thoma Church, I was given the assignment to represent the Presiding Bishop and to work on behalf of the Episcopal Church to develop the relationship between our two churches.

My first task was to meet with the Mar Thoma bishop who came to present the agreement on behalf of the Metropolitan of the Mar Thoma Church. That bishop was none other than the Rt. Rev. Dr. Philipose Mar Chrysostom.

We went to dinner at a restaurant close to the convention center in Denver. I expected an informal evening to learn about the wishes of the Metropolitan



and other bishops of the Mar Thoma Church regarding the agreement. Instead, Thirumeni proceeded to question me on several topics of theology. As I answered, Thirumeni would nod his head from side to side, a gesture I interpreted as disagreement with my statements. As more questions were asked and more answers given, Thirumeni continued to nod his head from side to side. I was feeling more and more uncomfortable about failing my theology exam and what the Presiding Bishop would say when he heard about it. However, I gradually came to understand that the nods which I took as disagreement were actually signs of agreement. This was my first encounter with anyone from the Mar Thoma Church and the culture of Kerala.

Less than one month later, in October, I found myself in India to learn more about the Mar Thoma Church and Kerala. One of the first lessons I learned was that it is next to impossible to say no to Thirumeni. Thirumeni had business in London on his way back home from the United States so he said to meet him in Bombay. So off I went to a strange and unknown country. When I reached Bombay, I waited at my hotel for word from Thirumeni and after a day or so I received word that he was delayed in London and would meet me instead in Bangalore.

It was the time of Divali and getting transportation into India and within India was next to impossible. Getting reservations for the flight to Bangalore proved to be a difficult task. At that time, telephone communication between offices in Bombay was not very easy. Persons were employed just to dial the telephones in order to get a line. After some hours of no success in reaching the airline office, the hotel told me that I had to go across town to an office of the Indian Airlines to get my ticket. Here I learned another cultural difference, that standing in a line, or queue, was only for people of low esteem or weak egos.

When I reached Bangalore Thirumeni had just arrived there himself. We then had a brief meeting to discuss the rest of my time in India. Thirumeni had arranged for me to fly to Cochin and then to be taken by car to Tiruvalla to meet with the Metropolitan. So I was sent to Tiruvalla where not only did I meet with the Metropolitan, I ended up as his guest at Poolatheen. The Metropolitan was very kind and concerned to teach me about local customs. I learned how important the thumb is in eating and not to allow food to go above the second knuckles of my right hand. I also learned how to tie a douthi so that it would not fall off in public. Many people are surprised that the Metropolitan would teach me how to tie a douthi as not many people have ever seen him wear one. However, I have never had a problem of it falling off when I wear it and I do not have to use a belt.

Next I was sent to Kottayam to meet with the Rt. Rev. Thomas Mar Athanasius. There I was subjected to more theological examination. Only this time, I was sweating because of the pepper cookies that Thomas Thirumeni insisted that I take with my tea.

I could spend much more time to tell you about my many other experiences of the Mar Thoma Church and visits to India but that would take many days. I



will only say that my admiration and respect for the Mar Thoma Church and its leaders continues to grow.

Over the past ten years I have watched the growth of the Mar Thoma Church in the United States with great interest. I am seeing patterns of denominational growth similar to many other groups who have immigrated to the United States over the years. Each group has brought its church to support its transition to life in the United States and to maintain its traditional community values. For example, the English brought the Anglican or now Episcopal Church, the Germans and Scandinavians brought their various Lutheran Churches, the Scots brought their Presbyterian Church, the Greeks and Russians brought their own Orthodox Churches, and, of course, the Irish, Italians, Spanish and Portuguese brought their own Roman Catholic Churches.

As time has passed, the denominational churches all seem to be facing problems. It may be helpful to look at this problem in terms of a paradigm shift. A paradigm, as defined by Thomas Kuhn, is ". . . an entire constellation of beliefs, values, techniques, and so on shared by the members of a given community." It is a way that a particular group makes sense of their reality. A paradigm shift requires a new way of looking at reality.

The Rev. Dr. Arlin Rothauge, my colleague who is the Officer for Congregational Development in the Episcopal Church, has been studying what he calls the denominational paradigm in the American context. In a paper that he has published recently, he identified the following values and beliefs as some of the characteristics of the denominational paradigm:

1. Our society is a new opportunity for mobility and prosperity.
2. Our clergy are responsible primarily for the spiritual care of our members and our own kind.
3. Socialization of our children and celebration of our social, theological, and ethnic traditions bind us together as a community.
4. Our organization and buildings provide the resources for maintaining our particular Christian heritage for society and history.
5. The kind of people who are most comfortable in our church are identifiable by their social standing and nationality.

He identified the following factors contributing to the failure of the denominational paradigm:

1. Progressively older membership, in progressively deteriorating older buildings, in progressively older and transitional neighborhoods.
2. Pervasive lack of denominational loyalty, and less acceptance of the mantle of destiny by the younger generations. Consequently, a dying but faithful membership is asking, "Who will be left to care?"

In analyzing the failure of the denominational paradigm, Dr. Rothauge discovered what he believes to be some of the problems of that paradigm:

1. It is not really necessary to seek new conversions and new disciples for Christ in our secular society because the membership naturally



flowed from our favored nationality and the next generations of our own families.

2. Newcomers to our denominations came, we assumed, out of an enlightened preference for the riches of our particular denominational heritage and our particular social standing in the community. Consequently, the instruction we offered new members concentrated mainly on Anglicanism, or some other denominational "ism," depending on the church involved. It was important to stir and solidify the denominational loyalty.
3. Our "gospel" often became personal advancement in achieving the "American dream," our next generations were always expected to gain a better, higher, more secular, and global education than their parents. The education fostered freedom, not religious conformity. With their new sense of independence and self-reliance, the new generation decided to attend the denomination of their "choice" or to not attend at all. Those old immigrant values and "Old World" loyalties seemed irrelevant, if not trivial, in their life.
4. The next generation often did not return and settle in the area and neighborhoods (of their parents) because the houses were occupied now by retirees and new nationalities, usually another wave of immigrants. During the shock waves of transition in our neighborhoods, we fled the scene, or maintained our ethnic and denominational purity as an island in a changing world with our neighborhood churches struggling to remain denominational and ethnic shrines. When this function began to contradict the greater purpose of the church as servant and evangel to all humanity, the old denominational paradigm suffered an internal disintegration.

Out on the horizon, however, Dr. Rothauge sees a new paradigm emerging, what he is calling the "missionary paradigm of the church". This paradigm may be described by the following:

1. Our society is a missionary field.
2. Our members, clergy, and church resources are devoted primarily to domestic mission enterprises, not forgetting responsibility for global work.
3. Making new disciples and nurturing the newcomers serve as our highest priorities.
4. Our message and strategies directly address key issues and needs in our society.
5. People count first so we first count people. And all people count equally.

Dr. Rothauge acknowledges that this new paradigm is not a novelty in the Christian tradition and that it does not require a total break with the past. His work on this subject will continue and we will share the results of his research as they become available.

As the Episcopal Church and other mainline churches in the United States may be facing decline because of the failure of the denominational paradigm, it will be crucial for the Mar Thoma Church in North America to learn from our mistakes, including our edifice complex and over emphasis on denominational



loyalties to the detriment of seeing the need for Christian witness and work for reconciliation and justice in a secular society.

The decline of the mainline churches in the United States may in fact be the work of the Holy Spirit to encourage the work of rediscovering the unity of the Body of Christ. In this regard, the bishops of the Episcopal Church adopted a resolution in 1886, known as the Chicago-Lambeth Quadrilateral, stating that they were "Deeply grieved by the sad divisions which affect the Christian Church" and that they hereby declared their "desire and readiness . . . to enter into brotherly conference with all or any Christian Bodies seeking the restoration of the organic unity of the Church . . ."

You are certainly blessed with deeply committed spiritual leadership in the Mar Thoma Church, your members are filled with intellectual abilities and great humor. You are able to laugh at your own customs and traditions as you gain more perspective from living outside of India.

The Episcopal Church will continue to be a partner to the Mar Thoma Church in the days ahead and we look forward to developing more meaningful ways to express our faith and commitment to the living Lord of History and of all Creation, to work for justice and freedom among all people, and to seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving our neighbors as ourselves.

May God bless you all!

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## TO OUR READERS

1. We have reminded everyone whose subscription expired with the July '92 issue. We are now mailing the October issue only to those who renewed their subscriptions. To renew or take up a new subscription, simply send us your full address, name of your parish and \$8.00 (1 year) or \$15.00 (2 years) in the name of Mar Thoma Messenger. If you are already a subscriber and you haven't got your copy, please write to the Editor.
2. It's our duty to keep you informed of all the developments that are taking place in our parishes and diocese and therefore, it is important that you send us through your achen / Secretary or through the Assembly member your parish news for publication.
3. Beginning with this October issue, the theme that we selected for 1992-'93 is "OUR CHURCH LIFE". We will be dealing with the following subjects:

Our Church Life	- Children	October 1992
	- Youth	January 1993
"	- Adults	April 1993
"	- Senior Citizens	July 1993

Please send us your articles on the themes or on subjects that are important to us for our lives in the West. The articles that are published in the Messenger are informative and useful to us. Please find time to read them and discuss with your friends so that you might be able to collect some feedbacks and send them to us in the form of 'Letter to the Editor'. It's always good to know what others' views are on a particular issue or on a subject that was written about.

4. The Assembly suggested to us that for the benefit of our parents who stay with us, we should publish some Malayalam articles also. Those of you who could write Malayalam articles in the form of poetry, short story, essay, etc. may please send them to us for publication. It would help us considerably if the Malayalam articles are printed ones. We understand Malayalam printing facilities are available in New Jersey, Philadelphia, etc. Or you may send these articles to Kerala for getting them printed for very little cost.

- Editor



# THE BY-LAWS OF THE MAR THOMA FAMILY CONFERENCE OF THE DIOCESE OF NORTH AMERICA AND U.K.

The Diocesan Assembly of the Diocese of North America and United Kingdom do hereby adopt these by-laws, which shall abide by the constitution of the Mar Thoma Syrian Church of Malabar, Kerala, India.

## ARTICLE I: NAME

The name of the conference shall be The Mar Thoma Family Conference of North America and U.K. , hereinafter called The Family Conference.

## ARTICLE II: PURPOSE

1. To promote Christian faith and fellowship through Bible study, witnessing and service to others.

2. Discussion and sharing of common concerns and problems of living in the Western Society and Culture.

3. To promote the faith and practices of the Mar Thoma Church.

4. To promote Christian family values.

## ARTICLE III: PARTICIPANTS

The members of the Mar Thoma parishes and congregations in the United States, Canada, and the United Kingdom, who are duly registered. The conference is also open for participation to members of other churches with the written approval of the Vicars of the Mar Thoma parishes and congregations of the respective areas. The number of such people from other churches shall not exceed 10 percent of the total number of registrants.

## ARTICLE IV: THE HOST PARISH

The host parish is selected by application to the diocesan council. The diocesan council shall discuss such requests and a recommendation shall be made to the diocesan assembly , which will make the final decision. The venue of the conference shall be:

1. Conference Centers
2. Retreat Centers
3. University campuses

To reduce costs and to promote a spiritual atmosphere for the conference, where there are no such facilities, other facilities may be considered and used.

The diocesan assembly shall select a host parish to organize the Family Conference for a given year. It shall make the selection for two years in

advance, so that planning can be facilitated. Parishes wishing to host the conference must apply to the council indicating the capabilities and resources available for such a venture.

## ARTICLE V: CONFERENCE COMMITTEE

Host parish shall elect a conference committee within three months of their selection. Conference Committee consists of the following:

1. Patron - The Diocesan Bishop or his designate.
2. President - The Vicar of the host parish.
3. Vice President - Elected from the host parish.
4. Secretary - Elected from the host parish
5. Treasurer - Elected from the host parish
6. The Diocesan assembly member or members of the host parish.
7. Diocesan Council member or members of the center and the officers of the Diocesan Council.

The conference committee is authorized to nominate various sub-committees. The conference committees shall make all of the arrangements for the Family Conference. The Secretary shall inform all the parishes and congregations in the United States, Canada, and the United Kingdom about the Family Conference, and its general outline, six months in advance. The committee has the freedom to allow members of the hosting parish as non-resident participants.

## ARTICLE VI: ACCOUNTS:

The conference committee shall present a budget, in advance to the diocesan council, in writing. The diocesan council has to approve the budget well in advance, before further arrangements for the conference are made. The conference committee shall elect auditors who are knowledgeable in finance, from the hosting parish. The auditors shall audit the accounts and the Treasurer shall present the audited accounts to the Conference Committees, no later than three months form the last day of the Family Conference. The audited accounts then should be presented to the Diocesan Council within four months after the conference.

## ARTICLE VII: REGIONAL CONFERENCES

Regional Family Conferences may be held at the initiative of the regions and the sites shall be selected by the regional Diocesan Committee in consultation with the Diocesan Secretary. These shall not be



scheduled to coincide with the Diocesan Family Conference.

**ARTICLE VIII: AMENDMENTS**

Any provision in these by-laws may be amended by the Diocesan Assembly giving notice of sixty days to the Diocesan Council. Council may also on its own initiative present amendments to the Assembly. The amendments shall be brought to the Assembly for the discussion and action only after giving sufficient notice.

Sd/- Rt. Rev. Dr. Philipose Mar Chrysostom  
Bishop, Diocese of North America & U.K

**ARTICLE IX: REPORT OF ACCOUNTS**

The accounts and report of the Family Conference as adopted by the Diocesan Council should be presented at the business meetings of the Family Conference by the Diocesan Council.

**ARTICLE X: THIS DOCUMENT**

This supersedes all previous by-laws. Passed by the Diocesan Assembly on July 23, 1992.

Sd/- Rev. P. J. Alex  
Diocesan Secretary.



*Rolling Trophy for Choir competition is being received from the Diocesan Bishop by Mrs. Marykutty Philips on behalf of the Detroit Choir*



*Celebrating the 75th birthday of the Rt. Rev. Dr. Philipose Mar Chrysostom*



*10th anniversary celebration*



*Rev. P.J. Alex, the diocesan secretary, putting in a good word for the 'Messenger'*



# FAMILY CONFERENCE THROUGH PICTURES



*Rony Mathew from New York gave an inspiring and talented performance with his trumpet, despite being blind. He received a tremendous applause from the audience and words of appreciation from the Diocesan Bishop.*



*Scenes from "Talent Night"*



*"Ottam Thullal" staged by Philadelphia group*

*A new achen in our diocese? -- from no where!!  
Dr. George Zachariah and his friends from Washington, D.C. in a comedy skit*



# Youth- Worship in Truth

Commander P.M. Verghese, Valley Cottage, N.Y.

The number of grown up children, teens and above, in the Mar Thoma community in America is increasing. Some of them are born in the United States and others came as immigrants with parents at a young age. Most of them cannot read, write, and speak Malayalam. Quite a few may understand a little bit just because they hear parents' conversation at home in this language. It is, therefore, correct to say that Malayalam is almost a foreign language to this second generation though no fault of their own.

We have been living in this country for many years with English as the working language. Yet we do not relish worshipping in English, but cling on to our traditional Malayalam service. We have a special attachment to our sweet native language which is but natural. What about our children? Have we thought about the language that they desire for worshipping. Applying the same standard as ours, they too do not like a foreign language worship. Malayalam worship is an agony forced upon them. They resent it, though remain subdued, at present, to their parents for obvious reasons. Is this not the reason Sunday School is conducted in English?

Sunday School students escape the ordeal of Malayalam service because their classes are held at the time of worship. Thus children hardly attend worship. In Kerala, Sunday School is held at a different time enabling children's attendance at worship. This arrangement is practically difficult in America, as in the case of outside Kerala parishes in India.

Another disadvantage of this system is that Sunday School teachers are deprived of worship. Surely, they like to attend Holy Communion and hear a sermon sometimes. If the teachers absent themselves to attend service, even if occasionally in rotation, it is at the expense of the students. I agree that a very few parishes have modified arrangements to maximize participation of Sunday School students and teachers in worship.

It is gratifying that all parishes have at least one English service a month. Students attend this with or without Sunday School that Sunday. There again the losers are the children. Service in "foreign" tongue not being tasty enough, many parents remain absent, probably, the only service they are looking forward to. This is a double grand loss to their kids.

Parents love their children, no doubt. Their future is uppermost in our minds and for the "dream come

true" go even out of our way, sacrificially too, to achieve this goal. It is commendable. What about their spiritual upbringing? Worship is the basic need for Christian growth. How much have we done in this respect? To date almost nothing. Are we willing to sacrifice a great deal in this too? The responsibility is entirely ours. The most desirable thing is that children should worship in full in the language they really can understand and have Sunday School on all Sundays. How can this be achieved? The adults are duty bound to do some slicing away of their taste for the benefit of their children who are dear to them.

There should be a minimum of three English services including at least one Holy Communion service and one Malayalam Qurbana Service in a month. Worship on fifth Sundays be a mutually arranged one. Service and Sunday School on all Sundays give ample time for informal community fellowship and adult/sevika sanghom/youth meetings. To make this practically possible the liturgy has to be shortened by a bold and drastic revision.

The youth should be allowed to have full involvement in worship services to give them opportunities to share in the common worship, develop their personality in the spiritual realm and build up a stable Christian character. If we do not appreciate the sentiments of our young ones and remain reluctant to make necessary and substantial reforms with an open mind to cater to their needs they will drift away in search of better green pastures for their solace and satisfaction in worship. If we fail them in this vital and crucial matter the huge edifices we build or buy for worship spending large sum of money will, in the not too distant future, display "For Sale" boards and come in line with some denominations we see around us today.

Our closely knit and cemented family structure will develop cracks disrupting harmonious living, bringing untold misery, and loss of peace if we do not grant them liberty in this field offering them circumstances in a silver plate. Denial will force them to seek and find it elsewhere, shattering our life's dream.

Today's children are tomorrow's adults. They will certainly and gratefully acknowledge if the parents sacrifice for their sake and reciprocate with affection and respect showing greater regard for the church as a whole. Let us therefore wake up before it is too late and act to avoid a bleak future of the families and the Mar Thoma Church in America.



## A Report on the XIII MAR THOMA YOUTH CONFERENCE OF NORTH AMERICA & U.K.

Biju Matthew, Secretary

The 1992 Mar Thoma Youth Conference of North America and U.K. was held in Morristown, New Jersey at the College of St. Elizabeth on August 12-15, 1992. The hosting parish for this year was the St. Peter's Mar Thoma Church of New Jersey.

Overall, the Youth Conference was a great success with over 250 delegates, resource people, and aches representing 28 parishes from both the United States and Canada. The theme of this year's conference was, "Hope in the Midst of Crisis." The conference leaders were Rt. Rev. Dr. Zacharias Mar Theophilus Episcopa, Dr. John Richard, and Rev. Anne West. Both Thirumeni and Rev. West gave compelling and insightful main talks, while Dr. Richard was responsible for the morning Bible studies.

In order for any youth conference to succeed it is important the delegates take part in the activities. Much of the success of this conference can be attributed to the dedication of both individuals and youth fellowships who contributed in making the programs both enjoyable and spiritually meaningful. This also includes the music of Rev. Jacob David and "the Posse", who kept the conference music live and slammin. The Posse includes, Susheel Philip (St. Peter's), Mohan Zachariah (Washington D.C.), Sajeev Cherian (Philadelphia), and Shaji Mathai (St. Thomas New York) Along with the Posse were singers who led the delegates in many of the sing-alongs. They included, Rayvey Mathews (Ottawa), Suja Ninan (Chicago), Jessie Joseph (Long Island), Marina Thomas (St. Peter's), and Bobby Mathew (St. Peter's).

The youth fellowships of Bethel, Washington,

Dallas, and Chicago led morning and evening worship services throughout the conference. Further more, workshops dealing with issues facing the Christian Malayalee community were led by four youth fellowships. Staten Island dealt with - *Communication within the Family*. Epiphany presented a Christian perspective of the issue of 'Abortion.' Philadelphia focused upon *Christian Marriage*. St. Thomas tackled the issue of *Racism and Sexism in the Malayalee Community*.

In addition, conference delegates took part in the talent and variety entertainment program, in which, participants sang, danced, and performed skits. There was also time for recreation, where many played both basketball and volleyball.

The last night of the conference was capped off with a beautiful dedication service held outdoors in a Greek amphitheater. The service was led by Rev. P.G. George of Long Island. During this service Dr. John Richard gave a message and invited the young people to accept Jesus as their personal savior. The dedication service was an opportunity for many to re-dedicate their lives to Christ, share their experiences, and

grow closer with their fellow brothers and sisters in Christ.

The conference closed on Saturday, August 15, 1992 with a Holy Qurbana service led by the Rt. Rev. Dr. Zacharias Mar Theophilus Episcopa, followed by a public meeting to celebrate the tenth anniversary of the Zonal Council. The meeting was presided over by Miss Anita George. Besides the Rt. Rev. Dr. Zacharias Mar Theophilus, Mayor John Abraham, Mr. Varghese Chandy, and Miss Beena Thomas spoke on the occasion.

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*"In order for any youth conference to succeed it is important the delegates take part in the activities. Much of the success of this conference can be attributed to the dedication of both individuals and youth fellowships who contributed in making the programs both enjoyable and spiritually meaningful."*

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# YOUTH CONFERENCE THROUGH PICTURES



**Bishop M.C. Mani of the Church of South India with Right Rev. Dr. Zacharias Mar Theophilus**



**Rev. Johnson P. Mathew and Secretary, Biju Mathew join with the St. Peter's group during worship service.**

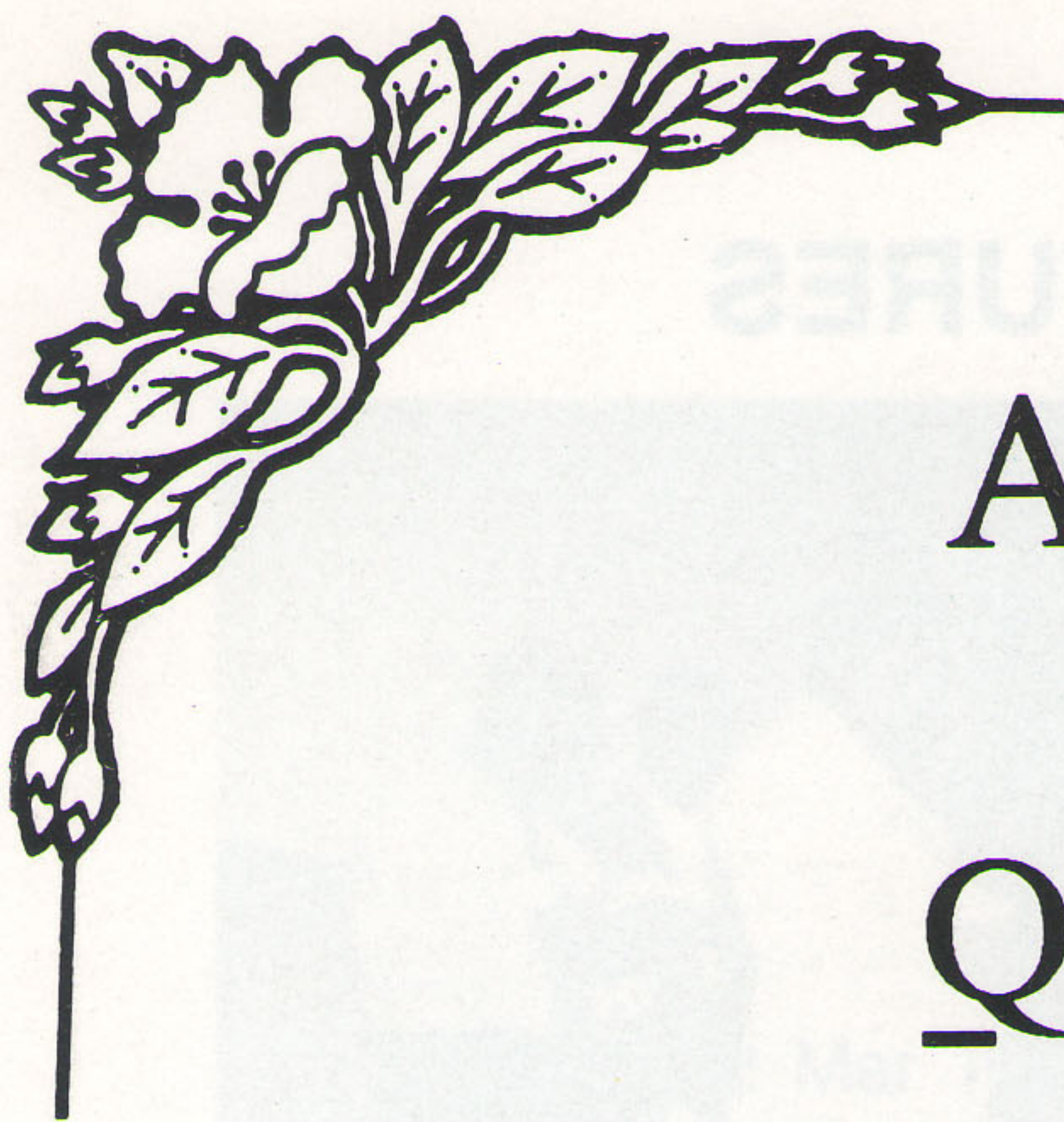


**The "Hawaiian Night" on Friday, August 14**



**A section of the audience**





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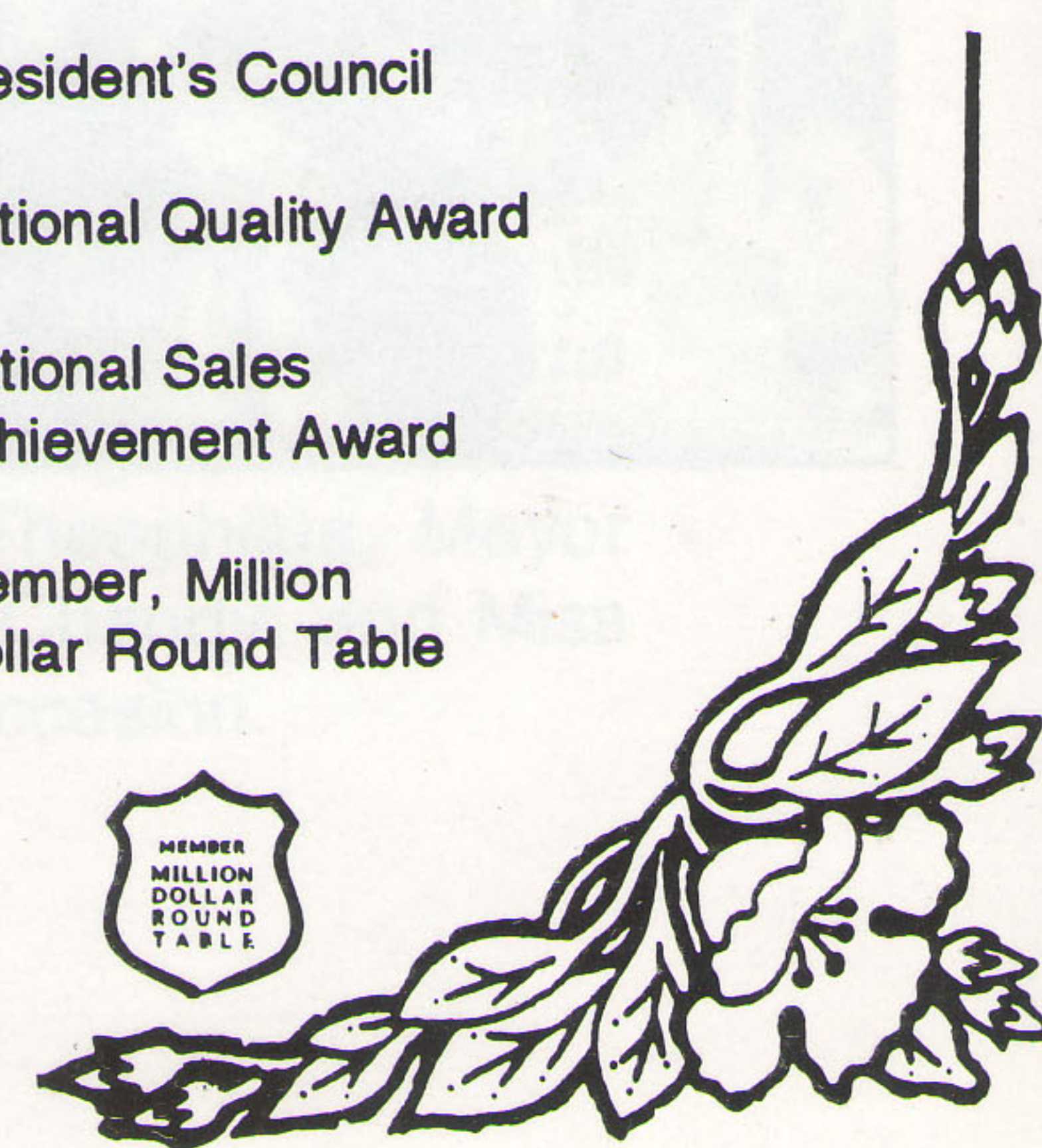


President's Council

National Quality Award

National Sales  
 Achievement Award

Member, Million  
 Dollar Round Table





## REPORT ON THE MAR THOMA SABHA PRATHINIDHI MANDALAM MEETINGS

The 1992 Mar Thoma Prathinidhi Mandalam meetings were held on September 8th and 9th at the V.

G. M Hall, Tiruvalla. The Most Rev. Dr. Alexander Mar Thoma Metropolitan presided over the meetings. Besides all our Bishops, about 600 achen and 550 Mandalam members were present at the meetings. The two days' schedule of meetings were as follows:

Tuesday Sept. 8, '92	
8 A.M. to 10 A.M.	Registration
10 A.M. to 10.30 A.M.	Worship
10.30 A.M. to 7 P.M.	Business session

Wednesday Sept. 9, '92	
7.30 A.M. to 9 A.M.	Holy Communion
10 A.M. to 6 P.M.	Business session

In his opening speech, the Most Rev. Dr. Thomas Mar Athanasious, Metropolitan of the Yacobaya Syrian Church and the President of the Kerala Council of Churches, appealed to the Mandalam members to work for human rights and social justice as the prophet Amos. The Most Rev. Dr. Alexander Mar Thoma Metropolitan in his presidential address exhorted the members to offer themselves for witnessing Christ and adjust their life priorities based on Christian principles and biblical teachings. Valiya Thirumeni reminded the audience that everyone to whom much is given, of him, will much be required; and of him to whom men commit much they will demand the more." (Luke 12: 48)

The Annual Report and Accounts for the year 1991-92 were presented by Mr. C. Abraham Ittycheriah, which included a budget of 2 crore and 37 lakhs of rupees (approx. one million dollars) for the Mar Thoma Church and its functions and also Rs. One crore and 33 lakhs (approx. half a million dollars) for institutions under the direct control of the Church. After discussions, the budget was passed.

### IMPORTANT DECISIONS.

1. A resolution to consecrate three more bishops was presented by the Rev. P.M. George, Sabha Secretary and seconded by Dr. Jacob O. Mathew. After discussion, the Mandalam unanimously passed the resolution.
2. Election for the Episcopal Nomination Committee was then conducted. 14 lay-leaders and 8 achen were elected. Total number of members is 24 including the Most Rev. Dr. Alexander Mar Thoma Metropolitan and Rev. P.M. George, Sabha Secretary.
3. Decided to entrust more powers and responsibilities to the diocese.
4. Mandalam representation is possible with 100 - 2000 members in a parish instead of the 150-2000 members hitherto required.
5. If a minimum of two representatives are not elected to the Mandalam by parishes outside India, Then Valiya Thirumeni would nominate two members to the Sabha Council. (Travelling expenses would be given only to those who reside in India.)
6. Decided to construct a modern auditorium including a few guest rooms and office spaces near the Sabha Office.
7. Mandalam meetings will henceforth last three days instead of two days prevalent now.

Two resolutions under clause 113 of the constitution were presented:

- a) There should be one episcopa for 150,000 members
- b) Fix the retirement age for episcopa as 70 years. Both the resolutions were withdrawn after discussion.

**Dr. Jacob O. Mathew, Los Angeles  
Member, Sabha Council.**

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*Reflect upon your present blessings – of which every man has many – not on your past misfortunes, of which all men have some."*



# The Royal Court Judgment

Malayalam Translators: Mr. C.J. Cherian & Rev. Joseph Jacob  
Publishers: Ecumenical Publishing Center, Trivandrum

The Royal Court Judgment of 1889 had played a predominant role in shaping up the future of the Mar Thoma Church. It was not, in material terms, a verdict favorable to the Church, nor did it help the Church in its teething troubles. It was a verdict primarily unbiased, but at the same time insistent, in a well concealed manner, to allow foreign influence to encroach upon the freedom of the Malankara Churches. Though not within the realm of this review, it is relevant and logical to presume in this context that Justice W.E. Ormsby who pronounced the judgment had, while playing saint, his own axes to grind. He might have been trying surreptitiously to please the missionaries of his country.

This judgment, however, is significant for two reasons. First: it caused considerable material loss to the Mar Thoma Church which was in its formative stages. It consequently reduced the supporters of the new Church into a paltry group of idealistic reactionaries with little financial resources to fall back upon. This marked the first vicissitude the Church as an institution had to encounter. Nevertheless, the set back later turned into such a blessing in disguise that it considerably activated the imagination and enthusiasm of Marthomites for a long length of time spanning over about a century. The history of the Mar Thoma Church now denotes the myth of the dis-

carded stone that later enhanced the corner!

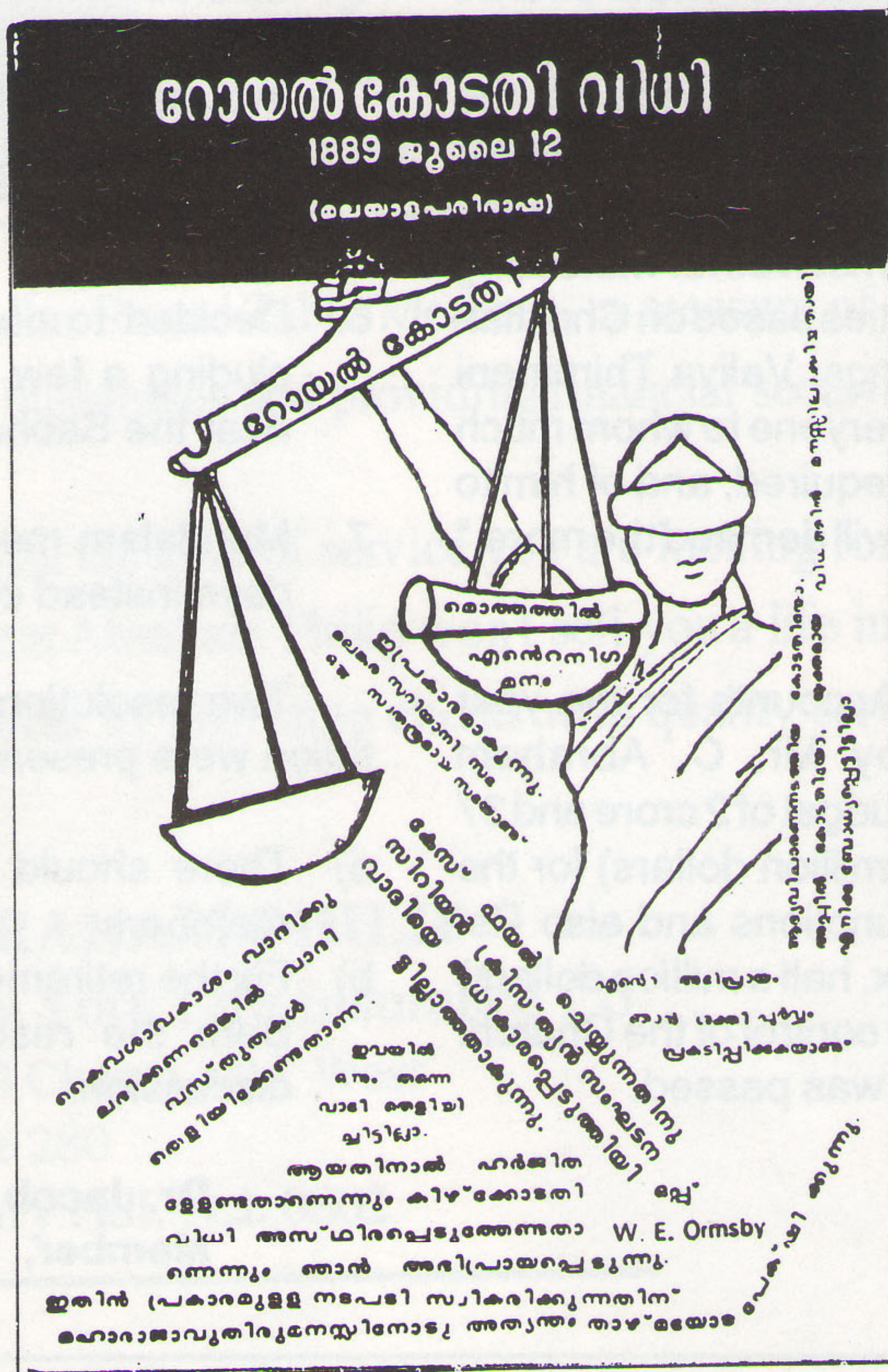
Second: this judgment is not just a verdict dealing with the legality of things alone. It is also a reliable history of the Malankara Church extending from the 16th to about the end of the 19th century. The Royal Court Judgment Of 1889 is an immensely valuable document in that it emphasizes the historicity of incidents and related ideas and attitudes that contributed to the evolution of the present Mar Thoma faith.

Its Malayalam translation, now under review, has been written in a refreshingly stoic style. The

translators deserve praise for the honesty and sincerity with which they fulfilled their task. In certain parts of the text however, dates according to the Gregorian and the Kali Varsha calendars, intermingle causing chronological disorder. An extensive use of footnotes to elaborate obscure events mentioned in the Judgment would have been desirable. Being a valuable document, this edition should have been better edited and more carefully proofread. Despite these minor defects it provides interesting reading and the most precious portion of his-

tory concerning the formation of the Mar Thoma Church.

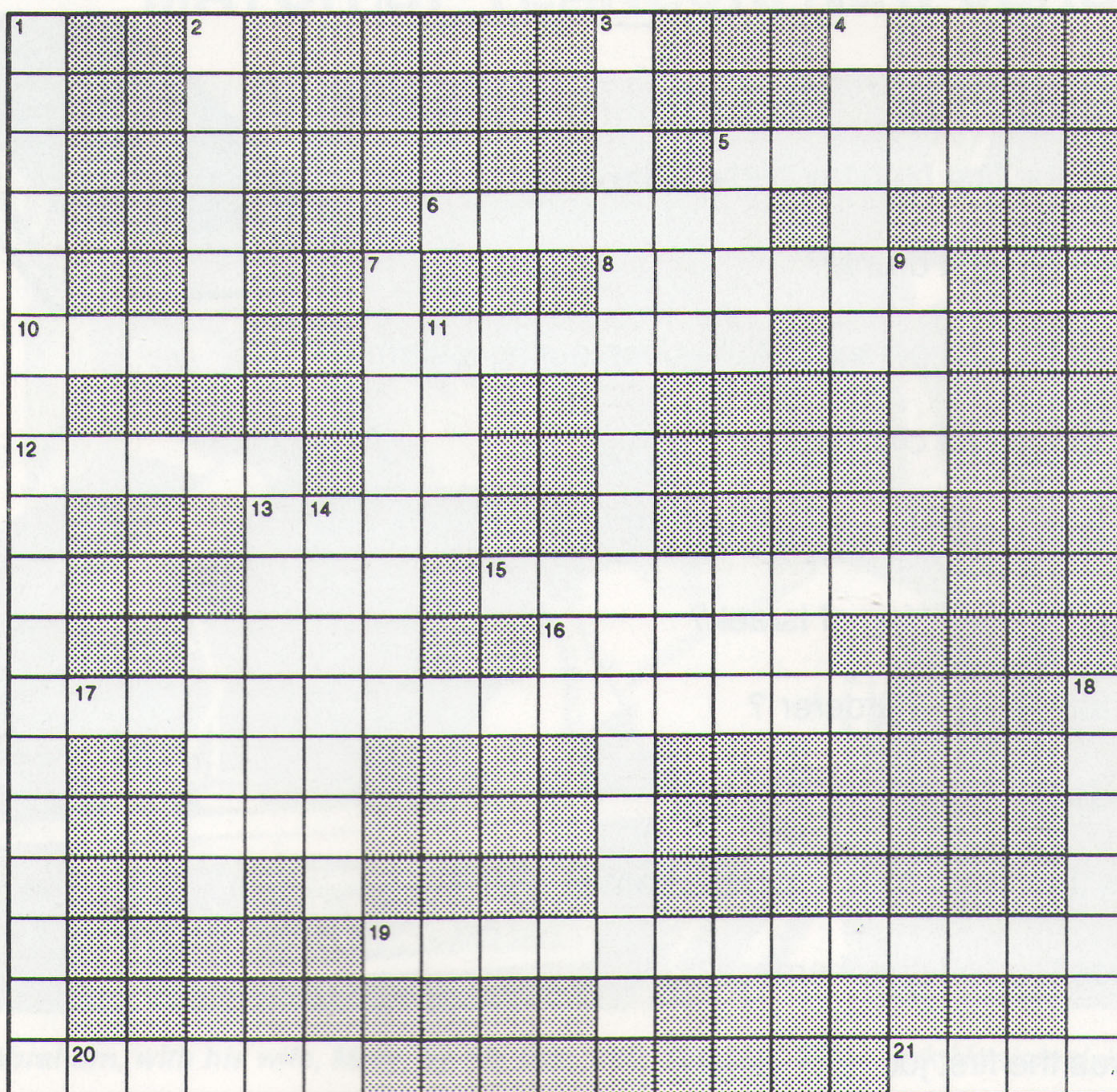
K.C. Cherian  
Long Island Mar Thoma Church, New York





# BIBLE CROSSWORD PUZZLE

(Notable Men & Women)



## ACROSS

5. She was a Persian Queen. She upset the King and the counselor by refusing to appear before them at their banquet. (Book Of Esther)
6. She was a Jewish girl, married a Persian Emperor. She helped save her exiled people from extermination. (Book of Esther)
8. He had an Israelite servant girl who told him about a cure for leprosy. (II Kings 5)
10. She was a widowed prophetess, she was eighty four years old, when she saw the baby Jesus in the temple. (Luke 2)
11. She was a prophetess too, the sister of two great leaders of Israelites. She was once afflicted with leprosy for speaking against her own brother. (Ex. 15)
12. God told Moses, your brother \_\_\_\_\_ will be your prophet. (Ex. 7)
15. She was a Midiamite women. She was the wife of Moses. (Ex. 2)
16. She was a servant girl. She came to the door when Peter escaped from prison. (Acts 12)
17. They both were Hebrew women, God did use them as midwives for the Israelite women. God did make houses for them too. (Ex. 1)
19. They were two sisters of Bethany. They had a brother named Lazarus. They were very close friends of Jesus. (Luke 10)
20. She was an Israelite woman. She lived in Moab. But she returned to Israel after her husband's and son's death. (Book of Ruth).
21. This Moabite woman was an ancestor of Jesus. (Book of Ruth)

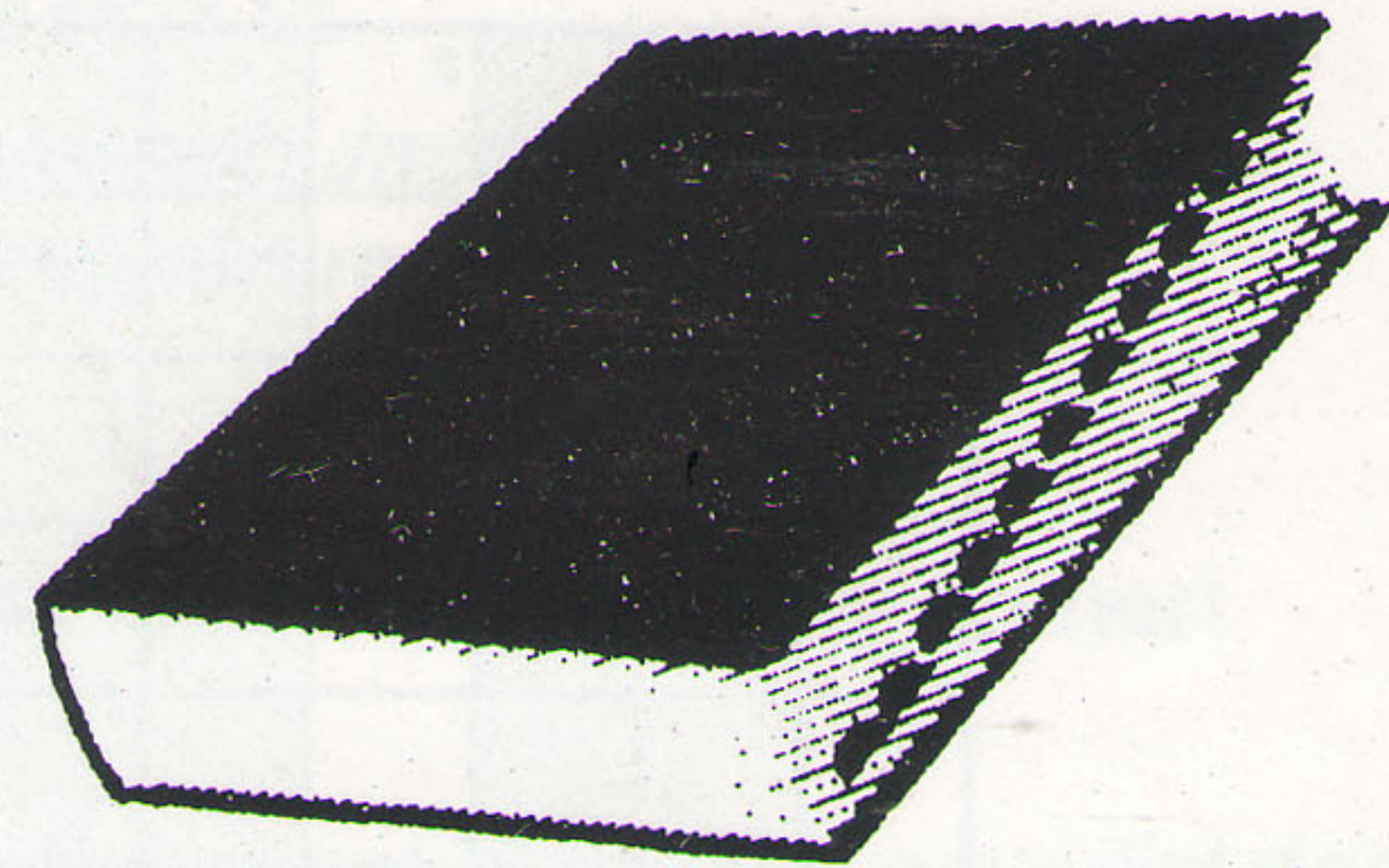
## DOWN

1. They were two women of Philippi. They both were asked by Paul to be of the same mind. (Philippians 4)
2. She was the wife of a servant of Herod, she ministered unto Jesus with her substance. She went with Mary Magdalene to embalm the body of Jesus. (Luke 8, 24)
3. They were two sons of Eli. They were priests of the Lord. The sin of these young men was very great in the Lord's sight, for they were treating the Lord's offering with contempt. (I Samuel 1)
4. He was eight years old. He became the King of Judah. He reigned thirty-one years. He did right in the sight of the Lord. The Lord did bless him. (II Kings 22)
7. This son was born to Jacob in his old age; his brother was thought to be dead. If so, he was the only one of his mother's sons left. Who was he? (Genesis 44).
9. Lamech named his child a name that was thought to mean "rest". (Genesis 5)
11. Naomi called herself this after suffering tragedy. (Book of Ruth 1)
13. He was the son of Nun. He sent two spies from Shittim. His last words were, "but as for me and my household, we will serve the Lord." (Book of Joshua 24)
14. She was a woman of Athens. She became a Christian because of Paul's teachings. (Acts 17)
18. She was an Egyptian woman. She was the wife of Joseph. (Genesis 41)

Mrs. Saji Pothan, Los Angeles



## BIBLE QUIZ



1. Who had the first birthday party in the Bible?
2. Who was the first drunk ?
3. Who was the first person to fall asleep during a sermon ?
4. Who built the first city ?
5. Where was the first beauty contest ?
6. Who was the first king of Israel ?
7. Who was the first murderer ?
8. Who was the first hunter ?
9. What is the first book in the Bible named after ?
10. Who was the first shepherdess?
11. Who was the first judge of Israel ?

**Sajeev Pothan, Los Angeles**

### *Congratulations to Bible Word Search Finders of July 1992 Mar Thoma Messenger*

1. Shaji Varughese - Canadian Mar Thoma Church
2. Anu T. Alex - Boston Mar Thoma Church
3. Siju & Alvin Rajan - Staten Island Mar Thoma Church
4. Toby and Tony Panicker - Oklahoma Mar Thoma Church
5. Liza, Angela, and David John - Trinity Mar Thoma Church
6. Samuel Thomas - Trinity Mar Thoma Church , Houston
7. Larry & Leshy Varghese - Trinity Mar Thoma Church, Houston
8. Toby and Shelby Mathew - Trinity Mar Thoma Church, Houston
9. Shibu Varughese - Canadian Mar Thoma Church ( April Issue )
10. Sajina Pothan - Mar Thoma Church of Los Angeles



## JOHN ABRAHAM ELECTED MAYOR OF TEANECK, NEW JERSEY



*John Abraham, with his wife, Mary, by his side, being sworn by Teaneck Municipal Judge James E. Young.*

Persistence and perseverance are two traits of Teaneck Councilman John Abraham's character that could be attributed to his success. July 1, 1992 was a proud day not only to John Abraham and his family but also to the entire Indian community in this country. John Abraham's election as Mayor of Teaneck, New Jersey, which has a population of 38000 residents, has added significance to the Mar Thoma community in the West as he is a Marthomite and is a member of our St. Peter's Church in Teaneck.

Abraham who immigrated to this country in 1972 and won a Council seat in 1990, won by a 4-3 vote at the reorganization meeting. He said he hoped to help bring together Teaneck's residents who include whites, blacks, Jews, Hispanics, and several hundred Indians. "I want to be a catalyst for the process that will lead us out of the difficulties that we have experienced in the recent past", said Abraham. "This community must begin again to function in harmony," Abraham continued.

Abraham's election was hailed by Indian lead-

ers who said that although one million Indians live in the United States, they are not widely involved in local government. "It's a small step for John Abraham but a quantum leap for the Indian community," said Varughese Chandy, President of the Kerala Cultural Forum. Indian newspapers and other periodicals all across the United States gave extensive coverage to John Abraham's election as Mayor. Reception meetings were held almost every week since the inauguration as Mayor. It was on the concluding day of our Youth Conference in Morris Town, New Jersey, that Mayor John Abraham issued a declaration stating that August 15 would be observed as Indian Independence Day for the city of Teaneck. In the public meeting held in connection with the 10th anniversary celebrations of the Zonal Council, Mayor John Abraham reminded the audience that it was in our own interests that we get involved in the community that we live in and also in the political process so that, if and when needed, our voice would be heard with respect and understanding by the local as well as central authorities.

**Abraham Mattackal**



## News from DIOCESE/PARISHES

### MAR THOMA CHURCH U.K.

**Family Conference:** The tenth Mar Thoma Conference was held at the High Leigh Conference Center, Hoddesdon from 14-16 August 1992. Due to his indisposition Coorilos Thirumeni was not able to attend as originally included. Chrysostom Thirumeni also had to return to Kerala cancelling his UK programs, including the conference much to our disappointment.

Nevertheless, we were fortunate enough to have Rev. Dr. M.V. Abraham, Principal, Mar Thoma Theological Seminary, Kottayam as our main speaker for the conference. Other speakers were Rev. Simon Reed, Rector of the Anglican Church, Aylesbury, Prof. A.G. George, Trivandrum and of course our own Achen Rev. A.T. Zachariah.

Bible studies and expositions on the theme "Behold I come quickly" (Rev 3:11) challenged the participants on their preparedness to meet up with the Lord. Two interesting seminars were also held, the first one "Reflections on Faith" led by Mr. John Thomas, gave selected participants an opportunity to express their own views on faith against the biblical perspective while the second one "The Age of Deception" led by Mr. Zachariah Abraham pointed out the dangers of being drawn into cults like, Jehovah's Witnesses, Mormons, New Age, etc. He also talked about the various heresies, philosophies, and ideologies which are prevalent today and to which our younger generations are exposed to at the present time.

There were 170 participants at the conference. As we praised and worshipped the Lord, the all prevailing presence of our Lord was felt throughout the conference. The power of the Holy Spirit was released upon many, touching them by his Love, Mercy, and Grace.

Dear friends across the Atlantic, there is much goodwill here for your people to come and attend our

next conference as there is also much interest here to visit the next Family Conference in Washington. Let us worship and praise the Lord together.

Bishop of London, the Rt. Rev. Dr. David Hope joined us for the Holy Communion Service and gave the sermon on August 9, 1992. It was through the auspices of the Bishop of London, that we are able to worship at the St. Katharine Cree Church in the City of London.

During this historic visit the Bishop conferred our Achen Rev. A.T. Zachariah Registrar status which gives our Achen the authority to conduct marriages and worship services according to the Anglican rites and to give pastoral care as if he were an Anglican Priest. This marks an important step in the ecumenical relationship of the Mar Thoma Church with the Anglican.

The annual Harvest Festival and Sale held on Sept. 12 was a great success. The whole congregation came with the first fruits of their income. Many were actively involved in running stalls, preparing Kerala delicacies, in giving and collecting funds. This years collection was beyond all our expectations, half of which will be sent to the evangelical institutions of our church in India. While we praise the Lord for all His blessings, our congratulations also go to the Convener Mr. Anil Mathew.

**Kerala Christian Convention:** The 6th convention organized by the Mar Thoma Church will be held on Sept. 25-27. The speaker is the famous Nuclear Scientist and anointed man of God Dr. George Samuel, who is the Dean of the Haggai Institute, Singapore and Director of Nava-jeevodayam Centre, Tiruvilla. Dr. George Samuel will speak on the contemporary theme "*The Relevance of God in a Hi-Tech Society*", as we live in a very materialistic and godless society. Please pray for the convention.

V.T. Abraham

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*"Choose a charity in your community and support it generously with your time and money."*



## MAR THOMA CHURCH OF LOS ANGELES

### Mission Week

As decided by the Diocesan Assembly we had set apart September first week as Mission Week in our Church. We were fortunate to get Mr. Don Richardson, Minister - at-large for Region Beyond Missionary Union International, and author of the best selling books "Peace Child", "Lords of the Earth" and "Eternity in their Hearts" as the speaker on Saturday and Sunday, September 5th and 6th.

Mr. Don Richardson along with his wife Carol and their child of 8 months left Canada in 1962 to live among the most primitive, head-hunting, tree-top



*Mr. Don Richardson speaking during Mission Week celebrations*

dwelling cannibals of the Dutch New Guinea, an island north of Australia. They lived with the natives for 15 years, learned their language, created an alphabet and dictionary for their language and finally translated the New Testament into their language. Many churches were established and now 75% of the natives are Christians. The 15 years of their struggles and triumphs coupled with the strange customs and habits of the jungle tribes are movingly depicted in the movie "The Peace Child" which was shown to the audience on Saturday Sept. 5th, 1992. **Mr. Richardson reminded us that it was foreign missionaries from many European countries and America who went to the difficult terrains of India to propagate the gospel of Jesus Christ. Now it was the turn of the Indian Christians living in America and other European countries to spend their time and resources, even in a limited way, for spreading the gospel in India.**

### Convention

Our annual convention was held from September 11th to the 13th, 1992 at our parish. Rev. Philip Varghese of the Mar Thoma Church and Rev. M.

Mathews of the Methodist Church were the speakers. For the benefit of the children and youth the convention was held in two sessions every day. Rev. Mathews spoke in English to the children and youth,



*Rev. M. Mathews speaking during the convention*

while the Rev. Philip Varghese spoke to the adults. A number of people from our other sister churches also joined us during the convention. The convention was a great success as so many of our people had a chance to rededicate their lives to Jesus Christ.



*Rev. Philip Varghese leads the congregation in a sing-along*

### Sevika Sanghom

As part of the community activities, the Sevika Sanghom members visited a local retirement center - Arrow Retirement Center, San Dimas. The members sang a few songs with them and the Rev. M. Mathews who was one of our convention speakers, gave a message on 'Hope in Christ'. Mrs. Aleyamma Koshy gave her testimony to the inmates. According to Mrs. Pramod John, the Sevika Sanghom Secretary, the whole event was a very pleasant one indeed.

LA Sevika Sanghom is also coordinating a usable clothing collection drive for the benefit of local charities and needy people in Kerala.

**Abraham Mattackal**



## NORTHEAST REGIONAL SEVIKA SANGHOM LEADERSHIP TRAINING PROGRAM

The first meeting of the Leadership Training Program was held at the Epiphany Mar Thoma Church, New York (sponsor of the meeting) on Saturday, August 29, 1992. Approximately 90 members from nine parishes attended this conference. The program started with a song and opening worship. Mrs. Aleyamma Koshy gave the devotional talk. In addition to Rev. T.P. Koshy, Vicar of Epiphany Mar Thoma Church, Rev. Joseph Ayrookuzhy, Rev. Dr. T.P. Abraham, Rev. Dr. P.G. George, Rev. Mathai Joseph were present to provide leadership for the conference. Rev. T.P. Koshy, vicar welcomed the participants. Rev. Joseph Ayrookuzhy presided over the meeting.

Rev. Dr. T.P. Abraham conducted the first session. The topics identified were :

### 1. Leadership in Administration and Organizational Skills.

After the first session all participants learned more about the rules and regulations of the accounts,

budgets, and the reports. The goal of this session was to strengthen the leadership in administration and organizational skills. After discussion the session dispersed for lunch.

### 2. Leadership in Organizing and Conducting Bible Classes.

In the second session of the conference Rev. Dr. P.G. George spoke on this topic. Achen briefly explained how to read and study the Bible and how to improve your knowledge of the Bible. After the discussion and feed-back session Mrs. Mariamma Abraham gave the vote of thanks. The training program came to a close with a prayer by Rev. Mathai Joseph.

All the participants enjoyed the training program and it was a blessing to all. A delicious breakfast, lunch, and snack was served to all those who participated. We hope such training programs will take pace in this and other areas of our diocese.

**Mrs. Mariamma Abraham, Convener**

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## TRINITY SPORTS (HOUSTON)

Trinity sports is an organization under the church started in 1985 to encourage our members, especially the youths to get involved in sports and games. The motto of Trinity Sports is to work for physical fitness, enable participants to learn advanced sporting skills, promote teamwork and the principles of good sportsmanship. It also provides an opportunity for our members to come together, thereby enabling better understanding, co-operation and friendship and above all share in the fun of outdoor sports and games.

In 1986 the Most Rev. Dr. Alexander Mar Thoma Metropolitan inaugurated the Trinity Sports activities. In the meeting, His Lordship, stressed the need for nurturing our physical growth along with our mental and spiritual development. Rt. Rev. Dr. Philipose Mar Chrystostom Suffragan Metropolitan, our Diocesan Bishop started the sports activities this year on May 23, 1992. Thirumeni encouraged us and appreciated all the members who took active part in conducting the sports activities.

We had 8 youth basketball teams, 2 soccer

teams, and 2 girls volleyball teams registered this year. We also conducted adult badminton, area-wise soccer, and volleyball tournaments this year. Trinity sports sponsored a volleyball and soccer tournament during August between the Dallas and Houston Mar Thoma Church teams. It was real fun and a time of social get together and friendship. We are also planning to have a youth basketball tournament this year.

Trinities Sports season closing ceremonies were held on August 2, 1992 when Rt. Rev. Dr. Zacharias Mar Theophilus visited the Houston parish. Thirumeni distributed the awards to all the winners of various competitions. I would like to take this opportunity to thank and appreciate all our beloved Thirumenies, Rev. T.I. Joseph, Rev. P.J. Alex, Rev. Thomas Alexander, and Rev. Eapen Cherian for all their support and co-operation. "The important thing of Trinity Sports is not to win, but to take part; the important thing in life is not to triumph but the struggle; the essential thing is not to have conquered but to have fought well."

**T.A. Mathew, Convener (Trinity Sports)**



**THE EASTERN REGION MAR THOMA YUVAJANA SAKHYAM**

The annual meeting of the region was held on March 21st at Epiphany Mar Thoma Church, Queens, New York. The following office bearers were elected for the year 1992:

Mr. Sam George (Vice President), Mr. Shibu V. John (Secretary), Miss. Sobha Panicker (Joint Secretary), Mr. George Thomas (Treasurer), Mr. Sunny Abraham (Auditor).

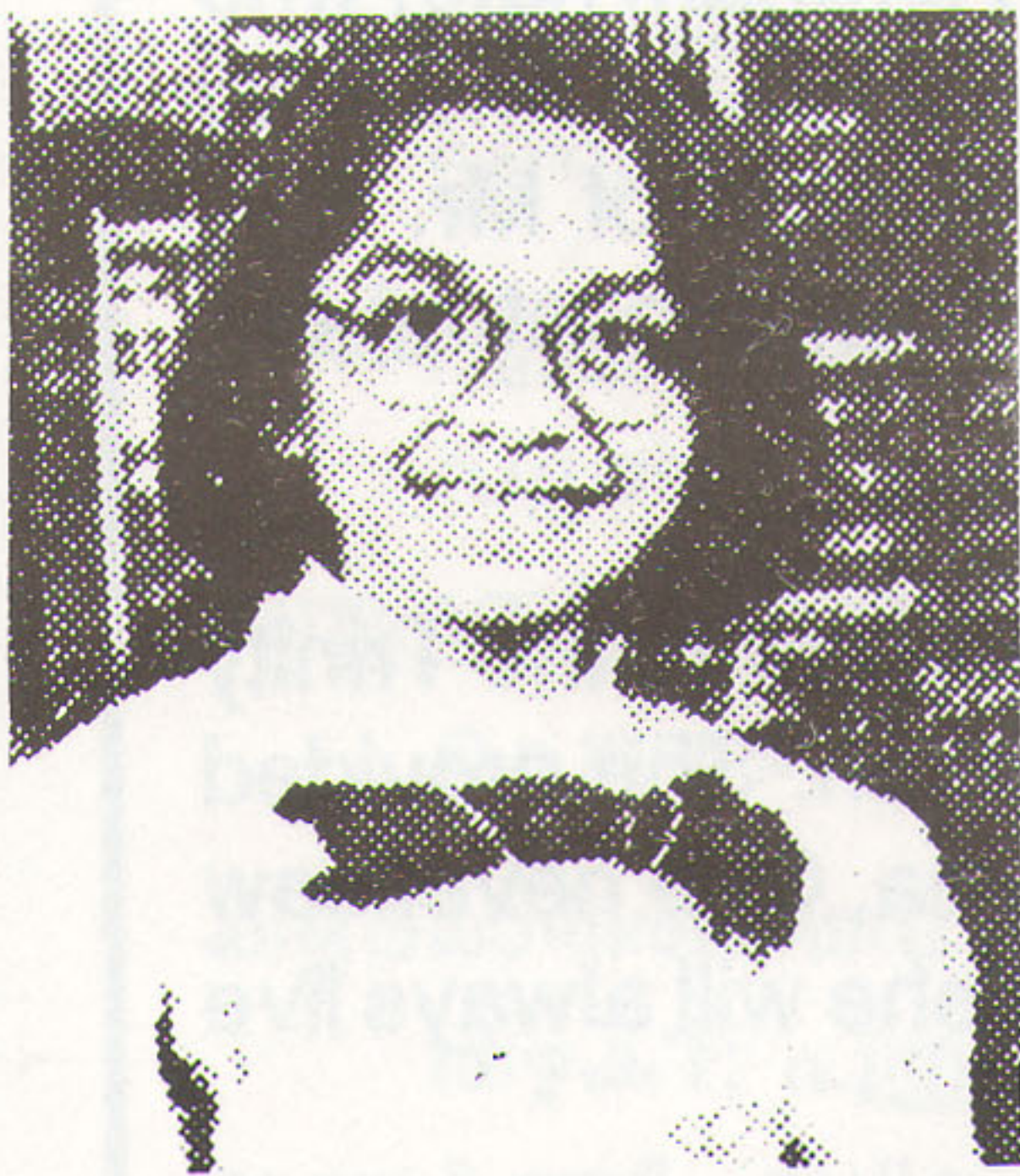
A one day conference was held on June 6th at St.

Thomas Mar Thoma Church, New York. The Theme of the conference was " Sex, AIDS, Drugs, and Suicide: Its Impact on Mar Thoma Youth Today." Philipose Mar Chrystostom Suffragen Metropolitan and Mr. P.T. Thomas were the main speakers. In addition, Rev. Dr. T.P. Abraham, Rev. K.U. Abraham, Rev. Varghese Thomas, Rev. Thomas George, Rev. Johnson Mathew, and Rev. Dr. P.G. George led the conference. The conference was very informative and useful to all participants.

**Shibu V. John, Secretary**

**DIANA THOMAS**

Diana Thomas is a fifth grade honor student at P.S. 103 in Bronx. On Friday, May 8th 1992, at Hunter College, Diana Thomas was declared the City-Wide Champion of the New York City Board of Education, Division of Library Services' 15th Annual Story Telling Festival for Level II (5th and 6th grades) students.



This festival began in the late Fall at the classroom level and continued through the Spring in a series of competitions. Diana Thomas practiced

diligently for many months with her coach Ms. Paula Miller, Library Teacher at P.S.103. Over the course of this time, Diana has earned the distinction of being judged at Level II : Class Winner, Grade 5 Winner, School Winner, District XI Winner, Bronx Boro Winner, and finally on Friday she was awarded the Level II City- Wide Story Telling Festival Champion.

The Story Telling Festival is a contest in which interested students are encouraged to memorize an authentic folk tale, fairy tale and tell it from memory word for word as it is written. Student story-tellers are judged for their pronunciation, enunciation, expression, poise, pacing, memorization, story selection, and overall performance.

ദൈവത്തിന്റെ ഖജനാവിൽ മാത്രമേ  
സമയമുള്ളൂ?  
ഒരിക്കലും അസ്തമിക്കാത്ത സമയം.  
കഴിഞ്ഞ അമ്പതു വർഷമായി  
മരണം എന്റെ തൊട്ടടുത്തു  
തന്നെയുണ്ട്.  
ഓരോ കഥ ഏഴുതുമ്പോഴും  
അതു പുനർനടക്കാനുണ്ട് കഴിയുമെന്നു  
കരുതിയിരുന്നില്ല.  
ഓരോ രാത്രി കിടക്കാൻ പോവുമ്പോഴും  
കരുതും, ഇതെന്റെ അവസാന രാത്രിയാണെന്നും.  
കാലത്തു് എഴുന്നേല്ക്കുമ്പോൾ,  
ഞാൻ ദൈവത്തിനു നന്ദിപറയുന്നു;  
'ദൈവമേ,  
എനിക്കു ഒരു ദിവസംകൂടി  
അനുവദിച്ചുതന്നതിൽ  
ആയിരം നന്ദി...'

എന്റെ വഴിയിലെ വെയിലിനും നന്ദി,  
എന്റെ ചുമലിലെ ചുമടിനും നന്ദി  
എന്റെ വഴിയിലെ തണലിനും, മരക്കൊമ്പിലെ  
കൊച്ചു കുയിലിനും നന്ദി  
വഴിയിലെ കൃഷ്ണ നോമ്പിനും നന്ദി,  
മിഴി ചുവപ്പിച്ച സൂര്യനും നന്ദി  
നീളമി വഴിച്ചമടുത്താങ്ങി തൻ  
തോളിനും വഴിക്കിണിനും നന്ദി  
നീട്ടിയോരു കൈക്കുമ്പിളിൽ ജലം  
വാർത്തു തന്ന നിൻ കമ്പിവിനും നന്ദി  
ഇരുളിലെ ചരിക്കുണ്ടിനും പോയാരിരവിലെ  
നിലാക്കുളിരിനും നന്ദി.  
വഴിയിലെ കൊച്ചുകാട്ടുപൂവിനും  
മുകളിലെ കിളിപ്പാട്ടിനും നന്ദി  
മിഴിയിൽ വറ്റാത്ത കണ്ണുനീരിനും  
ഉയിരണങ്ങാത്തൊരലിവിനും നന്ദി

—ദൈവക്കും മറ്റൊരുവർണ്ണത്തിനും ബഹിർ.

—സുഗതകുമാരി



**MAR THOMA CHURCH: DIOCESE OF NORTH AMERICA AND U.K.  
EASTERN REGION**

A Leadership Training Institute was held under the auspices of the region on April 3rd, 1992 in Philadelphia Mar Thoma Church. The sessions were arranged to enable the participants to provide leadership roles in organizing and conducting Bible

classes, worship, sermon, and group dynamics. Rev. Joseph Ayrookuzhy, Rev. Thomas George, Mr. P.T. Thomas, Dr. George Zachariah, Mr. P.T. Mathew and Mr. T.P Koshy were the leaders of the institute. About 30 people participated in the program.

**P.T. Thomas**



**OBITUARY  
MRS. ANNAMMA ABRAHAM - HOUSTON**

Trinity Mar Thoma Church has lost one of its finest members in the death of Mrs. Annamma Abraham of the Northshore prayer group. Mrs. Annamma Abraham died of heart failure on June 30th 1992.

Mrs. Annamma Abraham was born on April 5th 1923 at Pullad in the Komattu House. She was married to Mr. T.T. Abraham (late) who was a Fisheries Inspector. He was from the Thottinal House and lived at Thonniyamala until 1980. She was the loving mother of Mr. T.A. Mathew and Valsa (Houston), Jessy and Babu P. Alex (Houston) Mr. T.A. Varghese and Anita (Houston).

Her steadfast belief in Christ was her strength and joy. She was an active member of the Trinity Mar Thoma Sevika Sanghom and the Grand Parents Association of the Houston parish. She provided leadership in organizing and conducting the ladies prayer groups in the Northshore area. One never saw her without her warm and pleasant smile. Though she has left us for heavenly abode, she will always live in our minds and thoughts.

**Philip Abraham**

**IN LOVING MEMORY**

On the path of life, the implications of life reality are exciting. Yes, the way is long, the path is hard; you will be old before you reach the end of it, but the end will be better than the beginning.

Our deepest and sincere condolences to our dear Thirumeni Rt. Rev. Dr. Joseph Mar Iraneus Episcopa, for the sudden demise of his mother in July 1992. His mother played a vital role in his life and for six decades gave him the privilege of being able to enjoy the warmth and comfort from her presence.

I have known the Maramon Palakunnathu family since my childhood days. Ammachy was a person greatly respected by both the family and the community at large. She was a devoted wife, a mother and a very active member of our church.

Our Diocesan Bishop the Rt. Rev. Dr. Philipose Mar Chrysostom conducted the funeral service and the Most Rev. Joseph Mar Koorilose, Metropolitan of the Thozhiyoor Malabar Independent Syrian Church, Kunnamkolam, several political and religious leaders were present at the funeral. We pray to the Almighty to give Iraneus Thirumeni strength and added courage to withstand this great loss.

**Jacob O. Mathew, Los Angeles  
Member, Sabha Council**



# മുന്തിരിവള്ളി

മസ് ജോൺ

നട്ടു നീയെന്നെ നിന്റെ  
ദിവ്യമാം പർണ്ണാശ്രമ  
മുറഞ്ഞ വനികത—  
നാരോമൽത്തുടിപ്പായി.

ആശ്രമകുളിരേക—  
മാനന്ദനിറവാൻ  
ട്ടാർദ്രമാം സ്ഥലിയിലെ  
നാദ്യത്തെമുളപൊട്ടി.

ചെറുനാമ്പുകൾ നീട്ടി—  
പ്പടൻ, ദിനംതോറും  
പുതുമോഹങ്ങൾ കൂമ്പി—  
ട്ടുണൻ. തുടുത്തു ഞാൻ.

മഞ്ഞുതുളികൾ രൂപി  
വളർത്തി, പുലരികൾ;  
മഞ്ജളനിലാവണി—  
ചൊരട്കി, യിരവുകൾ

കുളർമാരുതൻമന്ദം  
തഴുകി; പുതുജീവ—  
നണർത്തി സിരകളി,  
ലുഷ്മളകിരണങ്ങൾ,

ഞാനൊരു മനോഹര  
ലതികയായി നാനാ  
ശാവികൾ തോറും സുപ്ര-  
തീക്ഷകളോളം തല്ലി.

ഋതുദേവങ്ങളെനീൽ  
റോമാഞ്ചമണച്ചുപ്പോൾ,  
പുതുമോടികളെന്നെ  
ക്കോരമയിർക്കൊളളിച്ചുപ്പോൾ

പുവിടാനൊരുങ്ങി ഞാൻ,.....  
പുഷ്പങ്ങൾ വിരിഞ്ഞില്ല;  
പൂവൊന്നും കണികാണാ—  
താക്കാലം കടന്നുപോയ്.

നിൻപ്രതീക്ഷകൾക്കൊത്തു  
വളരാൻ കഴിഞ്ഞീല;  
നിന്റെ പൂങ്കാവിന്നാദ്യ  
ഫലങ്ങൾ കൊടുത്തില.

ഫലശൂന്യമാം വെറും  
മുന്തിരിത്തളായിന്നീ  
മലർവാടിയിൽ; തവ  
മോഹനസ്വപ്നങ്ങളിൽ

കടനം കലർത്തി ഞാൻ  
നിൽക്കുന്നു, വിശേഷമാം  
കഥയെന്തെന്നിങ്ങത്ര  
പുന്തളിർ കരുത്താലും!

ഈ പുഷ്പവനിയിൽ നീ  
വീണ്ടും വന്നെത്തുന്നേരം,  
ആകലാത്മാവായെന്നെ,  
നീയന്നു ദർശിക്കുമ്പോൾ

ചെത്തി നീ വെടിപ്പാക്കേൻ  
ശാവകൾ ഫലം കായ്ക്കാ—  
ദുഃഖത്തെക്കാളും ഞാനാ  
വേണേ സഹിച്ചീടാം.

പുതുചൈതന്യം നേടി,  
പുളകുത്തിർ ചൂടി,  
പുതിയവസന്തം ഞാൻ  
സ്വപ്നം കണ്ടുണരട്ടെ!

മധുരസ്മിതം തൂകി.  
മലർമഞ്ജരി ചാർത്തി,  
മധുരക്കനിയെന്നിൽ  
സമൃദ്ധം വിളയട്ടെ!!



## റവ. എം. ജെ. ജോസഫ് ചാർജെടുത്തു

കേരള Scripture Union & C. S. S. M.-ന്റെ  
പുതിയ സെക്രട്ടറിയായി റവ. എം. ജെ. ജോസഫ് (കി  
ക്കൊഴൂർ) ജൂൺമാസം 1-ാം തീയതി മുതൽ ചുമതല  
യിൽ പ്രവേശിച്ചു. ശ്രീ കെ സി ചെറിയാൻ റിട്ടയർ  
ചെയ്ത ഒഴിവിലേക്കാണ് നിയമനം.

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