

MAR THOMA

# MESSENGER

A PUBLICATION OF THE DIOCESE OF NORTH AMERICA & EUROPE

October 1999



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the New Millennium"**

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### LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Received the latest issue of the Mar Thoma Messenger (July 1999) and it looks good. The front cover picture of Rev. Roy Abraham Thomas titled First "Kasseessa" From Us is very appropriate for this special issue. I like to congratulate the Editorial Board especially Rev. K. G. Joseph (Manager) and Mr. Abraham Mattackal (Chief Editor) for a job well done. The articles and the coverage of the XVII Mar Thoma Family Conference was outstanding. Keep up the good work—congratulations!

**T. A. Mathew, Houston**

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Cover: Installation of The Most Rev. Dr. Philipose Mar Chrysostom Officiating Metropolitan as the 20th Marthoma  
Photo by: Sunny Abraham, Bethel MTC Philadelphia, PA

# Message From The Diocesan Bishop



Dearly Beloved in Christ,

I had to be in Kerala for the special service for the elevation of the present Metropolitan as the Valiya Metropolitan and the installation of the officiating Metropolitan as the new Metropolitan of the Mar Thoma Church. It was a solemn, sacred service incorporated within the Holy Communion Service, a moment of celebration and delegation. The Church celebrated the very valuable service of the 19th Mar Thoma through the liturgy of the Eucharist. The Church witnessed the delegation of position and power to a successor by the Mar Thoma Metropolitan while he is alive and active. It was an historical moment at the dawn of a new millennium. We need to pray for and support the chosen leaders of the Church that they may lead and guide us through the will and purpose of God.

I missed the annual Mandalam meeting due to my unavoidable presence in the first Central Committee meeting of the World Council of Churches, which met at Geneva. The place and the role of our Church in the WCC is further strengthened through the nomination of quite a few members of our Church in various important commissions and committees and on the staff. We need to deepen and widen our ecumenical experience in our local and Global context of existence. NCCC in USA is celebrating its 50th Anniversary in November at Cleveland where five of our delegates are participating. Last month we supported the humanitarian services, especially the Relief work of the NCCC through Church World Service, by our financial contribution. We need to do more and support more in the coming years.

A new Sabha Council and office bearers have taken charge in the Church for the next three years. Our Diocese has three elected members who are competent to contribute much to the shaping of the affairs of our Church. No more our Church is a Central Travancore-centred one. It is a Diasporic Global Church with multilingual and multicultural membership. So any deliberation or decision made at Tiruvalla has a bearing and a consequence globally. This calls for seriousness and cautiousness in all our dealings on Church affairs. The future should have a bearing on the present as the past has an influence on the present. Indecisions can stall progress while wrong decisions can destroy everything. Right decisions at the nick of time can turn the course of history for the better. Decision makers need divine wisdom to choose between the right and wrong.

One of the visible strengths of our Church, establishing herself as a Global Church, is our developing relationships with other Churches. I had the special privilege of representing the Most Rev. Dr. Alexander Mar Thoma Metropolitan at a very special dinner hosted by the Most Rev. Lord Archbishop of Canterbury at the Archbishop's official residence, Lambeth Palace, in London. It was a very important occasion as it was to honor our Metropolitan and thank God for establishing full communion with the Church of England in 1974. His Grace spoke very warmly about the relationship between the Anglican communion and the Diaspora community of the Mar Thoma Christians world wide. I had the opportunity to stress the dire need of strengthening and deepening the bilateral relationships in the new changing ecumenical scenario.

India has a new Government at its helm through the largest free and fair election. Coalition governments have become a reality in India that has to be reckoned with. Religious affiliations play more significant role than political commitments in the Indian political scene. Personalities carry more weight than parties do. Liking for dynasties is still at the heart. Issue based, policy-oriented, people-oriented politics have yet to emerge. Though democracy has several pitfalls, definitely it is better than autocracy. The voice of minorities, marginalised, unorganized, etc. must be heard in any governance of people. More vigilance is essential on our part to keep democracy alert and active. The Church has to keep a watch on what is happening within itself and beyond to fulfill its mission in the contemporary world. May the peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be upon you all.

With blessings.

Yours in Christ's Service,

The Rt. Rev. Dr. Zacharias Mar Theophilus

# 1999 SABHA PRADHINIDHI MANDALAM— AN OVERVIEW OF THE PROCEEDINGS

I must confess that I had no knowledge about the proceedings or the *modus operandi* of the Mandalam until such time I attended this year's meeting in Thiruvalla from August 26 through 29 as a representative of the Los Angeles Mar Thoma Church. Though active in the North American Diocese of the Mar Thoma Church for almost three decades, I have always been harboring the thought that deliberations and decisions at the Mandalam meetings are mainly for the Mar Thoma members residing in Kerala and other states of India to worry about. It's also true that given an opportunity to go to India on a two or three-week vacation, most of us would go in January/February with the intention of attending the famous Maramon Convention rather than in August/September to watch the Mandalarn proceedings even as an observer.

Sitting on the front row of the 'lay section-men' of the audience along with some fellow Mandalam members from the North American diocese, I could closely watch the proceedings though occasionally I had the fear of being thrown out to the back row as normally the front rows are reserved for 'important' people of the society and the Church. But then the thought of the freedom of the press came to my mind and it gave me courage to face any eventuality as I was sitting there more as a reporter of the *Mar Thoma Messenger* than as a member of the Mandalam.

At the end of the first day's meeting, my perceptions about the Mandalam meetings began to change. I saw democracy at work. I saw the genuine concern and complaints of the Marthomites being addressed by their representatives with emotion and pain. I saw the greatest form of love and respect being expressed and showered on our Bishops and other Church leaders by our representatives to the Mandalam. Just like you see in any Parliament House of a democratic country, I was impressed and astonished at the way the members debated and decisions taken on various items on the agenda. I was proud to be a Marthomite!

On a serious note, one of the many decisions taken at the Mandalam meetings was related to the working of the Mandalam itself. The Sabha Council was asked to submit a report about the election to the Sabha Council and the proceedings of the Mandalam meetings at the next year's Mandalam meetings. Here are a few points for the consideration of the Sabha Council:

1. A beautiful auditorium building was completed but the most important component of the auditorium—its accoustical treatments—need to be redone or improved upon considerably. During the mandalam meetings, it was difficult to hear clearly and distinctly what the Speaker on the dais was speaking about, even sitting at a distance of about 20 or 30 feet from the dais. Elimination of echoes by installing sound absorbing materials like fiberglass wool and perforated boards on walls and ceilings is a priority. Speakers could be installed permanently on elevated positions from different angles so that the audience could hear the person speaking from the dais no matter where they are seated.
2. Because of the hall with flat floor is already completed, only the height of the seatings could now be altered. Seatings are to be in three sections—one facing the dais and the other two side sections. If benches or chairs are to be built on a semi-circular way in the hall, with progressively varying heights to the back, as is often found in auditoriums and cinema houses, people can see the speakers without any obstruction.

3. Many members and observers had to return to the afternoon meetings without taking good lunch. The township of Thiruvalla doesn't have many hotels and restaurants to cater to the needs of over a thousand people extra on a single day. Many members had to walk from one restaurant to the other looking for a quick lunch. Sometimes there were too many people looking for a seat. This problem could be solved easily by giving the contract for three days to any outside caterers. The same caterer could provide morning breakfast and evening snacks and coffee. In order to minimize the loss, members could be asked to take lunch tickets in the morning itself so as to enable the contractor to arrange the food according to the number of tickets sold. The same contractor could provide bottled water for sale too in addition to providing boiled water in earthen coolers.
4. Representatives from different parishes of the Mar Thoma Church come to the Mandalam meetings. They are not unknown group of people coming from different unknown regions. They are elected representatives of our own parishes. The meetings are over by 5 or 6 p.m. at the most. Then why do we have to segregate them into three sections (lay men, women and achen) with rope barriers? Why do we have to show even in a vague way that achen are a class by themselves? Living as we do in a century that witnessed tearing down of many a 'wall' like the Berlin wall, we must ensure that no wall of segregation is built up. If all these three sections are made into one section, then it would give an opportunity to exchange greetings, ideas and opinions, know each other personally especially between the achen and lay people. If the lady members want to sit together at one corner or on the few front rows, it's up to them and not for us to segregate them.
5. This year's study material 'Service of Reconciliation' introduced by Rev. Dr. K. A. Abraham was indeed a good one. At least an hour should be set apart for discussion on the salient points raised in the study material. Because of the time constraints and tight schedules, many of the members don't get a chance to say 'hello' to an achen or an unknown member. If the daily meetings could start at 9 a.m. instead of 10 a.m., 30 minutes more could be added to the lunch time and discussion on study material theme.
6. Sabha Council's answers to the questions submitted in advance by the members should be forthright, clear and unambiguous. They should not be evasive and 'smart'.
7. Too much time was spent for controlling the question-answer sessions with discipline and order. Many members were seen asking questions or commenting on others' answers repeatedly without giving chances to others. A member should not be allowed to ask repeat questions or make comments thereof until and unless no one else is standing on the floor. A second chance is given to a member for questioning only when no other person is standing.

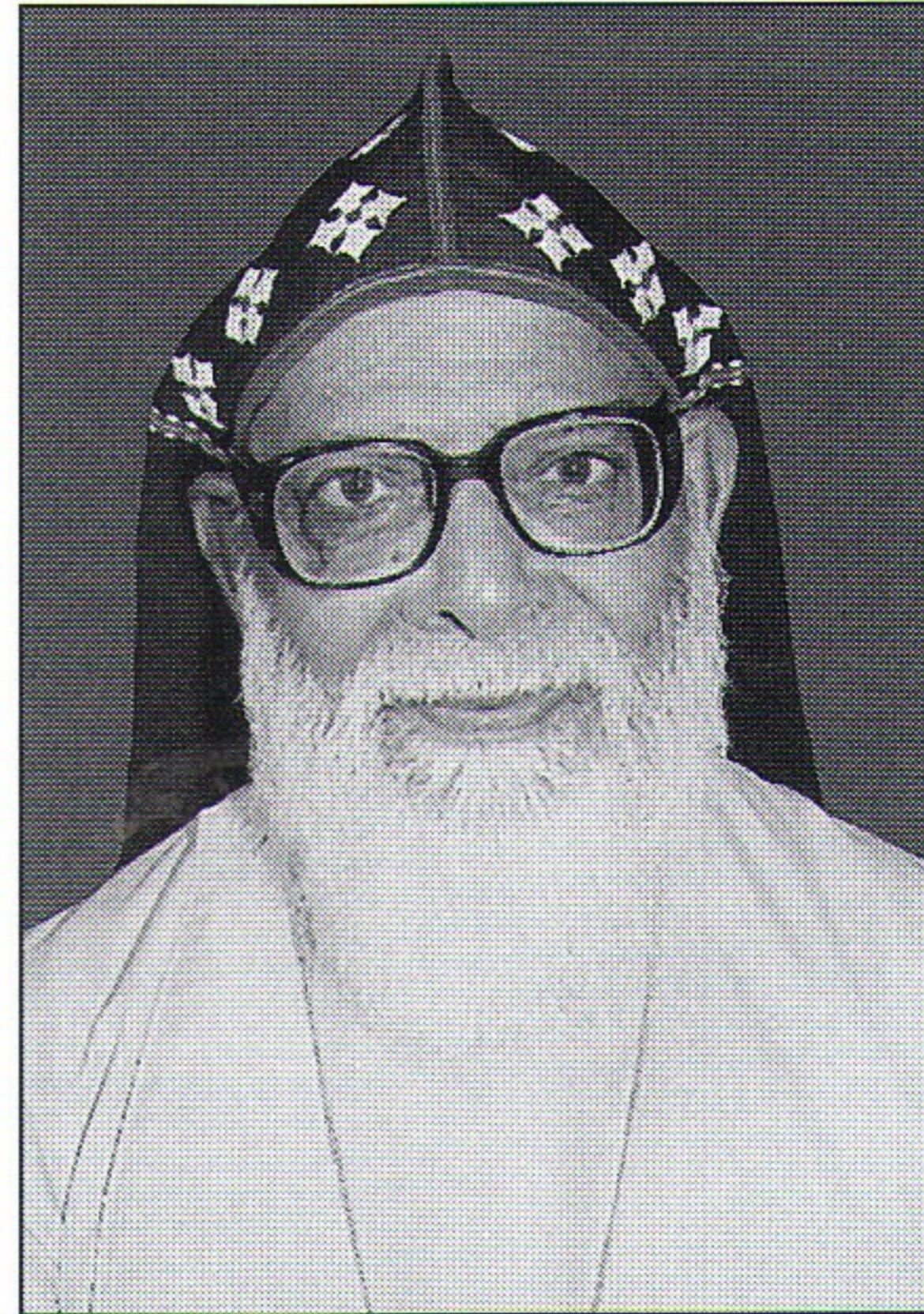
As a new millennium is just about to dawn on us with so much potentials and possibilities, and as the world around us and its people have become closer and more interdependent than any time in the past, the Mar Thoma Church has to rise to the occasion and meet its challenges. The Mar Thoma Church is not now confined to the four corners of Kerala or India only, but it's a global church as was proved at the Mandalam meeting where voices of Mar Thoma diaspora representing North American continent, Europe, Australia, Gulf countries, Singapore & Malaysia could be heard.

**Abraham Mattackal, Los Angeles, California**

# Presidential Address in the Mar Thoma Sabha Mandalam on August 26, 1999

The Most Rev. Dr. Alexander Mar Thoma Metropolitan

Let us thank God for the opportunity He has given us to gather here once again as the newly constituted Sabha Mandalam. The great jubilee of celebrating the 2000th year of the incarnation, of our Lord has arrived. During the past two Millennium the Christian Church has passed through many crisis periods. Churches have been established in all countries of the world. The movement of the Kingdom of God, which was established with the incarnation, crucifixion and resurrection of our Lord is progressing. Evil forces have risen against it all through history. However we still firmly believe that despite all this, the Kingdom of God will indeed be established, that God still reigns as its sovereign Lord and that Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and for ever and is the triumphant Lord. The word of God assures us that the Holy Spirit is working unceasingly towards the realization of the fullness of the experience of the Kingdom of God. Let us face this situation with the firm hope that inspite of intense oppositions, the Church of Christ will go forward not defeated by the powers of Hades.



## Our Heritage

Our Church was established 2000 years ago in the South-West corner of India by St. Thomas. Let us thank God for this glorious heritage. God has helped us to participate in the ancient culture of India. In the beginning of the 19th Century, the Word of God became available in our Malayalam Language. The experience of new life, which was brought about by the power of the Holy spirit led our fathers to share the light of the Gospel in India, and to work for fulfilling the mission of the Church. We who had been confined for many centuries in the south-west corner of India have been sent to reach many countries abroad by the challenge of the modern world. Today, the Mar Thoma Church has been sent not only to all parts of India but also to many Western and Eastern countries and has formed new Dioceses there. We do not stand alone. We have taken a very significant part in the world wide Ecumenical Movement, which started in the middle of the last Century.

We have entered into full communion relationship with the world wide Anglican Communion, the Church

of South India and the Church of North India to bear witness to the unity of the Church. We also have special relationship with the Malabar Independent Syrian Church of Thozhiyoor. We also keep good relationship with the Roman Catholic Church in Kerala and the Orthodox Church, which claim allegiance to the tradition of St. Thomas. We have good relationship with the Knanaya Church and the Chaldean Church. Conversations are going on to enter into full communion relationship with the United Lutheran Church in India. We have been led

to participate in the Ecumenical Organizations like the Kerala Council of Churches, National Council of Churches in India, Christian Conference of Asia and the World Council of Churches. Besides these we participate in International Organizations like Y M C A, Y W C A, Bible Society etc. God has given us the opportunity to enter into the new Millennium along with all of them. We have gathered here as the representative Assembly of the Church, which is called to direct the activities of the Church at this historic moment.

The election of the members of the new Sabha Council has been conducted in the different Dioceses. Election of the Office bearers of the Church and many related Committees remain to be conducted during the coming days. May the Lord help us to face the challenges of the new century and fulfill our responsibilities for His glory.

## The Present Situation

The scientific movement which started in the 16th Century in Europe led to Industrialization. Revolutions have taken place on the basis of the motto, Liberty, Equality and Fraternity. Also the supremacy of the western countries and Imperialism spread all over the world establishing colonialism. Because of these developments, during this century the world has passed through the tragedy of two World wars. With mastery of Nuclear power, we have entered into a new era all together different from the past. Human kind is now able to establish full mastery over the forces of nature and to exploit them according to their wish without other considerations. We have begun to experience the extreme

consequences for good and evil of this mastery over nature. As already stated, much has been written about this in recent days there is no need to elaborate on this now. The present situation encompassing the whole world may be denoted with three terms "Globalization, Liberalization, Marketisation". Western countries, which developed fast with the mastery over nuclear power have started Projects all over the World to sell their products. The developing Countries at the same time run into unbearable financial debts, unable to pay back the loans taken by them and are unable to develop on their own.

With the expansion of this cultural setting, gaining, material power and pleasure has become the supreme goal of human existence for people all over the world. This is the greatest danger we face at present. Multi-National Corporations have reached all Countries across Continents and work for their economic gains turning the whole world into their Market. In the developing countries also there is a small group, who are able to adjust to this new situation. They also exploit the weaker millions in their countries, and the poor are sinking into despair unable to get liberation from economic distress. Even though it may be said that democratic governments exist in many of the developing countries, the state has become unable to work for the development of the poor because of these economic forces. No state is able to stand alone without yielding to the mighty power of the multi-national corporations and the world Bank. Thus the modern world faces a new economic colonialism. All developing countries like India have to struggle for their development facing this unfortunate situation.

### **Some other Aspects of this Crisis**

Our country faces some other difficult situations also. Those who have some economic power and influence wish to increase, what they have by attaining political power and so they form political parties in their own names. Political Parties have become numerous. A Government which is formed with the coalition of such Parties suffer from instability which we experience today. There is little hope of establishing a stable Government even after the next general elections, in the Centre. Without a strong Central Government, progress cannot be envisaged.

India is a land of many religions. The policy followed till now is granting all religions equal rights which was called 'Secularism' in the Constitution of India. Today the tendency is growing to combine religion and Politics which leads to Communalism, which is the growing danger in the present political situation.

With this tendency there is also a growing propaganda that the minority religions are foreign importations, and

that they should not be given rights in India today. Such propaganda is completely against the rights granted to all citizens according to the Constitution of India.

According to the Caste system prevalent in India during the past many centuries, millions of people have been mercilessly exploited. Christian Agencies have worked for their liberation in loving service motivated by the love of God. In many parts of North India, these Christian groups have been attacked and Churches and Missionaries have been cruelly treated. Still the Christian Church has to continue its mission of loving service facing this situation.

It is a redeeming feature to note that many Hindu leaders have clearly expressed the view that this kind of intolerance is against the real spirit of Sanathana Hindu Dharmam of ancient India, and all must work together with good will and the spirit of universal brotherhood. So it is up to us Christians to work for the rights of all religious groups and to work for the liberation of the poor and the marginalized. For this unity must be demonstrated among all Christian denominations. They must clear their differences and work together in Christian witness and service. They must also work ceaselessly against growing social evils, like corruption, alcoholism and drug addiction.

The possibility of working together with all people of good will, irrespective of religious differences must be pursued through local Panchayat groups. However we face the problem that even the Panchayat groups are being made tools of certain political parties, which destroy the possibility of all people working together by good will. This is a very unfortunate situation, which has to be faced and remedied.

No society can develop properly without progress in education. It is true that Kerala has the highest literacy rate among all the states in India. Yet we see that for opportunities for higher education people have to go to other states and they spend huge amounts of money for getting an admission. The leaders in this state must find a solution for this problem, so that the state may not lose such heavy investments. At present the private agencies and Churches, who have contributed largely in the field of higher education in the state are being discriminated against. They are not granted new opportunities in the field of higher education. This policy must be revised.

### **Our Responsibility**

The solution for all these problems is that the Church continue unabated its task of helping in the establishment of the Kingdom of God. In fulfilling this task the Church has to continue to proclaim the message of the love, fellowship, justice and sharing implied in the message of the Kingdom of God and give courageous leadership in



establishing it. The Church must demonstrate these aspects in their practical life style, and in their relationship with others. As an example, when the World Council of Churches met in the 8th Assembly last December at Harrare, the Churches appealed to the affluent nations in the world to renounce their claim to be repaid the huge burden of debts, from the poor developing countries. They also appealed that the rich nations should contribute regularly a substantial share of their gross national income for the development of the weaker nations.

We have the responsibility to respect people of all religions and to deal with them in brotherly love and to work together with them for the common good. Moreover in spite of oppositions, we have to reach the exploited poor people and to work for their development continually. The Sabha Report gives us details regarding such services being rendered in the Villages through the different Dioceses and the Ashrams and missionary efforts. With out being contented with this we have to muster the youth in larger numbers and train and send them to serve with selfless devotion to the poor villages. Our Parishes must become recruiting centres for such noble workers who are willing to dedicate their lives and wealth in the service of others. Our Parishes also must show forth the joy of Christian fellowship and of fulfilling the will of God. For this arrangements for regular Bible Study and Counseling must be developed in all parishes. There must be earnest search to find out what new ways of service are possible to the Parishes and Dioceses and all must have the courage to implement them. Your attention is drawn to the report regarding the needs and possibilities in the different Dioceses.

The subject selected for special study in the Mandalam this year is 'Reconciliation'. In the present world situation the relevance of this subject is worth remembering. The study which will be inaugurated in the Mandalam must be carried on in the Parishes with the challenge to implement it in the life and work of the Church.

Mention may be made of some dear ones who have been called to their eternal rest after the last Mandalam meeting. They include Metropolitans of sister Churches, the Most Rev. Paulose Mar Paulose, Archbishop Joseph Kundukulam, the Most Rev. Paulose Mar Philoxenos, the Most Rev. Geevarghes Mar Gregorios, Bishop Joseph Kureethara and from the Clergy of our Church, Rev. C. Chacko and Rev. K. V. Thomas and some leading members of the laity. We praise God for their noble lives and the illustrious service they rendered. We record our condolence for the bereaved.

Our country is facing aggression from the Pakistani intruders in Kargil area. Many lives of brave soldiers have been sacrificed and others have suffered serious wounds. We pay homage to the memory of the departed and pray

for the consolation of the relatives of the victims. We have resolved to contribute a substantial amount to the Prime Minister's Fund to help them and have already paid part of it to the Prime Minister. We appeal to all to contribute liberally towards this Fund with out delay.

Both India and Pakistan are suffering huge losses through the continued attacks from our neighbor Pakistan with the intention of capturing Kashmir. Both the countries are also facing the problems of alleviating the poverty of the masses. But a huge share of the annual income is being used every year to face the military problem. To find a peaceful settlement for this is most important for both countries. Let us pray and work for it.

## Conclusion

I concluded my Presidential Address in the Sabha Mandalam in 1997 with the following statement and appeal. *"God granted me grace to function as the President of this Mandalam for the past 21 years. It is through the prayers and co-operation of all the members of the Church and the never failing grace of God that I was enabled to shoulder this responsibility. I appeal to the Mandalam to relieve me from the responsibility and entrust it with the Suffragan Metropolitan"*. Two years have passed after that. My physical strength has weakened during this time, and I have had to be hospitalized on some occasions. I regarded it as very important that fulfillment of my responsibilities should not be hindered because of my physical inability. I am confident that the Suffragan Metropolitan, who is endowed by God with many sided talents, will be able to discharge these responsibilities fully, and so he may be entrusted with these added duties. Accordingly after careful consideration and consulting the Episcopal Synod and the Sabha Council, I entrusted many responsibilities with him, on 15th March 1999, with the title "Officiating Metropolitan". He now stays with me in the Poolatheen and we happily share the duties with mutual consultations. Rt. Rev. Dr. Joseph Mar Irenaeus, was elevated as the Suffragan Metropolitan. Also three senior members of the clergy were distinguished as "Vicars General"; Very Rev. P. V. Thomas, Very Rev. Dr. P. P. Abraham and Very Rev. A. C. Kurian. In this Mandalam necessary constitutional amendments are forthcoming to make the changes regarding Officiating Metropolitan according to constitutional provision. These matters and other important subjects are coming up for our deliberations and decisions in this Mandalam. I seek the active co-operation of all members in the decisions concerning the work of the church during the next three years. It is my prayer that everything may be done for the Glory of God and for the fulfillment of the mission of the church, in the days to come. May God's blessings be with all of us forever. ■

# Mandalam Meetings — August 26-28, 1999

Abraham Mattackal

A three day meeting of the members of the *Sabha Pradhinidhi Mandalam* was held at the Sabha Auditorium, Thiruvalla from August 26 through 29, 1999. Close to a thousand members representing different Mar Thoma parishes in India and abroad, including those from North America, U.K, Gulf countries and Singapore/Malaysia were present at the meetings. The Most Rev. Dr. Alexander Mar Thoma Valiya Metropolitan,



*Most Rev. Dr. Alexander Mar Thoma Valiya Metropolitan, Rt. Rev. Dr. Philipose Mar Chrysostom Metropolitan and Rt. Rev. Dr. Joseph Mar Irenaeus Suffragan Metropolitan at the Mandalam Meeting.*

presided over the opening session. During his presidential address, Valiya Metropolitan reminded the audience that attacks on the minority communities were still continuing and violence and persecution in the name of religion were to be stopped. Mar Thoma Church has a moral responsibility to work for the betterment of the poor and downtrodden, the Valiya Metropolitan told the members.

The Most Rev. Dr. Alexander Mar Thoma Metropolitan, Rt. Rev. Dr. Philipose Mar Chrysostom, Rt. Rev. Dr. Joseph Mar Irenaeus, Rt. Rev. Geevarghese Mar Athanasius, Rt. Rev. Dr. Geevarghese Mar Theodosius, Rt. Rev. Dr. Euyakim Mar Coorilos, Rt. Rev. Joseph Mar Barnabas, Rt. Rev. Thomas Mar Timotheos and Rt. Rev. Dr. Issac Mar Philoxenos were present at the meetings. Rt. Rev. Dr. Zacharias Mar Theophilus could not be present at the meetings as he had to attend the WCC Executive Committee Meeting in Geneva at the same time. The President of the National Council of Churches (NCC) Dr. K. Raja Ratnam, General Secretary Rev. Dr. Ipe Joseph, and Bishop George Ninan were also present at the meeting.

The Sabha Secretary Rev. A. C. Kurian presented the accounts and report to the members. He also answered questions sent by members earlier. Advocate Chacko George introduced constitutional amendments, after the Holy Communion Service at the St. Thomas Church on the 27th at 9 A.M. in which all the Bishops, a number of archbishops and members were present. The meeting started with a heavy load of programs. Trustee K. Varghese presented the budget for 1999-2000. Details of the budget as published in the *Malayala Manorama* dated August 29, 1999 are given alongside.

'Service of Reconciliation'—the theme of a study material presented by Rev. Dr. K. A. Abraham, was discussed in the afternoon of the 27th. A special meeting was held at 4 p.m. on the 27th, to honor those who were awarded 'Padma Bhushan' and 'Padma Shree' by the Government of India, namely Dr. Jacob Cherian, Dr. George Joseph and Dr. K. A. Abraham. The Mar Thoma Literary Award was given this year to Mr. Varghese Malakaracku. Rev. Dr. T. Jacob Thomas who was the recipient of the Christian Literary Award was honored at the meeting.

Voting for the election of Sabha Secretary, Sabha Trustee, Clergy Trustee, and members of the 'Vaideeka



*Most Rev. Dr. Philipose Mar Chrysostom Metropolitan keeping the unruly quiet.*

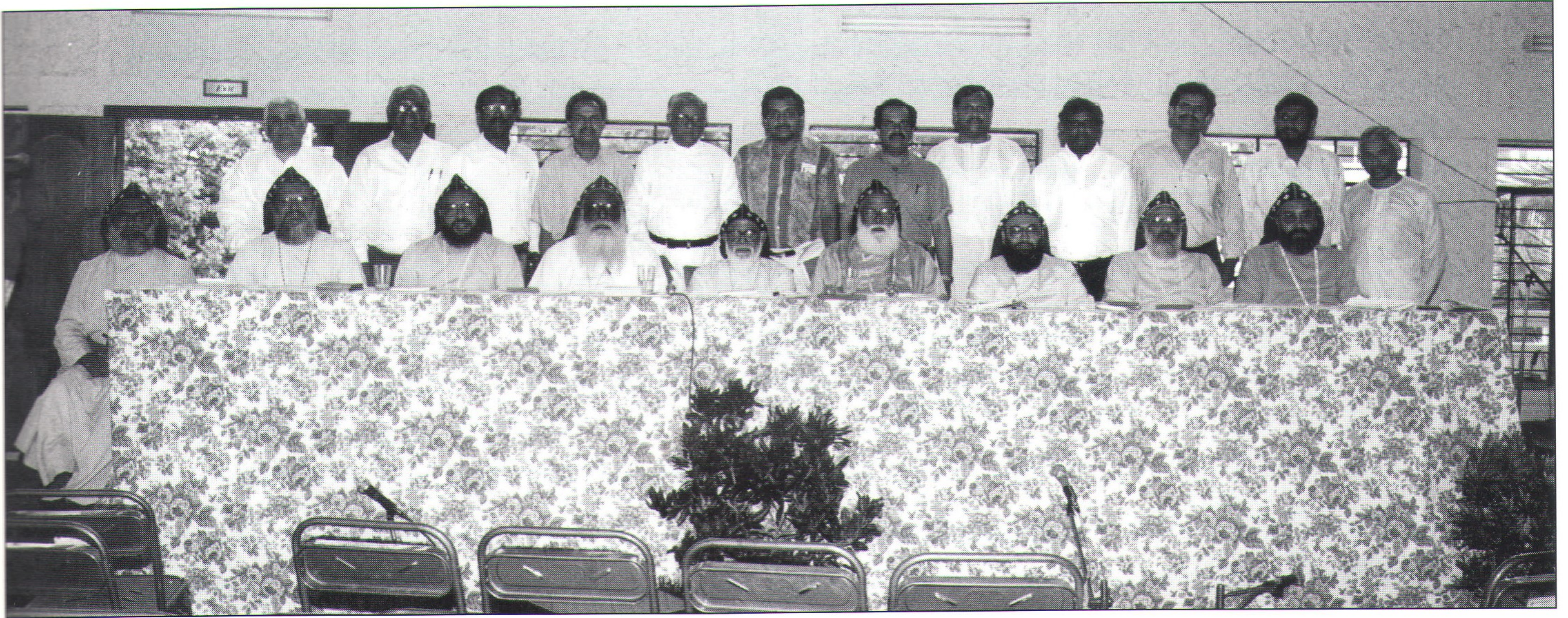
Selection Committee' were held from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Saturday the 28th. The results of the elections and details of the salient decisions including that of some constitutional changes are given elsewhere. Rt. Rev. Dr. Geevarghese Mar Theodosius thanked Rev. A. C. Kurian for his dedicated service to the Church. After serving as Sabha Secretary for the last six years, Rev. A. C. Kurian will take over as the Vicar General for the Trivandrum-Quilon diocese. The 1999 Mandalam meetings ended at about 7 p.m. on Saturday the 28th.



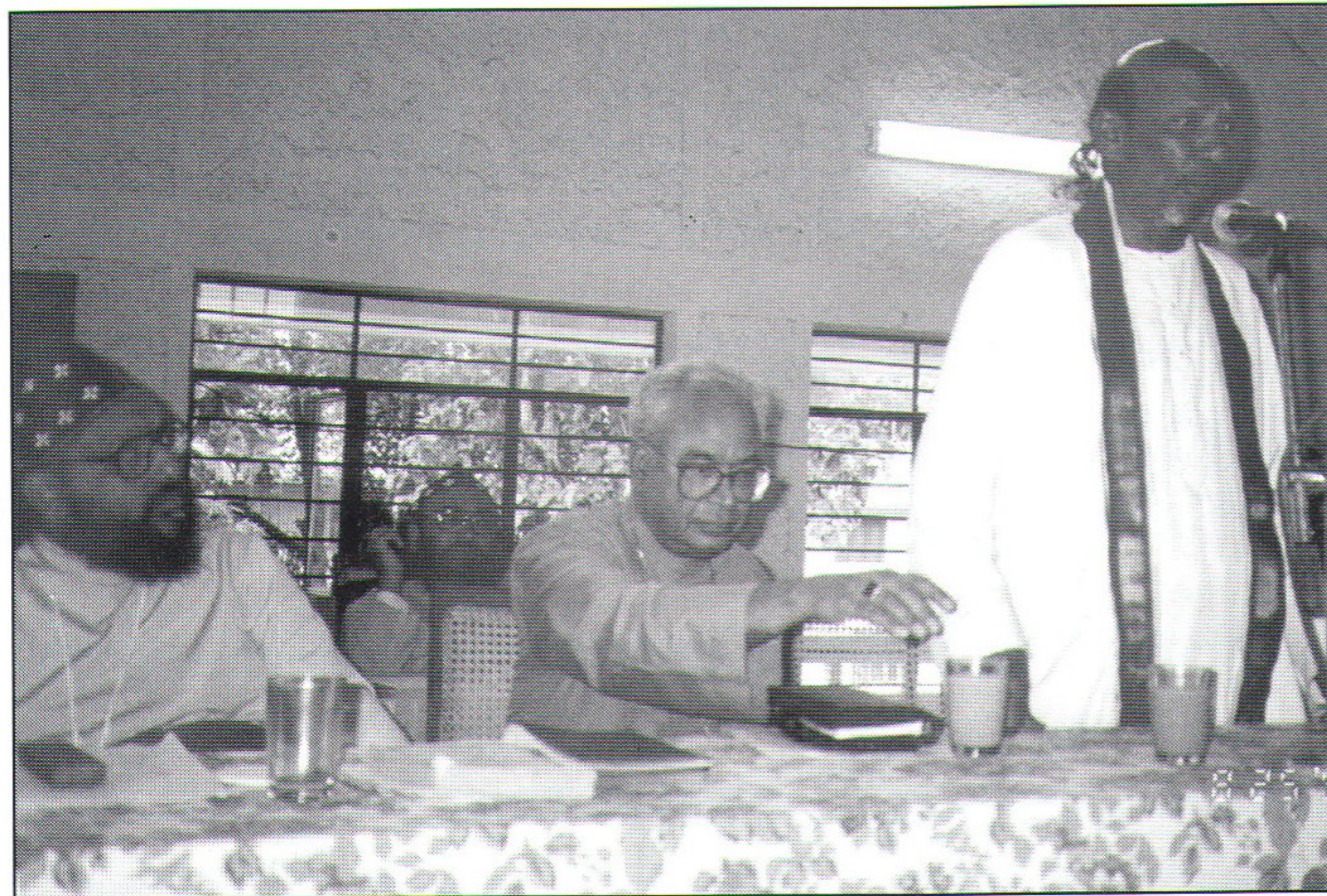
*A Holy Communion Service was conducted for the Mandalam Members at 9:00 a.m. on September 27, 1999 at the St. Thomas Church Thiruvalla. The celebrant was Rt. Rev. Isaac Mar Philoxenos Episcopa. Most of our bishops, large number of archbishops, and lay members were present at the communion service.*

## OUR MANDALAM MEMBERS WITH OUR BISHOPS

(Zacharias Thirumeni was in Geneva attending the WCC meeting)



Standing from Left to Right: *Thomas Daniel (Epiphany MTC, NY), Dr. Thomas Abraham (St. Peter's MTC, NJ), Abraham Mattackal (Los Angeles MTC, CA), Thomas Mattappallil (The MTC Staten Island, NY), Very Rev. A. C. Kurian (Vicar General), Sunny Abraham (Philadelphia MTC, PA), Philip David (St. John's MTC, NY), Varkey Abraham (Long Island MTC, NY), P. T. Thomas (St. Thomas MTC, NY), John P. Mathew (Trinity MTC, Houston, TX), Sunny Abraham (Bethel MTC, PA), Abraham Mathew (The MTC of Dallas, Farmers Branch), P. T. Thomas (San Francisco MTC) not in the picture.*



**Dr. K. Raj Ratnam, President, National Council of Churches speaking at the meeting, on his right are Bishop George Ninan of NCC and Rt. Rev. Geevarghese Mar Athanasius.**

## SABHA COUNCIL MEMBERS FROM OUR DIOCESE



*From left to right: Rev. K. Y. Jacob (Diocesan Secretary), Dr. Thomas Abraham (St. Peter's MTC, NJ), Mr. Thomas Daniel (Epiphany MTC, NY)*

# Some of the Major Decisions Taken at the 1999 Mandalam Meetings

സഭാ ഭരണഘടന 390 (A) വകുപ്പ് പ്രകാരം മലേഷ്യ സോണിലെ ഇടവകകളിൽ നിന്നുള്ള ഭദ്രാസന പ്രതിനിധിയെ സംബന്ധിച്ച് (Art. 193) സഭാ സെക്രട്ടറി അവതരിപ്പിച്ച താഴെ പറയുന്ന റിപ്പോർട്ട് അംഗീകരിച്ചു :-

1 മുതൽ	100 വരെ അംഗങ്ങൾക്കു	1 അംഗം
101 മുതൽ	200 വരെ അംഗങ്ങൾക്കു	2 അംഗങ്ങൾ
201 മുതൽ	350 വരെ അംഗങ്ങൾക്കു	3 അംഗങ്ങൾ
351 മുതൽ	500 വരെ അംഗങ്ങൾക്കു	4 അംഗങ്ങൾ
500 നു മുകളിൽ		5 അംഗങ്ങൾ

അഭിവന്ദ്യ ഓഫീഷ്യേറ്റിംഗ് മെത്രാപ്പോലീത്താ തിരുമേനി, ഒരു ലഘു പ്രസ്താവനയോടെ താഴെ വരുന്ന പ്രമേയം അവതരിപ്പിച്ചു:-

“സഭാ സേവനത്തിൽ ആയിര്യ്ക്കുമ്പോൾ തന്നെ സ്വന്തം തീരുമാന പ്രകാരം ചുമതലകൾ പിൻഗാമിയെ ഏല്പിച്ച് ആത്മീയ നേതൃത്വത്തിൽ കൂടുതൽ ശ്രദ്ധ പതിപ്പിക്കുന്ന ഒരു പുതിയ പാരമ്പര്യം മാർത്തോമ്മാ സഭയിൽ നി. വ. ദി. മ. ശ്രീ. ഡോ. അലക്സാണ്ടർ മാർത്തോമ്മാ മെത്രാപ്പോലീത്താ സൃഷ്ടിച്ചിരിക്കുന്നു. അഭിവന്ദ്യ മെത്രാപ്പോലീത്തായും ഓഫീഷ്യേറ്റിംഗ് മെത്രാപ്പോലീത്തായും ഒരുമിച്ച് പുലാത്തീനിൽ താമസിച്ച് കൂട്ടായ്മയിൽ ജീവിക്കുകയും പ്രവർത്തിക്കുകയും ചെയ്യുന്നതിൽ സന്തോഷിക്കുന്നു. മേലിലും ഇരുവരും ഒരുമിച്ച് ആലോചിച്ച് പ്രവർത്തിക്കുന്നതിനും ആത്മീയ ശുശ്രൂഷകളിൽ കൂടുതൽ നേതൃത്വം നൽകുന്നതിനും മെത്രാപ്പോലീത്താ തിരുമേനിയെ ദൈവം ശക്തീകരിക്കട്ടെ എന്നു ഈ മണ്ഡലം ആശംസിക്കുകയും പ്രാർത്ഥിക്കുകയും ചെയ്യുന്നു”.

സഭാ പ്രതിനിധി മണ്ഡലം സർവ്വസമ്മതമായി പ്രമേയം അംഗീകരിച്ചു. ഇപ്രകാരം ഒരു പ്രമേയം പാസ്സാക്കി തീരുമാനം ചെയ്തതിൽ ഉള്ള നന്ദിയും സന്തോഷവും അഭിവന്ദ്യ മെത്രാപ്പോലീത്താ തിരുമേനി പ്രകാശിപ്പിച്ചു.

സഭാ പ്രതിനിധി മണ്ഡലത്തിന്റെ നടത്തിപ്പ്, സഭാ കൗൺസിലിലേക്കുള്ള തെരഞ്ഞെടുപ്പ് ആദിയായ സഭാ വിഷയങ്ങളിൽ നടപടിക്രമങ്ങൾ നിർദ്ദേശിച്ച് അടുത്ത സഭാ പ്രതിനിധി മണ്ഡലയോഗത്തിൽ അവതരിപ്പിക്കുന്നതിന് സഭാ കൗൺസിലിനെ ചുമതലപ്പെടുത്തി.

സഭയുടെ പേരിൽ കൊല്ലം ഡിസ്ട്രിക്റ്റിൽ കൊട്ടാരക്കര താലൂക്കിൽ കടയ്ക്കൽ വില്ലേജിൽ സർവ്വേ നമ്പർ 308/12 ആന്റ് 308/17 ൽ ഉൾപ്പെട്ടതും 1978 മുതൽ മി. കെ. സി. സാമുവേൽ സുവിശേഷകനായി പ്രവർത്തിച്ച് വരുന്നതുമായ വസ്തു സംബന്ധിച്ച് അദ്ദേഹം സമർപ്പിച്ചിട്ടുള്ള അപേക്ഷ പരിഗണിച്ച്, അർഹത പരിശോധിക്കുന്നതിനും, നടപടി എടുക്കുന്നതിനും സഭാ കൗൺസിലിനെ ചുമതലപ്പെടുത്തി.

“അനുരഞ്ജനത്തിന്റെ ശുശ്രൂഷ” എന്ന വിഷയത്തെ അധികരിച്ചുള്ള പ്രബന്ധം അവതരിപ്പിച്ചു. പ്രസ്തുത വിഷയത്തെ സംബന്ധിച്ച് ചർച്ചകൾ നടത്തി.

ഭരണഘടന 113-ാം വകുപ്പനുസരിച്ചുള്ള പ്രമേയങ്ങൾ.

“ബാഹ്യ കേരളത്തിലെ മാർത്തോമ്മാ ഇടവകകളിലുള്ള മലയാളം വായിക്കുവാനറിയാത്ത അംഗങ്ങൾക്കു ഉപയോഗിക്കുന്നതിനുവേണ്ടി മലങ്കര മാർത്തോമ്മാ സുറിയാനി സഭ ആരാധനയ്ക്കും ശുശ്രൂഷകൾക്കും കൂദാശകൾക്കും ഉപയോഗിക്കുന്ന എല്ലാ പുസ്തകങ്ങളും മാരാമൺ കൺവൻഷൻ ഗീതങ്ങളും ഇംഗ്ലീഷിലേക്കു ലിപി മാറ്റം (Transliteration) ചെയ്തു പ്രസിദ്ധീകരിക്കുന്നതിനു ആവശ്യമായ ക്രമീകരണങ്ങൾ ചെയ്യുവാൻ സഭാ കൗൺസിലിനെ ഈ സഭാ പ്രതിനിധി മണ്ഡലം

ചുമതലപ്പെടുത്തുന്നു” എന്ന പ്രമേയം ചർച്ചകൾക്കുശേഷം, തത്വത്തിൽ അംഗീകരിക്കുകയും അതതു പ്രദേശങ്ങളിലെ ആവശ്യമനുസരിച്ച് തീരുമാനങ്ങൾ കൈക്കൊള്ളുന്നതിനു ഡയോസിഷൻ കൗൺസിലുകളെ ചുമതലപ്പെടുത്തുകയും ചെയ്തു.

“സഭാ പ്രതിനിധി മണ്ഡലത്തിൽ പട്ടക്കാർക്കും അമ്മായർക്കും ഭരണഘടന അനുശാസിക്കുന്ന പ്രാതിനിധ്യത്തിന്റെ അനുപാതത്തിൽ കൗൺസിലിൽ പ്രാതിനിധ്യം പുനർനിശ്ചയിക്കുന്നതിനും മണ്ഡലത്തിലും കൗൺസിലിലും സ്ത്രീകൾക്കു അർഹമായ പ്രാതിനിധ്യം ലഭിക്കുന്നതിലേക്കുമായി ആവശ്യമായ ഭരണഘടനാ ഭേദഗതികൾ നിർദ്ദേശിക്കുന്നതിനും ആയവ അടുത്ത സഭാ മണ്ഡലത്തിൽ കൊണ്ടു വരുന്നതിനുമായി സഭാ കൗൺസിലിനെ ചുമതലപ്പെടുത്തുന്നു” എന്ന പ്രമേയം പാസ്സാക്കി.

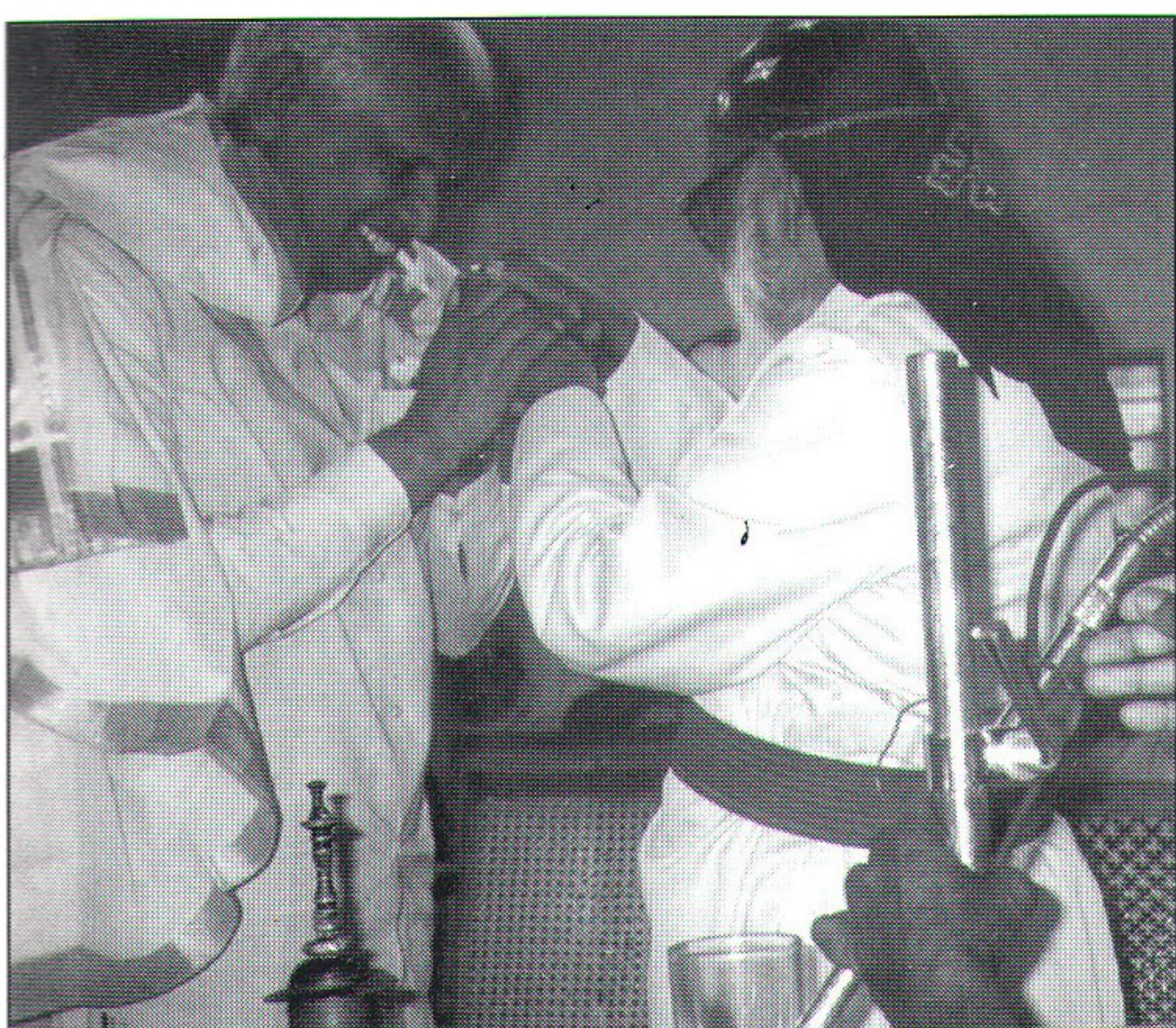
“മാർത്തോമ്മാ സഭയുടെ ഇടവകകളിൽ സേവനമനുഷ്ഠിക്കുന്ന ശുശ്രൂഷകർക്കായി (Sextons) അവരുടെ രോഗാവസ്ഥയിലോ അതുപോലെയുള്ള മറ്റ് അത്യാവശ്യ ഘട്ടങ്ങളിലോ സഹായം ലഭിക്കത്തക്കവണ്ണം സഭയായി ഒരു ക്ഷേമനിധി രൂപീകരിക്കണമെന്നു ബഹുമാനപ്പെട്ട സഭാ കൗൺസിലിനോടു ഈ മണ്ഡലം ആവശ്യപ്പെടുന്നു” എന്ന പ്രമേയം പാസ്സാക്കി.

മാർത്തോമ്മാ സഭയ്ക്ക് സ്വന്തമായി ഒരു പ്രൊഫഷണൽ കോളജ് ആരംഭിക്കുന്നതിനുള്ള സാധ്യതകളെപ്പറ്റി പഠിച്ചു സമർപ്പിച്ചിരുന്ന റിപ്പോർട്ട് ചർച്ച ചെയ്യുകയും, സഭയുടെ അടിസ്ഥാന പ്രമാണങ്ങളും തത്വങ്ങളും ലംഘിക്കാതെ യഥാസമയം ഒരു പ്രൊഫഷണൽ കോളജ് സ്ഥാപിക്കുന്നതിന് ആവശ്യമായ പ്രാരംഭ നടപടികൾ സ്വീകരിക്കുന്നതിന് സഭാ കൗൺസിലിനെ ചുമതലപ്പെടുത്തുകയും ചെയ്തു.

സഭയ്ക്കുള്ളിലെ ട്രസ്റ്റികൾ, സൊസൈറ്റികൾ ഇവകളുടെ പ്രവർത്തനങ്ങൾ, ഭരണഘടനകൾ എന്നിവയെ സംബന്ധിച്ച് പഠിയ്ക്കുന്നതിന് നിയമിച്ചിരുന്ന കമ്മിറ്റിയുടെ റിപ്പോർട്ട് സ്വീകരിക്കുകയും, അവയിലെ അപൂർണ്ണതകൾ പരിഹരിച്ച് നടപ്പാക്കി അടുത്ത മണ്ഡലയോഗത്തിൽ റിപ്പോർട്ട് ചെയ്യുന്നതിന് സഭാ കൗൺസിലിനെ ചുമതലപ്പെടുത്തുകയും ചെയ്തു.

1999-2002 കാലയളവിലേക്കു താഴെപ്പറയുന്ന സ്ഥാനങ്ങളിലേക്കു തിരഞ്ഞെടുപ്പ് നടത്തി. ഭരണഘടന 164-ാം വകുപ്പ് അനുസരിച്ച് സഭാ കൗൺസിൽ അംഗങ്ങളുടെ തിരഞ്ഞെടുപ്പ് ഭദ്രാസന തലത്തിലും മേഖല അടിസ്ഥാനത്തിലും ആണ് നടന്നത്. തിരഞ്ഞെടുക്കപ്പെട്ടവരുടെ പേരുകൾ ചുവടെ ചേർക്കുന്നു.

**The Most Rev. Dr. Alexander Mar Thoma Valiya Metropolitan recognizes Marthomites Dr. Jacob Cherian and Dr. George Joseph who were awarded “Padma Bushan” and Dr. K. A. Abraham who was awarded “Padma Shree” by the Government of India.**



ഭരണഘടന 390-ാം വകുപ്പു പ്രകാരം പ്രത്യേക വിജ്ഞാപനം അനുസരിച്ച് 1999 ആഗസ്റ്റ് 26, 27, 28 തീയതികളിൽ തിരുവല്ല സഭാ ആഡിറ്റോറിയത്തിൽ കൂടിയ പ്രത്യേക പ്രതിനിധി മണ്ഡല യോഗത്തിൽ താഴെപ്പറയുന്ന ഭരണഘടന ഭേദഗതികൾ പാസ്സാക്കി.

**7 A പുതുതായി ചേർക്കുക.**

- (1) ആരോഗ്യ സംബന്ധമായോ മറ്റു കാരണങ്ങളാലോ, മാർത്തോമ്മാ മെത്രാപ്പോലീത്തായ്ക്ക് തൽസ്ഥാന ചുമതലകൾ തുടർന്നു നിർവഹിക്കുന്നത് പ്രയാസമാണെന്ന് സ്വയം ബോധ്യമായാൽ, എപ്പിസ്കോപ്പൽ സിനഡിന്റെയും സഭാ കൗൺസിലിന്റെയും ആലോചനയോടു കൂടി, മെത്രാപ്പോലീത്താ എന്ന നിലയിൽ നിക്ഷിപ്തമായിട്ടുള്ള അധികാരങ്ങളും ചുമതലകളും ക്ലിപ്തതീയതി മുതൽ ഒഴിയാവുന്നതാണ്.
  - (2) അപ്രകാരം തീരുമാനം കൈക്കൊള്ളുന്നതിനിടയായാൽ, എപ്പിസ്കോപ്പാമാരിൽ മേൽപ്പട്ടത്തമുള്ളയാൾ (ഒരേ സമയത്ത് എപ്പിസ്കോപ്പാമായി വാഴിക്കപ്പെട്ടതാണെങ്കിൽ അവരിൽ പ്രായം കൂടിയ ആൾ), സാധാരണയായി മാർത്തോമ്മാ മെത്രാപ്പോലീത്തായായി അവരോധിക്കപ്പെടുന്നതാണ്. ഭരണഘടനയനുസരിച്ച് മാർത്തോമ്മാ മെത്രാപ്പോലീത്തായിൽ നിക്ഷിപ്തമായിട്ടുള്ള എല്ലാ അധികാരങ്ങളും ചുമതലകളും പുതുതായി അവരോധിക്കപ്പെടുന്ന മെത്രാപ്പോലീത്തായിൽ നിക്ഷിപ്തമാകുന്നതാണ്.
  - (3) അധികാരം ഒഴിയുന്ന മെത്രാപ്പോലീത്താ, മാർത്തോമ്മാ വലിയ മെത്രാപ്പോലീത്താ എന്ന പേരിൽ അറിയപ്പെടുന്നതും എപ്പിസ്കോപ്പൽ സിനഡ്, സഭാ പ്രതിനിധി മണ്ഡലം, സഭാ കൗൺസിൽ എന്നീ ഭരണ ഘടകങ്ങളിൽ തുടർന്നും അംഗമായിരിക്കുന്നതുമാണ്.
- 8 (3) 'എപ്പിസ്കോപ്പാ' എന്ന പദത്തിന്റെ വ്യാപ്തിയിൽ വിഷയത്തിനോ സന്ദർഭത്തിനോ വിപരീതമായി യാതൊന്നും ഇല്ലാത്തപക്ഷം മാർത്തോമ്മാ വലിയ മെത്രാപ്പോലീത്തായും, മാർത്തോമ്മാ മെത്രാപ്പോലീത്തായും, സപ്രഥമൻ മെത്രാപ്പോലീത്തായും ഉൾപ്പെടുന്നതാണ്.

**63-A. പുതുതായി ചേർക്കുക.**

ഭദ്രാസനത്തിന്റെ ചുമതലയുള്ള എപ്പിസ്കോപ്പാ ഒരു മാസത്തിലധികം കാലം ഭദ്രാസനാധ്യക്ഷന്റെ ചുമതലകൾ തക്ക സമയത്ത് നിർവ്വഹിക്കുന്നത് പ്രയാസമാകുന്ന സാഹചര്യങ്ങളിൽ, ടി ചുമതലകൾ താൽക്കാലികമായി നിർവ്വഹിക്കുന്നതിന് ആവശ്യമായ ക്രമീകരണങ്ങൾ, യുക്താനുസരണം, മാർത്തോമ്മാ മെത്രാപ്പോലീത്തായ്ക്ക് ചെയ്യാവുന്നതാണ്.

**63-B. പുതുതായി ചേർക്കുക.**

ഭരണപരമായി ഭദ്രാസനാധ്യക്ഷൻ കൈക്കൊള്ളുന്ന തീരുമാനങ്ങൾ, ബന്ധപ്പെട്ട ഇടവകകളെയോ വ്യക്തികളെയോ അറിയിക്കുന്നതിനും, ഭദ്രാസനാധ്യക്ഷനു വേണ്ടി എഴുത്തുകുത്തുകൾ നടത്തുന്നതിനും, ഭദ്രാസന സെക്രട്ടറിയെയോ, എപ്പിസ്കോപ്പായുടെ സെക്രട്ടറിയെയോ, യുക്താനുസരണം നിയോഗിക്കുന്നതിന് ഭദ്രാസനാധ്യക്ഷന് സാതന്ത്ര്യമുണ്ടായിരിക്കും.

**344-A. പുതുതായി ചേർക്കുക.**

ഭദ്രാസനാധ്യക്ഷൻ സാമാന്യം ദീർഘകാലം ഭദ്രാസന കേന്ദ്രത്തിനു പുറത്തു പോകുവാൻ ഇടയാകുന്ന സാഹചര്യങ്ങൾ നിലവിലുള്ള ഭദ്രാസനങ്ങളിലെ ഇടവകകളുടെ സുഗമമായ നടത്തിപ്പിനെ മുൻനിർത്തി, വിവാഹ ലൈസൻസ്, ഇടവക ചുമതലക്കാരുടെ വാർഷിക തെരഞ്ഞെടുപ്പ്, ഇടവകസംഘം അംഗീകരിക്കുന്ന ഇടവകയുടെ വാർഷിക റിപ്പോർട്ട്, ഓഡിറ്റ് ചെയ്ത തെരട്ട്, ബാക്കി പത്രം, തന്നാണ്ടത്തെ ബഡ്ജറ്റ് എന്നിവ മേൽ 329, 330, 344 എന്നീ വകുപ്പുകളിൽ വിവക്ഷിക്കുന്ന പ്രകാരം, ഭദ്രാസനാധ്യക്ഷനു വേണ്ടി, അംഗീകാരം നൽകുന്നതിന്, ഭദ്രാസന കേന്ദ്രത്തിലും, ഭദ്രാസനത്തെ മേഖലകളായി തിരിച്ചിട്ടുണ്ടെങ്കിൽ, മേഖലകളിലും, വികാരി ജനറാളിനിയോ/ ഭദ്രാസന സെക്രട്ടറിയെയോ/ ഓരോ സീനിയർ പട്ടക്കാരനെയോ, മെത്രാപ്പോലീത്തായുടെ അനുമതിയോടു കൂടി, ഭദ്രാസനാധ്യക്ഷൻ നിയോഗിക്കാവുന്നതും, അതിനാവശ്യമായ ക്രമീകരണങ്ങൾ ചെയ്യാവുന്നതുമാണ്.

മേൽ പ്രകാരമുള്ള ചുമതലകളുടെ നിർവ്വഹണത്തിൽ, തർക്ക സംഗതികൾ ഉണ്ടാകുന്നതിനിടയായാൽ, നിയോഗിക്കപ്പെട്ട സീനിയർ പട്ടക്കാർ അങ്ങനെയുള്ള സംഗതികളിൽ സ്വയം തീരുമാനം കൈക്കൊള്ളുന്നതിനു പകരം, മെത്രാപ്പോലീത്തായുടെ തീരുമാനത്തിനായി, ബന്ധപ്പെട്ട രേഖകൾ, സ്വന്ത റിപ്പോർട്ടോടുകൂടി, സഭാ കേന്ദ്രത്തിലേക്ക് അയച്ചു കൊടുക്കേണ്ടതാണ്.

നിയോഗിക്കപ്പെട്ട പട്ടക്കാർ നിർവ്വഹിക്കുന്ന അംഗീകാര നടപടികൾ മാസം തോറും ഭദ്രാസന കേന്ദ്രത്തിലേക്ക് അയച്ചു കൊടുക്കേണ്ടതാണ്.

**375-A. പുതുതായി ചേർക്കുക.**

സാധാരണയായി, വരനോ വധുവോ, കൂടി നടക്കുന്ന പള്ളിയിലോ, ചാപ്പലിലോ വച്ച് വിവാഹം നടത്തേണ്ടതാണ്.

എന്നാൽ വിവാഹ കക്ഷികളുടെ സൗകര്യർത്ഥം, മേൽ പറഞ്ഞ പള്ളികളിലോ, ചാപ്പലുകളിലോ അല്ലാതെ മറ്റൊരു പള്ളിയിൽ (മൂന്നാം പള്ളിയിൽ) വച്ച് വിവാഹം നടത്തണമെന്ന് വിവാഹ കക്ഷികൾ ആഗ്രഹിക്കുന്ന പക്ഷം, രണ്ടിൽ ഏതെങ്കിലും കക്ഷിയോ, കക്ഷിയുടെ രക്ഷകർത്താവോ, സ്വന്തം ഇടവകയുടെ വികാരിയുടെയും, മൂന്നാം പള്ളിയുടെ വികാരിയുടെയും ശുപാർശയോടു കൂടി, മൂന്നാം പള്ളിയുടെ ചുമതല വഹിക്കുന്ന ഭദ്രാസനാധ്യക്ഷന് അപേക്ഷ സമർപ്പിക്കാവുന്നതും, ഭദ്രാസനാധ്യക്ഷൻ, യുക്താനുസരണം മൂന്നാം പള്ളിയിൽ വെച്ചുള്ള വിവാഹം അനുവദിക്കാവുന്നതുമാണ്.

ഭദ്രാസനാധ്യക്ഷന്റെ നിയന്ത്രണത്തിന് വിധേയമായി ഭദ്രാസനത്തിന്റെ ചുമതലയുള്ള വികാരി ജനറലും, മേൽ പറഞ്ഞ വ്യവസ്ഥകളനുസരിച്ച് ഈ അധികാരം ഉപയോഗിക്കാവുന്നതാണ്.

മൂന്നാം പള്ളിയിൽ വെച്ചുള്ള വിവാഹത്തിന് മുമ്പായി ഇരുകക്ഷികളും, ചുവടെ 377-ാം വകുപ്പിൽ വ്യവസ്ഥ ചെയ്തിരിക്കുന്ന പ്രകാരം അവരുടെ ഇടവകകളിൽ നിന്ന് ലഭിക്കുന്ന കുറി മൂന്നാം പള്ളിയുടെ വികാരിയ്ക്കു സമർപ്പിക്കേണ്ടതാണ്.

നിയമാനുസരണം വിവാഹ വിളിച്ച് ചൊല്ലി നടത്താൻ സാധിക്കാതെ വരുന്ന സന്ദർഭങ്ങളിൽ, ചുവടെ 378-ാം വകുപ്പിൽ പരാമർശിക്കുന്ന ലൈസൻസ് സംബന്ധിച്ചുള്ള വ്യവസ്ഥകളും, രണ്ടിലൊരു വിവാഹ കക്ഷി ഇതര സഭാംഗമാകുന്നതിനാൽ, കുറി ലഭിക്കുവാൻ സാധ്യമാകാതെ വരുന്ന സന്ദർഭങ്ങളിൽ, ചുവടെ 379-ാം വകുപ്പിൽ അനുശാസിക്കുന്ന പ്രകാരം, സത്യവാങ്ങ് മൂലം സ്വീകരിച്ച് വിവാഹം നടത്തി കൊടുക്കുന്നത് സംബന്ധിച്ചുള്ള വ്യവസ്ഥകളും, മൂന്നാം പള്ളിയിൽ വെച്ച് നടത്തുന്ന വിവാഹങ്ങൾക്കും ബാധകമായിരിക്കുന്നതാണ്.

ഏതെങ്കിലും കാരണവശാൽ, തക്കസമയത്ത് മൂന്നാം പള്ളിയുടെ ചുമതല വഹിക്കുന്ന ഭദ്രാസനാധ്യക്ഷനെയോ, ഭദ്രാസനത്തിലെ വികാരി ജനറലിനെയോ സമീപിച്ച് അപേക്ഷ നൽകുവാൻ ആവശ്യ കക്ഷിക്ക് സാധ്യമാകാതെ വരുന്ന സാഹചര്യങ്ങളിൽ മേൽ പ്രകാരമുള്ള അപേക്ഷ, മെത്രാപ്പോലീത്തായ്ക്ക് സമർപ്പിക്കാവുന്നതും, മെത്രാപ്പോലീത്താ, സന്ദർഭോചിതമായി, യുക്താനുസരണം, മേൽ പറഞ്ഞ വ്യവസ്ഥകളനുസരിച്ച്, നടപടി സ്വീകരിക്കാവുന്നതുംമാകുന്നു.

ഭരണഘടന 113-ാം വകുപ്പു പ്രകാരം വികാരി ജനറലന്മാരുടെ നിയമനത്തിനുള്ള ഉയർന്ന പ്രായപരിധി 55 വയസ്സിൽ നിന്നും 58 വയസ്സായി ഉയർത്തുന്നതിനെയും, അവരുടെ പരമാവധി സേവന കാലാവധി പത്ത് വർഷത്തിൽ നിന്നും ഏഴ് വർഷമായി കുറയ്ക്കുന്നതിനെയും പറ്റി ഭരണഘടന 56-ാം വകുപ്പ് 2, 4, 5 ഉപവകുപ്പുകൾക്ക് നിർദ്ദേശിക്കപ്പെട്ടിരുന്ന ഭരണഘടനാ ഭേദഗതി പ്രമേയം ചർച്ചകൾക്കുശേഷം താഴെപ്പറയുന്ന വിധം തീരുമാനിച്ചു. :-

ഈ പ്രമേയം സംബന്ധിച്ച് കൂടുതൽ പഠിച്ച് അടുത്ത മണ്ഡലത്തിൽ ഇതു സംബന്ധിച്ച പ്രമേയം അവതരിപ്പിക്കുന്നതിന് സഭാ കൗൺസിലിനെ ചുമതലപ്പെടുത്തി.

# മാർത്തോമ്മാ സഭാ ബജറ്റ്: ഭവനഭാനത്തിനും സെമിനാരി വികസനത്തിനും പദ്ധതി

തിരുവല്ല: സാമൂഹിക, വിദ്യാഭ്യാസ, പിന്നോക്ക ക്ഷേമ പ്രവർത്തനങ്ങൾക്കു മുൻതൂക്കം നൽകുന്ന മാർത്തോമ്മാ സഭയുടെ പുതിയ ബജറ്റ് സഭാ മണ്ഡലം യോഗം അംഗീകരിച്ചു. 6.7 കോടി രൂപ വരവു പ്രതീക്ഷിക്കുന്ന ബജറ്റ് ട്രസ്റ്റി കെ. വർഗീസാണ് അവതരിപ്പിച്ചത്. ഇന്റർനെറ്റ്, ഇ-മെയിൽ സംവിധാനം സഭയിലും ഏർപ്പെടുത്താൻ ബജറ്റിൽ പദ്ധതിയുണ്ട്. മാർത്തോമ്മാ സഭ സ്വന്തമായി വെബ്സൈറ്റും സ്പ്രിംഗ് ക്ലബ്ബും.

കോട്ടയം വൈദിക സെമിനാരി വികസനത്തിനു മാസ്റ്റർ പ്ലാൻ തയ്യാറാക്കി സ്മലം വാങ്ങുന്നതിന് അരക്കോടി രൂപ ബജറ്റിൽ വകയിരുത്തി. ഹോസ്റ്റൽ കെട്ടിടം, മറ്റു കെട്ടിടം പണികൾക്കായി 88 ലക്ഷം രൂപയും കൊമ്പാടിയിലുള്ള എപ്പിസ്കോപ്പൽ ജൂബിലി ഇൻസ്റ്റിറ്റ്യൂട്ടിൽ ലേഡീസ് ഹോസ്റ്റൽ പണിയുന്നതിന് അഞ്ചു ലക്ഷം രൂപയും സഭയുടെ സംഗീതവിഭാഗം ആധുനികീകരിക്കുന്നതിന് ഓഡിയോ വിഷൻ സെന്ററിന്റെ പണികൾക്കായി അഞ്ചു ലക്ഷം രൂപയും സ്റ്റുഡിയോ പണികൾക്കായി 20 ലക്ഷം രൂപയും ജനറേറ്റർ വാങ്ങുന്നതിനായി 8.5 ലക്ഷം രൂപയും വാൻ, സൗണ്ട് സിസ്റ്റം മുതലായവയ്ക്കായി 10 ലക്ഷം രൂപയും തെളിയുരുള്ള മാനസികാരോഗ്യ കേന്ദ്രത്തിനു സ്കൂൾ വാൻ വാങ്ങാൻ അഞ്ചു ലക്ഷം രൂപയും ബജറ്റിൽ വക കൈമാറ്റിച്ചിരിക്കുന്നു.

സാമ്പത്തികമായി പിന്നോക്കം നിൽക്കുന്നവർക്കു വേണ്ടിയുള്ള പ്രത്യേക ഭവന ഭാന പദ്ധതിക്ക് അരക്കോടി രൂപയാണു ബജറ്റിലുള്ളത്. സർക്കാരുമായി സഹകരിച്ച 500 പേർക്കു സഭ വീടു നിർമ്മിച്ചു നൽകും. ദുരിതാശ്വാസ പ്രവർത്തനങ്ങൾക്കു 10 ലക്ഷം രൂപ മാറ്റിവച്ചു. രോഗഗ്രസ്ഥരായ പട്ടക്കാരുടെ ക്ഷേമത്തിന് ഒരു ലക്ഷം രൂപ നൽകും.

നിർത്തലാക്കിയ ടി.എ.എം. പ്രസിനു പകരം ഓഫ്സെറ്റ് പ്രസ് ആരംഭിക്കാൻ 40 ലക്ഷം രൂപ ഇക്കുറി

യും ബജറ്റിൽ വക ചേർത്തു. കേരളത്തിനു പുറത്തുള്ള ഗ്രാമങ്ങളിൽ ബാലവാടികൾ തുറക്കാൻ 30 ലക്ഷം രൂപ ചെലവഴിക്കും. കാർഗിൽ ഫണ്ടിലേക്കു സഭ 20 ലക്ഷം രൂപ നൽകാൻ ഉദ്ദേശിക്കുന്നു.

കേരളത്തിനു വെളിയിലുള്ള ഗ്രാമങ്ങളിൽ 100 പ്രാഥമിക വിദ്യാലയങ്ങൾ ആരംഭിക്കുന്നതിനും സ്വയം തൊഴിൽ പദ്ധതിക്കും പിന്നോക്ക വിഭാഗക്ഷേമ പ്രവർത്തനങ്ങൾക്കും ഒരു ലക്ഷം രൂപ വീതം ബജറ്റിൽ വകയിരുത്തി.

മരണാസന്നരും നിരാലംബരുമായ രോഗികളുടെ സംരക്ഷണത്തിന് 60,000 രൂപയും അന്ധർ, ബധിരർ, മുക്തർ, മാനസിക വളർച്ച പ്രാപിക്കാത്തവർ എന്നിവരുടെ പുനരുദ്ധാരണത്തിനും പ്രാഥമിക വിദ്യാലയങ്ങളുടെ നിലവാരം മെച്ചപ്പെടുത്താനും തെക്കൻ തിരുവിതാംകൂർ വൃദ്ധമന്ദിരത്തിനും മനോരോഗികളുടെ പുനരധിവാസത്തിനും കല്യാൺ സ്കൂളിനും അരലക്ഷം രൂപ വീതം നൽകും.

സാമ്പത്തികമായി പിന്നോക്കം നിൽക്കുന്നവർക്ക് ആരാധനാകേന്ദ്രം നിർമ്മിക്കാൻ അഞ്ചു ലക്ഷം രൂപയും വെല്ലൂർ ഗൈഡൻസ് സെന്ററിന് ഒരു ലക്ഷം രൂപയും നൽകും.

കൂട്ടികളുടെ വിദ്യാഭ്യാസ മികവിനു പ്രോത്സാഹനം നൽകാൻ മൂന്നര ലക്ഷം രൂപ വകയിരുത്തി. വൈദിക പഠനത്തിനും ഇതര പരിശീലനത്തിനും അഞ്ചു ലക്ഷം രൂപയാണു മാറ്റിവെച്ചിരിക്കുന്നത്. മലങ്കര സഭാ താരകയ്ക്ക് അരലക്ഷം രൂപ ഗ്രാന്റ് അനുവദിച്ചു. പരേതനായ ടി.എം. വർഗീസിനു സ്മാരകം നിർമ്മിക്കാൻ ഒരു ലക്ഷം രൂപ നൽകി.

പുതുനൂറ്റാണ്ടിനെ വരവേൽക്കാനുള്ള ആഘോഷങ്ങൾക്കായി കാൽലക്ഷം രൂപ ബജറ്റിൽ ഉൾക്കൊള്ളിച്ചു. സഭാ ഓഡിറ്റോറിയം ചെലവുകൾക്കു 15 ലക്ഷം വും കമ്പ്യൂട്ടർ സ്പ്രിംഗിംഗ് ഒരു ലക്ഷവും കാറുകൾ വാങ്ങാൻ 10 ലക്ഷവും രൂപ ബജറ്റിൽ ചേർത്തി

യുണ്ട്. ഭൂഭവന ഭാനത്തിന് ഏഴു ലക്ഷം, വിവാഹസഹായത്തിനു നാലു ലക്ഷം, മെഡിക്കൽ ഫണ്ടിലേക്കു നാലു ലക്ഷം, മെഡിക്കൽ സഹായ ഫണ്ടിലേക്കു അഞ്ചു ലക്ഷം എന്നിങ്ങനെയും ബജറ്റിൽ തുക വേർതിരിച്ചിട്ടുണ്ട്. വൈദികരുടെ പെൻഷൻ ഫണ്ടിലേക്ക് 20 ലക്ഷം രൂപ അനുവദിച്ചു. കൽക്കട്ട ജൂനിയർ ഇന്ത്യ സെന്ററിനു സഭ ഒരു ലക്ഷം രൂപ പ്രത്യേക സംഭാവന നൽകും.

മാനവ സൗഹാർദം ഉൾപ്പെടെയുള്ള ഐക്യ പ്രവർത്തനങ്ങൾക്ക് ഒരു ലക്ഷത്തോളം രൂപയുണ്ട്. പോർട്ടർമാരുടെ ഇടയിലുള്ള പ്രവർത്തനങ്ങൾക്കും തുക വേർതിരിച്ചു. 'മോചന' കേന്ദ്രത്തിനു സഭ അരലക്ഷം രൂപ നൽകും. ടി.എ.എം. ഓറിയന്റേഷൻ സെന്ററിന് ഒരു ലക്ഷം രൂപ സംഭാവനയുണ്ട്, അണ്ണാനഗർ കോംപ്ലക്സിന് അര ലക്ഷവും.

എം.സി. റോഡ് സൈഡിലുള്ള മാർത്തോമ്മാ ബിൽഡിങ്ങിന്റെ മുകുളിലത്തെ നിലയിൽ മുറികൾ തിരിക്കുന്നതിനും മറ്റുമായി 10 ലക്ഷം രൂപയും പുലാത്തീൻ അരമന, മറ്റു കെട്ടിടങ്ങൾ എന്നിവയ്ക്കായി നാലു ലക്ഷം രൂപയും.

6,70,39,208 രൂപ വരവു 5,90,03,000 രൂപ ചെലവും പ്രതീക്ഷിക്കുന്ന സഭയുടെ പൊതു പ്രവർത്തന പദ്ധതികളുടെയും 5,99,27,561 രൂപ വരവും 5,17,67,019 രൂപ ചെലവും പ്രതീക്ഷിക്കുന്ന സഭയുടെ നേരിട്ടുള്ള ഭരണസമിതികളിലൂടെ പ്രവർത്തിക്കുന്ന വിവിധ സ്പ്രിംഗ് പദ്ധതികളുടെയും ബജറ്റാണ് അവതരിപ്പിച്ചത്. കഴിഞ്ഞ വർഷത്തെക്കാൾ 1,19,94,122 രൂപ അധിക വരുമാനം സഭയുടെ പൊതു പ്രവർത്തനത്തിനും 1,38,49,451 രൂപ അധികവരുമാനം സഭയിലൂടെ നേരിട്ടു പ്രവർത്തിക്കുന്ന സ്പ്രിംഗ് പദ്ധതികളുടെ പ്രവർത്തനങ്ങൾക്കും ബജറ്റിൽ ഉൾക്കൊള്ളിച്ചിരിക്കുന്നു.

ബജറ്റ് സമ്മേളനത്തിൽ ഡോ. അലക്സാണ്ടർ മാർത്തോമ്മാ മെത്രാപ്പോലീത്ത ആധ്യക്ഷ്യം വഹിച്ചു.



# റവ.ഡോ. പി.ജെ. ഫിലിപ്പ് മാർത്തോമ്മാ സഭാ സെക്രട്ടറി



റവ. ഡോ. പി.ജെ. ഫിലിപ്പ്

തിരുവല്ല: മാർത്തോമ്മാ സഭാ സെക്രട്ടറിയായി റവ. ഡോ. പി.ജെ. ഫിലിപ്പ്, അൽമായ ട്രസ്റ്റിയായി അഡ്വ. സുരേഷ് കോശി, വൈദിക ട്രസ്റ്റിയായി റവ. എൻ.ഐ. മത്തായി എന്നിവർ തിരഞ്ഞെടുക്കപ്പെട്ടു.

വെരി റവ. എ.സി. കുര്യൻ, കെ. വർഗീസ്, റവ. കുര്യൻ തോമസ് എന്നിവർ കാലാവധി പൂർത്തിയാക്കിയതിനെത്തുടർന്നു സഭാ മണ്ഡലയോഗമാണു പുതിയ ചുമതലക്കാരെ തിരഞ്ഞെടുത്തത്. മൂന്നുവർഷമാണു കാലാവധി.

സഭാ സെക്രട്ടറി റവ. ഡോ. പി.ജെ. ഫിലിപ്പ് (56) പൂല്ലാട് പൊൻവേലിൽ ഫിലിപ്പോസ് ജോണിന്റെ മകനാണ്. കോഴഞ്ചേരി സെയ്ന്റ് തോമസ് കോളജ്, ജബൽപൂർ ലിയോനാർഡ് എന്നിവിടങ്ങളിൽ വിദ്യാഭ്യാസം പൂർത്തിയാക്കി. '88ൽ വൈദികനായി. ബൈബിളിലെ 'രക്ഷാ സൈദ്ധാന്തിക ചിന്തയും അദ്വൈത വേദാന്തത്തിലെ മുക്തിവിചാരവും' എന്ന വിഷയത്തിൽ പുണെ യൂണിവേഴ്സിറ്റിയിൽനിന്നു ഡോക്ടറേറ്റ് നേടി.

നോർത്ത് അമേരിക്കൻ ദ്രോസനത്തിന്റെ ആദ്യ സെക്രട്ടറി, സഭാ ഓഡിറ്റോറിയം ഫണ്ട് കമ്മിറ്റി ജനറൽ കൺവീനർ, മെത്രാപ്പൊലീത്തൻ ഫണ്ട് സെക്രട്ടറി, കെ. സി. സി. യൂത്ത് കമ്മീഷൻ കൺവീനർ, സഭാ കൗൺസിൽ, വൈദിക സെലക്ഷൻ കമ്മിറ്റി, കോഴഞ്ചേരി സെയ്ന്റ് തോമസ് കോളജ് ഗവേണിങ് ബോർഡ്, ചെറുകോൽ ഐ. ടി. സി. ഗവേണിങ് ബോർഡ്, സുവിശേഷസംഘം മാനേജിങ് കമ്മിറ്റി, മാർത്തോമ്മാ സെമിനാരി ഗവേണിങ് ബോർഡ്, സി. എൻ. ഐ. - സി. എസ്. ഐ. - എം. ടി. സി. ജോയിന്റ് കൗൺസിൽ, വെല്ലൂർ മെഡിക്കൽ കോളജ് കൗൺസിലിങ്

നിലകളിൽ സേവനമനുഷ്ഠിച്ചു. എൻ. സി. സി. ഐ., ക്രിസ്ത്യൻ കോൺഫറൻസ് ഓഫ് ഏഷ്യ, ഏഷ്യ-അമേരിക്കൻ മിനിസ്ട്രി ക്ലർജി കോൺഫറൻസ് എന്നിവയിൽ സഭയെ പ്രതിനിധീകരിച്ചു.

നോർത്ത് അമേരിക്കയിൽ എപ്പിസ്കോപ്പൽ സഭയുമായുള്ള ബന്ധത്തിൽ ലെയ്സൺ ഓഫീസറായും പ്രവർത്തിച്ചിട്ടുണ്ട്. ഇപ്പോൾ കുമ്പനാട് നെല്ലിമല ബഥേൽ, വട്ടക്കോട്ടാൽ ക്രൈസ്റ്റ് മാർത്തോമ്മാ ഇടവക എന്നിവിടങ്ങളിൽ വികാരിയാണ്. റാന്നി സെയ്ന്റ് തോമസ് കോളജ് ലൈബ്രറിയൻ സാരാമ്മയാണു ഭാര്യ. മക്കൾ: സി.എ. വിദ്യാർഥി ജോൺ, ബി.ഇ. വിദ്യാർഥി അൻപു.

## Results of the Sabha Elections Held on Saturday, August 28, 1999

Sabha Secretary  
Rev. Dr. P. J. Philip  
Clergy Trustee  
Rev. N. I. Mathai  
Lay Trustee & Treasurer  
Adv. Suresh Koshy

### Vaideeka Selection Committee

1. Rev. Dr. C. K. Mathew
2. Very Rev. Dr. P. P. Abraham
3. Rev. T. K. Mathew
4. Rev. Abraham Lincoln
5. Very Rev. A. C. Kurian
6. Prof. Alexander K. Samuel
7. Chartered Accountant K. Varghese
8. Adv. Sasi Philip
9. Prof. Anian Alex Thomas
10. Prof. A. G. George
11. Mr. Sabu Alex
12. Prof. M. Issac
13. Prof. Mohan Joseph

# മാർത്തോമ്മാ സഭാ മണ്ഡലം സമാപിച്ചു

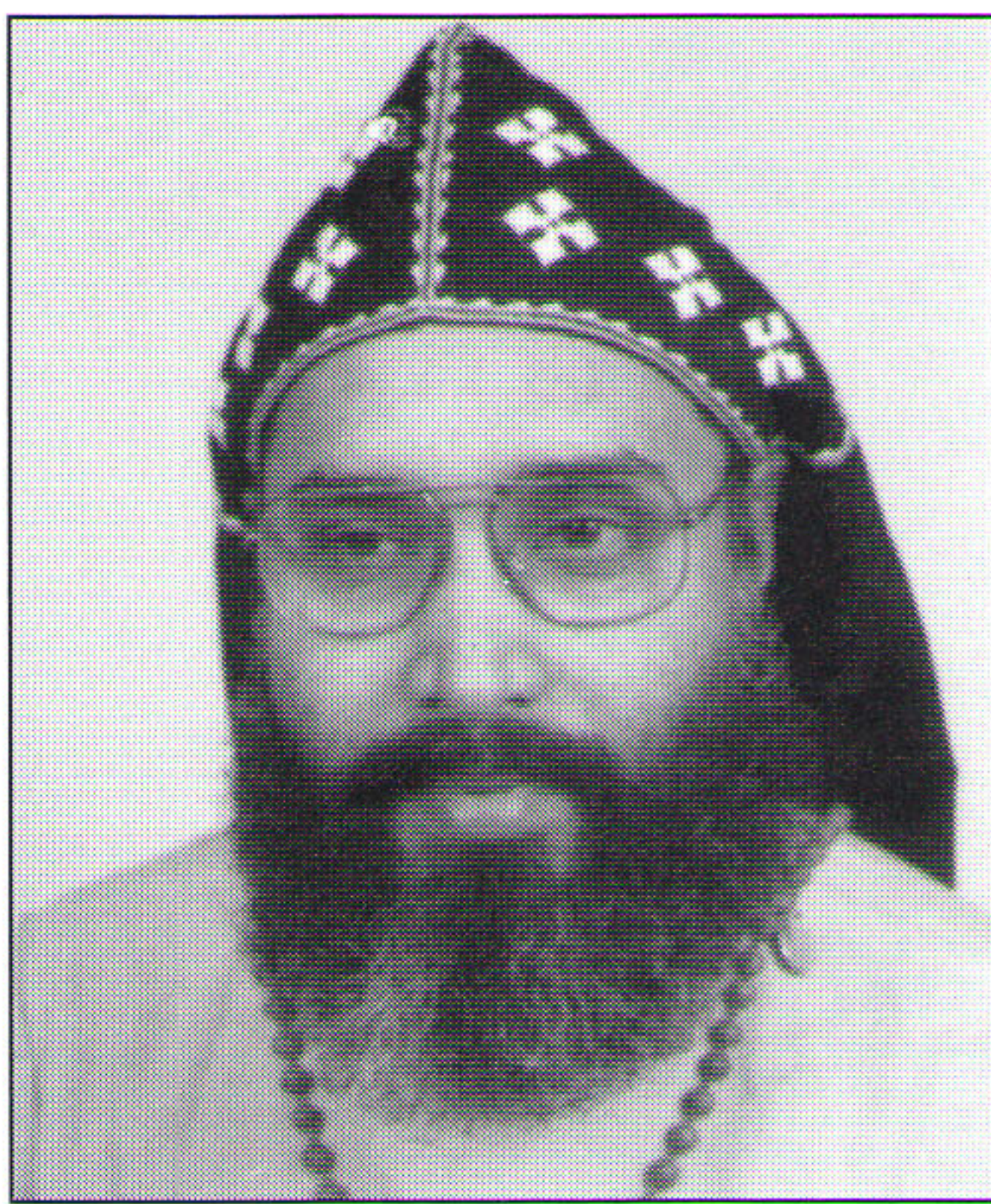
തിരുവല്ല: മാർത്തോമ്മാ സഭയുടെ പ്രതിനിധി മണ്ഡല യോഗം ഇന്നലെ സമാപിച്ചു. സഭയിലെ വിവിധ ഇടവകകളിൽ നിന്നു തിരഞ്ഞെടുക്കപ്പെട്ട ആയിരത്തിമൂന്നുരോജം മണ്ഡലംഗങ്ങളും സഭയിലെ ബിഷപ്പുമാരും വൈദികരും മൂന്നു ദിവസത്തെ സമ്മേളനത്തിൽ പങ്കെടുത്തു. സഭാ ട്രസ്റ്റി കെ. വർഗീസ് ബജറ്റ് അവതരിപ്പിച്ചു. റവ. ഡോ. കെ.എ. ഏബ്രഹാം പഠന വിഷയം അവതരിപ്പിച്ചു. '99-2000 കാലയളവിലേക്കു സഭാ സെക്രട്ടറി, വൈദിക ട്രസ്റ്റി, ആത്മായ ട്രസ്റ്റി, വൈദിക തിരഞ്ഞെടുപ്പു കമ്മിറ്റി എന്നിവരെ തിരഞ്ഞെടുക്കാൻ വോട്ടെടുപ്പു നടത്തി. തിങ്കളാഴ്ച ഫലം പ്രഖ്യാപിക്കും.

റവ.എ.സി. കുര്യൻ സഭാ സെക്രട്ടറി സ്ഥാനത്തു നിന്ന് ആറു വർഷത്തെ സേവനത്തിനു ശേഷം ഇന്നലെ വിരമിച്ചു. റവ. പി.ജെ. ഫിലിപ്പ്, റവ. ചെറിയാൻ വർഗീസ് എന്നിവരാണ് സഭാ സെക്രട്ടറി സ്ഥാനത്തേക്കു മരുശരിക്കുന്നത്. വൈകിട്ടു നാലിനു ചേർന്ന പ്രത്യേക യോഗത്തിൽ ഡോ. ജേക്കബ് ചെറിയാൻ, ഡോ. ജോർജ്ജ് ജോസഫ്, ഡോ. കെ.എ. ഏബ്രഹാം, വർഗീസ് പാലക്കര, റവ. ഡോ. ടി. ജേക്കബ് തോമസ് എന്നിവരെ ആദരിച്ചു. സമ്മേളനത്തിൽ ഡോ. ഫിലിപ്പോസ് മാർ ക്രിസ്റ്റോഫർ, ഓഫീഷ്യലിങ് മെത്രാപ്പൊലീത്ത, ഡോ. ജോസഫ് മാർ ഐറേനിതസ് സപ്രഗൻ മെത്രാപ്പൊലീത്ത, ഗീവർഗീസ് മാർ അത്താനാസ്യോസ്, ഡോ. ഗീവർഗീസ് മാർ തിയോഡോഷ്യസ്, ഡോ. യൂയാക്കീം മാർ കുറിലോസ്, ജോസഫ് മാർ ബർണബോസ്, തോമസ് മാർ തിമോത്തിയോസ്, ഡോ. ഐസക്ക് മാർ പീലക്സി ഡോസ് എന്നിവർ പങ്കെടുത്തു. യോഗങ്ങളിൽ ഡോ. അലക്സാണ്ടർ മാർത്തോമ്മാ മെത്രാപ്പൊലീത്ത ആധ്യക്ഷ്യം വഹിച്ചു.

Reprinted from Malayala Manoram

# God's Love in Action: Navjeevan Center

Rt. Rev. Dr. Isaac Mar Philoxenos Episcopa



*Anand* barely five years old, has been sitting alone with his mother for quite some time treasuring every moment, at the Mar Thoma Mission Hospital campus Vapi, under the care and attention of NAVJEEVAN CENTER's house-parents. He longed to be with his mother more often; but for his own good, she had

decided to send him away to the Center—a sacrifice she willingly took, though with a heavy heart, to give him his only chance of living a normal life. The streets of 'Kamathipura' in Mumbai (redlight area of commercial sex workers) were no place for her/her own fate was bad enough.

Sitting there in the Vapi Center, Anand pleads with his mother to "stop and come away, Jesus can Change your life; I know him." This is exactly what the Mar Thoma church in Mumbai envisaged through Navjeevan (NJ), when the project was conceived four years ago and the first batch of 11 boys came into the fold, reaching out the love of God, transforming lives of children and mothers sentenced to life imprisonment in the dark dungeons of Mumbai's red-light areas.

It may be easy to dismiss the NJ Center's efforts as being merely a drop in the ocean, unable to make a dent! Fortunately, the 48 boys and girls now adopted by NJ and stays with the Mission Hospital at Vapi the parents and other staff working tirelessly for their care, are not paralyzed into inaction, by any such apprehensions, their attentions and care for the 'least of these brethren', are founded on the faith in Him through whom all things are possible." Raising these children from their miserable levels of deprivations, bad health and habits poised a formidable challenge to the NJ caregivers. But looking back, it has been a challenge well undertaken and met through sufficient grace, as is now obvious to anyone who may visit these children at the Vapi Center. The children in Vapi will shortly be shifted to new homes in Murbad near Kalyan in Maharashtra on the outskirts of Mumbai where the infrastructure in progress include housing, care, education (School), vocational training for children and also rehabilitation facilities for Commercial Sex Workers. Navjeevan has also started a Night-Care Center for infants of CSWs in a Municipal School near the red-light areas. The Street Children

Programs carried out at the St. Thomas Church, Santacruz for children from surrounding slums, rehabilitation of minor girls (csws) at Badalapur near Mumbai, AIDS awareness programs in local trains to combat the problem awaiting epidemic proportions now, are other activities of the Navjeevan Center.

What do you think must have been on *Anand's* mother's mind when she breathed her last a few weeks later



*Children of Navjeevan Center at Vapi Home*

after that day spent in Vapi, with her son? The hope of things to come?

*Ritu* a four year old girl, wants her mother to be with her always, but, is it possible for her even to see her mother? She is unaware of her mother's sad demise after suffering as AIDS patient for long. At the Navjeevan Center without realizing the great loss in her life, she grows with other children under attention and love of her caregivers. To her as well, NAVJEEVAN is the only HOPE.

Navjeevan Center has to go a long way to accomplish its objectives. It needs to be our aim to help these children and women to live a life marked by worth-fullness and self-respect by receiving social recognition, emotional, physical and psychological support and spiritual enrichment which will help them to become positively contributive members of society.

Would you like to know more about NAVJEEVAN?

Please contact:

Rev. Saji Joseph, Director

NAVJEEVAN CENTER

MarThoma Center, Sector 10A Vashi

New Mumbai 400 703, India

Tel & Fax: 91-22-7669484/7657141

Email: [marthoma@bom.7.vsnl.net.in](mailto:marthoma@bom.7.vsnl.net.in)

(Both names *Anand* and *Ritu* are changed to protect their identities)

# The Second Coming of Jesus Christ

Rev. Dr. K. A. Abraham

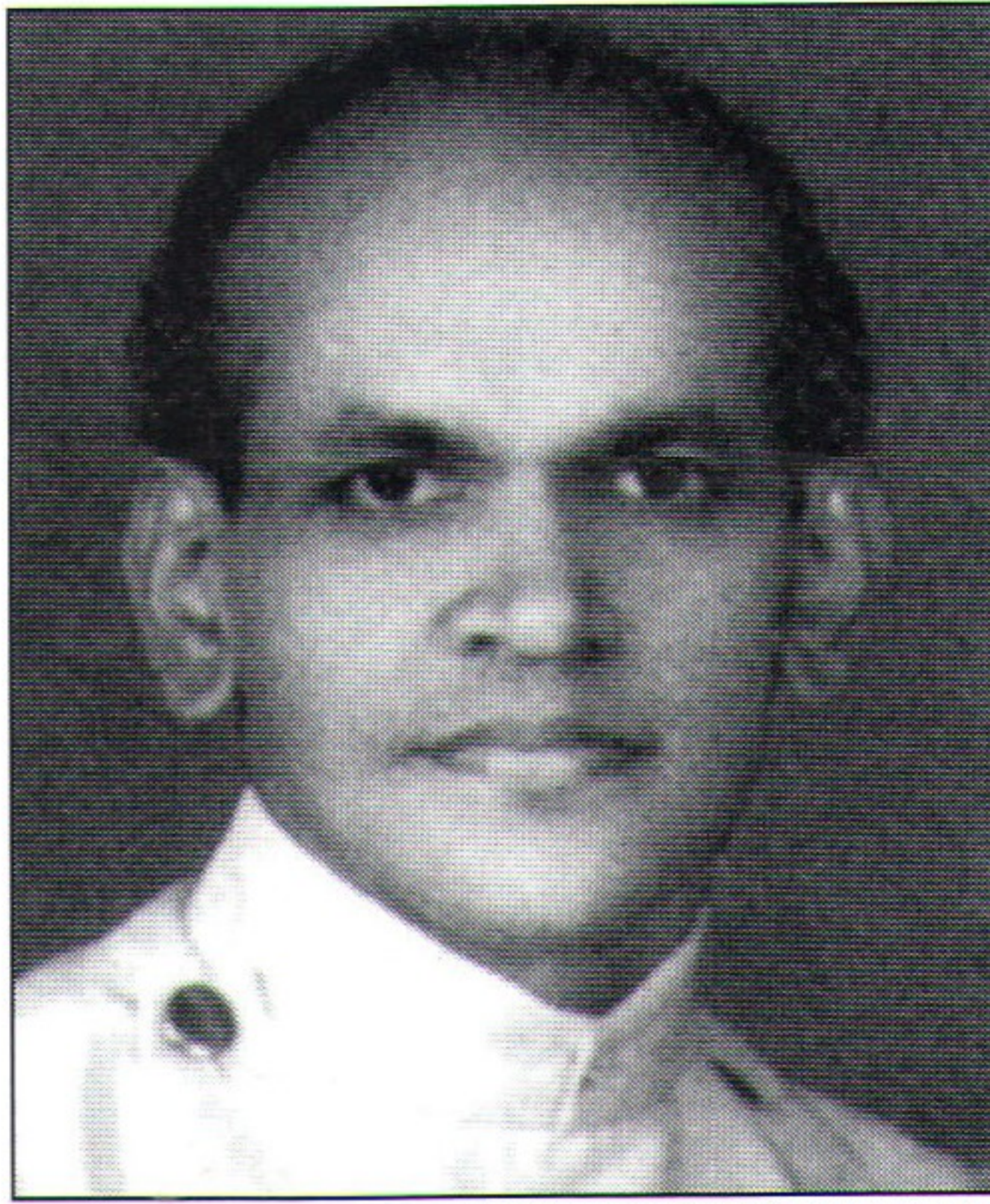
At the outset, I would like to extend my deep gratitude to The Rt. Rev. Dr. Zacharias Mar Theophilus, the Diocesan Bishop of North America and Europe, for having invited me to lead the Diocesan conventions. This gave me an opportunity to do some serious study and reflection on this topic. At least a few were wondered whether the Mar Thoma Church was serious about this doctrine!

As we are at the threshold of a new millenium, a reflection on this theme is timely. These days the cult leaders whip up the crowd frenzy by their predictions about the end of the world. Very often people are carried away by the biblical interpretations of these freelance charismatic leaders.

Here we are confronted with some fundamental questions. Does this world have a future? What is the ultimate meaning of human life? What is the historical role and function of the Church? What is the meaning of the Second Coming of Christ?

In our attempt to answer some of the above questions, both a negation of this world and glorification of this world are to be avoided. In Christian spiritual circles two approaches are found in this regard: (1) let us wait and see the future, and (2) the future should be brought into the present. It should also be remembered that these are ultimate questions and the ultimate can be expressed only in symbolic and poetic language. Two elements are to be noted here: imagination and vision. Nevertheless, individualistic imaginations and visions, which are alienated from the community of faith should not be entertained. There are two schools of thought in the Bible; the apocalyptic and the prophetic. The book of Daniel and Revelation are two apocalyptic books of the Bible. These books are full of symbolism, imageries, numbers, and visions. Very often a literal interpretation of some portions of these books have led to several problems. Here it should be remembered that the word of God gives us a pattern of obedience and not a blue-print for action. In other words, in order to comprehend the meaning of the biblical texts, the context then and context now are to be taken seriously. The prophetic interpretation is more linear in nature. God-human-community-nature-Kingdom of God is the order here.

It is within this theological framework that this topic is to be understood. Since it is beyond the scope of this article to go into all aspects of this theme, a reflection in the light of two biblical texts would be appropriate: Matthew 24:1-14 and Acts 1:6-11.



## I. What Does the End Mean?

In Peter's Pentecost message in Acts 2:17 this question is brought to the force. When the onlookers misunderstood the event of Pentecost, Peter gives an interpretation in the light of Joel 2:28-29. What does that mean? If the words of Peter were to be taken literally, then the end was on the day of Pentecost! As mentioned earlier, a literal interpretation would be counter productive here. Let us ponder on Matthew 24:3-14; a little more deeply with regard to the meaning of the word "end."

1. **In the words of Leonardo Boff "The end is not a cosmic catastrophe but a consumation, an achievement of the end as the goal and fullness.** What is already fermenting in creation will be fully realized." The creation was cosmos out of chaos (order out of disorder). Ever since the creation, the spirit has been active in the world. The incarnation of Christ is to be understood within the framework of the work of the Holy Spirit. The historical function of Christ, was to redeem the created order from its aberrations, the Greek word 'telos' that is translated as the 'end' has to do with purpose, fulfillment and consummation. In other words, the end means 'the time' (kairos) in which God's will would be fully realized on earth.
2. **The Issue of False Teachers**  
They are the representatives of the old, asserting itself in the guise of the new. the true believers should have the Spirit of discernment here. The question is whether we have the preparedness to usher in the new. This can be compared to the reference to anti-Christ mentioned in Revelation 13, which has to do with the idolatry of the State of Rome. Even today our life is in the midst of several idolatrous elements, the idolatry of wealth, the idolatry of power, the idolatry of religion, the idolatry of law etc. An idol is that which blocks our ultimate loyalty to God.
3. **The emergence of the new involves pain, sufferings, and struggles.**  
The word 'birth-pang' is used in Matthew 24:8. The birth-pang denotes the emergence of the new. The same expression is found in Romans 8:22. The question is whether we can become channels through which God's new life is poured into our midst.

#### 4. **The proclamation of the gospel of the Kingdom of God** (vs. 14).

The gospel of Jesus Christ is the gospel of the Kingdom, is the proclamation of God. The sure sign of the end is the proclamation of the gospel of the Kingdom in the whole world and human response to it. In other words, the "end" is not a historical inevitability or a progressive perfection of humanity. This is not something that is imposed on humanity from above. Nevertheless, the Lord's coming and our becoming are deeply interwoven.

## II. **The Ascension and Return of Christ**

The crucifixion, resurrection, ascension, Pentecost, and Second Coming of Christ are all interrelated. The crucifixion of Jesus Christ was the inevitable consequence of his mission in the world. Resurrection means that death is not the end and God will allow sin and evil to say the final word in history.

The Greek word that is translated as the 'Second Coming' is *parousia*. The literal meaning of the word is 'active presence.' While Jesus was a historical human being, He was within the limitations of time and history. For example, He didn't travel all over the world. He didn't speak all languages. His message of the Kingdom was made known only in a limited area of the world. How can this Jesus be acknowledged as the Lord of the whole universe? The answer to this question is the ascension of Jesus Christ. Hence the ascension of Jesus Christ is not to be seen as an absentee Lordship. In other words, the ascension means that Jesus transcends all historical limitations (linguistic, cultural, geographical, etc.) so that He could be with us all the time. Yes, the ascension of Christ means the eternal availability of Christ.

### **What are Some of the Consequences of His Coming?**

1. **The final victory over the forces of the evil** (II Thess. 2:8-9, Rev. 12:7-12)
2. **The fulfillment of God's will for humanity** (Isa. 65:17-25, Rev. 21:1-5, I Cor. 15:51-52)
3. **The consummation of everything in Christ** (Eph. 1:5-10).

## III. **How should We Wait for the Return of Christ?**

The three parables given in Matthew 25 give us some guidelines. Two elements are common in all parables; human accountability and the judgement dimension of the gospel. The early church believed that the return of Christ

would happen in their lifetime. When this didn't happen some were confused and some became complacent. Hence these parables point to the mind-set of the early believers. The parable of ten virgins point out that both vigilance and complacency can occur in the life of the Church and only the vigilant ones can meet the Lord. In the parable of the talents the judging criterion is the faithfulness of the believers. The parable of the sheep and the goats demands from us a life of compassion and the need to acknowledge the presence of Christ in the poor and marginalised.

## **Conclusion**

Any predictions about the end of the world and the Second Coming of Christ would be meaningless. What we have in I Thess. 4:13-18 is Paul's version of the manner of the Lord's coming which was written in the context of kingship and within the framework of three-storeyed world-view. Here, rather than the 'how' and 'when', the 'why' of the Second Coming is more important. Matthew 24:36 remind us that even the Son of God is not aware of that time. As mentioned earlier, we must have the spirit of discernment to do away with the contemporary heretic teachers and cultic leaders. Our primary concern should be the Kingdom of God and its righteousness (Matthew 6:33). What is required of us is conversion to this Kingdom (Mark 1:15) and our commitment to Christ on the way of the cross for the promotion of the values of the Kingdom.

In other words, waiting for the return of the Lord should not be at the expense of our involvement in God's mission in the world. Hence, the concern should be for a creative hope in history. As C. S. Song the Taiwanese theologian rightly reminds us, what we need to inculcate is "A strong faith in tomorrow despite the bitter disappointments of yesterday and the cruel realities of today."

### **Who can participate in the Second Coming of Christ?**

- Those who have committed their lives for Jesus and for His Kingdom.
- Those who have lived on the way of the Cross for the establishment of the Kingdom of God.
- Those who are accountable, vigilant, faithful and compassionate.

In order to make our hope more creative, the following words of the late Dr. M. M. Thomas would be helpful, "Our task is to make the message of Jesus Christ intelligible and a choice for or against him inescapable." ■

# A Historical Introduction to the Liturgies of The Mar Thoma Syrian Church

Rev. Dr. George Mathew

## Introduction

During the second quarter of the nineteenth century, a section of the Syrian Church, which is known as the St. Thomas Church (Mar Thoma Church), underwent certain degree of reformation in her doctrines and practices, through the influence of the Church Missionary Society (CMS). This Church is later known as the Mar Thoma Syrian Church.<sup>1</sup> The reformation was under the leadership of Rev. Abraham Malpan of Palakkunnathu, and Rev. Geevarghese Malpan of Kaithayil, both were Professors of the Old Syrian Seminary at Kottayam. They revised and translated the Liturgy into the Malayalam vernacular and celebrated the Holy Qurbana in their local churches. Mar Thoma Church is the pioneer among the Syrian Churches in translating the Liturgy into Malayalam. It was the emphasis of the reformers that the liturgy should be in the language of the people and first such liturgy was celebrated in 1836. It was opposed by the conservative section of the church, because Syriac was considered as the sacred language even if it is not understood by the people. Later on all section of the Syrian Church accepted it as the norm.

## Liturgical Revisions<sup>2</sup>

Now let's examine what are the revisions and changes that had made by the reformers, in the Liturgy and the practices of the Church at that time. The following changes were made in the Anaphora:

All prayers for the dead and to the Blessed Virgin Mary and the Saints were omitted.

According to the old liturgy, before receiving the Communion, the priest says: 'Thee I am holding who holdest the bounds, Thee I am grasping, who ordeest the depths, Thee O God I place in my mouth.' This prayer was removed. In another prayer the priest says: 'We offer Thee the unbloody sacrifice for Thy whole church all over the world.' Here the word 'prayer' was substituted for 'unbloody sacrifice'. At one place the priest lifting the veil addresses it as follows: 'Thou art the hard rock which was set against the tomb of our Redeemer.' This prayer is replaced by one addressed to our Lord: 'Thou art the tried and precious stone, which was set at naught by the builders.' A rubric to bless the incense was removed.<sup>3</sup>

With regard to the practice also certain changes were made:

"The communion was to be administered in both kinds. It was not to be celebrated when there was no one to partake. The service was to be conducted in vernacular and not henceforth in Syriac."<sup>4</sup>

## The Manuscript Tradition

One of the major limitations in tracing the history of the Liturgies and their revisions is the lack of proper records or sources. In India until recently very little attention was given to the preservation of the old manuscripts or liturgical texts. Moreover, the hot, damp climate of Kerala in particular is not favorable to the preservation of documents.<sup>5</sup> Insects also pose a threat. In recent years, almost all Churches of Kerala, show a new awareness to preserve these old manuscripts, but much has been lost.

In older days most of the translations and revisions of the liturgies were done informally and in private. There was no formal liturgical committees as such, and the translations were made according to the convenience and need of the translators. No formal minutes were kept. Because of all these factors, it is very difficult to trace back the exact history of the liturgies and their revisions. K. N. Daniel, explains the practices of liturgical translations and revisions in the Church after the reformation period as follows:

"It was the custom of the divines of the Mar Thoma Church to conduct the service with the Jacobite liturgy before them. They knew by heart, the corrections introduced into it by their church."<sup>6</sup>

It was during the episcopate of Titus II Mar Thoma Metropolitan (1911-1944), that almost all the offices of the Church were translated from Syriac with the help of Rev. O. J. Joseph Malpan and Rev. M. G. Zachariah Malpan, and were printed.<sup>7</sup> Since the work of translation was assigned personally by the Metropolitan to a particular priest or group of priests. We do not have proper records about the precise and other persons involved. In the Mar Thoma Church Directory the practice of the order of Holy Qurbana after the reformation is explained in this way: "After the reformation each clergy used his own translation for the Holy Qurbana. So there were a number of translations existing in the Church. It

1. For the detailed history of the Mar Thoma Syrian Church, See Juhanon Mar Thoma, *Christianity in India and brief history of the Mar Thoma Syrian Church*, (Madras, 1968). K. K. Kuruvilla, *A history of the Mar Thoma Church and its Doctrines*, (Madras, 1951).

2. Cfr. G. Mathew, 'Development and Revision of Liturgies; An Historical Evaluation', in Abraham M. V. (Ed.), *A Study on the Malankara Mar Thoma Church Liturgy*, (Manganam, 1993), 7-19.

3. K. K. Kuruvilla, *A History of the Mar Thoma Church*...31-32.

4. Ibid.

5. J. P. M. Van der Ploeg, *The Syriac Manuscripts of St. Thomas Christians* (Bangalore, 1983), 183.

6. K. N. Daniel, *A Critical Study of Primitive Liturgies*, (Kottayam, 1937), 15.

7. Juhanon Mar Thoma, *Christianity in India*...28.

was during the time of Titus II Mar Thoma Metropolitan, the Liturgy was unified and printed.”<sup>8</sup>

Again in the preface of “The Office of Burial of the Bishops and Priests of the Mar Thoma Syrian Church Rev. M. G. Zachariah writes:

“The liturgy of our Church is written in Syriac in conformity with the liturgies of the Eastern Church. Since it was obligatory in previous days that all priests should have a knowledge in Syriac language, they conducted the services by translating from Syriac texts. As the present clergy do not know the Syriac language, it has convinced the Metropolitan (Titus II Mar Thoma) of the need for translating the liturgies into the mother tongue and unifying the service. His Grace took an interest in this and translated and published, ‘The Order of Public Worship and Daily Office.’ Later ‘the Order of Baptism,’ ‘Holy Matrimony,’ ‘Prayer for the Sick,’ ‘Burial,’ ‘Dedication of House,’ and also the Offices like the ‘Festival of the Birth of Our Lord’ ‘Palm Sunday,’ ‘Easter,’ ‘Pentecost,’ ‘Order for the Holy Week,’ were translated with the help of Olasseril Joseph Malpan.”<sup>9</sup>

From the above observations we can understand the procedures of the translation and revision of the Mar Thoma liturgies during the early part of this century. Now the translations and revisions of different Offices are chronologically discussed in detail.

## **Qurbana Taksa**

It has already been mentioned that the reformers used the first ever translated and revised Qurbana Taksa (Anaphora) in 1836, but it was not printed. Later there were several further attempts to revise the liturgy in General and particularly the Anaphora. These were mainly doctrinal revisions rather than inculturation attempts. In 1836, a liturgical revision committee was appointed by the initiative of the CMS Missionaries, but that had to face opposition from one section of the church and that attempt had given up. It was Rev. Eipe Thoma Kathanaar of Kovoov, who translated and printed the Mar Thoma Qurbana text for the first time. Various priests felt the need for a more standardised text, because there were several independent works. A provisional Order published with this end in 1900 but it was not accepted unanimously and withdrawn later on. Later in 1924, the Church Assembly (Samudaya Aalochana Sabha) appointed following twelve people as Liturgical Revision Committee: They were Revs. Olasseril Joseph Malpan, C. P. Philipose, George John, K. T. Thomas, K. E. Oommen (Convenor), Messers. P. J. Varghese, C. K. Mathen, K. K. Kuruvilla, C. P. Mathew, P. V. Varghese, T. C. Varkey, and K. N. Daniel. They produced an Order of Holy Qurbana in 1927. This Taksa was not taken for further

study and discussion but guidelines were drawn up for a revision of the Taksa based on the principles of reformation introduced by Abraham Malpan and Geevarghese Malpan. Finally, in 1942, Titus II Mar Thoma Metropolitan published an Order of Holy Qurbana, which is still in use as the official Qurbana Taksa of the Mar Thoma Syrian Church.<sup>10</sup>

**This Taksa contains, the following texts:**

The preparatory Service before the Holy Qurbana (*Thooyaba*).

- The Ante-Communion (Pre-Anaphora).
- The Anaphora of St. James.
- The Anaphora of Mar Dionysius Metropolitan.
- The Anaphora of Xystus Patriarch.
- The Anaphora called that of St. Peter the Apostle.
- The Anaphora of Mar Juhanon Patriarch.
- The Anaphora of Thomas the Harclean Episcopa.
- The Anaphora of Mar Ivanios Metropolitan.
- An Anaphora for the Sick to be conducted at home.
- Twelve *Promion* and *Sedre* including one for the Passover Thursday.

In 1954 another Taksa has been published by the Episcopal Synod, which is known as the Synod Taksa. A shorter version of the Holy Qurbana has been published by the Episcopal Synod in 1996.

## **English Version of the Holy Qurbana**

Several English translations were published by different people and none of them were official texts. In 1955, George Kuttickal Chacko translated the Malayalam text into English.<sup>11</sup> The first official English translation had been published in 1972 with a preface by the Juhanon Mar Thoma Metropolitan. This text is translated by Mr. T. K. Thomas (Geneva) and Rev. Murray Rogers.<sup>12</sup> But the inclination prayers (*Gahanta*) are omitted from this text. Even though it is the official text, it is not a full text of the Holy Qurbana.<sup>13</sup> A revised full text is yet to come for the use of the Church.

## **Order of Services**

In the preface of ‘the Order of Services’ (Sushrusha Kramam, 1947), Rev. V. P. Mammen, President of the Publication Board, writes:

“No attempts were made to translate the Liturgical Texts except that of the Order of Holy Qurbana and the Sunday Morning Office until 1945. This task had been undertaken by the late Metropolitan Titus II Mar Thoma. His Grace has

8. *Mar Thoma Church Directory*, (Tiruvalla, 1983), 85.

9. M. G. Zachariah (ed), *The Order of the Burial of Bishops and Priests in the Mar Thoma Syrian Church (Kahanaitha)* (Tiruvalla, 1970), 1

10. For a detailed History of the liturgical revision, see, Titus II Mar Thoma & Rev. M. G. Zachariah (eds), *Qurbana Taksa of the Malankara Mar Thoma Syrian Church (Malayalam)* (TAM Press, Tiruvalla, 1942), I-IV.

11. See, George K. Chacko (Tr), *The Mar Thoma Syrian Liturgy* (Princeton, New Jersey, 1955).

12. *The Order of Holy Qurbana, an English version of St. James Liturgy as used in the Mar Thoma Syrian Church*, (CLS, Madras, 1972).

13. For comparison, see, Philip Tovey, *The Liturgy of St. James as presently used*, Grove Books 40, (Cambridge, 1998).

appointed experts in Syriac language and Liturgy to translate the same into Malayalam. The first translation took place in 1945. This was printed separately at that time and now altogether as a book.<sup>14</sup> This Book contains the following Orders:

- Order of Holy Baptism (*Takso demdo kadisho*).
- Order of Holy Matrimony (*Takso d sugo*).
- Order of Thanksgiving after childbirth (*Takso d khubal takbuto*).
- Prayer for the Sick (*Takso d slutho al Kreehe*).
- Order of the dedication of a House (*Takso d burk baytho*).
- Order of the Burial (*Takso d ufoyo d aneethe*).
- Burial of children (*Takso d ufoyo d taleye*).

In this Book, 'the Order of Holy Baptism' has been translated by Maliakkal Zachariah Malpan and all other texts by Olasseril Joseph Malpan. Besides them, Rev. Kachukuzhiyil Bahanan, Rev. C. P. Philipose of Ayroor, other clergies and lay scholars in Malayalam also helped in many way. Rev. O. J. Joseph (Jr.) supervised the printing and other editorial work. Some prayers or hymns were given both in Syriac and Malayalam. This has been officially released in 1947.

In 1965 another edition of the Order of Services were published by the Mar Thoma Publication Board. There was no further revision except the addition of the exhortation to the bride and bridegroom after the wedding and an exhortation to the parents and godparents of the newly baptized.

During 1970s, the church felt the need for a more revised using modern language and current theological thinking and thereby more adequately meeting the spiritual needs of the people. To this end, the Episcopal Synod appointed a 11 member Liturgical Committee with Thomas Mar Athanasius Suffragan Metropolitan as chairman and Rev. M. J. Joseph as convenor. The purpose of this committee was to revise the language and theology of the existing 'Church Orders,' except the 'Order of Holy Qurbana.' In 1979, the committee produced a Revised Version of the 'Order of Services,' which was approved by the Episcopal Synod as a provisional Order for a period of one year. It was not well received, however and now completely out of use.<sup>15</sup>

### English Version

The first official English version of the 'Order of Services' were approved by the Episcopal Synod and published in 1988. Revs. John R. K. Fenwick, Peter Hawkins and George Mathew were the members of the translation committee.<sup>16</sup>

### Order of Dominical Feast Days (Maaranaya Perunalukal)

The following Order of Feasts were translated and published in by Olasseril Joseph Malpan before 1941.

- Order of Service for the Feast of the Birth of our Lord (*Eldho*)
- Order of Service for the Palm Sunday (*Ooshana*)
- Order of Service for the Easter (*Khamta*)
- Order of Service for the Ascension (*Suloko*)
- Order of Service for the Pentecost.

These texts are still in use without a change of revision. In addition to this, a special Order for the Church day is also published by the Malpan. Mar Thoma Church observes December 21, the St. Thomas Day as the Church Day (*Sabha Dinam*).

### Order of Service for Holy Week (Haasha)

In the preface to the Order of Holy Week it is written:

"The Order of Holy Week is not yet published in Malayalam, and therefore, there was no uniform or standardized form for the Services of the same. Several people suggested for a translated Order of the Holy Week. By the instruction of Titus II Mar Thoma, Syriac scholars like Olasseril Joseph Malpan, Maliakkal Zachariah Malpan, Revs. Cherukara C. P. Philipose, Kizhakethalakkal Mathen, Kottoorethu Joseph, and other learned clergy of the Mar Thoma Church, translated the Order of Holy Week. This has been first published (except *Prooimion* and *Sedra*) in 1930, by Olasseril Joseph Malpan. Maliakkal Malpan had published *Prooimion* and *Sedra* as a separate book in 1941."<sup>17</sup>

In 1974, a revised and abridged edition of the Order of Holy Week had been published. Morning and noon prayers from Monday to Wednesday of the Holy Week have been removed from the text. *Sedra* prayers have been made short without losing its theological content. This is the official text of the Church at present.

### English Version

So far, the Order of Holy Week is not translated and published into English, even though there were several independent partial translations were in use. In 1998, Rev. Abraham Kuruvilla has translated The Order of Service for Good Friday. A committee has been appointed for this end. Rt. Rev. Joseph Mar Barnabas, Rev. M. V. Abraham, Abraham Kuruvilla and George Mathew are the members of this committee, appointed by the Episcopal Synod of the Church. The Order for Good Friday has been approved by the Synod and published in the same year. Now the same committee is appointed to translate the entire text of the Holy Week. ■

(To be Continued)

14. Quoted from the preface of the *The Order of Service* (Malayalam), CMS Press, (Kottayam, 1965), iii-iv,

15. See, G. Mathew, The Mar Thoma Church, 'Syrian versus Hindu conflict over inculturation in India,' in David Holeyton (Ed), *Liturgical Inculturation in Anglican Communion*, Grove 62, (Nottingham 1990), 48-50.

16. Cfr, preface by Alexander Mar Thoma Metropolitan in, *Mar Thoma Church Order of Service*, (Tiruvalla, 1988)

17. Cfr, K. K. George, Preface in *the Order of Service of the Malankara Mar Thoma Syrian Church from Palm Sunday to Easter* (Tiruvalla, 1967), I-II.

# Family — God's Design on the Earth

Rev. Dr. K. V. Simon, Los Angeles

**A**s we approach the new millennium, family is the focus of the social, political and religious spheres of our life. Family is not a human agenda, but a divine institution. C. H. Spurgeon has said, "when home is ruled according to the Word of God, angels might be asked to stay with us, and they would not find themselves out of their element. But many homes are an outpost of hell rather than a parcel of paradise." Families have always been the well spring of strength and stability in society. It is the source of our deepest joy. A reflection of the family is well expressed in the society. It is called by God, called in unity, for a definite purpose to glorify Him. Family should be the highest place of happiness and joy on earth. There are more dysfunctional families on earth, which have turned away from the eternal purpose of God. Let us look into the various aspects of it.

## I. DYSFUNCTIONAL FAMILY—PERVERSION OF GOD'S DESIGN

### 1. Parental deficit

Modern families are less able to fulfill the basic function of parenting. The parents have no time to spend together to make a close, intimate relationship. Many dwell under the same roof more like unrelated boarders. The future of any culture depends on the quality of the family and of the younger generations. Many parents relegate childrearing to other agencies. There are no more full time parents any more. There are a lot of single parents—higher rate of divorce. Scripture talks about having a mother and father in the home. This decade is a decade of disintegration. There is a deterioration of moral values. People become more sexually promiscuous and the drug culture is escalated.

### 2. Parental weakness:

Today in our society there is an exploding rate of divorce. God's plan is that a family includes both man and woman, faithful, healthy and together for life. There are many broken families. So the children get bad examples of family life and hence they get easily spoiled. The parents do not have the morale to instruct their children. The Biblical concept of family instruction is given by the Psalmist (Ps. 78:5-8). It is to be carried down from generation to generation, even to the children yet to be born. We also have examples of weak parenthood in the Bible.

Eli's children were evil men in the sight of God (I Sam.2: 29-34). They had no regard for the Lord. They treated the Lord's offering with contempt. Their sin was great in the sight of the Lord.

Samuel's sons did not walk in His ways (I Sam. 8:1-3). They became dishonest and by accepting bribes they perverted justice.

Modern parents are absent from home for longer hours. Corrie Ten Boom said that her father's warm and gentle care and touch filled her with security and love.

### 3. Influence of Media:

Media takes the highest portion of the teen's life. They are always exposed to the media. When we read the Newspapers or watch the TV, we get the news about divorce, spousal and child abuse, children of drugs or with the gun, co-habitation, homo-sexual marriages and so on. Power, money, pull and position supersede the importance of honesty, trust, responsibility and faithfulness. The good life of the previous decade is gradually slipping down. The children are open to the e-mail, Internet twenty-four hours. They have more influence of the media than the parents. 750, 000 children live in foster homes. Four out of ten live in broken families, fourteen million children tend to be alcoholics, the average age of smokers is ten, and one million teen-age girls get pregnant every year.

### 4. Attitude of the spouses:

Families begin to collapse when there is no reserve. There is a breakdown in the relationship. It depends mostly on the attitude of the spouses. If we do not create a healthy attitude, there is a possibility of breaking down.

**Forgiveness versus resentment.** Resentment will spoil the relationship; we quickly forget the good of the other person because of our pride and set out to rationalize scenarios of hate. Forgiveness is a risk, it is costly. It is accepting and respecting the other person as he/she is.

**Agreement versus fighting each other.** We fight for silly things like the clowns in a circus not taking life seriously. Argument will never win anything in life. It will only spoil the smooth atmosphere.

**Relationship versus manipulation.** When we think of the other person as an instrument to be used for our benefit, the relationship ends there. They know how to seduce, to charm, to play sick, to appear weak. They play every trick for their benefit. We have to value the other person with dignity and as God's creation.

**Humility versus ego.** We boast on our family and bring down the partner without thinking that he/she is a creation of God and made for each other for complimentary

*Cont'd on page 27*



# Unwrap Your Gifts and Release Your Ministry

P. S. Thomas, Karnataka

## Introduction

A visiting preacher asked a Mar Thoma congregation “who is the *sisrushakan* in this church?” The answer pointed to the sexton of the church. The writer is happy that the sexton is understood as a minister—which is not so in many quarters—but was sad that the members did not recognize themselves as ministers. This article is aimed at helping the believers to realize that they are gifted ministers in and through the church. Believers in Christ are a community of ministers. Each one of them is gifted in many ways. They need to discover, develop and deploy their gifts. The discovery, development and exercise of the gifts are done in the context of and relation to the local church. God has not only given gifts to his people. He has also given leaders to help believers discover and develop their gifts. It is the gifts given to every believer that decides his/her ministry in the church and in the world. The purpose of the ministry is not to exalt the individual but to honor God and serve His people in love. We must remember that a total dedication of the believer, with his gifts and ministries, precedes acceptable and effective service.

## 1. A Community of Gifted People:

Believers are exhorted to minister to each other with whatever gifts they have been given by God in His grace (1 Peter 4:10). It should be noted that each one has been given different gifts. These are grace gifts or *Charismatta*. So the church is a charismatic community or a community of gifted people. God gives every one of us gifts and ministries. These gifts are the abilities or capabilities or potentials and talents given to us by God. These talents are given to us at birth and we may call them *natural gifts*. To believers in Christ in addition to natural gifts certain other gifts are given at the time of new birth. We may call these *Spiritual gifts* (1 Cor. 12: 1). These spiritual gifts are understood as the manifestations of the Holy Spirit. At the time of new birth the Spirit of God makes the believer a dwelling place of God or the temple of God (1 Cor. 6:19). The spiritual gifts are the manifestations of the Holy Spirit who dwells in the heart of believers. His manifestations differ from person to person, but it is the same Spirit (1 Cor 12:4-7). The natural gifts and the spiritual gifts dovetail perfectly in believers.

There can be different attitudes towards the gifts that God has given to us. Some go around as though they have been given nothing. They despise themselves, accuse God and may be jealous of others. They will maintain a low self-image. On the other hand there are others who feel they

have everything and need nothing from others. A sense of self-sufficiency, pride and high self-esteem will make them less effective. However, the right attitude will be to maintain a balanced self-esteem and be willing to give to and receive from others.

## 2. Discover, Develop and Deploy:

Natural gifts and Spiritual gifts need to be discovered by each one. None of us is aware of our gifts and ministries at birth or at new birth. We need the association and help of others. Home, school and the church provide opportunities to discover, develop and exercise our gifts and ministries. Parents, teachers and church leaders are special gifts to God's people to help them to be equipped for their ministry in the world and in the church (Eph. 4:7-12).

The following will help you discover your gifts and ministries:

- a) Pay attention to your gut feeling. When a person is committed to God and wants to serve Him in the church and in the world, God will plant desires in his/her heart. We may have many desires, some will come and go but others stay with us and become dominant desires and convictions. As you pray about your desires and commit them to God and sift them in the light of God's word, you will gradually become aware of what you are and have.
- b) Watch the things that give you satisfaction. I am not talking about evil gratification but genuine satisfaction. You might have tried doing different things but certain things you do better and enjoy doing. Continue in it and you will come to the conviction about your ability and work.
- c) Look at what others encourage in you. We are placed in a community of people in the world and in the community of believers in the local church. As a real relationship begins to develop, people will encourage us to do certain things because they have observed us and evince a genuine interest in us. Think of Paul discovering and encouraging Timothy. Association with godly people is very important—we need it and must encourage it.
- d) See what God blesses in our life. As we try our hands in few things there are certain things that are used by God to help others. It could be a word of advice given to someone that helped him or her take a decision or solve a problem. You may have the gift of Wisdom and the ministry of

counseling. When you taught a lesson, people were enlightened and they came for more, be sure, you are a gifted teacher. Or you may be sensitive to the needs and sufferings of others, and by your very presence and actions you have ministered encouragement to others. Why you may have the ministry of encouragement.

When you discover your gifts, that decides your ministry or life work. The tendency is to ignore the lesser gifts and exalt the so-called greater gifts. Be warned that you may end up like the man who buried his one talent and ultimately lost it. "He that has will be given more is an unchanging spiritual principle."

### **3. For the Glory of God:**

Apostle Peter exhorts us to be the good stewards of the manifold grace of God. We must exercise the gifts, abilities and talents for the glory of God (1 Peter 4: 10,11). The tendency to ignore the giver and exercise the gifts for the glory of one's self is ingratitude to say the least. We need to continually check our motives in whatever we do. "Why do I do what I do?" is a good question to ask ourselves every now and again.

### **4. Dedication First, Service Next:**

Apostle Paul has written about the spiritual gifts in Romans 12:1 Corinthians 12-14 and in Ephesians 4. In Romans he started with an appeal to God's people reminding them about God's mercies to make a total, decisive dedication of their lives. He then proceeded to describe various gifts and ministries of the members of the church. It tells that dedication precedes service. There are gifts exercised without this continuous and total dedication to God and for the glory of God, which will divide and harm the church.

May God help us to understand that the local church is a community of ministers. May each member be encouraged to discover his/her gifts. May the leadership of the church help the members to discover, develop and exercise their gifts and equip them for the ministry. ■

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The writer is the secretary of the Karnataka Mission Board, Mar Thoma Church, and lives in Hoskote, Karnataka. He also conducts workshops in local churches on equipping lay people for ministry.

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS!!!**

### **Essay Competition!**

As part of the new Millennium celebrations, the Mar Thoma Messenger will hold an Essay Competition for our Diocesan students in the age groups of upto 15 years and 15 to 20 years as of March 1, 1999. The subject of the Essay is "MY HOPES AND FEARS AS A CHRISTIAN FOR THE NEW MILLENNIUM" The First and Second Place winners will be awarded prizes and Certificates of Recognition during the 2000 Family Conference in Long Island, New York. Type-written essays (double spaced) of not more than 1500 words are to be sent through the respective Parish Vicar to the Convenor of the Selection Committee, Dr. T. M. Thoams, 717 West Jackson Avenue, Bridgeport, CT 06604 to reach him on or before March 1, 2000. A signed statement of the author of the essay to the effect that he or she has neither sought nor obtained any help from anyone in preparing the essay, is to be attached with the essay. The winning essays will be published in the April issue of the Messenger.

### **Messenger Subscription Award!**

The Vicar and the Diocesan Assembly Members (including members of the Editorial Board/Managing Committee) are the local Promoters for the Messenger. A first and second place award will be given during the next Family Conference in Long Island to those promoters who collect the maximum number of subscriptions as of June 1, 1999 to the Messenger from parishes with not less than 50 families as its members. The maximum number will be the number of subscriptions obtained in terms of the percentage of the total number of families in the parish. For example, 45 subscriptions collected from a parish of 50 families will be 90% subscribers to the Messenger. This award will continue every year as an ongoing basis.

### **Questions You Always Wanted to Ask But Never Did!**

Clear your doubts, get answers to your questions — biblical, spiritual, personal — questions about our church, diocese, parishes and host of others. Send your questions to the Sinai Center. Mark confidential if your names are not to be published.

# Our Christian Women and Their Quest

Anna A. Panackal, Philadelphia

(A paper presented at the FOCUS Group Seminar at Santhigiri on February 12, 1999)

**G**od created the first man from clay and the woman from his bone to be a companion to him. While they were living in Eden and doing the will of God, there was no domination or subjugation of one person by the other. When they sinned and ate the fruit of the forbidden tree, they moved away from the will of God and started doing the will of Satan. Like Satan, they also desired to be like God, and in that quest they developed a desire to dominate over others. God cursed them and placed the woman under the domination of the man. Throughout history, we find men dominating women and in almost all societies women are denied the political and social status they deserve. All this happened because of the first sin of humans. Two thousand years ago, Jesus came to this world and redeemed the humans through his sacrificial death on the cross and his resurrection. All of us who have accepted Jesus Christ as our savior received salvation from sin. When we are baptized into union with Christ, we take the qualities of Jesus. "So, there is no difference between Jews and Gentiles, between slaves and free men, between men and women." (Galatians 3:28) From the teachings of Jesus Christ we know that the rulers of this world have power over people and it should not be the way among the followers of Christ (Matthew 20:26; Mark 10:43). When people are saved, it is not the men only who are saved, but the women also are saved from the sin and the curse. Therefore, in a Christian community there is no reason to put down women at a lower level than men. Some point out that it is through a woman, humans had the great fall and they forget that it is through a woman, Mary, salvation came to this world, and in that process no man had any role.

In 1st Corinthians 12:28, we can see that leadership in the church as: "In the Church, then, God has put all in place: in the first place, apostles; in the second place, prophets; in the third place teachers; then those who perform miracles; followed by those who have the power to heal or to help others, or to direct them; or to speak in strange tongues." Apostle means one who is sent on a mission. Who is the first person resurrected Jesus sent on a mission? Jesus sent Mary Magdalene to spread the Good News about his resurrection, "Go to my brothers and tell them for me." Jesus did not choose Peter or John, but chose Mary as the first apostle. Jesus gave the disciples the mission to spread the Gospel to the whole world later before he ascended into heaven and thus made them his apostles. We know Anna, the daughter of Phanuel, was a prophetess (Luke 2:36). We know the role of the mother of Timothy, Eunice and grandmother Lydia as his teachers, instilling in

him faith (2 Timothy 1:5). God had used women at all levels of leadership in the Church.. We, as true believers of God with faith in Jesus, should make use of the talents of women at all levels of leadership in the church.

Two thousand years ago, apostle Paul pointed out that there is no difference between men and women in the church. But at the end of the 20th century, our church keeps women away from many responsible positions. Of course, St. Paul wrote to Timothy that women should learn in silence and all humility and that he does not allow women to teach or to have authority over men (1 Timothy 2:12) What we find here is a personal preference to suit the cultural situation in the Christian community there at that time. When we are saved through grace, all of us have salvation irrespective of our gender differences. To generalize one gender as superior to the other is a sin and not according to the will of God. The culture in our community and the laws of the land do not support this idea now.

In the family, we have a group situation and we know that in any group situation one person will emerge as the leader, especially when some of the group members are immature and need attention, support, and guidance. If the children are to grow disciplined and have firmness of character, we will have to present a well structured social environment in the family. The order of status presented in the Bible, and in our tradition is: Father as the head of the family, then the Mother, and then the children according to their order of birth. This order does not indicate that men are superior or women are inferior. In many family situations, the mother or even one of the children may emerge as the leader. The order only indicates the extent of responsibilities of each member for the services to be given to the rest of the family members. If the social interaction in the family is authoritarian and not democratic, children also will learn to be authoritarian and may react against the rigidity and autocratic attitudes of the parents. Only when we meet together in the name of Jesus Christ as a family, Jesus will be in our midst and then we will be able to make decisions according to the will of God. As Mother Teresa had pointed out, the family that prays together stays together. Sharing of ideas without domination is a sign of a Christ centered family.

Some parents consider boys are superior to girls. It is definitely immoral and perhaps illegal to treat boys and girls differently. We have to give both boys and girls the same chance to develop themselves to their maximum to become productive members of their community. Then only will they understand fairness and justice and love God and Jesus

through us. If they find us to be unjust or unfair, and if we profess to be Christians, there is a good chance for them to turn away from God and Jesus and all our efforts on them will be in vain.

There is a misconception among several parents that boys achieve better than girls. Our society is currently male dominated keeping women at a disadvantage in many respects. Therefore, men earn more and hold more powerful jobs. In USA and some Western countries girls achieve better academically (and this is true in Kerala too) and graduate from colleges at higher rates. As the society releases the bondage enforced on girls, they achieve and perform better. However, the traditions in a rigid society such as in India change very slowly and that too with great sacrificial efforts of women leaders in the country and through education of the young about the injustice.

Many in the West believe that many infants in India are killed at the time of their birth because they are girls. Customs in the community and traditions impose extraordinary responsibilities and pressures on the parents when the child is a girl. Governments are trying to change the customs such as dowry, and property inheritance rules by making some of these customs illegal. In spite of all these attempts by the government, dowry system is still prevalent as a demon in various forms. We ought to be ashamed of this custom. The legal system in the country should make it easier to sue for discrimination based on gender in admission to educational institutions, employment, salary dispersion, and other economic incentives as well as political empowerment. Educational practices in schools, contents of educational materials, and teaching methods should be restructured to make them gender bias free giving girls the same chance as the boys. Continued vigilance and critical evaluations of the educational systems are necessary steps to create a gender bias free society.

Nothing in this world is achieved free except salvation through Christ. All great changes in society came through the sacrifices of great people and hard work of thousands of visionary leaders. Fair treatment to Christian women, and for that matter all women, will not come easy. Women should feel angry towards the injustices and should unite to struggle against the establishment that sponsor discrimination. As Christian women, they cannot become violent activists, but they can patiently insist on changes to remove such prejudicial practices. In the past, our mothers have patiently suffered and resisted many such practices, but the changes they could bring about in the community are minimal. They were economically and socially dependent on their husbands completely. Conditions are different now. The social norms and the laws are also changing to support the rights of the women. But the method of Christian women is to do things with love and resist peacefully the imposition of the will of others on them.

In an article by Anita Nahal Arya in the Hindustan Times (Sept. 3, 1998), it is pointed out that Indian parents who left India ten or twenty years ago have not only frozen

in time but have brought up their children on the notion that existed in India at the time they left the country. Indian parents seem to encourage children to settle for conventional careers such as engineering, medicine, or law mainly for prestige reasons. It is high time that parents realize that children have their own lives and should be allowed to explore and nurture their own interests, abilities, and skills. As long as a youngster excels in whatever professional track he/she had chosen, that person should be encouraged and supported instead of forcing them to follow the path the parents choose for them. This attitude and authoritarian enforcement of the will of parents on the youngster is more true with girls. There is great possibility for these young women to revolt against parents and they may seek freedom from them as soon as they reach 18 or when they become financially independent.

We, the Indian immigrants in the Western world, who live and thrive in the Western culture that provides more freedom to women, hesitate to give our daughters some freedom their classmates enjoy. Almost all the girls with brothers complain that boys are given more freedom and that their parents give more interest and attention to the careers of the boys than theirs. They also point out that the Indian men, especially their fathers, seldom help their wives with chores at home. These families will foster a female centered home culture on their sons and will thus perpetuate a male lazy culture for generations to come. By the grace of God, because of the influence of the outside culture, some young men are taking active part in the performance of household chores and child rearing. Among our youngsters, usually both husband and wife work on their professional jobs outside and support each other with their responsibilities at home. This is highly commendable because they did not have a good model to emulate, and yet they are doing what they are supposed to do.

The main reason for the problems in gender relationships in our community is because men consider themselves superior and try to impose their will on their spouses. Although they may argue that our churches do not discriminate against women, they are not willing to give women many responsible positions in the church. It is not receiving reservations for women, but earning their rightful position in the church administration they should aim at and win many seats on the executive committee, diocesan assembly, as well as Mandalam even if it means facing the election. It is gratifying to know that our Mar Thoma Church leadership is recognizing the need to involve more women to responsible administrative bodies and responsible leadership positions. This year, in the Diocese of North America, there are only 7 women representatives in the assembly and they form less than 10% of the seats. Is this scarcity of women in the assembly because of a lack of able qualified women coming forward to take the responsibilities or is it because such qualified women are given hard time purposely to kill their initiative. As a woman who worked for the Diocesan Assembly, Diocesan

Council, and the Diocesan Executive Council for a term, my feeling is that the leaders of the Church are very supportive of women representatives and encourage women to come forward to take up responsible positions. I feel that some women are not coming forward because they feel that they are not capable to do what they are supposed to do. This happens because of their low self esteems created by their families and/or by their husbands. Some others who feel that they are capable of doing the work do not come forward because they fear that they will not get the support they need from their spouses to execute the job. From conversations with women who were nominated and who had withdrawn from candidacy in elections at the parish level, we can easily understand that the fear of the lack of support from their spouses is the major reason for the hesitation to take up responsible positions.

God has given everyone the right to chose right or wrong, good or bad, God or the Devil, but in an authoritarian environment in the family, this God given freedom to chose is lost. On the judgment day, we are held responsible for what we have done and we do not have any right to blame others for what ever we have done. Remember what happened to Adam when he tried to put the blame of his sin on Eve, and for that matter, what happened to Eve when she tried to put the blame on the Serpent. All of us, both men and women, husbands and wives should work together in union with Jesus Christ for the glory of God. Let us have Christ in our families and allow everyone the freedom to chose and do the will of God so that there is no discord in our families and have peace which passeth all understanding.. May God help us to always see the Truth, and enjoy His love, so that we all stay united in Christ wherever we are. ■

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## **Family — God's Design on the Earth**—*Cont'd from page 22*

relationship. We must have the same mind of Christ Jesus emptying and serving attitude.

**Encouraging versus blaming.** The partners are there to encourage each other. If we start blaming the partner, there is communicational break down. If we have no love for the partner, we begin to blame each other. Only love can encourage and appreciate.

### **5. Digging up the dirt of the past:**

He who slings mud loses the ground. Let us give credit where credit is due. We are not prepared to forgive or forget. If God digs up the dirt of the past in our lives we will be nowhere. God has put all our transgressions under the deep sea. We live in the past, not in the present. We pile up the blames of the other person, digs out his/her old histories, defame his/her personality. We are not prepared to give respect to the other person.

### **6. Too much of independence:**

Each person thinks of himself/herself the master of his/her life and wants to bully the other. Liberty in the positive sense is well and good. When it turns out into license it spoils the whole situation. We have the freedom to walks on the road, but not to block the other person's pathway. Independence of the children takes the responsibility away from the parents. They are mere onlookers of the show in this permissive culture. Freedom is not free from responsibility. It is the right to do what we ought to do. Freedom devoid of responsibility is chaos. Undisciplined children who do not know how to respect the authorities or honor the parents will create a chaotic world around us. All human relationships are learned in childhood. If you learn

reverence, awe, respect and obedience as a child, there is the basic for the proper relationship. Freedom is not free dominion. Modern world gives a misinterpretation of freedom.

### **7. Who has to take decisions:**

Some families have divided roles to members. Sometimes we want to COW as our parents did. We strongly react against their desires, which will irritate them. Family is not a bossing or bullying atmosphere. It is mutually accepting, respecting and submitting. It is not a one man-show, but teamwork laboring together for physical, mental, and spiritual development of the members of the family.

### **8. Gossip in the family:**

This is the worst thing, which corrodes the tissues of family like cancer. Envy and jealousy is behind gossip. If we gossip in front of the children they will become slaves of it. Don't encourage gossiping in the family, but gossiping the gospel is a smart thing to do. If you begin to criticize another person in front of the children, they will hate them, and ultimately they will hate you also. Never gossip in the family.

Our world is so unstable and unpredictable, changing so rapidly both technologically and intellectually. Is it possible to have a stable family? In spite of sin and weakness, human families can be healthy. The power of Jesus Christ can refine and reshape each individual and enable to lead a healthy family life. God's word gives us the hope and stability regardless of the circumstances. Our deepest potential resides in allowing Jesus Christ to invade our lives and begin a radical process of transformation. If a person is in Christ, he/she is a new creation. ■

*(to be continued)*

# The Mar Thoma Church and the Millennium Bug

Mathew Verghese, Age 12, Mar Thoma Church of Greater Washington

Everywhere we go we hear about the 'Y2K problem' do we really think it is a problem? Do we understand what it entails? Do we realize we will be a part of it? Do we know what it is?

As the year 2000 (Y2K) is getting closer each passing day, numerous businesses and families are preparing for the potential devastation the millennium bug could cause around the world. We may ask, what is this 'millennium bug' or Y2K problem? The millennium bug is a term used to describe the problem computers around the globe will face at the turn of the century and Y2K just means, year two thousand. This originates from the computer's need to give an accurate date, but computers stored the year of a date only as two digits. So Wednesday, August 18, 1999 is stored in the computers as 09/18/99. On January 1, 2000 the date stored in the computer will be 01/01/00 and the way this date is used, is what the problem is going to be. This problem stems from the fact that the engineers who created software in the 1960's did not think that their software would be used in the year 2000 as it is today. So they never planned for the year 2000, and when the year turns from 1999 to 2000, software that read this date would change the year 1900 instead of 2000.

In our daily lives computers run electricity, water, traffic lights and even communications. We have used computers even to do simple math problems and also to create nuclear codes. Today without computers we cannot survive. If this Y2K crisis proves true, businesses and families must prepare to live in a Y2K environment not centered around computers. What is going to happen no one really knows but we should prepare for different kinds of situations? The worst would be where there are worldwide disruptions, world economies collapsing, no electricity or water supply. The manageable problems would be few disruptions for only a certain amount of time and of course the best situation would be when everything goes on as usual. We should all hope and pray for the latter or we are in for some very difficult times. I feel, the best way to respond to this crisis is (through energizing the body of Christ as a whole) that, for all Christians is to unite together and get involved in the name of Christ.

In my opinion during the Y2K crisis, churches will have to play major roles, and be in total opposition to profit-seeking businesses. Churches and other non-profit organizations will be finding at that time that there is greater demand for their services such as counseling, free food, refuge and shelter and especially companionship and support for other church members. But sad to say, churches mainly run on income provided by charitable donations, and when the demand for their services increase, expenses will go 'through the roof' this will create serious cash flow problems. For churches that do not only want to survive but thrive in a Y2K environment, they must not only react to the effects of Y2K but they must also be proactive in addressing all possible problems before they occur. To solve the cash flow problem, the church can save money right now by, encouraging members to donate more, and can stop purchasing 'wants' but only the 'needs.' This way a church will have enough finances to survive in a Y2K environment.

For a church to be successful in a Y2K environment I feel we must mainly be strongly united. A church and its members cannot thrive or even survive in the year 2000 environment unless they do it collectively and not individually! what we can do collectively within the church is far more important than what we can do individually in our homes.

For the members of the Mar Thoma Church I feel, the Y2K disruptions will prove very real, many of our members may possibly be

stranded because it will be in the middle of winter. Those having wood stoves for heat will survive, but for those in relatively newer houses, town houses, or even apartments, without heat will be devastating and other alternatives have to be thought of. We need to do something together, man, woman and child. There cannot be disunity in the church nor can there be arguments or leadership problems, and no one should ever stay away from the church because of the conflicts within. A church should be a unified body of Christ, not only at times of need but to survive this crisis.

As recorded in the Bible several times, God has had to directly intervene and punish His people from their wicked ways. This may be a time where we are having a glimpse of what is in store for us. The solutions are fairly simple, in that, Christians should be spending a good part of their time fervently praying especially for the church because the church has become very passive and smug with its role.

When and if the year 2000 disruptions surface, we should prepare the church the same way as we would prepare our own homes. The church should have enough food and water for the whole congregation so that their rations can be met for a couple of weeks. The church should have a place where extra clothes can be kept so that if warmth is an issue there is always clothes to go around. The three most important things I think a church has to do to prepare for the Y2K is as follows:

(1) buy a generator; (2) buy something that will generate heat without electricity; and (3) be willing to open the church for members and others as a form of shelter.

To conclude, here is a list that I think will help the church overcome the Y2K problem:

- Organize meetings for church leaders and executive members in order to discuss how to face the Y2K if the need arises
- Organize a general awareness meeting for all the members to share their views as to what action should be taken if we were faced with such situation.
- Start storing food and water, look into purchasing a generator and find an alternative source of heat.
- Provide important articles and factual material on the subject in the church newsletter to keep all members informed.
- Help the church hold sessions to renew members on how to witness and serve and thereby lead people to Christ.
- Allot certain members to be leaders in the Y2K movement and regional leaders for certain communities.
- Develop a strategy for partnering with 'sister parishes,' whereby communities that eventually encounter problems can lean on the church(es) that is less affected.

Finally, we should all remember the story in the Bible that tells us about Joseph. Joseph envisioned seven years of prosperity and seven years of famine. So during the seven years of prosperity, Joseph and the Egyptians prepared for the seven years of famine so that when the famine finally came, Joseph was well prepared and could withstand the problem without hurting the Egyptian's normal lives. We also have to fight to overcome one of the tools the Devil wields most successfully, namely the "don't get involved, it's not my business" syndrome. Philippians 2:4 says, "each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others." God has blessed us for decades and we should prepare for this oncoming problem, within the few months we have. So I say may the grace of God be on us all and let us do the right thing with the future of all in mind. ■

# An important milestone in the relationship between Mar Thoma Church and the Church of England: The Archbishop of Canterbury honors the Metropolitan of the Mar Thoma Church

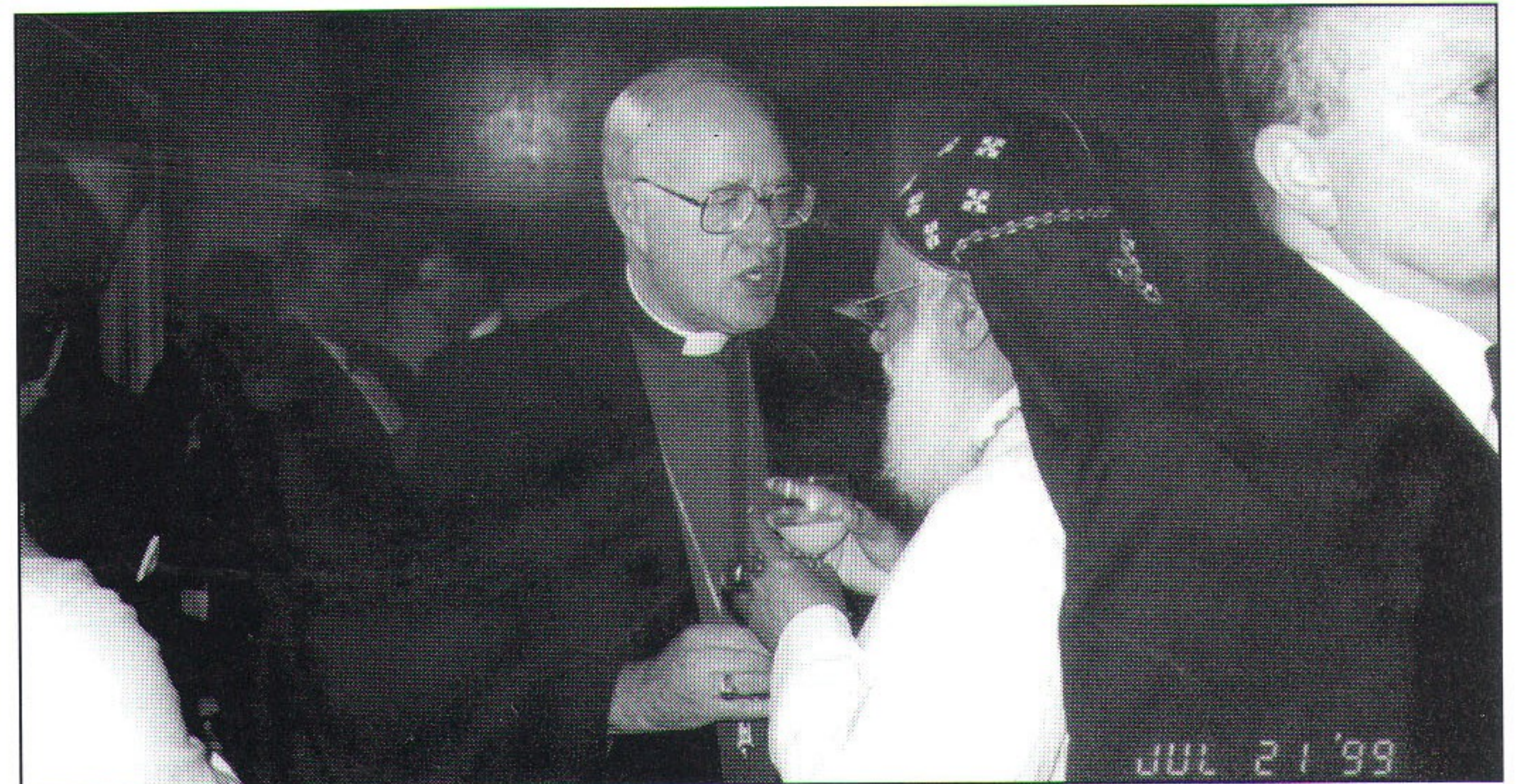
**A**t the 25th anniversary of establishing full communion between the Mar Thoma Church and the Church of England, the Most Rev. and Rt. Hon. Lord Archbishop of Canterbury Dr. George Carey honored the Most Rev. Dr. Alexander Mar Thoma Metropolitan by inviting His Grace as the chief guest for the annual Nikean Club dinner at Lambeth Palace on 21 July 1999. The Rt. Rev. Dr. Zacharias Mar Theophilus represented the Metropolitan of the Mar Thoma Church at the dinner. Over hundred representative of various Churches including Bishops, Priests, and leaders of British and immigrant communities were present at this prestigious ecumenical gathering. Rev. Thomas Varughese, Rev. John T. George, Mr. and Mrs. Mathew Kallumpram, and Dr. and Mrs. Zac Varghese of the Mar Thoma Church were also at the dinner.



*Most. Rev. and Rt. Hon. Lord Archbishop of Canterbury Dr. George Carey speaking at the dinner meeting.*

The Nikean Club owes its origin to the celebration in London in 1925 to mark the 16th Centenary of the First Ecumenical Council of Christian Churches held in Nicea in 325 AD. The Club was founded under the auspices of Archbishop Randall Davidson to commemorate that centenary. This Club exists to further relations with nonAnglican Christian Churches and has some 300 members. The Archbishop of Canterbury is the president of the Club and Sir Peter Marshall, a retired ambassador, is its chairman. During the last 74 years, the Club had the privilege of entertaining and honoring a number of distinguished Christian leaders from overseas. Recognizing the contribution of the Mar Thoma Church to the ecumenical movement, the Archbishop specially wanted to honor the Metropolitan of the Mar Thoma Church this year and particularly to celebrate the 25th anniversary of establishing full communion between the two Churches.

At the dinner, the Archbishop spoke very warmly about the relationship between the two churches and he particularly recollected his visit to the Maramon



*Zacharias Thirumeni with Archbishop Dr. Carey*

convention in 1995. As the head of the Anglican Communion, His Grace deeply valued and gave thanks for the communion with one of the most ancient Churches of the East. His Grace then proposed a toast for the health of the Metropolitan of the Mar Thoma Church. The Rt. Rev. Dr. Zacharias Mar Theophilus, in reply, thanked the Archbishop and remembered with joy his happiness in being able to be present at the consecration of the Rt. Rev. Dr. Dominic Walker, Bishop of Reading in 1997. Bishop Zacharias Mar Theophilus spoke eloquently about the contribution of CMS missionaries in the 19th century, at the time of the reformation of the Mar Thoma Church and the development in ecumenical involvement of the two Churches in the context of the Diocese of North America and Europe. His Lordship also traced the historical fact of the presence of one Bishop John from the Indian Church at the First Ecumenical Council at Nicea in 325 AD. He also



*Zacharias Thirumeni speaking on the occasion*

stressed the need to develop further co-operation and mission partnership between the two Churches. It was really a memorable evening for those present and a milestone in developing relationships between the two Churches. This occasion was a historically significant event in the continuous growth and development of the Mar Thoma Church as a Global Church. ■

**Dr. Zac Varghese, London**

# നാഥൻ നടന്ന നാട്ടിലൂടെ

നടന്നതിന്റെ യാത്ര കുറിപ്പ്

Y.Cherian, New York



1997 July മാസം 21, മദ്യോന്യം കഴിഞ്ഞ സമയം. New York Kennedy Airport ൽ ഞങ്ങളെ പ്രതിക്ഷിപ്തിരുന്ന Christian Tour പ്രതിനിധി എന്നേയും ഭാര്യ കുഞ്ഞുണ്ണമ്മയേയും സ്വാഗതം ചെയ്തതോടൊപ്പം മുമ്പ് ഒരിക്കലും കണ്ടിട്ടില്ലാത്ത സഹയാത്രികാരെ പരിചയപ്പെടുത്തി. 42 പേരടങ്ങുന്ന യാത്രാ സംഘത്തിൽ 4 മലയാളി കുടുംബങ്ങളെ ഒഴിച്ചാൽ ശേഷിച്ചവർ വിവിധ നിറക്കാരും ഭാഷക്കാരുമായ വ്യത്യസ്ത ക്രിസ്തീയ സഭാവിഭാഗത്തിൽ ഉൾപ്പെട്ടവരുമായിരുന്നു.

Immigration അധികൃതരുടെ നിങ്ങളുടെ അഭിമുഖ സംഭാഷണത്തെ തുടർന്ന് Air Lines ജീവനക്കാരുടെ കർശനമായ പരിശോധനാ മദ്യോ യിസ്രായേൽ രാജ്യത്ത് പ്രവേശിക്കുവാനുള്ള Visa യുടെ കാലാവധി അന്നു കൊണ്ട് അവസാനിക്കുന്നതിനാൽ ഒരു മലയാളി കുടുംബത്തിനു ഞങ്ങളോടൊപ്പം യാത്ര ചെയ്യുന്നതിനെ നിരോധിച്ചു. ദുഃസ്വപ്നം എന്ന ചിന്ത മനസിനെ നിരാശപ്പെടുത്തിയെങ്കിലും അടുത്ത ദിവസം അവർ ഞങ്ങളോടൊപ്പം കടന്നുവരുവാൻ സാധിച്ചത് എല്ലാവർക്കും സന്തോഷത്തിനു ഇടയാക്കി.

അതിവേഗം മാറി മറഞ്ഞുകൊണ്ടിരുന്ന പഞ്ഞിക്കെട്ടുപോലെ നിങ്ങളുനിവർന്ന നിലാകാശത്തിലെ മേഘപാളികൾക്ക് ഉമ്മവെച്ചും, വില്ലുപോലെ ആകാശ പാളികളെ തുളച്ചു ഇരുഭാഗത്തേക്കും മാറ്റി അറ്റാൻറിക് സമുദ്രം മറികടന്ന് ഞങ്ങളെ വഹിച്ചിരുന്ന യിസ്രായേലിന്റെ ELAL വിമാനം ഏകദേശം 10 മണിക്കൂർ കൊണ്ട് തലസ്ഥാന നഗരമായ Tel Aviv Ben Gurion വിമാനത്താവളത്തിൽ എത്തിച്ചേർന്നു.

വിമാനത്തിൽ നിന്നും ഇറങ്ങി ലോകരക്ഷകനായി പിറന്ന അരുമനാഥന്റെ കാൽ ചുവടുകൾ പതിഞ്ഞ പുണ്യഭൂമിയിൽ കാലുകുത്തിയപ്പോൾ തന്നെ എന്റെ ഹൃദയം ദൈവത്തെ മഹത്വപ്പെടുത്തി. കാരണം 6 വർഷത്തിലധികം സമീപ രാജ്യമായ Saudi Arabia യിൽ ലേഖകൻ കുടുംബമായി താമസിച്ചിരുന്ന കാലത്ത് വിശുദ്ധനാട് സന്ദർശിക്കുവാനുണ്ടായിരുന്ന ചിരകാലാഭിലാഷം നിറവേറിയ മുഹൂർത്തമായിരുന്നു ഈ സുവർണ്ണാവസരം.

മാതാപിതാളിൽ നിന്നു കേട്ടതും ശിശുവകുപ്പ് മുതൽ സണ്ടേ സ്കൂളിൽ പഠിച്ചതും, ബൈബിളിൽ നിന്നും വായിച്ചറിഞ്ഞതും, വേദശാസ്ത്ര പഠിതാക്കളിൽ കൂടി കേട്ടിട്ടുള്ളതുമായ ചരിത്ര സംഭവങ്ങൾ നേരിൽ കാണുവാനുള്ള ഹൃദയ തുടിപ്പോടെ യാത്ര ആരംഭിച്ചു. "യെരൂശലേമേ, ഞങ്ങളുടെ കാലുകൾ നിന്റെ വാതിലുകൾക്ക് അകത്ത് നിൽക്കുന്നു" (സങ്കീ.122:2)

മുഖവുരയായി യിസ്രായേലിന്റെ ചരിത്രം, ഭൂമിയുടെ കിടപ്പ്, പ്രവചനങ്ങൾ, വേദപുസ്തക പശ്ചാത്തലം എന്നിവയെപ്പറ്റി ചുരുക്കമായി അനുവാചകരുടെ ശ്രദ്ധയിൽ കൊണ്ടുവരുന്നത് പ്രയോജനകരം എന്നു കരുതുന്നു.

ഞാൻ നിന്നെ കാണിപ്പാനിരിക്കുന്ന ദേശത്തേക്ക് പോക എന്ന് ദൈവം അബ്രഹാമിനോട് വാഗ്ദത്തം ചെയ്ത നാൾ മുതൽ ചരിത്ര പ്രസിദ്ധമാണ് യിസ്രായേൽ (ഉല്പ. 12:1-6). മെഡിറ്ററേനിയൻ കടലിനു കിഴക്കും ഇജിപ്റ്റിനു വടക്കുമായി ലബനോനേയും യോർദ്ദാനോടും ചേർന്നു കിടക്കുന്ന ഫലഭൂയിഷ്ടമായ ഭൂപ്രദേശങ്ങളാണ് യിസ്രായേൽ.

യിസ്രായേൽ എന്ന വാക്ക് നിന്റെ പേർ ഇനി യാക്കോബ് എന്നല്ല; യിസ്രായേൽ എന്നു വിളിക്കപ്പെടും (ഉല്പ.35:10). അപ്രകാരം യാക്കോബിന്റെ സന്തതികൾ പാർത്തിരുന്ന ദേശമാണ് ഇന്ന് യിസ്രായേൽ രാജ്യമായി അറിയപ്പെടുന്നത്. യിസ്രായേൽ രാജ്യത്തിന്റെ വിസ്തീർണ്ണം കേരളത്തേക്കാളും ചെറുതാണ്. യേശു ജനിച്ചു, ജീവിച്ചു, പ്രവർത്തിച്ചു, ക്രൂശിൽ മരിച്ചു, ഉയിർത്തെഴുന്നേറ്റു, സ്വർഗ്ഗാരോഹണം ചെയ്ത സ്ഥലമാകയാൽ ക്രിസ്ത്യാനികൾ യിസ്രായേലിനെ വിശുദ്ധനാടായി കാണുമ്പോൾ, ആദ്യപിതാവായ അബ്രഹാമിന്റെ സന്തതി പരമ്പരയിൽപ്പെട്ട യെഹൂദരും മുസ്ലീമും യിസ്രായേലിനെ പുണ്യഭൂമിയായിതന്നെ കരുതുന്നു. അങ്ങനെ ലോകത്തിലെ പുരാതന മതവിഭാഗങ്ങളായ യെഹൂദ, ഇസ്മായീലി, ക്രിസ്ത്യാനി എന്നിവരുടെ ഉത്ഭവ സ്ഥാനമാണ് യിസ്രായേൽ.



“അവരുടെ ഭംഗം ലോകത്തിന്റെ നിരപ്പിനു ഹേതുവായി എങ്കിൽ അവരുടെ അംഗീകാരം മരിച്ചവരുടെ ഉയിർപ്പെന്നല്ലാതെ എന്താകും” (റോമ.11:15). ഈ വേദവാക്യം യിസ്രായേലിനെ കുറിച്ചുള്ള പ്രവചനമാണ്.

ഏ.ഡി. 70ൽ Titus, തലസ്ഥാനമായിരുന്ന യെരൂശലേം ആക്രമിച്ച് നശിപ്പിച്ചപ്പോൾ യെഹൂദന്മാർ പിഡനം സഹിക്ക വയ്ക്കാതെ ലോകത്തിന്റെ നന്നാഭാവത്തേക്കും ചിതറിപ്പോയത് ചരിത്ര സംഭവമാണല്ലോ. 1948ൽ സ്വന്തമായി രാജ്യം പുനഃസ്ഥാപിതമായതിനെ തുടർന്നു ചിതറിപ്പോയ യെഹൂദന്മാരുടെ സന്തതി പരമ്പരകൾക്ക് തിരികെ വരുവാൻ അവസരം ലഭിച്ചു. ലോകത്തിന്റെ നന്നാഭാവങ്ങളിൽ നിന്നും യെഹൂദന്മാർ യിസ്രായേലിൽ കൂടിയേറിക്കൊണ്ടിരിക്കുന്ന വാർത്തകൾ നാം വിവിധ മാദ്ധ്യമങ്ങളിൽ കൂടി അറിഞ്ഞുകൊണ്ടിരിക്കുകയാണ്. ഇന്ന് അറിയപ്പെടുന്ന യിസ്രായേൽ രാജ്യത്തെ, വാഴത്ത നാട്, കനാൻ, പലസ്തീൻ എന്നീ പേരുകളിലാണ് വേദപുസ്തകത്തിൽ കൂടി നാം മനസ്സിലാക്കുന്നത്.

**പലസ്തീൻ :**

യേശുവിന്റെ കാലത്ത് പലസ്തീൻ നാടിനെ പ്രധാനമായി 3-ായി വിഭജിച്ചിരുന്നു. വടക്കു ഗലീല, തെക്ക് യെഹൂദ്യ, മദ്ധ്യത്തിൽ ശമര്യ, തെക്കു മുതൽ വടക്കുവരെ 140 മൈൽ നീളവും, വടക്കു 45 മൈൽ മുതൽ തെക്ക് 100 മൈൽ വരെ വീതിയും ഉണ്ടായിരുന്നു. ഗലീല പ്രവിശ്യ 60 മൈൽ നീളവും 30 മൈൽ വീതിയും ഉള്ള ഫലഭൂയിഷ്ടമായ ഭൂമി ആയിരുന്നു. ഇവിടെയാണ് ഗലീല കടൽ സ്ഥിതി ചെയ്യുന്നത്. ഇതിനെ ഗന്നസരേത്ത് എന്നും തിബര്യാസ് എന്നും വിളിച്ചിരുന്നു. സമുദ്ര നിരപ്പിൽ നിന്നും 700 അടി താഴ്ചയിലാണ് ഈ കടൽ സ്ഥിതി ചെയ്യുന്നത്. പലസ്തീനിലെ ഏറ്റവും ജനവാസമുള്ള സ്ഥലമായിരുന്നു ഇത്. 204 ഗ്രാമങ്ങളും പല പട്ടണങ്ങളും അവിടെ ഉണ്ടായിരുന്നു. യെഹൂദ്യ പ്രവിശ്യ 50 മൈൽ നീളവും ശരാശരി 20 മൈൽ വീതിയുമുള്ള പ്രദേശമായിരുന്നു. ഇവിടെയായിരുന്നു യെരൂശലേം നഗരം. മതാധിപന്മാരുടെ സ്വാധീനം നിമിത്തം യാഥാസ്തികമനോഭാവം ഉള്ളവരായിരുന്നു ഇവിടെ വസിച്ചിരുന്നവർ. പലസ്തീന്റെ കിഴക്കെ അതിർത്തിയിലൂടെ ഒഴുകുന്ന യോർദ്ദാൻ നദി പബനോൻ മലകളിൽ നിന്നും ആരംഭിച്ച് ഗലീലകടൽ വഴി ചാവുകലിൽ അവസാനിക്കുന്നു.

**പഴയ യെരൂശലേം :**

സമുദ്ര നിരപ്പിൽ നിന്നും 2400 അടി ഉയരത്തിൽ കുന്നുകളാലും മലകളാലും നിറഞ്ഞ സ്ഥലമാണ് യെരൂശലേം. മഞ്ഞയും വെളുപ്പും കലർന്ന നിറമുള്ള കല്ലുകൾ സുലഭമായതിനാൽ അത്തരം കല്ലുകൊണ്ട് പണിയപ്പെട്ടിരിക്കുന്ന കെട്ടിടങ്ങൾ ഇവിടുത്തെ മനോഹരമായ കാഴ്ചയാണ്. ഇത്തരം കല്ലുകളാൽ വേണം കെട്ടിടം പണിയേണ്ടത് എന്ന നിയമം ഗവൺമെന്റ് വ്യവസ്ഥ ചെയ്തിട്ടുള്ളതുപോലെ തന്നെ കൃഷിക്ക് യോഗ്യമായ സ്ഥലങ്ങളും ഗവൺമെന്റിന്റെ അധീനതയിലാണ്. യെരൂശലേം ഉയരം കൂടിയ സ്ഥലമാകയാൽ മോറിയാ മല, യെരൂശലേം ദേവാലയം, വിലാപ മതിൽ, ദാവീദിന്റെ കല്ലറ, പഴയ മതിൽ, ശലോമോന്റെ ഗുഹ, സുന്ദരഗോപുരം, ശിലോഹാം ക്ഷേത്രം, കിഴക്കേ വാതിൽ, ശ്മശാനതോട്ടം, യേശുവിനെ വിസ്തരിച്ച സ്ഥലം ഇവകളെല്ലാം സന്ദർശകരുടെ ശ്രദ്ധയിൽ പെടും.

**ഇന്നത്തെ യെരൂശലേം :**

ഏ.ഡി. 1500-ൽ തുർക്കികൾ യെരൂശലേം പട്ടണത്തിനു ചുറ്റും പണികഴിപ്പിച്ച മതിലിന് 5കി.മി. ചുറ്റളവും, ഉദ്ദേശം 30 അടി ഉയരവും 8 വാതിലുകളും ഉണ്ടായിരുന്നു. ഒരിക്കൽ കനാൻ നാടിന്റെ തലസ്ഥാനമായിരുന്ന യെരൂശലേം കാലാന്തരത്തിൽ ദാവീദ് രാജാവ് ഇതിനെ യിസ്രായേലിന്റെ തലസ്ഥാനമാക്കിയത് ചരിത്ര സംഭവമാണല്ലോ. ഇന്നിവിടെ അറബികളുടെ മോസ്കും, യെഹൂദരുടെ സിന്നഗോഗും, ക്രിസ്ത്യാനികളുടെ ദേവാലയം എന്നിവ എവിടെയും തൊട്ടടുത്തു നില്ക്കുന്നത് ഒരു കാഴ്ചവസ്തുവാണ്. ഇന്നിവിടെ യെഹൂദന്മാരുടെ രാഷ്ട്രീയ കേന്ദ്രം, അറബികളുടെ വ്യവസായ കേന്ദ്രം, ക്രിസ്ത്യാനികളുടെ ആരാധനാ കേന്ദ്രവുമായി മാറിയിരിക്കുന്നു.

മതിൽ കെട്ടുകൾക്ക് പുറത്തേക്ക് ജനങ്ങൾ താമസമാക്കിയതോടെ ഇന്നറിയപ്പെടുന്ന യെരൂശലേം ഉടലെടുത്തു. പഴയ പട്ടണത്തിന്റെ 8 ഇരട്ടി വലിപ്പമുള്ള പ്രദേശമാണ് ഇന്നത്തേത്. ആധുനിക രീതിയിലുള്ള അംബര ചുംബികളായ കെട്ടിടങ്ങൾ, വിസ്തൃതമായ റോഡുകൾ, പാർലമെന്റ് കെട്ടിടങ്ങൾ, നക്ഷത്ര ഹോട്ടലുകൾ, കാഴ്ചബംഗ്ലാവുകൾ, വ്യവസായ കേന്ദ്രങ്ങൾ എന്നിവ കൂടാതെ സൂര്യ പ്രകാശത്തിൽ നിന്നും ലഭിക്കുന്ന ഊർജ്ജം കൊണ്ട് വെള്ളം ചൂടാക്കുന്ന റാക്കുകൾ ഘടിപ്പിച്ചിട്ടുള്ള കെട്ടിടങ്ങളും കാണാൻ കഴിയും.

**യെരൂശലേം ദേവാലയം:**

പഴയ നിയമ കാലത്തും പുതിയ നിയമ കാലത്തും ഒന്നുപോലെ പ്രാധാന്യം അർഹിച്ചിരുന്ന ഒന്നത്രെ യെരൂശലേം ദേവാലയം. ഇന്ന് ഇവിടെ കാണുന്ന മനോഹര കാഴ്ച വസ്തുവായ ഒമറിന്റെ ദേവാലയം (The Dom of rock) ഏതൊരു സന്ദർശകരേയും ആകർഷിക്കുന്ന ഒന്നാണ്. അബ്രഹാം യിസഹാക്കിനെ യാഗം കഴിച്ച സ്ഥലമായിട്ടാണ് അറബികൾ വിശ്വസിക്കുന്നത്. അതേ സമയം ശലോമോൻ പണികഴിപ്പിച്ച ദേവാലയം ഇരുന്ന സ്ഥാനമായിട്ടാണ് യെഹൂദർ കണക്കിലെടുത്തിരിക്കുന്നത്. ഇന്ന് ഇത് അറബികളുടെ അധീനതയിലാണ്. ഈ സ്ഥാനത്തു തന്നെയാണ് യഹൂദന്മാർ ദേവാലയം പണിവാൻ ആഗ്രഹിക്കുന്നതെന്നും, അല്ല, അതിന്റെ എതിർ വശത്താണെന്നും ഉള്ള വാദപ്രതിവാദം രണ്ടുകൂട്ടർക്കും തർക്കത്തിന്റേയും പ്രശ്നത്തിന്റേയും ഈറ്റില്ലമായി തീർന്നിരിക്കുന്നു. ഇവിടെ ഉണ്ടായിരുന്ന ദേവാലയത്തിലേക്കായിരുന്നു യേശു കഴുതപ്പുറത്ത് കയറി ചെന്നതും, യേശുവനെ ക്രൂശിപ്പാനായി കടത്തികൊണ്ടുപോയ വഴിയും. അവസാനനാളിൽ വിണ്ടെടുപ്പുകാരനായ മശിഹാ യെരൂശലേമിൽ തന്റെ രാജ്യം സ്ഥാപിക്കാൻ കടന്നുവരുന്നതു ഇതുവഴി ആയിരിക്കുമെന്നാണ് യെഹൂദന്മാരുടെ വിശ്വാസം (യെഹ.44:1-4)

**ബേതേലേം:**

ബേതേലേം എന്നാൽ അപ്പത്തിന്റെ ദേവനും എന്നും എഫ്രാത്ത എന്ന അപരനാമത്തിലും അറിഞ്ഞിരുന്നു. യേശു ജനിച്ച ഈ സ്ഥലം യെരൂശലേമിൽ നിന്നും 4 മൈൽ തെക്കായി ഒരു കുന്നിൻ മുകളിൽ സ്ഥിതി ചെയ്യുന്ന ചെറിയ പട്ടണമാണ്. 55% മുസ്ലിങ്ങളും ശേഷിച്ചവരിൽ ഭൂരിഭാഗം ക്രിസ്ത്യാനികളും ചുരുക്കം യഹൂദരുമാണ് ഇവിടുത്തെ സ്ഥിരതാമസം. യാക്കോബിന്റെ പ്രിയതമ റാഹേലിന്റെ ശവകുടീരം ഏത് ടൂറിസ്റ്റുകളുടെ ശ്രദ്ധയിലും പെടാറുണ്ട്. (ഉല്പ.35:19) ബേതേലേം കുന്നിന്റെ കിഴക്കു ഭാഗത്തായി കിടക്കുന്ന സമതല പ്രദേശമാണ് ബോവാസിന്റെ വയൽ എന്നും അവിടെയായിരുന്നു അന്ത്യമരണമുട്ടിയതു എന്നും, കൂടാതെ ഇവിടെ വിശ്രമിച്ചു കൊണ്ടിരുന്ന ആട്ടിടയന്മാർക്കാണ് ദൈവഭൂതൻ "നിങ്ങൾക്കായി ദാവീദിന്റെ പട്ടണത്തിൽ ഒരു ശിശു ജനിച്ചിരിക്കുന്നു" (ലൂക്കോ.2:11) എന്നത് വെളിപ്പെടുത്തിയതും. യഹൂദ പാരമ്പര്യം അനുസരിച്ച് ദാവീദ് ജനിച്ചതും, തന്നെ രാജാവായി വാഴിച്ചതും

(1ശമു.16) ഇവിടെയാകാൻ സാദൃശ്യതയുള്ളതിനാലാണ് ദാവീദിന്റെ പട്ടണം എന്ന് ബേതേലേമിനെ അറിവാൻിടയായത്. ശലോമോൻ ജനിച്ച സ്ഥലവും താൻ പണി കഴിപ്പിച്ച കൂട്ടങ്ങളും ഇന്നും കാണികളുടെ ശ്രദ്ധയിൽ പെടുന്നു (1ശമു.16:11).

യേശു ജനിച്ച സ്ഥലത്ത് ഇന്ന് സ്ഥിതി ചെയ്യുന്ന ദേവാലയത്തിന്റെ മൊസേക്ക് തറ എ.ഡി. 385 കോൺസ്റ്റന്റയിൻ ചക്രവർത്തിയുടെ മാതാവ് ഹെലിനാ പണിയിച്ചതാകുന്നു. യേശു ജനിച്ച സ്ഥലമെന്നു കരുതിനിടത്ത് കാണുന്ന വെള്ളികൊണ്ട് നിർമ്മിതമായ നക്ഷത്ര വിളക്കുകൾ ആടേയും ശ്രദ്ധയെ ആകർഷിക്കും. Church of Nativity എന്ന പേരിൽ അറിയപ്പെടുന്ന ഈ ദേവാലയം ഗ്രീക്ക് ഓർത്തഡോക്സ് സഭയുടെ അധീനതയിലാണ്. ഇതിലേക്ക് പ്രവേശിക്കുന്നവർ ഭയത്തോടും വിനയത്തോടും ആയിരിക്കണമെന്ന ചിന്തയിൽ ഇതിന്റെ കവാടം ഉയരം കുറച്ചാണ് പണി കഴിപ്പിച്ചിരിക്കുന്നത്. അതായത് തല കുനിച്ചാതെ ഇതിനുള്ളിൽ പ്രവേശിക്കുക അസാദൃശ്യം. 5 ഭാഗമായി പണിതിരിക്കുന്ന ഈ ദേവാലയം 18 അടി ഉയരത്തിലും 46 മാർബിൾ തൂണുകളാൽ നിർമ്മിതമാണ്. ഇടതു വശത്തായി സ്ഥിതിചെയ്യുന്ന റോമൻ കത്തോലിക്ക ദേവാലയത്തിന്റെ പ്രത്യേകത ശിലയിൽ പൊതിഞ്ഞിരുന്ന യേശുവിനെ വിദ്വാനന്മാർ വന്നുകണ്ട് നമസ്കരിച്ച ഇടമായിട്ടാണ്.

**കർമ്മേൽ:**

കുട്ടിക്കാലം മുതൽ കേട്ടിട്ടുള്ളതാണല്ലോ ഏലിയാ പ്രവാചകൻ ബാലിന്റെ 850 പ്രവാചകന്മാരെ കൊന്നൊടുക്കിയ സംഭവം. യിസ്രായേലിന്റെ പടിഞ്ഞാറായി കിടക്കുന്ന ഈ ഉയർന്ന പർവ്വതത്തിൽ ആയിരിക്കുന്ന സന്ദർശകർക്ക് ജീവനുള്ള ദൈവത്തിന്റെ അത്യുത പ്രവർത്തി ഓർക്കുമ്പോൾ വരുവാനിരിക്കുന്ന ന്യായവിധി യെകുറിച്ച് ഓർക്കുവാൻ അവസരം ലഭിക്കും.

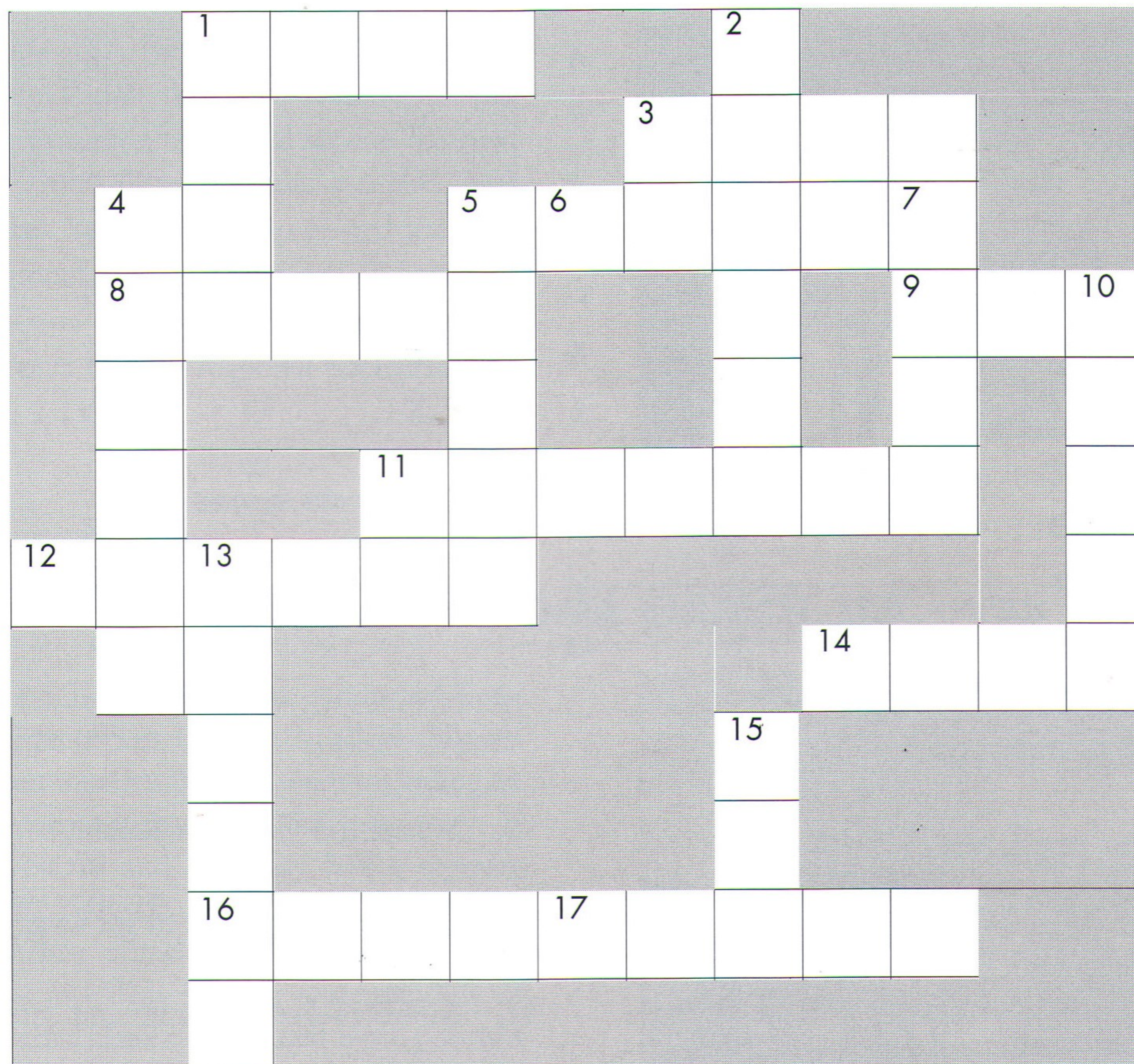
**ഒലിവുമല:**

യെരൂശലേമിന്റെ മതിലിനു കിഴക്കു ഭാഗത്ത് കിദ്ദോൻ തോടിനു അപ്പുറമായി കിടക്കുന്ന ഭാഗമാണ്. ധാരാളം ഒലിവു മരങ്ങൾ വളരുന്ന ഇടമാകയാലായിരിക്കാം ഈ പേര് ലഭിച്ചത്. നോഹ ഇറക്കി വിട്ട പ്രാവ് ഒലിവ് ഇലയുമായി മടങ്ങിവന്നത് ഇവിടെ നിന്നുമായിരിക്കും എന്നു യഹൂദന്മാർ വിശ്വസിക്കുന്നു. ദേവീ രാജാവിന്റെ മകൻ അബ്റഹാം തന്നിരിക്കെ തിരായി പ്രവർത്തിച്ചപ്പോൾ വിഖ്യാതംകൊണ്ട് ഈ മലയിലാണ് രംഗ്തി കഴിച്ചത് (2ശമു.15:30). (തുടരും)

# BIBLE CROSS WORD PUZZLE

AS IN TODAY'S ENGLISH VERSION  
(based on the book of Deuteronomy)

Mrs. Mini Joys Thomas (New York)



## Across

1. Who wrote the ten commandments on the two stone tablets?
3. Moses, the Lord's servant, died there in the land of \_\_\_\_\_.
6. There has never been a prophet in Israel like him, the Lord spoke with him face-to-face.
8. At this mountain the Lord our God made a covenant.
9. King of Bashan.
11. The Lord told Moses that he will not cross this.
12. Moses stayed on the mountain \_\_\_\_\_ days and nights, as he did the first time.
14. In this month the passover is celebrating.
16. \_\_\_\_\_ catching its young safely on its spreading wings.
17. Moses called heaven and \_\_\_\_\_ to witness.

## Down

1. This tribe received no land as the other tribes did.
2. "Be determined and confident." Moses said to whom?
4. The selected twelve men went into this valley to explore the land.
5. King of Heshbon.
7. God said to Moses, write down this \_\_\_\_\_  
teach it to the people of Israel.
10. He, son of Jephunneh entered the promised land.
13. Moses said "May \_\_\_\_\_ never die out."
15. Aaron died on this mount.

# BIBLE WORD SEARCH

AS IN TODAY'S ENGLISH VERSION  
(based on the book of Amos & Jonah)

Mrs. Mini Joys Thomas (New York)

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

1. Town of Amos.
2. Who were as tall as cedar trees and as strong as oaks?
3. A shepherd.
4. The Lord said, the people of \_\_\_\_\_ will die in the noise of battle while soldiers are shouting and trumpets are sounding.
5. For how many years the Lord led Israel through the desert.
6. What kind of trees do Amos take care of?
7. Amaziah was the priest of \_\_\_\_\_.
8. Father of Jonah.
9. Where did God sent Jonah?
10. Jonah went to there to get away from the Lord.
11. Sailors picked Jonah up and threw him into there.
12. Who swallowed Jonah.
13. How many days Jonah was inside the fish?
14. The fish spit Jonah up on the \_\_\_\_\_.
15. At God's command who attacked the plant?

## Bible Word Search Finders (July 1999)

- |                       |                       |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Samuel Thomas      | Trinity MTC, Houston  |
| 2. Jency George       | Trinity MTC, Houston  |
| 3. Usha George        | St. John's MTC, NY    |
| 4. Mariamma Zachariah | St. John's MTC, NY    |
| 5. Melanie Zachariah  | St. Thomas MTC, NY    |
| 6. Achamma Isacc      | St. Peters MTC, NJ    |
| 7. Sneha Mary Abraham | Philadelphia MTC, PA  |
| 8. Seema Johnson      | Emmanuel MTC, Lubbock |
| 9. Seethal Johnson    | Emmanuel MTC, Lubbock |

## Bible Cross-Word Puzzle Winners (July 1999)

- |                       |                       |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Denny Simon        | Epiphany MTC, NY      |
| 3. Mariamma Zachariah | St. John's MTC, NY    |
| 4. Melanie Zachariah  | St. Thomas MTC, NY    |
| 5. Achamma Isacc      | St. Peters MTC, NJ    |
| 6. Sneha Mary Abraham | Philadelphia MTC, PA  |
| 7. Seema Johnson      | Emmanuel MTC, Lubbock |
| 8. Seethal Johnson    | Emmanuel MTC, Lubbock |

**DEADLINE FOR ANSWERS November 30, 1999**

# DIOCESAN NEWS

## ST. ANDREW'S MAR THOMA CHURCH

The Diocesan Bishop, Rt. Rev. Dr. Zacharias Mar Theophilus, visited our Parish on April 18, 1999 and celebrated the Holy Communion. A special service was held for the first communicants. Eleven youths received First Communion on that day. Youth fellowship hosted the One Day North Eastern Regional Spring Conference on Saturday, May 1, 1999. Yuvajana Sakhyam won the overall championship in the North Eastern Regional Kalamela. The V.B.S. was held on July 9-11, 1999.

**Rev. George Abraham, Vicar**



*Zacharias Thirumeni, Oommen Philip Achen and George Abraham Achen with First Communicants.*

## ST. JOHN'S MAR THOMA CHURCH, U.K.—VBS

The Vacation Bible School (VBS) was conducted from May 1-3, 1999 for children of 5 to 13 years. In all 39 children participated. The children were taught new songs including an appropriate Malayalam song which they all enjoyed.

The theme was Y-NOW and each day had a separate theme. ***Y-JESUS CAME, Y-JESUS DIED, Y-LIFE COULD CHANGE.*** Each day Achen introduced the topic and there were video presentations to enhance better understanding of the topic. In their respective classes, designated bible portions were read, taught and discussed. To supplement the teaching, various activities including plasticine modelling were also done.

The Youth league provided recreational activities and the Sevika Sanghom served refreshments throughout the program. The highlight of the three day program was the presentation they did on the final day through sketches and songs. They gave a glimpse of what they learned at the VBS.



Through the grace of God and with a band of dedicated teachers and volunteers who by their selfless and untiring devotion to duty the VBS concluded successfully at 4 p.m.

We thank all the teachers and the volunteers for all their helps.

**Varughese Mathew, Convener**

## ST. JOHN'S MAR THOMA CHURCH, U.K.—CULTURAL EVENING

A multi-cultural evening was organized by the youth members of this parish on May 31, 1999. The program included a range of skits, solos, instrumentals, folk dances etc. This cultural evening displayed the potentials of our youths in organizing an excellent event. A fancy dress competition was arranged for the Sunday School children. An amount of £850 was collected to be sent to the 'Kosovo Crisis Appeal'.

**Rev. John T. George, Vicar**



## MIDWEST SEVENTH REGIONAL CHOIR FESTIVAL—TORONTO, CANADA



*Detroit Malayalam Choir singing at the Festival*

“Hallelui, Hallelui,” rang through the halls of the North Albion Collegiate Institute Auditorium. Music and a love for the Lord brought more than 675 people to the auditorium in Toronto, Canada for the 1999 Midwest Regional Choir Festival of the Mar Thoma Church on Saturday, August 7th. Families and friends gathered from Chicago, Detroit, Philadelphia, Kingston, Montreal and Ottawa for the function. Four parishes, Bethel Mar Thoma Church, Frankfurt, IL; Chicago Mar Thoma Church, Detroit Mar Thoma Church and the host The Canadian Mar Thoma Church, Toronto participated in the festival.

Rev. K. Thomas began the musical evening with worship and Rev. V. T. Josen, Vicar of the Chicago Mar Thoma Church, opened in prayer. John P. George, Malayalam choir leader of the Toronto parish began the evening with a song of praise and thanksgiving and Rev. George Mathew, Vicar of the Toronto parish gave a warm welcome and introduction. “Music is the universal means of communication and the Mar Thoma Church music must be the expression of our faith and practice,” said Rev. George Mathew of the Toronto parish in his welcome speech.

The song “Jesus Christ is the best example on the Earth to follow,” touched the hearts of the audience. Rev. M. J. Joseph, General Secretary, CSSM, Thiruvalla, composed and sang the song that evening. Joseph Achen, also the key note speaker for the evening, stressed that his fascination and love for music brought him to the Lord Jesus Christ and to church ministry. Music ministry can be used to heal hearts and minds. He challenged the audience to use their talents to draw people to God.

The four participating parishes put more than three months of hard work and practice to prepare for the event. They were each given 20 minutes to present three Malayalam and three English songs.

“Music brings joy and peace to my heart and it takes hard work and dedication to teach songs, says John P. George of the Toronto parish.

The Bethel Malayalam Choir, under the leadership of Ms. Ivy Jackson and Mr. Justin Sadhu gave its first musical presentation. The Bethel English choir members joined with the Malayalam adult choir.

“Christuvin prathi chayayil nammal cheram onnai” the choir participants and audience sang. This sing-along con-



*Sing-along song by all choir participants*

cluded the perfect evening. Mr. Varghese Olipattu, Vice President of the Toronto parish proposed the vote of thanks. Regional Choir Festival came to an end with prayer and benediction by Rev. George Mathew.

Each church choir received certificates of appreciation for their participation and commitment to the choir festival.

The Toronto parish generously provided dinner for all attendees and accommodations for out of town visitors. Many joined the Toronto parish the next day for worship service and Holy Communion.

Rev. George Mathew, Vicar; Mr. Mathew Rajan, Choir Committee Convenor and all members of the Toronto parish deserve special thanks for their collective effort in making the 1999 Regional Choir Festival a wonderful experience for all those who attended.

The Detroit Mar Thoma Church will host the first Choir Festival of the Millennium. Dr. Suresh Mathew, the choir leader of the Detroit Mar Thoma Church asked the audience for their prayers and welcomed them to participate in the Regional Choir Festival 2000.

**C. V. Samuel, Detroit, MI**

### UNITY SERVICE WITH CHURCH OF INTERCESSION EPISCOPAL CHURCH — JANUARY 24, 1999

A joint worship service with the Church of Intercession Episcopal Church, New York, NY was conducted on Sunday, January 24, 1999. Rev. Canon Frederick William celebrated the Holy Communion and Rev. George Abraham of the Mar Thoma Church gave the message. There was a social get together and lunch was served after the service.

**Rev. George Abraham**



Photograph by: Oscar J. Callender, Jr.

## MAR THOMA CHURCH OF LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA



*Rev. Dr. K. G. Pothen replying at the felicitation meeting.*

### Better Late Than Never!

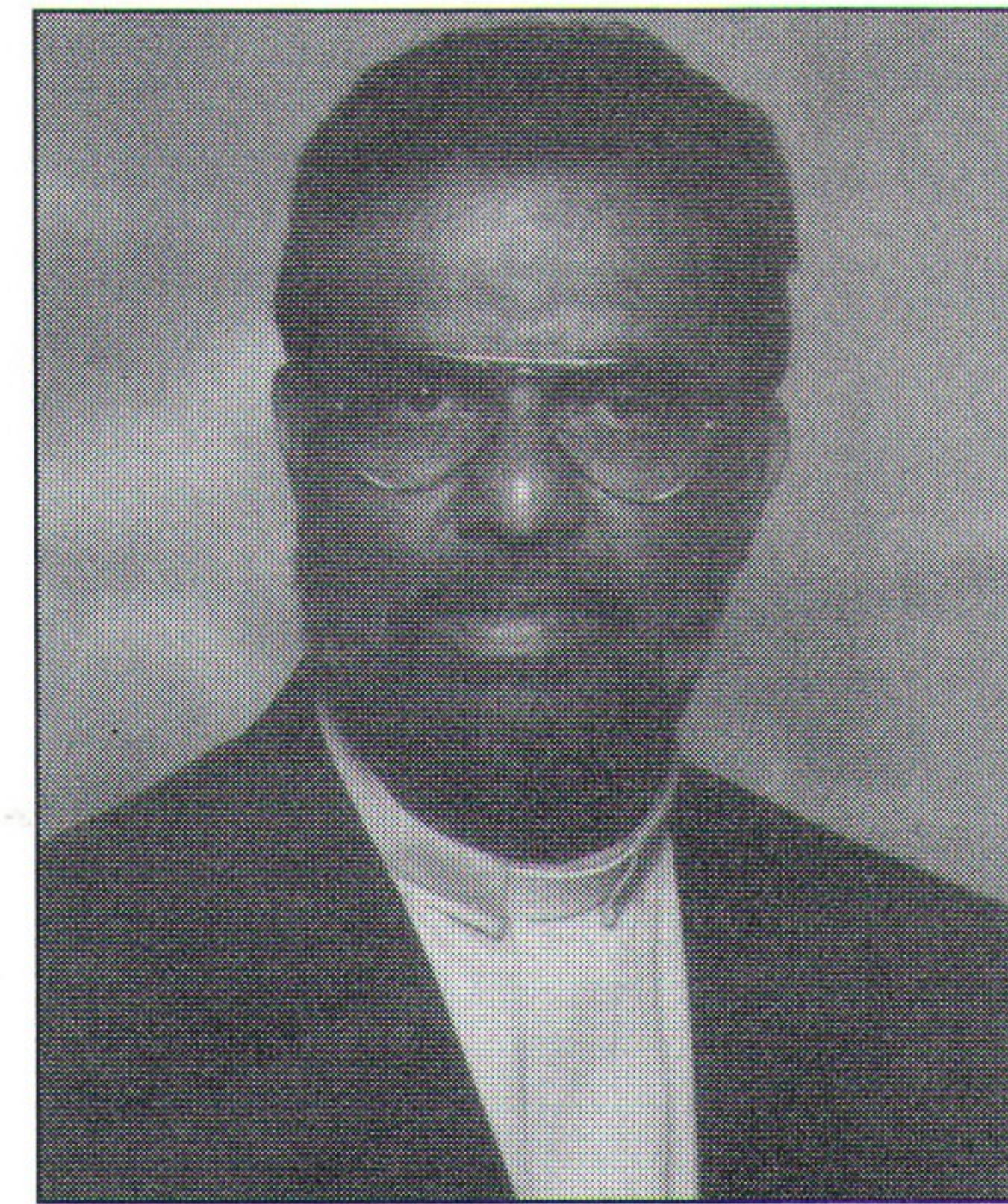
A meeting was held immediately after the Holy Communion Service on August 8, 1999 to felicitate Rev. Dr. K. G. Pothen who was awarded the Ph.D. degree in Philosophy of Religion and Theology by the world renowned Claremont Graduate University, Claremont, California. The title of the Dissertation was 'Relational Cosmologies of Gregory of Nyssa and Alfred North

Whitehead.' The Vicar Rev. Dr. K. V. Simon presided over the meeting.

While felicitating Pothen achen, many a member remembered with gratitude the services rendered by Pothen achen for the LA parish during his long tenure as Vicar from 1984 to 1993. It was during this time that the Church building was bought and an extensive renovation of the same that followed. The LA Family Conference of 1987 was also held while Pothen achen was the Vicar. Though enrolled as a full time student, Pothen achen, because of the parish responsibilities, could not spend all the required time for studies resulting in longer time for the submission of the thesis. Achen's continued presence was needed at the Mar Thoma Theological Seminary and, therefore, he was called to the Seminary in 1993 without having an opportunity to complete the thesis. However, during the summer vacation of 1999, Pothen achen submitted his thesis and came back to LA to defend the thesis. Besides being faced with a very tough area of study and an institution known for its rigid stand on discipline and curriculum, Pothen achen had also to study four foreign languages, including Latin and German. The climb on the mountain was tedious and long but conquering the peak was, indeed, a remarkable achievement and satisfaction to all concerned.

Pothen achen, while replying, thanked each and every member of the parish for the love and support he received from them during these years and the special relationship that he has with the Los Angeles parish. The members wished him well for his continued valuable services to the Church.

Our present Vicar Rev. K. V. Simon also received his Doctorate in Missions (D.Min) from the Covington Theological Seminary, Georgia in August 1999. Our congratulations to both Pothen achen and Simon achen!



*Rev. Dr. K. V. Simon*

### PARISH DAY AND CONVENTION

The 23rd Parish Day of the Los Angeles Mar Thoma Church was celebrated along with the annual convention from August 13 – 15, 1999. A famous revival preacher of the Mar Thoma Church, Mr. K. M. John, Channapetta was the main speaker at the convention. He gave inspiring and renewing messages on Friday, Saturday and Sunday. The parish day was celebrated on Sunday August 15th starting with the Holy Communion Service. Since it coincided with the Indian Independence Day, there was the flag hoisting and the keynote address was given by Rev. Dr. Saphir Athyal. Sports and games also were arranged. The whole day was a time of enjoyment and renewal and dedication for our church.

**Rev. K. V. Simon, Vicar  
Abraham Mattackal**



*Rev. Dr. K. V. Simon with Evangelist K. M. John, Channapetta*

## CONGRATULATIONS TO DR. JACOB OLASSEL MATHEW OF LOS ANGELES MTC



Dr. Jacob Olassel Mathew, a member of the Mar Thoma Church of Los Angeles, is elected as the Vice President of the California Democratic Council. The term of office is up to the year 2001. It is the first time an Indian-American has been elected to such a position and it is a privilege to our community.

Dr. Mathew is the Vice President of the Indo-American Christian Federation, founder President of the LA Kerala Association and founder member of the FOKANA. He is one of the oldest members of the Mar Thoma Church of Los Angeles, its first Vice President and convener of the Church finding and building committee. He was the Sabha Council member from 1990-93. He also holds offices in other various social and cultural associations.

We express our congratulations for this honor being conferred on him and pray that God may use him for the well being of the Indo-American community.

**Rev. K. V. Simon, Vicar**

## HIS HOLINESS MATHEWS II CATHOLICOS MALANKARA METROPOLITAN VISITS THE DIOCESAN CENTER

The Diocese of North America & Europe of the Mar Thoma Church gave a warm reception to His Holiness Mathews II Catholicos Malankara Metropolitan on



*From Left to Right: His Holiness Mathews II Catholicos, Zacharias Thirumeni and Mathews Mar Barnabas Thirumeni*

October 4, 1999 at the Sinai Mar Thoma Center, Merrick, NY. The Diocesan Episcopa Rt. Rev. Dr. Zacharias Mar Theophilus felicitated His Holiness and extended all good wishes and prayers for him. Bishop Mathews Mar Barnabas, Diocesan Secretary Rev. K. Y. Jacob, Rev. John Thomas, Rev. Thomas K. Jacob, Rev.

Thomas Easow, Mr. Kalathil Varghese, Council member, Mr. P. T. Abraham and few church members were also attended and wished His Holiness well.



*His Holiness Mathews II Catholicos and Zacharias Thirumeni with achens and others*

His Holiness Catholicos expressed his gratitude to the Diocesan Bishop for the warm reception and appreciated the Mar Thoma Community for their participation in the completion of the Diocesan Center.

**Rev. K. Y. Jacob, Bishop's Secretary**

## ZACHARIAS THIRUMENI PRESENTING SILVER JUBILEE MEMENTO TO METROPOLITAN



*Zacharias Thirumeni presenting the memento to Metropolitan. Sitting behind: Chrysostom Thirumeni and Philoxenos Thirumeni  
Standing right: Anil Thomas Mulamoottil (Sabha Council Member)*



## ASCENSION MAR THOMA CHURCH, PHILADELPHIA

The first parish day of our church was held on the first Sunday in February and Rev. Oommen Philip was the chief guest. The Sunday school presented an Easter Pageant which was well attended and was superb. Our Diocesan Bishop visited our church on March 27-28, 1999. First Holy Communion service was conducted and about 10 children took part in the service. This year's VBS was conducted jointly with Bethel MTC and was a big success. Our Annual Gospel Convention was held on August 12-14 and Evangelist Mr. Samuel Ganesh was the main speaker. The Edavaka Mission and Yuvajana

Sakhyam jointly conducted a retreat in Pen Del Retreat Center which was a great blessing to all the participants. Our Vicar General, Very Rev. P. V. Thomas visited our church and conducted Holy Communion. Our Church Building Fund Raising is going on and our ticket sale for the raffle is progressing well. We would like to thank all the parishes who participated in our raffle ticket sale and raffle drawing will be held on October 24, 1999. It is mentionable that our Jerusalem Prayer Group took the responsibility of sponsoring a Missionary in Karnataka.

**M. K. Philip, Vice President**

## SUNDAY SCHOOL CALENDAR OF EVENTS

**Sept. 5, 1999** Teachers' Recognition/Dedication Day

**Nov. 7, 1999** World Sunday School Day Celebration

**May 14, 2000** Diocesan Sunday School Examination

The general body meeting of the Diocesan Sunday School held at Houston during the Family Conference on July 3, 1999 have made the following decisions.

1. Decided to continue the Cokesbury curriculum for our Sunday School for the next three years.

2. Continue teaching "The Mar Thoma Church What it is and What it stands for" in all the grades.

3. The Diocesan Sunday School Examination will be held on May 14, 2000.

If you have any questions regarding Sunday School please call the Diocesan Sunday School Secretary at 713-455-7469.

**T. A. Mathew, Diocesan Sunday School Secretary**

## CONGRATULATIONS TO MR. KALATHIL VARUGHESE OF LONG ISLAND MTC



Mr. Kalathil Varughese was elected by the Democratic Party at the Primary Election held on September 14, 1999 to the office of: Member of County Committee Election District 74, in the town of North Hempstead, Assembly District 16,

Nassau County, New York. He is a member of the Long Island Mar Thoma Church. He is serving as a member of Diocesan Council and Council Executive of the Diocese of North America and Europe.

We express our congratulations for this honor being conferred on him and pray that God may use him for the well being of the Indo-American community.

**Rev. Thomas K. Jacob, Vicar**

## CONGRATULATIONS TO ALEYAMMA THOMAS AND MARIAMMA ABRAHAM OF BETHEL MAR THOMA CHURCH PHILADELPHIA

Mariamamma Abraham and Aleyamma Thomas of Bethel Mar Thoma Church Philadelphia took their Masters Degree in Health Services Administration from the University of St. Francis, 500 Wilcox Street, Joliet, IL. Their hard work and motivation is commendable. Every Marthomite RN's should think about doing some advanced studies in their respective fields.

### Messenger

*Aleyamma Thomas and Mariamma Abraham with their proud spouses after the graduation ceremony. K. S. Abraham (extreme left) is one of the Diocesan Assembly members from the Bethel MTC.*



## WEST COAST REGIONAL YOUTH CONFERENCE

The West Coast Regional Youth Conference was conducted from July 29 – August 1, 1999 at the Alpine Meadows Camp and Retreat Center, San Bernardino. The conference was hosted by the San Francisco Mar Thoma Church. Ninety youths from the Western Region (Los Angeles, San Francisco, Seattle, Arizona) participated. The theme was GRACE —JUST AS YOU ARE (Eph. 2:8). Rev. Kurian Thomas, Rev. K. V. Simon, Mr. Saji and Bindu Oommen were the leaders. It was a time of renewal, commitment and dedication for the youths. The 2000 conference will be hosted by the Los Angeles Mar Thoma Church.

Rev. K. V. Simon



## XVIII Mar Thoma Family Conference — 2000

Hosted by

**The Long Island Mar Thoma Church, New York**

on

**June 29 – July 2, 2000**

at

**Huntington Hilton Hotel**, Long Island, New York

Theme:

**With Christ to a New Millennium**

Leaders:

Rt. Rev. Geevarghese Mar Athanasius

Rt. Rev. Dr. Zacharias Mar Theophilus

and many other Prominent Leaders

**For more information please contact:**

Rev. Thomas K. Jacob, President (516) 377-9803

Chacko Mathew (Secretary) (516) 248-9350

## Matrimonial

Parents invite marriage proposals for their daughter, 25 years old, 5'3" slim, light complexion, Indian-born U.S. Citizen, B.S. in Hospitality Management, employed in Hotel Management/Corporate sales, from Marthomites 30 years or younger. Please respond with photograph, personal and family details to:

Box #OCT 001

c/o Mar Thoma Messenger, Sinai Mar Thoma Center, 2320 S. Merrick Avenue, Merrick, NY 11566

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