



MAR THOMA MESSENGER

A PUBLICATION OF THE DIOCESE OF NORTH AMERICA & EUROPE

October 2014



Women - Enriching The Church

Diaspora Issue



An **Allstate Agent** is
your key to quality **protection**
and **savings** on car insurance.

Insurance



Call me and see how much you can save.

I can help you get the protection that's personalized for you and your family's needs along with the savings you deserve. Safe drivers can save 45% or more on car insurance. And our multiple-policy discount lets you save even more.

Dollar for dollar, nobody protects you like Allstate.

ROY C. THOMAS, LUTCF

Tel: (718) 464-8500

Fax: (718) 464-4230

224-17 Union Turnpike
Bayside, NY 11364
royctho@allstate.com

Call me today for a free quote.



Allstate[®]

You're in good hands.

Auto Home Life Retirement



A Publication of the Diocese of North America & Europe (For private circulation only)

Vol. XXXIII No. 4

EDITORIAL BOARD AND MANAGING COMMITTEE
 Patron: Rt. Rev. Geevarghese Mar Theodosius

Diocesan Secretary:
Rev. Binoy J. Thomas (Manager)
 516-377-3311 marthomadiocese@gmail.com

EDITORIAL BOARD MEMBERS:
 Chief Editor: **Dr. Mathew T. Thomas**
 301-526-8723 mtmessenger1@gmail.com

Dr. Nancy George Maliacal, Canada
 905-799-2123 nancygmal@rogers.com

Mr. Santhosh Abraham, Philadelphia, PA
 215-605-6914 santhosh4545@aol.com

Mr. George Sam, Ashburn, VA
 832-877-1588 george_same@yahoo.com

Mrs. Laila Alex, Philadelphia, PA
 215-688-7103 laila.alex@yahoo.com

Mrs. Mary Varghese, Schaumburg, IL
 847-687-0475 mvarughe@allstate.com

MANAGING COMMITTEE MEMBERS
 Manager: **Rev. Binoy J. Thomas**
 516-377-3311 marthomadiocese@gmail.com

Mr. Philip Thomas (Diocesan Treasurer)
 469-744-3137 philiphomascpa@yahoo.com

Mr. T. A. Mathew, Houston (Advertisement)
 713-436-2207 tamathew@hotmail.com

Mr. Samuel K. Samuel, New York, (Circulation & Subscriptions)
 914-498-9990 samsamuel@optonline.net

Mr. Zachariah Mathew, Dallas (Subscriptions North America)
 817-745-0904 sunureeni@yahoo.com

Mr. Georgey Mathews, Detroit (Subscriptions North America)
 248-987-4020 georgeymathews@gmail.com

Mr. Jaffey Chacko, Bristol, UK (Subscriptions Europe)
 044-931-194725 jaffey.chacko@gmail.com

Diocese of North America & Europe
 www.marthomanae.org

Malankara Mar Thoma Syrian Church
 www.marthoma.in

03 A Letter from the Metropolitan

05 Message from the Diocesan Episcopa

07 Editorial

09 History of the role of women in church with reference to the Mar Thoma Church in Kerala: Celebrating early leaders - Dr. Anita Daniel

11 Her-story in the Bible - Mrs. Laila Alex

14 I'm only human... I'm just a woman: Deliberations of a Mar Thoma woman - Mrs. Aswathi Varughese

16 Freedom of Women in Christ - Dr. Anna A. Panackal

19 Perspectives from our Diocesan Regions

- Mrs. Dinah Oommen
- Mrs. Nirmala Abraham
- Dr. Mariamma Thomas
- Mrs. Marykutty Philip
- Dr. Annie Lincoln
- Mrs. Rachel Abraham

27 Matrimonial

28 Music and Worship – Mrs. Susan Mathew

31 The Beginnings - Formation of the Mar Thoma Church in the Tri State Area of New York, New Jersey and Connecticut - Mrs. Aleyamma Ninan

33 Bible Crossword Puzzle

34 New Achens who joined this diocese

35 Parish News

36 Diocesan News

42 Episcopal Visit

50 Obituaries

Subscription Rates	2 Years	5 Years	Life
USA	\$ 25.00	\$ 60.00	\$ 300.00
Canada	\$ 25.00	\$ 60.00	\$ 300.00
UK	€12.00	€ 30.00	€ 180.00

Advertisement Rates	Four Issues	One Issue
Back Cover / Color	\$ 2000.00	\$ 525.00
Front / Back Inside / Color	\$ 1500.00	\$ 400.00
Inside Full page / BW	\$ 700.00	\$ 200.00

Mailing Address

Mar Thoma Messenger - Sinai Mar Thoma Center, 2320 Merrick Avenue, Merrick, NY 11566
Dr. Mathew T. Thomas - (Chief Editor) 7612 Lake Glen Drive, Glenn Dale, MD 20769

Theme: Women - Enriching The Church / Diaspora Issue
 Cover: Consecration of the St. Thomas Mar Thoma Church, Calgary
 Photo: Dani George, Los Angeles, CA

Disclaimer: Articles published in the Mar Thoma Messenger is solely the views of the authors. Messenger or the Diocese of North America & Europe / PrintCall do not endorse the contents or views expressed in the articles and is not responsible or liable for the contents or views in any form, nor shall endorse any advertisement or the products or services offered or involved.

Design, Print & Direct Mailing:

PrintCall - San Francisco, CA | 1-855-609-CALL | www.PrintCall.com | info@printcall.com

സരഗ്ഗി/കിളിമന്തജാരെ



AFRICAN SAFARI

Mar 2015 & Sep 2015

Put your feet where Apostles walked....

View the sites where History speaks....

Feel the living touch of Jesus....

Australia

& NEW ZEALAND

(Sydney/Canberra/Melbourne) & NZ
Besides tour, visit Malayalee Churches & meet friends & relations
(Visit Australia only OR both)

November 05 -20, 2014,
March 05 - 19, 2015,
November 04 - 18, 2015

Turkey & Rome or Greece

Christian Tour : 7 Days in Turkey + 4 Days in Rome or Greece connected with the 7 Churches mentioned in Revelations and St. Paul's Journey

From: JFK-NY, Washington DC
Chicago, Houston & LA

Sep 06 - 18, 2014 Turkey & Greece
May 17 - 29, 2015 Turkey & Greece
Sep 13 - 25, 2015 Turkey & Greece

Visit South East Asia
Hong Kong-Malaysia-Bali (Indonesia)-Singapore
Sep 20 - 02 Oct, 2014

Triangle Tour (5 Days): Delhi/Agra/Jaipur

Enjoy Kerala's Tourist Spots with Children.... 10 Days Package....

Holy Land Tours 2014-2015

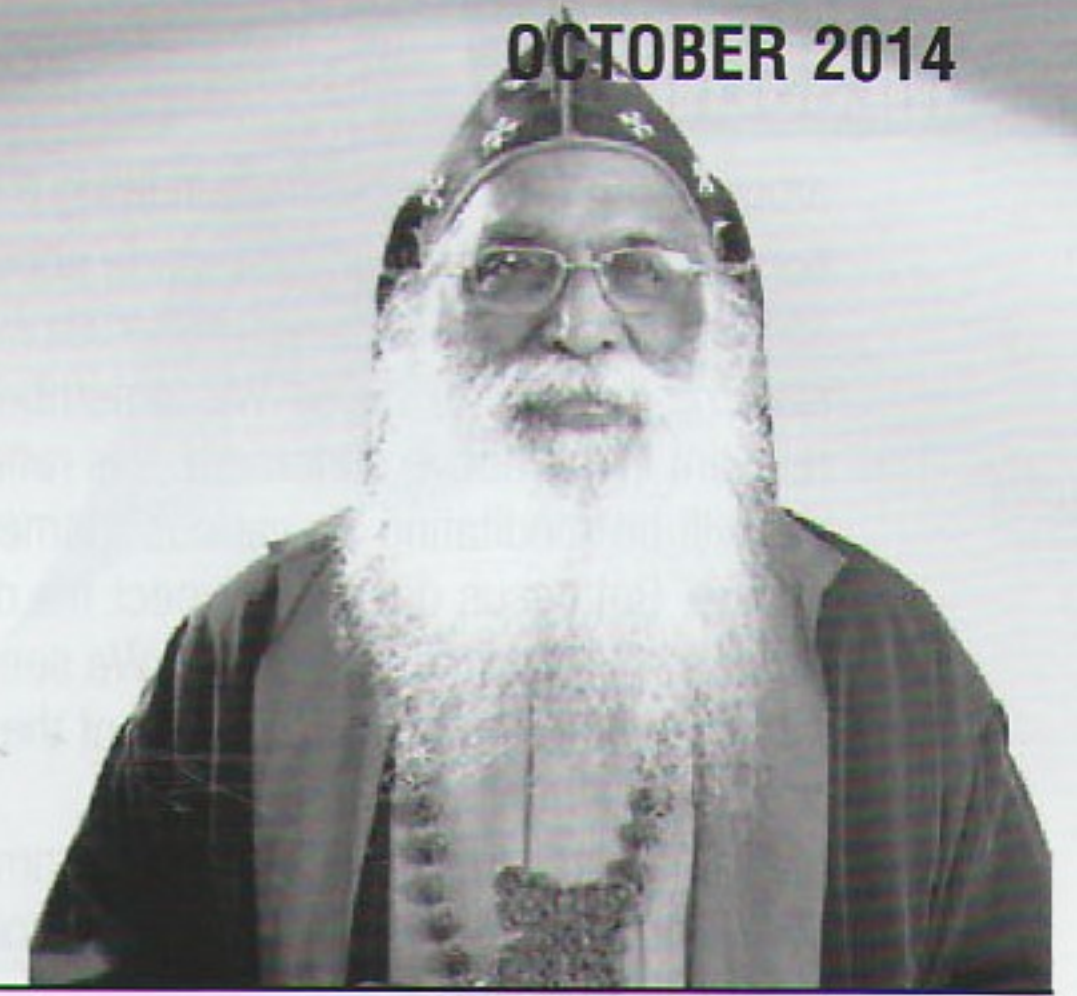
Sep 02 - 11, 2014 Jordan/Israel
Nov 09 - 18, 2014 Jordan/Israel
Feb 15 - 24, 2015 Jordan & Israel
Apr 12 - 24, 2015 Jordan/Israel & Egypt
Sep 06 -15, 2015 Jordan & Israel

Tour Prices Cover:
Airfare/Taxes/Entrance Fees
5 Star Hotels
Breakfast/Lunch/Dinner
Service of Gov. approved Guides

CAREWAYS

TRAVEL & TOURS
465 Knoll Road, New Milford, NJ 07646
P. T. Chacko
Tel : 201 - 483 7151 / 201 - 483 7152
E-mail : careways73@verizon.net
www.bestholylandtours.com

*Egypt and Nile Dinner-Cruise-optional



A Letter from the Metropolitan

Dearly beloved in Christ,

A new academic year has begun. Thousands of children start their education in the new academic year by learning the alphabets. May God bless them so that they get the heavenly wisdom to grow in the grace of God and in favor of humans. Let them make use of the wisdom that offers infinite possibilities for the welfare of society. Our children should grow with steadfastness, with dreams of rising high in life, with social awareness, and above all with trust in God. The former President of India, Dr. A. P. J. Abdul Kalam, who was always enthusiastic in encouraging students, once said that it is a crime to be content with smaller dreams where one ought to grow with bigger dreams.

It is indeed a matter of pride for us that three of our youth could secure high ranks in the last Civil Service Examination. Mr. Johny Tom Varghese, son of Mrs. & Rev. George Varghese (St. Paul's Mar Thoma Church, Kizhakkamuthoor) could, with trust in God, earnestness and hard work, secure the 8th rank at the all-India level and the first place in South India. Special congratulations to Johny for this achievement and for thereby bringing honor to Kerala, the Malayalee community, and to our Mar Thoma community. Mr. Ajith John Joshua, son of Mrs. & Mr. C. O. John (Chathannoor Christos Mar Thoma Church) got the 78th rank, and Ms. Priyanka Thomas, daughter of Mrs. & Mr. T. C. Benjamin (St. Peter's Mar Thoma Church, Pune) got the 158th rank. On behalf of the Church, I congratulate these three promising young talents. Let us pray that they will excel in their realms of service and in life. I congratulate all the students who secured high marks in the various other public examinations.

It is a commendable achievement that all of our colleges, which were visited by the National Accreditation Commission team, got the A grade. I congratulate the Principals, members of the Governing Board, teaching and non-teaching staff and the students for this merit, and for making the visits of the team hearty and benevolent.

This year, 35 theological students are about to enter into the ministry of the church with the recommendation of the Vaideeka Selection Board. Special praise is due to the members of their families, especially the parents and the parishes to which they belong, for nurturing them in a religious environment at home and giving them to the ministry of the Church. It is our prayer that these newly-ordained will be blessed by the Almighty to do His service, wherever they are placed, in a manner pleasing to God and a blessing to the church. I especially welcome all who have dedicated their lives for this ministry.

The Valiya Bava of the Indian Orthodox Church, His Holiness Baselios Mar Thoma II was called to eternity. Let us thank God for his life and ministry.

Let us pray for the new Patriarch of Antioch, His Holiness Ignatius Aprem II to carry out a fruitful and relevant ministry.

Our Sabha Secretary, Very Rev. P. T. Thomas turned 65 on June 20, 2014. He can continue in service until the upcoming session of the Sabha Prathinidhi Mandalam. We remember with gratitude the blessed ministry of this Achen in various positions in different parishes and dioceses. He rendered commendable service during the last three years as Sabha Secretary and as Senior Vicar General.

Greetings to the Diaspora communities for organizing special gatherings in Kerala! God has scattered our members throughout the world with one goal: to get involved in the nation-building of the migrated countries by sharing our heritage with the people

around them. Our success lies in living a life based on Christian values without compromising or forgetting them. The observation that Bishop Stephen Neil made about our church is noteworthy: *A church (Mar Thoma Church) that is ready to suffer losses sticking on to principles based on the vision given by God; but a church which gained more than what was lost, in the same generation, standing firm on their values.* We remembered the 125th anniversary of the Royal Court Verdict in July. That remembrance was relevant in the above statement. It is reflected in the emblem of our Church, "Lighted to Lighten".

We will be meditating on various themes during the coming months. The experience on the Mount of Transfiguration was unique. But Jesus does not expect his disciples to make tents and dwell there forgetting the agony and pain of this world. He doesn't allow them to do so. We see a Jesus who comes down the Mount of Transfiguration and relieves the pain of the father and the physical discomfort of the son. The Church is the real body of Christ which gets involved in the pain of others.

May God bless the new Central government in India to use the God-given opportunity to govern the nation with the vision of 'One United India', rising above petty politics and narrow philosophy, without forgetting the responsibilities and disregarding the public consensus.

India's Independence Day challenges everyone to think about using the freedom, the position and the privileges that God has given for the welfare of humanity. The God-given freedom reminds us of our obligation to discharge our responsibilities in relationship with God. We have no right to use our privileges, positions and freedom without a sense of responsibility. It is by becoming the salt of the earth and the light of the world that we can bear Christian witness among the people of other faiths.

Arrangements were made for the Sabha Council elections in the Dioceses. New Sabha Prathinidhi Mandalam will be held in Thiruvalla on September 9, 10 and 11. Let us pray for the successful conduct of the meetings. All members of the Mandalam are welcome to the meeting.

May the grace of God be with you all.

Dr. Joseph Mar Thoma Metropolitan

BIRTHDAY WISHES

August 29



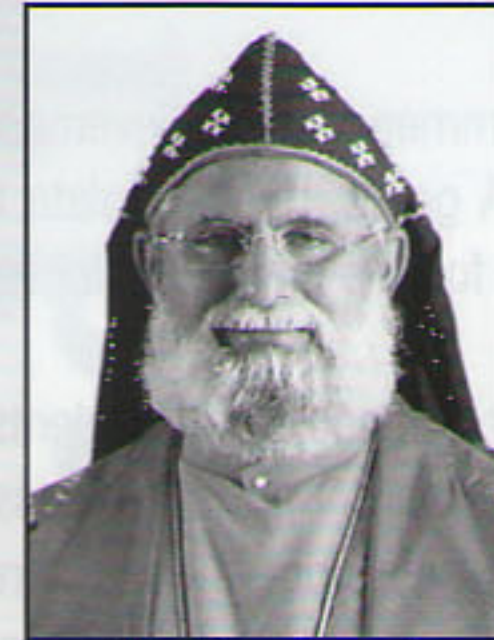
Rt. Rev. Dr. Zacharias
Mar Theophilus Suffragan Metropolitan

November 25



Rt. Rev. Dr. Euyakim
Mar Coorilos Episcopa

September 8



Rt. Rev. Joseph
Mar Barnabas Episcopa

December 13



Rt. Rev. Thomas
Mar Timotheos Episcopa

December 5

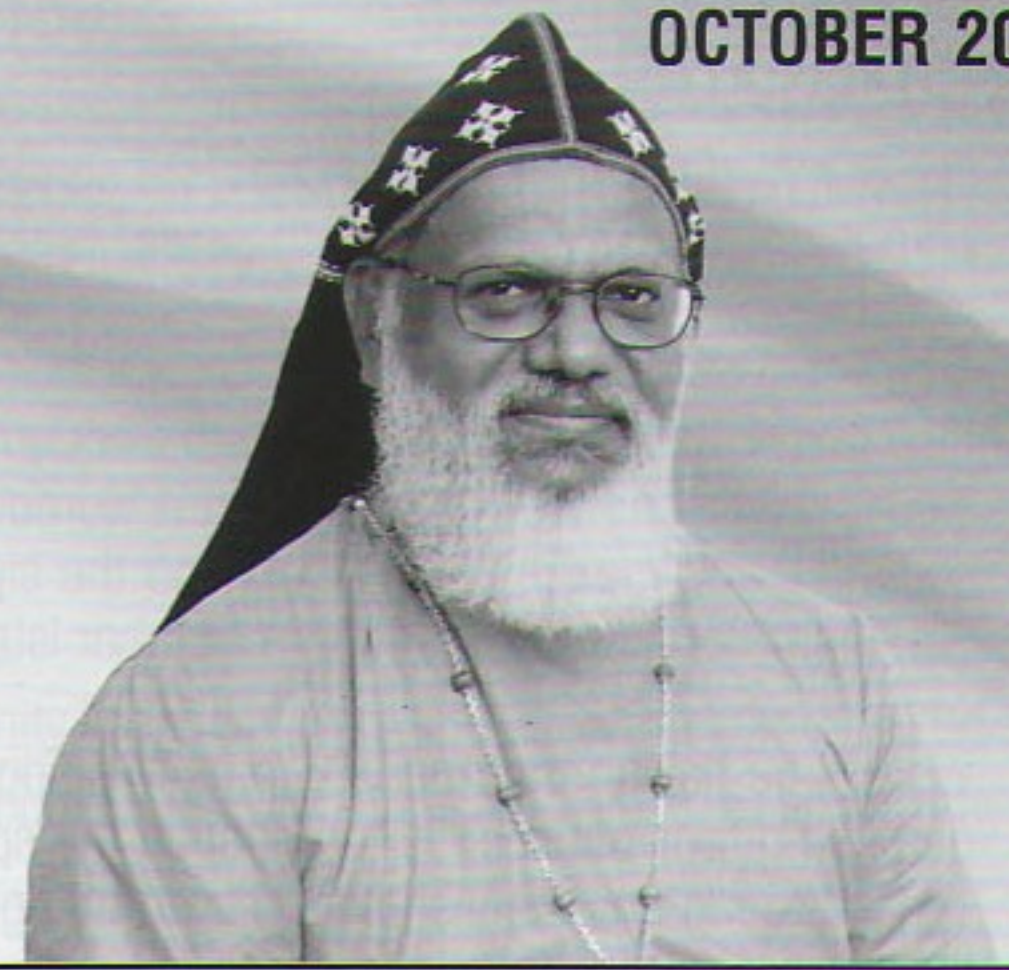


Rt. Rev. Dr. Isaac
Mar Philoxenos Episcopa

August 16



Rt. Rev. Dr. Abraham
Mar Paulos Episcopa



Message from the Diocesan Episcopa

Dear Friends in Christ,

The October issue of the Mar Thoma Messenger comes to you when the annual conferences of the Sevika Sangham and the Yuvajana Sakhyam are taking place in Washington D.C. and Niagara Falls, Canada, respectively. Hitherto, we have been calling our conferences National Conferences, perhaps because they originated through the initiative of our members in USA. It is high time that we as a Diocese become inclusive, and respect the initiative and participation of our members from Canada, UK, and the rest of Europe. Hence, from 2015 onward, all the annual conferences held at the Diocesan level will be called Diocesan Conferences.

It is for the first time that our senior friends above the age of 60 are assembling for a conference at the Diocesan level with the theme: **Churching the Diaspora – Faith Development and Stewardship**. This is significant, as all the parishes in the Diocese are creating a unit of the Senior Fellowship in 2014. I look forward to seeing meaningful studies and relevant discussions on the theme and the forthcoming issues of the Mar Thoma Messenger will have some papers related to it.

This issue of the Mar Thoma Messenger is based on the topic: "Women, Enriching the Church." This is an acknowledgement of the fact that the presence of the Mar Thoma community was palpable in the lands that we reside in, through the migration of our women for their professional advancement in the 20th century. It is through them that a large number of our families established themselves in various countries outside India. Subsequently, it is through the families that our parishes sprang up, and the Diocese was established 26 years ago.

We come from a patriarchal society where male domination has been a reality. We have come to a land and age where partiality on the basis of gender is no longer permissible. This awareness is growing all over the world, including India. Cultural practices will take some time to change. It is not fair if religion stands in the way of change when the religious texts speak of justice and integrity of creation. Our Church, though slow in its move, has taken some steps to overcome male domination. However, more things are to be done.

In the ancient practice of our church, when children were brought for baptism, the male child (irrespective of age) was given preference, but now, baptisms are performed according to the child's age without any sexual prejudice. It is to be remembered that the Mar Thoma Church established a separate recognized organization called Mar Thoma Suvisesha Sevika Sangham to recognize the place of women in the mission of the church, and also for their independent spiritual nurturing. Our church recognized pioneers like Kandamma Varghese in Churching the Diaspora, and encouraged women to establish themselves through the Sevika Sangham and rise up to leadership roles at the national and international levels. Women like the Late Mrs. Annamma George, Mrs. Anna George, and Mrs. Nirmala Abraham have not only represented the church in various global forums, but have encouraged many to ascend to leadership roles and to fight for the rights of women.

The Mar Thoma Church realized the need to reserve seats for women in the decision-making bodies of the church, and now it is mandatory that from the parishes where two people are elected to the Sabha Prathinidhi Mandalam (Representative Assembly of the Church) one person must be a woman (Constitution No. 77). That provides the option that should only one person be elected from a parish, that person could be a woman. This is also true when Diocesan Assembly members are elected (Constitution No. 193). There is also a reservation to make certain that parishes take turns to send female representatives to the Mandalam, so that at every meeting at least 20% of the representatives will be women (Constitution No. 77 A). Again, in electing members to the Sabha Council, from the Dioceses where three or more persons are elected, it is mandatory that one must be a woman (Constitution No. 164 B). In the case of the Diocesan Council, there shall be a minimum of four women elected from the Diocesan Assembly (Constitution No. 294 [2]). Though these reservations exist with constitutional bindings, the church constitution does not prohibit women to fill any role they wish in the decision-making body of the church. Is it not proper that our parishes play a major role in recognizing the leadership of women adequately? Every time our church sends representatives to ecumenical bodies

like the World Council of Churches, we send at least one woman. This year, Ms. Arlene Mathew from Houston represented the church and our Diocese in South Korea.

This issue of the Messenger will include articles to cover the role of women in enriching the church. It is not exhaustive. This is also marked as a Diaspora issue. All through the year in 2013 and 2014, we have been writing on the Diaspora theme. Here, we have included the writings of a few women in our Diocese, at least one from each region. This will open up a chance to have seminars and meetings to understand the significance of women in the home, church, and society. I am glad that the Sevika Sangham Conference this year in October is discussing the topic: "Challenges faced by women in enriching their families."

We will be having the Annual Clergy Meeting of the Diocese at Trinity Mar Thoma Church, Houston in November. The primary purpose of our parishes is to enhance the spiritual growth of our members. Many parishes seem to be growing introverts, or concentrating on establishments, even though they enjoy so many facilities offered by a place of worship. All the parishes are therefore asked to take more interest in having Bible Study classes, counseling ministry through which the reconciliation of strained relationships is possible, and training seminars (camps and conferences) for grooming future spiritual leaders and families. We need more regional conferences organized for children and youth in the Southern and Western regions of the Diocese.

The Ebola epidemic, the unlawful migration of children, the frequent wars and shootings around the world are disrupting the peace of the whole inhabited earth. All these are threats to life and causing imbalance to our social fabric. Undoubtedly, this is a sorrow to God and to all living beings. Healing is possible when we respect life which belongs to God and see to the needs of our neighbors prior to that of our own. The Church, in which we are members, is called primarily to carry out this mission and ministry of healing.

Let us commit ourselves to the cause of life when we pray daily, "Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven."

God bless us all.

Yours in Christ's Ministry,

Mar Theodosius +
www.martheodosius.com

Congratulations



The Archbishop Mor Cyril Aphrem Karim is elected as the new Patriarch of the Syriac Orthodox Church of Antioch and All East. He is the 123rd Patriarch in the Apostolic Lineage of St. Peter replacing His Holiness Patriarch Ignatius Zakka I who passed away in Germany on March 21, 2014. The diocese of North America and Europe congratulates the Patriarch and wishes all God's blessings upon him and members of the Church.

Condolence



The Most Rev. Joseph Mar Koorilose, Valiya Metropolitan of Malabar Independent Syrian Church, passed away on September 7, 2014 and the funeral service was held on September 9, 2014 at St. George Diocesan Church, Thozhiyoor. The Rt. Rev. Dr. Euyakim Mar Coorilos, The Rt. Rev. Joseph Mar Barnabas, The Rt. Rev. Dr. Isaac Mar Philoxenos, and The Rt. Rev. Gregorios Mar Stephanos paid homage. The Diocese of North America and Europe expresses heartfelt condolences and prays for the peace of God to reign over the hearts of all the bereaved members of the church.



This issue of the Messenger is dedicated to the topic, "Women Enriching the Church." The articles provide a wealth of information on women who enriched Judeo-Christian history and the Mar Thoma Church. I was informed that traditionally the October issue of the Messenger is dedicated as a Diaspora issue. Hence, it is apt that readers know about the contributions of Mar Thoma women in strengthening the Diaspora in this Diocese.

Despite significant advances that women have made in a variety of fields, the concern in the world and within some Christian communities is that Christianity is generally against the advancement of women. While women have played a prominent role in upholding strong Christian values, building prayerful homes, and propagating historic missionary activities, they seemingly hit a glass ceiling when it comes to taking on leadership roles within the church. Even within churches that recognize the leadership of women, progress is made often at a snail's pace.

The Mar Thoma Church owes a lot of credit to the women who set sail to far off places from Kerala and other states in India for work. Their adventurousness facilitated the expansion of their families in the new lands to which they migrated. This migration gradually created the need for having traditional places of worship. Thus, Mar Thoma Churches sprouted in various parts of the world, particularly in this Diocese which includes USA, Canada, and Europe.

Is women's current stature and progress satisfactory? If change is needed, how can meaningful change be planned and implemented without hurting feelings and disrupting unity? While women have done a lot for the church and its growth, the reader should examine if, and how, they could do more.

It would not be unreasonable to anticipate opposition to the advancement of the woman's role in the church from many within the church who hold on to traditional ideals. We seem to forget that many women in the Bible held positions of authority and spiritual leadership as prophetesses, missionaries, and ministers. It is not uncommon to hear people selectively quote the Bible to keep women from experiencing the fullness of freedom within the church. However, it begs careful study of the scripture to understand whether such oft-used quotations were intended to address women in a specific context or women across generations. Even if we take the position that such references limiting the woman's role in the church were meant for all generations, we know that people do not strictly follow such restrictions. People only follow what they choose and do not adhere to many of the traditionally held positions that they do not find practical. For instance, our women do preach in churches and participate in the church public meetings. In this Diocese (although not in every parish), women assemble for worship and sit with men on pews on both sides of the aisle.

Although women today enjoy greater freedoms within the church, many concerns and barriers remain. How do we move forward from here? Fortunately, our church leadership is open to consider and promote meaningful reform. This Diocese has developed a Covenant Girls program, and its role is evolving. To move forward, women must first step up for devoted service to the church. Men should join hands for enhancing the role of women in the church. It should be a process that is derived out of mutual respect for one another. In the words of Mahatma Gandhi, "If we could change ourselves, the tendencies in the world would also change. As a man changes his own nature, so does the attitude of the world change towards him.... We need not wait to see what others do." What we need are strong advocates who inspire courage in our women to take on roles of committed leadership. We need honorable women and men who harbor mutual trust and respect for one another to serve God – driven by the true love and purpose as demonstrated by His Son, Jesus Christ.

Dr. Mathew T. Thomas

Email: mtmessenger1@gmail.com

Professional Accounting & Tax Services

110 Jericho Turnpike, Suite 102 Floral Park, NY 11001
Tel. (516) 352-8755 • Fax (516) 352-8757 • E-Fax 815-301-2757
E-mail : shajusam.ea@gmail.com



Shaju Sam, EA, MS (Tax)

Licensed to Practice Before the IRS

Member American Institute of Certified Public Accountants

Member National Association of Enrolled Agents

Member National Association of Tax Professionals



- ☑ **Individuals**
- ☑ **Corporations**
- ☑ **Partnerships**
- ☑ **Limited Liability Companies**
- ☑ **Sales Tax and Payroll Services**
- ☑ **Financial Planning**
- ☑ **Formation of Business Entities**
- ☑ **IRS and State Audit Representation**

Designed & Printed by St. Albans Digital Printing Inc. - (718) 528-5100

RAMAN ABROL, CPA

1130 Rt. 46W, Suite 9 • Parsippany, NJ 07054

Tel. (973) 331-5178

Fax (973) 718-4666

History of the role of women in church with reference to the Mar Thoma Church in Kerala: Celebrating early leaders

Dr. Anita Daniel



"982 Sakhakal, 83 Centers spread over 12 Diocese, 20 full-time gospel workers, 15 mission fields, 3 training centers, 4 homes for the needy, 2 educational institutions, 6 self-help projects, 1 tailoring unit, 4 collections for mobilizing funds- all for the women of the Mar Thoma Church!" These are undisputable figures of the progress of women in the Mar Thoma Church and of their involvement in mission. The reason to quote the statistical data is not to revel in pride but to be mindful of the fact that the journey to this point was not an easy one for the early women church leaders. This article seeks to remember the past so as to be in a better position to understand the present and pass the baton of rejuvenation to the future.

Scripture on 'women'

The events from birth to resurrection of Jesus Christ revolve around the significant roles of a lady; be it at the birth event of the savior child or at a troubled house during a wedding ceremony, be it at a distant place in a cursed land or after the resurrection in an open Cell. All these instances exemplify how women have been vital links in propagating godly values in a set up that was least favorable for women. However, the most debilitating notion about women that prevailed in Jesus' time and continued for centuries later was, "A hundred women are no better than two men" (Talmud, Ber. 45b) and a regular prayer that men prayed praising god was; 'Blessed are you who have not made me a heathen, who have not made me a woman, who has not made me illiterate" (bMen. 43b; Ber. 7.18). Against the backdrop of such incapacitating experiences and disappointing social outlook, the transition from oblivion to recognition would certainly not have been a smooth one for women in general. The only comfort for women is that in the eyes of the savior, they were people of competence, influence, experience, wisdom and resolution.

Perhaps, taking a cue from the various biblical incidents, the early church leaders particularly of the Mar Thoma church felt the need to equip women for mission and mobilize their influence. A book in Malayalam published by the Kandamma Study Centre titled, "Ormekyumo Ennalaeayudae Shilpikalae", literal translation of which would mean "Do you remember the sculptors of the bygone years?" documents the impact of several early women leaders in this direction and the data provided in this text stands as the reference point in this article. The people mentioned therein have been instrumental in transforming simple cottage fellowships into purposeful gatherings aimed at strengthening women for mission and converting it into a conglomeration of Christian women fellowship under the banner of the Mar Thoma Church across the length and breadth of the world. Today it is a vital part of the Mar Thoma Sabha. The icons of this movement have left a trail of their dreams and vision which we are duty-bound to carry forward. Their simple and humble contributions are elucidated in the succeeding paragraphs.

Revitalization of women during reformation:

An exclusive organization for women came into being during the period of reformation when meaningless expressions of the church were overhauled and a new stream of thought trickled into its very being. It was in the wake of such a revival that women's role underwent a sea change. The women reconsidered their role in society. The call to be a missionary as reiterated by Church Leaders transformed their outlook to life. Home and societal issues caught their attention. The need to shape faith in the family got started in homes. Their potentialities got redefined. As a prelude to the reformation event, a spiritual leader by name Ammal from Tamil Nadu was invited to give leadership for various meetings conducted for women. She inspired her hearers to participate in full-time ministry even while executing their routine work in the family. Small gatherings got accentuated which eventually led to the formation of the Mar Thoma Suvishesha Sevika Sanghom, which is now a vital organ of the reformed church.

Role of women missionaries and women education:

The resolute footsteps of foreign missionaries on the sands of Kerala served as the turning point in improving the spiritual and educational scenario of women. Missionaries like Miss Nicholson and Miss Meckbin spurred the church leaders to start a school and boarding home for girls. The leaders of the church gave wholehearted support for this venture among whom the name of Abraham Mar Thoma Metropolitan can never be overlooked. In the year 1910 the first school and training home for women got started under the name 'Nicholson School & Training Home'. Resident missionaries served expecting no remuneration in return. Girls were educated and essential life-skills training were imparted. Vanitha Mandiram was established and an Australian missionary Miss Kellaway served as a teacher to the young aspirants willing to participate in ministry. Several other missionaries continued the task with dedication Teaching, preaching, and serving were done with the sole mission to give woman her lost identity.

Establishment of the Mar Thoma Suvishesha Sevika Sanghom

His Grace, The Rt. Rev. Abraham Mar Thoma Suffragan Metropolitan sensed the need to unite women of the church under a common banner. Thirumeni's vision and co-operation of other church leaders led to the formation of The Mar Thoma Suvishesha Sevika Sanghom in the year 1919. A large number of women became part of the missionary movement. The sacrifices and hardships of these early church leaders is unthinkable. Throwing themselves on God's protection, the early church leaders whether holding prestigious positions or not, strove tirelessly to nurse the sick, cater to the needy, build institutions for equipping young women and raise the standards of women. They travelled near and far to empower women. The conduct of those in position was marked with a sense of accountability and humility and their work ethics continues to make this organization a living force.

Inland mission

With the backing of the church, women began helping the rural community return to a state of well-being. A part of their own earnings was set apart to educate the women and children in such areas. Most of the early women church leaders offered from what they received through small agriculture and poultry farming. As part of the inland mission, schools and boarding homes got started in several centers. Palaghat

mission is one such mission area started by their initiative. Destitute homes like Salem Home, Punalur Boy's home, Elanthur Santhi Asramam are a result of the action taken by our early church leaders.

Pioneers of mission

Pages would be inadequate to mention the names of all the significant personalities of the women's organization. But what runs through every name is that they were motivated by a deep sense of commitment to God, far more than by any desire to attain personal recognition or power. The history of woman's participation does not mention the work rendered by several women of the church. However, just to get a picture of the rough journey traversed a few names are mentioned here.

- ✿ Kottureth Sosamma; born in the year 1870, and the First President of the Mar Thoma Suvishesha Sevika Sanghom during its inception in the year 1919 was instrumental in influencing the Sanghom to start homes for the weak and destitute children of society.
- ✿ Polachirackal Kochuveetil Mariamma; widowed at the age of 33 with three children to cater to was one of the first secretaries of the Sanghom who gladly opened her home for meetings and gatherings of the Sanghom prior to the construction of a permanent building. She inspired her daughters to continue to serve the cause of women empowerment in their distinctive way.
- ✿ Anjilivelil Rahelamma; secretary of the Sanghom along with Mariamma Polachirackal believed that teaching is a profession to reach people with the gospel truth; had nine children but never sidelined the activities of the Sanghom; visited churches encouraging them to begin Sevika Sanghom unit. She wrote and dispatched letters all free of cost!
- ✿ Annamma Mammen; wife of Rev. V. P. Mammen, and a dynamic and hospitable Kochamma who taught ladies to lead life of simplicity and to learn to give not from surplus but in want. Instrumental in raising money by encouraging ladies to farm, and set apart from what they received for running the house.
- ✿ Kandamma Varghese; widowed at the age of 30 and with three children in their young age believed that "Woe is she if she did not preach the gospel". Such was her spiritual fervor right from her childhood days. Disciplined in living and in giving, she was the driving force for preparing women to learn the Word. No neighbor was an outsider and no home a strange one for this kochamma.
- ✿ Parapeedikayil Aleyamma; a dutiful wife, devoted mother and compassionate woman. Opened her house for every tired traveler and fed them with what was prepared at home. Her life was her prayer to God.
- ✿ Parackall Saramma Mathai; a bold leader who insisted on reading books and newspapers without fail. Though a widow she still gave for mission saying "God has no pleasure in a giving not backed by sacrifice."
- ✿ Aaviyottu Mariamma Varughese; adept at comforting other women in pain through her life of widowhood. A strong believer completely dedicated to empowering other women.

The contributions of Miss Kellaway, Annamma Skariah, Medayil Aleyamma George, P. J. Mariamma, Dr. Annamma Mathew and several others point to a few truths that the women of today safely tend to forget.

1. Every woman whether young or old is called to serve as a missionary in any capacity.
 2. Every other woman deserves our encouragement, aid and support.
 3. Every home ought to be another person's home for fellowship and spiritual nurture.
 4. Every giving must have a sacrifice behind it and every work a silent observer.
 5. Every setback in life is to make us stronger for mission and must not be the reason to retreat.
 6. Every free time ought to be spent in wishing good for others and not in belittling them.
- The list can go unending...

And Still Today

David Yonggi Cho concludes from his experience that women are the best choice for arduous, pioneering work. "We have found that in these situations, women will never give up. Men are good for building up the work, but women are best for persevering when men would get discouraged."

Christian women today need to know and celebrate their heritage. We can study women of greatness who served in Christ's cause and claim them as our role models. The roll is lengthy and glorious! That roll, however, remains incomplete, awaiting the contribution of current and future generations. God's women now enjoy freedom and opportunities their fore-bearers never envisioned. Women now hold highly responsible positions in government, business, and medicine. "To whom much is given, much is required." How will women of God today harvest such opportunities for their Father's purposes?

Nearing a century of its formation as a recognized body have we contributed to bring about any change or else are we willing to continue with the traditions... are we truly? Or do we have a reluctance to change? Is our presence as that of a dormant volcano that everyone knows its presence of but not of its power? When the world today talks of women empowerment, should not this initiative carry on with more vigor and dedication? If you and I have acknowledged its presence then we are bound to sustain it.

Women, stirred by the task that lies ahead, can mobilize, devoting their skills, their accessibility, their knowledge, their tenderness, their intuitiveness, their own distinctive fervor to the work. The pioneer spirit, full of dedication and faithfulness, which women throughout history have shown will set the standard. The task is too vast to be completed without all God's people! What's my response?

**Sabha Pradhindhi
Mandalam 2014**



Some of the Mandalam members from the Diocese of North America and Europe at the Mandalam meeting in Thiruvalla, Kerala.

Her-story in the Bible

Mrs. Laila Alex, Bethel Mar Thoma Church, Philadelphia, PA



Her story started in Eden, when God created Man and Woman in his own image and appointed them as stewards of all He made. He created them not identical, but appointed them, both together as the caretakers of His world. They were equal in value and worth, equipped to fulfill roles and functions ordained by the Creator. However, human penchant for sin estranged them from God's plan for his creation. And to redeem the sinners God intervened, through the centuries, until He sent His Only Begotten Son to die on the Cross. But, by that time in human history, Eve without whom God saw that Adam was incomplete, the 'helpmeet' God had designed to make Man complete, was relegated to the fringes of society as a worthless shadow.

How did this happen? Obviously, the 'Eve-story', with its religious sanction had a damning role in demeaning the status of women. The story, as we read in Genesis, branded Eve as the despicable 'sinner' who plucked the Forbidden Fruit and caused the fall of humanity from Paradise and introduced evil into the world. The banishment of Eve to the outskirts of society came to be approved as the just punishment for this crime!

The predominant family structure as we see in the Bible is patriarchal and it is based on texts, the oldest of which is written about 1400 B C E. But, Marija Gimbutas, former Professor Emeritus of Archeology at the University of California, Los Angeles and world-renowned archeologist, in her book "The Civilization of the Goddess" talks about matriarchal cultures that existed as far back as 6500 B.C. Even if we discredit the prevalence of such matriarchal societies in the prehistoric times, archeological evidence points to the fact that those ancient societies were more gender neutral than those of later times.

The matrilineal and matrilocal aspects of the ancient times are quite evident in the stories of the early heroines of the Bible. That is why in the Old Testament we see matriarchs like Sarah, Rebecca, Leah and Rachel intervening to define history, Miriam being hailed as one of the liberators of the people of Israel, Deborah leading Israelite troops into battle and Esther delivering her people from certain death. Accomplished women like Sheerah, the builder (Chronicles 7: 24), Jael who killed Sisera (Judges. 4), Queen of Sheba, who was equal in wisdom to Solomon and Judith of Bethulia are all celebrated for excellence in their chosen fields. Also, there are a number of prophetesses recognized as having greater skills than their male counterparts. In addition, the Old Testament contains two books named after women: the Book of Esther and the Book of Ruth, a testimony that the culture did not wholly disparage women.

These suggest that ancient patriarchal Judaism may have been grossly misrepresented and/or misunderstood in its treatment of women. For instance, the prayer thanking God "for not making me a woman" is quoted often as proof of the mean status accorded to women in Jewish society. In a community that considered obeying commandments as a blessing, the prayer was a simple confirmation of the higher number of commandments that men were obligated to perform. If we look closely we can see that the position of women in 'halakah' (Jewish laws) was not as lowly as most people seem to think. The Ten Commandments require respect for both mother and father. (Exodus 20:11, Lev. 19:3). Women had the right to buy and sell, own property and make their own contracts. Indeed, Proverbs: 31 asserts business acumen as a trait to be prized in women. Besides, women were believed to be endowed with a greater degree of "binah" (intuition, intelligence) than men.

However, we cannot deny that the primary role of the woman in traditional Judaism is that

of the keeper of the household as wife and mother. . .
In Judges 5: 6, 7 Deborah sings:

"In the days of Shamgar son of Anath,
in the days of Jael, the highways were abandoned;
travelers took to winding paths.

Villagers in Israel would not fight;
they held back until I, Deborah, arose,
until I arose, a mother in Israel.

Deborah who commanded the Israel armies and was acclaimed the greatest of their judges rejoiced in identifying herself as a "mother in Israel". This could be only because motherhood was eminently revered in that society. As Judaic laws regulate every aspect of life, roles within family are no less important than public offices. Hence, women are 'exempted' (not prohibited) from time-related commandments and active roles in the synagogue. The Talmud fully recognizes and celebrates woman's power as it teaches: 'when a pious man marries a wicked woman, the man becomes wicked, but when a wicked man marries a pious woman he becomes pious'. 'He who has no wife dwells without good, without help, without joy, without blessing and without atonement'. (Bereshit Rabbah 17, 2) Proverbs proclaim the value of a woman: "Who can find a virtuous woman, her price is far above rubies". From this perspective it appears that women enjoyed a respectable status within the patriarchal confines of ancient Judaism.

Yet, the narrative in the Bible reveals unashamedly the patriarchal gender bias that legitimizes the subjugation of women by denying them their individual rights. The tone of the narrative denigrates women as second class: they are property owned by the male that can be bought or sold. How do we explain this seeming contradiction? Is the patriarchal bend we see the result of the prevailing social milieu tempering the narrative by permeating it with the existing value system? This could very well be the case because by 1400 B C E when the earliest books of the Bible came to be written Judaic societies had become firmly established as patriarchal, totally dominated by males. Read in this context, the Eve-story in Genesis, fully assigning responsibility of the 'Fall from Grace' to the woman, may, very well have been a deliberate attempt at justifying the value system of the times.

We know for a fact that changes in societal norms do



WHAT IS THE SIGN OF A GOOD DECISION?*

It's letting our whole life insurance look after you – as you look after her.

Securing your family's future and laying the foundation early on is the sign of a good decision. MassMutual offers whole life insurance that can provide customized flexibility based on your needs and protection for a lifetime as long as the policy is in force. Enjoy the many benefits of:

- Guaranteed death benefits ▪ Guaranteed increased cash value every year
- Guaranteed fixed premium ▪ Chance to earn dividends¹

A mutually owned company with over 160 years of experience providing innovative insurance products and financial services, MassMutual serves the needs of individuals, families, and business owners. Make sure your next decision is a good one. MassMutual. We'll help you get there.®

Talk to your local MassMutual Representative today.

Spectrum
Spectrum Financial Group
A member of the MassMutual Financial Group



Shiju Abraham, BCS
Financial Services Professional
5080 Spectrum Drive, Suite 902W
Addison, TX 75001
972-455-4371
sabraham@financialguide.com
www.sfgtexas.com

LIFE INSURANCE + RETIREMENT/401(K) P LAN SERVICES + DISABI LITY INCOME INSURANCE + LONG TERM CARE INSURANCE + ANNUITIES

MassMutual Financial Group refers to Massachusetts Mutual Life Insurance Company (MassMutual), its affiliated companies and sales representatives. Insurance products issued by MassMutual, Springfield, MA 01111, and its subsidiaries, C.M. Life Insurance and MML Bay State Life Insurance companies, Enfield, CT 06082. ¹ Dividends are not guaranteed. CRN201303-146603

not happen in a day: political and economic exigencies that persist over long periods of time define societal norms. If we follow the time line of events documented in the Bible we can see that the changes in the status of women closely correspond to the external circumstances of Hebrew life. That is, the withdrawal of Jewish women from outside society may have been gradual, and definitely the result of extenuating external circumstances. Recorded history confirms that the one important factor that confined ancient Jewish women to family and child rearing was the political situation of the time. The Jewish tribes had to engage in continuous fighting as they struggled to establish themselves in the Caanan. The resultant death toll was sharply impacting their population. With infant mortality at 50% and maternal mortality at 20%, the major business of the women of those times came to be childbearing. The biblical injunction 'to be fruitful and multiply' and the abhorrence of a woman's 'barrenness' are to be read in this context.

As family and child rearing became the primary focus of women, their role in other areas of society gradually diminished. The significant downward shift in the status and role of women began during the period that the Eastern Mediterranean as a whole was undergoing dramatic changes due to the impact of Indo-European invaders. As Jews settled into Caanan and monarchy began circa 1000 B C E sanctions against women came to be widespread. By the Second Temple Period (538 BCE to 70 CE), women were not allowed to go out in public, talk to strangers, could not testify in courts of law and had to be veiled when outside their homes. In fact, they had become second class Jews, excluded from the worship and teaching of God, with status scarcely above that of slaves'.

Thus, by the time Jesus came into the world, rabbinical laws had effectively curtailed women's involvement in all aspects of public life and pushed them to the periphery of society. It became Jesus's mission to find and bring them back to their appointed place within God's fold. In the story of redemption that started with Virgin Mary there was not one instance that disgraced, disrespected or belittled women. Jesus's attitude towards women from any station of society was absolutely devoid of the prevalent patriarchal gender bias: every woman who came to him was received and comforted. If God's plan were different, this would not have been the attitude of the Son!

The New Testament gospels written toward the last quarter of the first century C E record the presence of women in crucial positions throughout Christ's life on earth. Starting with Virgin Mary, hailed by Elizabeth (Luke. 4-6), prophesied by Anna in the Temple of Jerusalem (Luke. 2: 36-38), we see women in close proximity with Christ, right up to the foot of the Cross and after, at resurrection appearing to Mary Magdalene (Luke. 24: 10). The gospels invariably acknowledge that women were among the first disciples of Jesus and that they served him in partnership with the apostles. Mary, sister of Lazarus sat at Christ's feet to listen to him. Women were never denied access to the Lord.

Jesus' acceptance of women among his followers and his treatment of women were totally against the rabbinical laws that governed social interactions between men and women. Christ's encounters with the Canaanite woman whose daughter was plagued by a demon (Matthew. 15:21-28), the woman who was suffering from the issue of blood (Matthew 9: 20-22), the woman who was a sinner (Luke 7: 37-50) and the Samaritan woman (John 4: 7-27), all bear proof of the Savior's open disregard for the social norms that denied acceptance to these hapless women. All these women were outcasts, condemned and ridiculed by their fellow beings, all/any interaction with them deemed improper by the strict rabbinical laws of the time. Each came to Jesus broken and miserable and, Jesus received them. Not one of them went back unfulfilled.

By receiving women as his followers, Jesus opened doors to new and fulfilling roles for them that were equal to those of men. As a result, we see in the New Testament records of many women emerging as leaders of the church. We read about Priscilla, Lydia, Suzanna, Joanna and a horde of other ladies who supported Christ and his disciples. Christ's attitude firmly established women in prominent positions. Even Christ's chosen disciples and apostles who had grown up firmly rooted in the social standards of the time found

his attitudes radical. This dichotomy is revealed in the writings of the Apostles especially when describing the organizational structures within newly formed congregations. The role as the head of the family is earmarked for husbands (Ephesians. 5: 23) as is the role of church leader (1 Timothy 2: 12). Peter calls women 'weaker vessels', then, goes on to remind husbands to give them honor (1 Peter 3: 7). Apostle Paul's chauvinistic attitude is well-documented, but he acknowledges the services of women and accords them love and respect as partners in the work of the Lord.

As Christianity spread, the status of women changed for the better. Under the influence of Christianity women also came to be regarded as individuals bearing 'the image of God'. They were freed from the demeaning pagan rites and rituals of debauchery and came to be less abused as 'chattel' or objects of amusement for men. They began to be recognized in their own right, and honored for their true feminine beauty which is not about "arranging the hair, wearing gold or putting on fine apparel: real beauty is manifest in the hidden person of the heart... the incorruptible beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is precious in the sight of God" (1 Peter 3:3).

Christianity, from its beginning has had a history of recognizing and affirming womanhood: subjugation of women by traditional patriarchal standards is totally foreign to Christ's teaching and the church he established. True Christianity extols the value of women by recognizing the female qualities of modesty and humility as virtue. Today, we see that advances in modern thought have persuaded traditional hierarchies of power within the social, political and religious realms to open up space for the recognition and growth of women. And, in that modern context women continue to redefine their roles to move forward together with men to create a Christian world and take up their appointed role as equal partners in the stewardship of this world.

**COME TO ME,
ALL YOU WHO LABOR
AND ARE HEAVY LADEN,
AND I WILL
GIVE YOU REST.**

MATTHEW 11:28



I'm only human... I'm just a woman: Deliberations of a Mar Thoma woman



Mrs. Aswathi Varughese, St. Thomas Mar Thoma Church, Lombard, IL

*It's a good morning!
Wake up to a brand new day
This morning,
I'm stepping, stepping on my way
Good morning,
You give me strength,
You give me just what I need.....*

Leela smiled to herself as she hummed the song and habitually chartered out her morning ritual for the past 3 years....coffee, breakfast for her husband, pack lunch for herself, a quick shower and off to the office.



In another town, Sumitra definitely did not feel like humming a song, let alone enjoy the beauty of the morning as she headed home after a long, particularly difficult, night at the hospital. She wearily and sadly thought of the young teenager lying in the ICU, the result of drunken driving. Saying a short prayer for the youngster, Sumitra marshaled her thoughts to the tasks ahead. Exhausted as she was, she still had to get home, pack lunches for

her two children, drop them off to school, buy groceries and cook dinner before she could go to bed for her well earned rest.



In yet another household, a different scene was being enacted. Teresa read her Bible and then along with her husband got ready for their customary morning walk. As she dressed, she mentally checked off her to do list: Set up the next week's Sevika Sanghom meeting; discuss the financial situation with the church secretary....

Three completely different scenarios, three women in different stages of their lives, yet bound together by womanhood. These are only three scenes out of numerous different permutations and combinations based on life stages, ages, children, occupation, size of family, members in household, etc.

This brings me to my topic: "Women in the modern Mar Thoma Church."

Today, more than ever a woman is called to play multiple, challenging, un-charted, roles. The challenge can be overwhelming with the unspoken agreement that the stakes are extremely high in the lifetime of each woman. To comprehend in part, this complex, multi faceted issue let's go back a few centuries. Most societies in the ancient world were patriarchal but there were a few exceptions. Traditionally, women in the Malayalee Christian community had much more 'voice' than their counterparts in other religions. The women in the Mar Thoma churches shared the spiritual power generated by 'The Reformation' and were instrumental in establishing the Sevika Sanghom. The need for empowering and educating women in the Mar Thoma church was understood and implemented early on. The Vanitha Mandiram, the Bible school run by the Sevika Sanghom was established in 1925 and was responsible for training many women evangelists.

Now, let's travel closer 'home' to the United States of America (USA). Women from Kerala immigrated to the USA in the fourth wave of emigration from Kerala, from 1975 to 1992. The promise of prosperity and opportunities for nurses prompted a chain of migration to the USA, Germany, etc. Women, whose lives were centered around the kitchen, with the stove being the fulcrum, now had opportunities outside the confines of not only their homes but also abroad. Along with the immigration of Mar Thoma families to the USA, many

women were delegated to being the sole bread winner for the family. Thus, even while Sumitra, a nurse professional, struggled with all her manifold responsibilities as an immigrant Mar Thoma mother in the USA, a new generation of confident IT professionals were in the making alongside the second generation of 'US born Indians'! This shift also translated to the arena of spiritual growth, study, and leadership! As the wheels of change turned, so also, in the Mar Thoma church the role of women has evolved considerably.

A few portraits of the multifaceted roles of Mar Thoma women today is presented below:

Women as learners of the Word

Proverbs 31:30b "a woman who fears the Lord is to be praised."

Yes, a women's' first and foremost allegiance is to the Lord. In a world that offers opportunities and challenges like never before, fear of the Lord, dependence on the Lord for guidance and sustenance and wisdom, not from an earthly standard but from the Word are characteristics that need to be cultivated diligently. Spiritual learning has customarily been a male dominated arena. Nonetheless as Mar Thoma women gradually expand their horizons into the arenas of spiritual leadership, evangelism, and ministry, spiritual knowledge MUST be inculcated.



Women as architects of families and societies

Ephesian 5: 22-24 "Wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands as you do to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Savior. Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything."

As Mar Thoma women step into leadership roles within their communities and homes this vital command is not one to be taken nonchalantly. There is always give and take in a married life. Yet, the cornerstone of a successful married life is to follow what our Lord and Savior commanded wives. There is no such thing as a perfect marriage, but there is a perfect partner for you - because that partner was chosen for each woman, not by man but by God. In the Mar Thoma wedding, the chief celebrant places the ring on the bride's finger, explicitly imparting the exhortation that it is the Holy Spirit bringing the groom and the bride in the holy matrimony. The minister puts



the ring on behalf of Christ and the church as a sign of the covenant. The familiar lyrics of the song 'Just as I am...' come to mind here. Changing the life partner is not a solution to a perfect relationship, but we are called to make, transform or mold the existing relationship to a perfect one in Christ. Marriage should not be considered as a license to change life partners to conform to being the 'perfect partner' that we envision but rather mold and transform existing relationships to be perfect for Christ.

And so, as Leela packed lunch for her husband and Sumitra wearily tried to juggle all her different tasks, we reach out a hand in need to our life partner.....

A woman is the 'rubber-band' that binds together a husband and wife. Just as a rubber band is flexible and adaptable, so, too women need to adapt to changing needs in a family. Raising children, juggling priorities, exhaustion, sleepless nights, caring for elderly parents - I'm sure that this resonates with many of us.

*I'm only human, I'm just a woman,
Help me to believe in what I could be and all that I am,
Show me the stairway that I have to climb
Lord, for my sake, teach me to take one day at a time,
One day at a time, sweet Jesus, that's all I'm asking from you,
Give me the strength to do everyday what I have to do,
Yesterday's gone, sweet Jesus, and tomorrow may never be mine,
So for my sake teach me to take one day at a time.*



A woman at any given point in her life is always juggling multiple roles: A daughter, a sister and friend, a wife, a mother, a daughter-in-law, an employee, a caregiver, etc. Every role demands superlative performance. Every role mandates that Christ is in control at all times. Proverbs 3:5, "Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding," is a woman's navigation system!

Women as leaders

Judges 4: 4-5, "Now Deborah, a prophet, the wife of Lappidoth, was leading Israel at that time. She held court under the Palm of Deborah between Ramah and Bethel in the hill country of Ephraim, and the Israelites went up to her to have their disputes decided." Judges 4 tells us that at one time in history a woman held the highest position of spiritual authority in Israel. The Bible states that God anointed Deborah as judge of Israel, gave her wisdom and prophetic counsel, and granted a 40-year period of peace as a result of her effective leadership. And the men who honoured her authority were blessed.

Humility and grace are the compelling qualities of a great leader. As Mar Thoma women lead the way in many walks of life, including church administration, teaching, etc., humility, grace and compassion are essential traits of a great leader. Christ showed Himself as an example of a servant leader, leading with compassion and serving humanity. Women who are called to lead must follow the example of our greatest teacher. Today in the US,

we encounter a rising populace of elder women retiring from the active workforce. As time, which was a scarce commodity in their yester years, is now in plenty, many Mar Thoma women find fulfillment in church related activities, devoting their time to leading organizations and activities. So, as Teresa prepares to lead the women in her church, she needs to don the mantle of gentleness and grace embroidered with compassion and humility.

Finally, Women as prayer warriors

Pray, pray, pray! In a patriarchal society, usually men do not shed tears! That's just a given....albeit untrue! On the other hand, its permissible for a woman to shed a few tears....A woman's heart is fabricated with arteries of compassion...let those arteries flow with tears and prayers for the marginalized, for the sad, the broken hearted....a woman on her knees praying is THE most powerful portrait in a world torn apart by strife and terror, fear and injustice....a portrait that can quench fires of dissension and discord. A portrait that is silent yet whispers louder than the sound of a thousand bullets! Prayer transcends boundaries -geographical, social, religious, etc.

Mar Thoma women, unite in prayer, for children, for families, for society, for leaders.....

*Sun scintillating diamond shards of light,
Streams of liquid gold ripple in ever
widening circles,
Vapors of mist swirl ever so gently,
Unspoken prayers rise heaven ward
in the morning light,
Dawn births a new day...
HIS PROMISES EVER NEW...*



Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. Matthew 7:7

Bibliography:
www.wikipedia

Lyrics: Good Morning....
wake up to a brand new day by Mandisa
One Day At A Time by Wanda Jackson

Our Hearty Congratulations to the newly elected Sabha Council Members for 2014-2017 from the Diocese of North America and Europe!



Rev. Mathew Baby
Vicar, St. Mathew's Mar Thoma Church,
Toronto, Canada



Mrs. Mariamma Abraham
Epiphany Mar Thoma Church,
New York, NY



Mr. Thampy Kurian,
Carmel Mar Thoma Church,
Boston, MA

Our best wishes and prayers for all your endeavors

Freedom of Women in Christ

Dr. Anna A. Panackal, Philadelphia Mar Thoma Church, Philadelphia, PA



The freedom of women in Christ started when Mary conceived Jesus in her womb through the power of the Holy Spirit. Her courage to accept the unknown, her implicit faith and obedience, and her total submission to the will of God, could have come only through the freedom she experienced as soon as Christ entered her life.

Some people assume or say Christianity is anti female and oppressive to women. In fact, nothing has elevated the status of women as biblical Christianity. Jesus treated women with great respect and dignity. "The extremely low status of the Greek, Roman and Jewish women had for centuries was radically affected by the appearance of Jesus Christ. His actions and teachings raised the status of women to new heights often to the consternation and dismay of His friends and enemies," writes Dr. Schmidt. Jesus went against the dogmatic culture and practices that singled out women as intellectually, socially and spiritually inferior.

Let us take the encounter of Jesus with the Samaritan woman. The way Jesus treated and responded to her was extremely unusual and radical at that period of time. He ignored the anti-Samaritan Jewish attitude and prejudice. She was an object of ridicule and scorn in her society. That might have been the reason she braved the hot sun and came to the well at noon, to avoid the other women who came in the evening when it was cool, to draw water from the well. Jesus didn't treat her according to the way the others saw her or dealt with her. He started a conversation with her in public. The rabbinic law of the times fiercely criticizes a person as evil if he talks to a woman in public. So we can understand why His disciples were startled when they saw Jesus talking to this woman. Let alone she was a woman; she was one with bad reputation. We can imagine how stunned and shocked this woman was when the Messiah reached out to her and offered her the living water for her thirsty soul. He went beyond the gender and cultural barriers and treated her as a person who was worth His offer of eternal life. This act of kindness shows to all women that regardless of past mistakes and failures Jesus wants to show His love and kindness to them because He knows every woman is created in the image of God and He offers the great ministry of cleansing, forgiveness, hope and a life of purpose and freedom.

In the gospel we see several women following Jesus. Mary Magdalene, Joanna and Suzanna and many other women who used their personal resources to help Jesus and His disciples (Luke 8: 2-3). When we look at some of the interactions Jesus had with women during His ministry we can see how he elevated them to a new status that transcended the cultural barriers of that time.

Jesus acknowledged women's faith and courage:

The Canaanite woman boldly approaching Jesus to cure her daughter from the demon is a true example of Christ acknowledging a woman's faith (Matthew 15: 21-28). Despite the silent treatment Jesus gave her she did not become despondent. She relentlessly pursued Jesus in spite of His hesitation to stretch His healing hand to someone inferior to the Jews. We read that He told her it is not right to give the children's food to the dogs. Her response to that rebuke must have stunned Jesus. That is when He told her, "You are a woman of great faith. What you want will be done to you." Another example is the woman who led a sinful life coming to the Pharisee's house to meet Jesus (Luke 7: 36-50). She had the audacity to come there because she must have been desperate to see Jesus. She approached Him with true repentance when she wet His feet with her tears. Not only did He tell the woman, her sins are forgiven, but He also told her, "Your faith has saved you. Go in peace." The burden of sin she had been carrying all those years fell away when she encountered Jesus. Another instance is the woman who had suffered from bleeding for 12 years; following Jesus, and touching His cloak (Luke 8: 43). Either she was pretty courageous or she might have thought Jesus would not notice who touched Him because of the large crowd. In any event, it was her unshaken faith that led her to that act which stopped her bleeding. Jesus could have let it go; but He did not, because He wanted to

promulgate her faith before that large crowd when He told her, "My daughter, your faith has made you well."

Jesus acknowledged women's individuality:

Scriptures show many instances of Jesus accepting each woman in her own right, in her own personality. This can be seen when Jesus healed the crippled woman on Sabbath (Luke 13: 10-13) as He went against the norm of the Jewish custom. This woman did not even ask Jesus to heal her. Jesus showed His regard for her by calling her the "daughter of Abraham". Another instance is when the Pharisees brought a woman who was caught in the act of committing adultery. He never condemned her; but gave her a new life which would have been taken away from her, had He not intervened.

Jesus acknowledged women's spiritual capabilities:

The Samaritan woman who lived a physical not spiritual life first addresses Jesus a "Jew", then "sir", then "prophet." Finally she sees Him for who He really is, "the Messiah" (John 4: 25-30). Then she runs to share her new found freedom to everyone in the city. Jesus chose Mary Magdalene who was once possessed with demons as the first witness to His resurrection. He could have appeared to others; but He didn't. He chose her. She had been there when He suffered at the cross and now He is there while she is suffering. She had stood by Him in His darkest hour and now He is standing beside her in her hour of darkness. He sends her on a great commission to tell others about the risen Christ which made her the first "apostle".

Jesus acknowledged women's intellectual capabilities:

Among Jesus' other friends were Mary and Martha of Bethany who entertained Him at their house. While Martha was attending to the household chores Mary did what men did in those days, learn from Jesus' teachings. By teaching Mary the spiritual truth Jesus violated the rabbinic law which said, "Let the words of the law (Torah) be burned rather than taught to a woman". When Lazarus died Jesus comforted Martha with the promise in John 11: 25-26. Not only did He cross boundaries by teaching a woman but He asked for a verbal response from Martha. Jesus ignored the prevailing socio religious custom when He demanded a response from her publicly (John 11: 27). She said, "Yes Lord, I do believe you are the son of God who was to come into this world."

Jesus acknowledged women's ability to serve:

After His triumphant entry into Jerusalem we see Jesus sitting in the temple and watching the poor widow standing in line to offer the little she had, two copper

coins, the smallest offering the temple allowed (Luke 21: 1-4). She served by giving all she had. Her name may not have been in the annual report of the temple; but her gesture must have meant a lot to God because 2000 years later the service of this poor widow is still talked about in sermons, lessons, and literature. What a remarkable thing! Not only did Jesus stop and notice this act of service but He called His disciples so they can also see her. That is why Jesus on His way to His ultimate sacrifice stopped to honor this woman's sacrificial act of service.

Despite Jesus' kindness to women, Christ followers have fallen short of the standards Jesus set in showing the worth and dignity of women during the centuries. "As Christianity spread throughout the world, its redemptive effects elevated women and set them free in many ways." (Sue Bohlin). Because of Jesus Christ and His teachings women in most parts of the world today enjoy more privileges and rights than at any time in history.

Unfortunately, we still find gender violence being one of the common human rights abuses. Women worldwide between the ages of 15-44 are more likely to die or get maimed because of male violence than because of cancer, war and traffic accidents combined. Currently we are witnessing enormous, savage attacks on women without age discrimination. Violations against women's human rights are often sanctioned under the pretence of cultural practices and norms or through misrepresentation of religious tenets. Everywhere rape puts the victims on trial. In Delhi, of 635 rape cases reported in the first eleven months of last year, only one ended in conviction. When there is domestic violence the abused women are often told that they must not do things which anger the spouse. Instead of holding the men accountable women are reminded to "bear the cross" for the benefit of their children and the family. Although religious leaders, politicians and other advocacy groups do not approve these abuses, they don't seem to have the courage shown

by Jesus of Nazareth 2000 years ago who elevated the status of women in a society which treated women without dignity and respect. When duty calls for action, how much pain do our Christian leaders take to address these issues that will force those who are in power to take serious action to curb these kinds of violence against women in an effective manner? Why is it that the abuse of women by their spouses or strangers is discreetly swept under the rug if the culprits are big time church donors or politically powerful? Being apathetic towards the empowerment of women undermines the vision of Christ laid out for His followers. Of course our churches are delegating women to hold position in certain areas where they can be seen and heard. But we find that despite Jesus' act of elevating women's dignity and worth, Christ's followers have not lived up to the standards Jesus set during His ministry. We should be challenged to become the eyes, ears and hands of Jesus and take a stand against these abuses; only then, we will become the true followers of Christ. We can only hope and pray that the freedom which Christ provided to the downtrodden women will become a reality in the present society and culture where women are forced into a subordinate position compared to men.

Congratulations to the 2014 Mar Thoma Merit Award Winners!!!



Jerin Thomas

Member of the Mar Thoma Church of Oklahoma. Graduated as Valedictorian from Putnam City High School, OK. Son of Mr. Thomas K. George and Mrs. Lovely Thomas.



Milan S. Abraham

Member of St. Thomas Mar Thoma Church, Indianapolis, IN. Graduated as Valedictorian from Pike High School, Indianapolis, IN. Daughter of Mr. Abraham Mathew and Mrs. Saley Abraham..



Joshua George

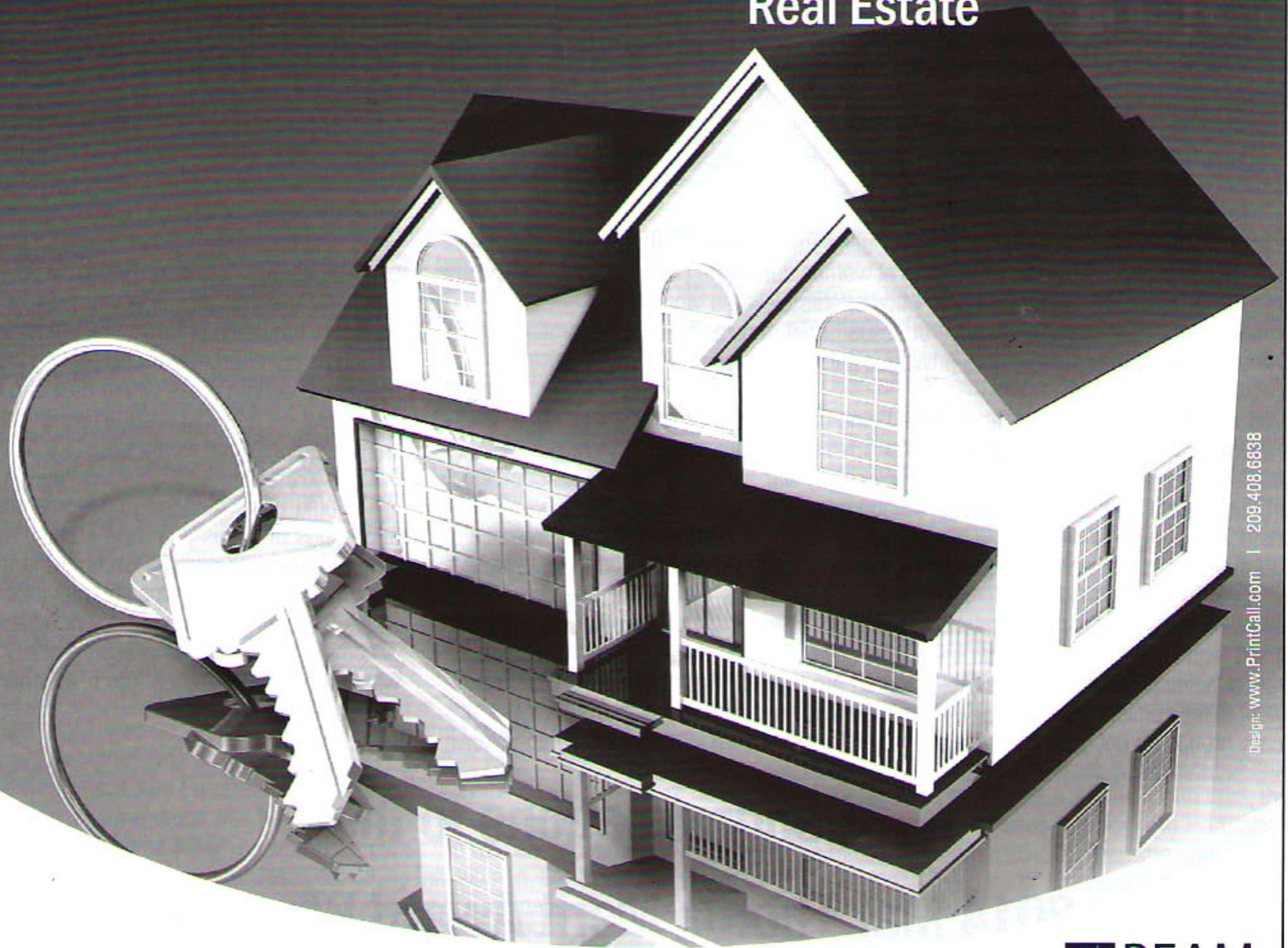
Member of Mar Thoma Church of Dallas, Farmers Branch, TX. Graduated as Valedictorian from Mesquite High School, Mesquite, TX. Son of Mr. Raju George and Mrs. Sosamma George.



Tanishq Mathew Abraham

Member of Mar Thoma Church of San Francisco, CA. Graduated at the age of 10 with a 4.0 GPA from Cedar Life Academy, Oak Hills, CA. Son of Mr. Bijou Abraham and Dr. Taji Abraham.

Real Estate



Design: www.PrintCall.com | 209.408.6838



You may have several reasons to move to Dallas

- Plenty of sunshine throughout the year and mild winters with an average of just three days of snow a year!
- Relatively stable housing and employment markets!
- Relatively low cost of living!
- Friendlier people!
- Above all, no state income tax!

You may also have several other reasons to relocate within Dallas

- Accommodate a bigger family!
- Downsize due to a smaller family!
- Move to a better school district for your children!
- Proximity to your workplace!
- Better neighborhood etc!



Contact me

- ▶ To buy a home within your budget, or to sell your home for the highest price, at a reasonable commission

SOM THOMAS

Realtor, Chartered Accountant

Office: (972) 539-1492 | Cell: (469) 363-8569 | Email: somctexas@yahoo.com

Make your transition to Dallas or relocation within Dallas a smoother one by working with a professional

1. Northeast Region

Some Challenges of Being a Christian and Also a Woman

Mrs. Dinah Oommen, Carmel Mar Thoma Church, Boston, MA



The Church is not a building, it is a people. The Church is a reflection of the thinking of the people who worship in it combined with traditional practices passed down through the generations. As a Church we are greatly influenced by traditional and cultural practices. Jesus stood against tradition when it restricted, suppressed or oppressed any group of people; women, non-Jews, the blind, the hungry, the poor, among others. He was never afraid to stand with the oppressed.

Biblical basis

When Jesus asked the Samaritan woman for a drink of water, he was shattering convention. Jews and Samaritans never mixed and Jewish men never talked to women in public, let alone a Samaritan woman; scandalous, unthinkable, breaking all accepted norms. Yet Jesus did this. Even the Samaritan woman felt uncomfortable. She prevaricated, tried to change the subject, but Jesus was focused and knew what he was doing.

Visiting with his good friends Martha and Mary, Jesus again did the unexpected. Martha understandably busied herself with cooking and serving their special guest, while Mary sat at his feet and listened ardently to what he had to say. And Jesus actually admonished Martha when she complained about her sister. Martha wasn't doing anything wrong (hospitality is important and the cooking has to be done), but Jesus tells her that Mary had chosen the better option. When Mary Magdalene broke a bottle of expensive perfume over Jesus' feet and wiped his feet with her hair, the disciples and the others with Jesus at that time were judgmental. What a waste of good money, they said. But Jesus did not think the way that the disciples, steeped in their traditional 'goodness', thought. He saw beyond the action to the intense love the woman had for him and he appreciated what she did.

Conventions and traditions are the brick and mortar of history that we fall back on for security, especially when we don't want to think outside the box. The box, though it confines and restricts freedom and movement, provides security in familiarity; the known devil is better than the unknown angel.

However, what a tragedy that is! Many of the accepted conventions of the Church and society, especially with regard to women, maintain a status quo. Change upsets the balance. Freedom of thought and action can be cataclysmic and dangerous. So we prefer to play it safe. And though it is not all honey and rainbows for men either, our traditions favor a male dominated society, in which women and children by and large are preferred to be seen and not heard, at least not too loudly.

Liturgical life

Let's take a look at the marriage service in our Church. The Bible portion read consistently at marriage services is from Paul's letter to the Ephesians.

Wives submit to your husbands as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the savior. Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything.

Ephesians 5:22-24

In a society in which gentiles, women and ignoramuses were considered on par with each other, which was the accepted convention in Paul's time, even treating a woman with kindness, was radical. However, today one of the few places where the concept of the husband being the head of the wife is reiterated is at marriage services in our churches. Most of society has moved on and beyond, then why does the Church cling to this image?

The most popular Psalm often sung (in Malayalam) by choirs at marriage services, at least in India, still remains Psalm 128, in which the man is portrayed as the head of the household and the woman and the children as the vine and the grapes. The words are put to a charming and captivating tune that sounds enchanting when sung as a solo or

in harmony at the marriage service. At that point the woman and the man also as a matter of fact, are so blinded with the romance of it all that the significance of those images doesn't sink in. But one has to ask here, if they are starting out the wrong way, on what needs to be, especially in this day and age, a relationship of equality.

The concept of superiority and inferiority can be confusing for a young couple, or for any couple, as a matter of fact. If you've been brought up to think you are superior, it is very difficult to think differently in a marriage. For happiness, and to be able to complement each other in a marriage, both the man and the woman need to be caring, understanding and supportive of each other's strengths while taking in one's stride the other's weaknesses. Nobody is perfect. Saying "I'm sorry" and meaning it, going the second mile at times, appreciating what is good and even turning the other cheek at times is what can make a relationship more equal and happy. The Church will do well to preach this from the pulpit, rather than watch silently while one partner heaps blame on the other.

Family life

Marriage and family life are not easy businesses. They can never be taken for granted. Both partners need to continue to work at keeping a relationship happy 'till death do us part'. However, in the Indian tradition, once married, husband and wife very often begin to take each other for granted.

In modern times, both man and woman work outside. Both come home tired after work. While the man generally sits in front of the TV or computer, often with a drink, the woman heads to the kitchen to prepare dinner for the family. Insensitivity and callous indifference on the part of either partner in the home, leaving the bulk of the responsibility to one or the other, can spell ruin for any relationship. Some way of sharing responsibilities that one or the other dislikes or finds difficult or tedious, must be worked out.

The dowry is an old horse that has been flogged often and long. Though the face of dowry has changed, it still is a problem in our society. If it's not money or house or land, a car or jewelry, it could now be a ticket to the USA or UK or some other country that clinches the deal or the engagement. And, often young women today realize this is really the reason they are married to that particular person and they resent the fact. If the bargaining point is this demeaning and has nothing to do with compatibility and emotional bonding, then

they are also not averse to using this knowledge as leverage when an argument (inevitably), crops up in their marriage. After all, they could very well have been just a means to an end. I'm not against arranged marriages per se, they have worked and may still continue to work in some cases, but only if they are 'arranged' for the right reasons, beyond just the dowry they bring, in whatever form. The ideal situation should be when all the children get a fair share of their parents' property or wealth. This is not a new concept; it just needs to be a real part of every understanding of parents as well as daughters and sons alike.

Social life

Culturally, we are all, by and large, like potted plants. In our fear of losing touch with our 'roots', we tend to preserve both the good and the bad from the 60s, 70s and the 80s in our home environments and our churches. The contradiction between the culture of our working places and the towns in which we live as against our homes and churches, is so distinct that there is often a crisis of identity especially among our young people. While discerning what is good in our culture and imbibing it, and weeding out what can be unjust, gender biased and often stunting in our traditions, we must also be able to appreciate and value what is good and sustainable in the country that we live in and imbibe that. Women in our attire, traditional roles and expectations often hold back when we could be agents of change in the home, church and society. We do need to be comfortable in our own skin and genuinely take pride in our heritage, without being bigoted and blind to what is good and acceptable in the society that we live in.

The silver lining

As Christian women who belong to the Mar Thoma church, we have many strengths. There is a bond that is invincible. Wherever one goes and whoever one meets, there is an immediate connection made if one belongs to the same church. And then of course one's history and geography are laid bare, but one is 'owned up', you belong. In a society in which identity is a crisis, this is the greatest strength of being a part of the church. And within certain parameters a person has the freedom to function and find security and fulfilment. Of course, one must not transcend those parameters too rapidly or one will be condemned harshly.

Though change happens slowly, it does happen inevitably. Anyone who has been a member of the Carmel Mar Thoma Church in Boston (where I am a member now) from its inception, can point out the changes, which could be the same in other parishes too. There is freedom for families to sit together or separately as men and women on either side, in

the church. Youth are given space to think, reflect and act and also to ask questions. The Choir has evolved into a force that also integrates with different projects and programs of the church and individual members are voices in other choirs and singing groups. There is a forum for serious discussion about issues that are imminent in the society and to which we as members of the Mar Thoma church can no longer shut our eyes and ears.

Though we haven't yet reached a stage in which women are on par with men in leading the church, under the leadership of our Theodosius Thirumeni and the different Achen's in different churches, our young women lead the worship in parts. As Dr. Mathai Zachariah put it aptly, if a leader is a few steps ahead of his followers, they can follow. However, if he is two hundred steps ahead, they will not even be able to see him, let alone follow him.

It was interesting to note that in a recent devotion of the Christian Education Forum (August 14, 2014), Rev. Shibi Abraham discussed Ephesians 5: 21-32 and affirmed that there should be equality in the relationship between a husband and wife and that both need to respect and love each other. We need to accept that we still have miles to go before we are in reality comfortable in such a relationship.

We are still evolving from a traditional, patriarchal Indian church, to becoming with guidance from above, a church universal, in which before God there is no man or woman, Jew or Gentile, slave or free (Gal. 3: 28). May God continue to bless our church and make us living channels of his love and grace.

2. Southeast Region

Enrichment of Women in Church Activities of the Diocese

Mrs. Nirmala Abraham, Philadelphia Mar Thoma Church, Philadelphia, PA



The history of the Mar Thoma Church like any other denomination of the East will undoubtedly reveal the commitment and dedication of the women from all walks of life. From the time of its inception, women have played a significant role in defining the ethos of the Church. As the church membership grew and spread to other countries across the oceans, including our Diocese, the women's contributions became even greater. Women have truly enriched the Mar Thoma Church at the local, diocesan, ecumenical and global level. What follows are my thoughts as I reflect on the four decades of my life's journey in the USA.

Migration to North America - A Historical Perspective: A small number of Mar Thoma women came for higher studies in the early sixties. In the late sixties, with the passage of new Immigration laws in the United States, a large number of Kerala women migrated here due to the availability of jobs in the health care field. The pioneers were brave enough to face the totally different culture, racial prejudices and long hours of work. In a book recently published by Sheela George titled 'When Women Come First', it is stated: 'this migration created a major transition in the gender roles of Kerala families.' These pioneers were primarily instrumental in bringing more family members to North America. As the number of Mar Thoma families grew, the need for organized Church also grew. It is fair to give tribute to these early settlers, especially our women, who financially supported the establishment and building of the Mar Thoma parishes in North America, Canada and Europe in the seventies and eighties.

Upholding the Spirituality in the Church Community - Prayer with Action: Women have traditionally given great spiritual support to the church and the family. During times of major illness, death and other crisis, women have gathered to support one another through prayer and action. Many women have served as mentors to younger women. Since the majority of our women work in the medical field, they have helped many church members during times of health crisis such as providing relevant information on medical coverage, associated health benefits, preventive care, after care and other valuable information.

Leadership Roles and Participation in National and Global Organizations - Net Working with the Mainline Churches and Organizations: Mar Thoma women have provided key leadership roles in international meetings such as the World Council of Churches (WCC), the United Nations Conference for

Women in Beijing in 2005 etc. They have represented the Mar Thoma Church at national boards of organizations such as World Day of Prayer, Church Women United, and the Episcopal Women's group for Women of Color. Mar Thoma women continue to serve as delegates to WCC and the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA (NCCC-USA). They have also taken an active role in securing membership in NCCC-USA and Church Women United. A team of Mar Thoma women who attended the Church Women United Leadership meeting in Puerto Rico were responsible for planning and forming the first National Sevika Sanghom Conference in Dallas fifteen years ago. The initiative and efforts behind this conference is a reflection of the vision and prayerful action of our women.

World Day of Prayer (WDP) Celebrations: Ecumenical Networking in a Global Context: Our women throughout the Diocese are celebrating World Day of Prayer (WDP) along with women of other denominations on an ecumenical basis as well as at the parish level. These celebrations have helped our church members to be aware of global issues facing women and children and to help fund projects to support their needs. On a local level, Mar Thoma women are providing strong leadership and technical assistance to celebrate WDP with their ecumenical sisters from the Orthodox, CSI, Jacobite, Knanaya and Catholic churches. These collaborative WDP celebrations and efforts have empowered women as well as helped create intergenerational fellowships.

Women have served as Volunteers in Traditional Roles Enriching the Church through the Years: Mar Thoma women also provide leadership roles for the Sevika Sanghom activities, Church Committees, Sunday Schools, Diocesan Councils, Mission Boards, and Editorial Board and Managing Committee of the Mar Thoma Messenger, Diocesan Sub Committees, Sabha Council and Diocesan Assembly. Their perspectives and voices have enriched our church, Diocese and parishes. Many of our women are accomplished writers, artists and musicians and have enriched the church with their skills. Many have theological background and are well known speakers in our Church and Community.

Mission Field - Diocesan Level and Missions in India: Women have served in key leadership roles within the Mission Board of our Diocese since its inception. Our younger women have consistently given their time and talent in volunteering for the mission trips. Women also have financially supported mission projects in India and within the Diocese.

3. Southern Region

Women – Enriching the Church

Dr. Mariamma Thomas, Florida



St. Paul in his letter to the Galatians (3:28) says, that "There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus." This was a lofty ideal set before the neo-converts on the day of their initiation to Christianity through baptism. We affirm in our Holy Communion service, that we are a sharing community. "We are one Body because we all share in one Bread." As a church we often forget this oneness in Christ and try to divide our activities on the basis of age, gender, class, and other divisions. The idea of women enriching the church emerges from the background of this division; we should be enriching each other and together should be enriching the church and society.

We recognize that the family is the school of faith and mothers provide the most powerful influence on the faith formation of children and teenagers. We are also aware of the tremendous changes the family life has undergone over the last fifty years, and the present day diversity in family structures and relationships. In many instances women have become income providers and means for facilitating movements of immediate and extended families to various parts of the world. Women in this respect contributed much in building the Diocese of North America and Europe and they continue to do so in many ways.

Families are stretched and stressed from many directions. Shared family activities such as eating together and finding time for conversation and prayer have suffered because of busy work schedules and a rise in the mindfulness in keeping isolated individual spaces and activities. There is demonstrable decline in family religious practices at home and participation of young people in the life of the church. In addition, parents increasingly become inadequate for sharing our Christian traditions with their children. Unfortunately, our church has contributed to the problem by over-emphasizing age and gender-segregated

Educational Attainments: Our second-generation women are high achievers and are excelling in professional education and careers. These women are an asset to our church and a great role model for the younger generation. However, serious questions remain as to how our Church can meet the needs of this millennial generation who are leaving the church in large numbers.

Conclusion: We have three generations of women in our church today: the first generation immigrants, their children who were mostly born and brought up in the diocese, and the third generation (grand children). Even though the sensibilities of these generations are vastly different, we do have a common thread that connects us through our culture, faith, practices, and family values of our forefathers. I have vivid memories of my mother, Elizabeth George, as an active member of the Sevika Sanghom and the church committee of the Philadelphia Mar Thoma Church. Her enthusiasm and love of the church has been contagious. May the experiences of yesterday, the activities of today and the vision for tomorrow help the Mar Thoma women to enrich our church and help its growth: Let it be the legacy that we pass on to the future generations.

Standing at the momentous milestone of the 25 years faith journey of our Diocese, I am filled with the spirit of celebration and gratitude to all the stops and pauses that have developed us and assisted us to write this history both individually and collectively. May we grow in grace as we grow older and may the wisdom of our mothers, the courage of our sisters and the hopes of our daughters keep us whole and strong!

activities, such as senior citizens, youth league, Sevika Sangham and other groupings. There are very few activities, which involve the entire family as a family. Therefore, we have a designated family Sunday, but every Sunday should be a family Sunday. As Dr. Zac Varghese wrote in the Messenger, there should be a contract between generations to build a covenantal relationship between God and our brothers and sisters.

Many women in the Mar Thoma Church have contributed much for the growth of the church and they have done it quietly without shouting for gender equality and the institution of feminine theology. Feminine emancipation has now opened to women many professions that were closed to them before. This has created a movement towards ordination of women in many churches; in July this year the Church of England has finally taken a momentous decision to admit women to the episcopate. The women in our church are not demanding such radical changes, but they would like to see more representational participation in all administrative structures of the church. A great deal of the work of a priest is pastoral and requires the

Why Spent Money for a Second Kitchen!
Just Pay for a **Powerful Vent Hood**

TGS TOP

Granites & Stones Inc.

Contact: George 832-969-0157

topgranite1@yahoo.com , topgranite1@hotmail.com



Fabrication & installation of Granite Counter Tops
Tubs around, Tiles, Ceramic, Travertine, Marble & etc.

Now We Serve

Dallas Area

Call: 214-604-4862



**Wood Flooring, Laminate,
Remodeling, Room Additions
Cabinets, Carpet & etc.**

**Factory
Direct
Blinds
Shutters
Solar Screens**

Buy Today & Have Installed Tomorrow !!!

gifts traditionally associated with women. We are not meant to be clones of one another, but rather to discover riches in our diverse talents.

God has given women special talents for suffering silently and gracefully, listening, multi-tasking, and providing much needed servant-ministry and hospitality. It is the women who provide the emotional shelter for our communities. In the wilderness of our diaspora

existence, we need shelter; we need the shelter of the community, its interdependence, shared wisdom, respect and trust. A mother's God-given instinct of sheltering her children is equally applicable to the church community. It is in this sheltering aspect women provide the greatest contribution for enriching the church.

4. Midwest Region

Women Enriching Church Life - A personal Perspective

Mrs. Marykutty Philip, Chicago Mar Thoma Church, IL



In the beginning, God created man and woman in His own image. God intended woman to enrich family life in an equal partnership to fulfill specifically designed roles. In the New Testament, the Almighty God was pleased to show favor to the most Blessed Virgin Mary, by choosing her to give birth to His dear son Jesus. God chose a woman to play the vital role of redemption of mankind through the incarnation of Jesus, the Savior. God intended the relationship between man and woman to be supportive and complimentary.

In His ministry we see Jesus elevating the role of women to a greater level of nobility and esteem. Jesus treated women with unprecedented compassion and reverence. Jesus' respect for women was demonstrated in his dealings with His own mother Mary, Martha and Mary, the Samaritan woman, the woman who touched His garment to receive healing, the daughter of Jairus, and Peter's mother-in-law, to mention a few. The apostle Paul told the Christians in Ephesus, "Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her" and added, "He who loves his wife loves himself."

Traditionally women, by choice or by delegation, did not play a prominent role in Church life at the parish, diocesan or global level. In earlier times women seemed to have been content with that role. Even long after women pioneers had established their mark of excellence in politics, their elevation to leadership roles in Church life was not prominent. Christian women play prominent roles in leading, guiding and teaching in today's Church settings.

On a personal level, I was born and raised in a Syrian Orthodox family. Until I left my home town more than four decades ago, the situation had not changed significantly. I came to the United States in 1971 as an exchange nursing student in a remote part of the state of Kentucky. In those days I didn't have any Malayalee friends nearby. There were no Malayalee Churches even in bigger cities like New York and Chicago. I was married to a Mar Thoma member and then moved to Chicago. We brought the late Rev. Abraham Lincoln Achen from Toronto to Chicago to officiate our marriage. This was the beginning of my association with the Mar Thoma Church. I had the privilege of being a part of the formation, establishment and tremendous growth of the Mar Thoma Church in North America. During the early days, we faced challenges different from those of the younger immigrants today. With our meager household income we had to help family back home, pay the bills and raise a family. But we were extremely enthusiastic to contribute towards the building up of a spiritual community of our own, which even our Church leaders at that time didn't think possible. Many of our friends had to make great sacrifices: some even took loans at high interest rates to pay their share to help construct Church buildings. The women of the Church demonstrated a great passion to contribute generously, sometimes

even beyond their means, towards the establishment and growth of local parishes. In my view, this was one of the most notable demonstrations of our women enriching the Church life at the local level.

The most important way women enriched Church life was through constant prayer, eager devotion and the intense study of the Word of God. These most cherished practices are what we learned from our parents and grandparents and are what we continue to pass on to future generations. There is no better way to enrich and influence family and Church life other than through continuous prayer and devotion. We can be the best role models by living what we preach and not letting ourselves be overwhelmed by material possessions.

We see women now coming to greater leadership level than before at the local, diocesan and global level. Leaders must be selected not through a quota system, but based on their leadership abilities and genuine spiritual commitment. I am tremendously pleased to see younger women stepping forward to demonstrate their skills, abilities and potential. But the number of these women is very low. It is unfortunate that even in our own parish representation of women in the managing committee is less than 10% when at least 50% of the members are women. Perhaps this is due to women's reluctance to take up leadership roles because of their many other commitments in life. But in order to enrich and influence Church life at a higher level, women must come forward to lead and influence with compassion and humility. I hope and pray that we will gradually achieve these goals with God's help and the support of the members of the Church.

There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus (Galatians 3:28).

Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience.

Col 3:12

5. Southwest Region

The Role of Women Enriching the Church

Dr. Annie Lincoln, Emmanuel Mar Thoma Church, Lubbock, TX



There is scarcely an ecclesiastical body, which has not discussed the place and service of women in its organization. Women are the support of the family, church and society. For every successful man, there is an intelligent and hard working woman next to him. God always uses women's talents to serve the church and community. Their talents should be used without any discrimination. We see a lot of women enriching the church and community from the old testament times onwards like Miriam, Naomi, Ruth, Rahab, etc. We can see the humility and service mind of women all through the Bible. My favorite example is in Acts 16:14 where we see that Lydia listened to the preaching of Paul and the Lord opened her heart, even though she was a busy business woman. A life changing conversion is bathed in prayer and obedience. The conversion of Lydia reminds us of a unique challenge of Christian evangelism. She became the first female missionary in Europe. She opened her home to fellow believers, which showed her hospitality. When the Holy Spirit empowers us, we will be able to empower others in the church and community. It was not by accident we all came to the United States. It was God's plan. Our strong family ties and culture should be a role model to the disintegrating families around us. We have to see others through the eye of Jesus. Then we can love them and help them. Like Mother Teresa we should see the face of Jesus in the downtrodden people. We should be transformed first to achieve that blessing.

The prayer of our late Beloved Metropolitan Abraham Mar Thoma was, "Every Marthomite should be an evangelist." This mission work should start first in our home, then to the church and finally to the community. Our Southwest region is very much involved in the mission work in the U.S. and in India. Churches from the Southwest region are doing tremendous work in Native America mission and Mexico mission. We can never forget our dear Patrick from Dallas St. Paul's Church. We are conducting many regional and national conferences in this area for Sevika Sanghom, Sunday School, Youth and Edavaka Mission. Dallas, Farmer's Branch hosted the National Edavaka Mission Conference in March of 2013 and there were over 300 attendees. It was a great success. Emmanuel Mar Thoma Church Lubbock hosted the 14th National Sevika Sanghom Conference in October 2013. Hard work and God's grace made it a great success for a small parish to accomplish. For all the organizations we have center conferences also.

Our women have a great role in enriching the church. There are so many talented people in our churches who are hiding behind others. We should find them and bring them to the limelight and frontline so they can be leaders. We can support them and teach them how to lead a good family life. We can show them the humility and prayerful patience that it takes to be a good wife, good mother and at the same time reach out to help the needy and open their hearts and home to others. Hospitality is one of the highest Christian qualities.

Most of our Sunday School teachers are women who could mold the children to be good citizens and walk in Christ's ways. They also serve the community through different organizations of the church. Our Sevika Sanghom members are helping the sick and needy. 14 years ago our Zacharias Thirumeni sent 8 women from our church to Puerto Rico for training under Church Women United. This training was, "How to empower women to be leaders in church and community." I was blessed to be among one of the eight. This training helped us to initiate the National Sevika Sanghom conference. It started as a leadership seminar. We took classes for all the attendees for 2 years, which was a great encouragement for our ladies who have never come to the frontline. It also gave us the time for witnessing and sharing our burden and problems. I wish and pray that we should organize more seminars like this, both in the diocese and in each region to empower the women in our church. May God Almighty bless the women to be role models in the Mar Thoma Church.

6. Western Region

Women's Contribution to the Spiritual Growth of the Mar Thoma Church in the Western Region!

Mrs. Rachel Abraham, Mar Thoma Church of Los Angeles, CA



Being a regular church-going woman, I find, more times than not, more women in attendance than men in the church. I am not suggesting this as a failure on the part of the church. In reality it may be the success of women being more tuned with the spirit of God. Women may hold the key to unleashing the power available in the church for the betterment of the poor, the needy, and the neglected. When it was time to start a revival in the City of Samaria, Jesus did not send Peter, James, or John. Jesus sent a woman who was a prostitute but later transformed into a follower of Christ filled with the power of Christ in her life. She believed Jesus was the Son of God and she went and told everyone she met about Jesus. The Scripture says in John 4: 39 "Many of the Samaritans from that town believed in Jesus, because of the woman's testimony."

Women in the Mar Thoma parishes of the Western Region extending from Phoenix to Los Angeles to San Francisco and to Seattle are actively involved in the spiritual growth of the church in many ways. The part played by the Edavaka Mission in general and the Sevika Sanghom in particular is exemplary. Monthly and weekly prayer meetings, intercessory

prayers, house visits, bible studies, visiting and spending time in various mission fields run by the Church in India, helping poor and needy children for their higher education, building churches for the newly converted Christian followers, organizing bake sale for fund raising, and conducting auctions and food sales to feed the hungry are some of the many activities going on with the initiative and leadership of the women in our parishes.

To name a few specific activities, the San Francisco Church women members organized a 'Baby Shower' at Heritage Home for the battered and homeless young mothers and also participated in the 'Food Drive Donation' to Second Harvest, and organization which

feeds the homeless. They also started a new initiative last year, partnering with City Team Ministries in San Jose. It involved helping out in the City Kitchen where they cook food for the homeless. Funds collected through various activities such as food sale and auctions by the Sevika Sanghom members in Seattle Mar Thoma Church help the Badvel Mission field in Andhra Pradesh. Women from Los Angeles Mar Thoma Church and Horeb Mar Thoma Church and Seattle Mar Thoma Church not only visited many mission fields in India but also continue to give financial support to them and are also involve in many of the activities mentioned above.

Women's presence in the Sunday Services and regular participations in various church activities will go a long way towards the enrichment of our church. Being a mother she

nourishes her children with Christian values and disciplines them to instill moral and ethical values in them from their childhood. Being a wife, she helps support her husband to be a valuable person in the Christian community. Women's involvement in the Sunday School activities, prayer groups, caring for the sick and needy and their help in various fund raising activities purely for charitable purposes are some of the very essential components of a growing Church. Together we can do a lot more.

7. Canadian Region

The followers of Phoebe and Prisca in Canada

Mrs. Chithra Jacob, St. Mathew's MTC, Toronto



When we think of the women in Bible, we can see that they are remembered for the different roles they played in the history of mankind. Deborah for wisdom and spiritual depth, Esther for her intelligence and commitment to God, Ruth for loyalty and commitment to family, Hanna for her prayer life, Lydia for the mission work and Mary for her surrender to God's will, are just a few examples. The missionary zeal of the Samaritan women and the boldness and courage to witness the Risen Christ by the women stand as great motivation to entire women fold especially in Canada.

Women have been playing a significant role in the Mar Thoma Church in Canada since the time Mar Thoma congregations started in Canada in the early 70s. Over the last 30 years, the Mar Thoma community in Canada has grown significantly in different parts of Canada and now has eight parishes and one congregation. Many women from the Canadian parishes play leadership roles in the executive committees of the parishes. In addition, they have provided leadership to the Mar Thoma church at the diocesan and global level as members of the Diocesan Assembly, Diocesan Council, Sabha Prathinidhi Mandalam and Sabha Council. Mrs. Susan Koshy (Trinity MTC, Edmonton) is currently serving as a Diocesan Council member from the Canadian region. In the past, Mrs. Susan Johnson (St. Mathews MTC, Toronto) served as a Diocesan Council member and as a Sabha Council member. Mrs. Elizabeth Thomas (Canadian MTC, Toronto), Dr. Usha George (Canadian MTC, Toronto), and Mrs. Sarah Mathews (St. Thomas MTC, Calgary) served as Sabha Prathinidhi Mandalam representatives in the past. Dr. Usha George (Canadian MTC, Toronto) is currently serving as an alternate member from the Mar Thoma Church in the governing board of the Canadian Council of Churches. Dr. Usha was also a member of the editorial board of the Mar Thoma Messenger. Dr. Nancy George Maliacal (St. Mathews MTC, Toronto) is currently serving as an editorial board member and Mrs. Susan Johnson (St. Mathews MTC, Toronto) as managing committee member of the Mar Thoma Messenger.

Women have also played major roles in many of the organizations within the Mar Thoma parishes in the Canadian region of our diocese. In the Sunday school they have served as superintendents, teachers, and volunteers, helping in the spiritual growth of our younger generation. Sevika Sanghom groups in the Canadian region are strong participants in the growth of the parishes. The appetites to learn the word of God and focus on prayer life have helped in building stronger Christian families within Canada. The Sevika Sanghom also organizes various charity events which show our strong commitment to the community around us. Annual walk-a-thons organized by the St. Mathews MTC, Toronto Sevika Sanghom raises thousands of dollars every year for various local charities. Young women in our youth groups are also strong ambassadors of our faith and participate in praise and worship sessions and other youth activities with ecumenical churches in Canada.

The Almighty has immensely blessed the Mar Thoma Church in Canada. The growth and development of the church has provided our women with numerous opportunities to serve our Lord. We are grateful for these blessings and look forward to continuing the ministry of our church.

8. Europe Region

Salient, but Silent Ministry of Women

Mrs. Elzi Zac-Varghese, London



The family is the primary sphere of a woman's activity and the most important source of her fulfillment. The book of Genesis gives two accounts of creation of humans; in the first account we read: "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them" (Gen 1:27). There is no agreement as to how man and woman share the image and likeness of God. The image possibly refers to the mental and spiritual faculties of having a loving relationship with the creator. Humans are also given the responsibility to care for the created world. This is in sharp contrast to the second creation account, where woman has a domestic function as a helper, while man has a public function. The goodness of creation is only fulfilled in having the unity of man and woman (Gen 2: 18). We often forget this fundamental fact when we divide our

functions in our daily living. If being a woman is in the image of God, then there is a feminine dimension in the Trinitarian reality of God.

Father is the unchallenged head of the patriarchal Israeli family as described in the Old Testament. Male dominance is prominent in the Old Testament narratives; women and children are considered as part of man's property as we read in the book of Job. Woman is also presented as a source of evil, and the harm



UNITED INDUSTRIES UNLIMITED

A GROUP OF ENVIRONMENTAL, CONSTRUCTION, SAFETY AND HEALTH PROFESSIONALS

Foreign and domestic investment opportunities

26 Frances Street, Westbury, NY 11590

Services include

New construction permits and drawings
Department of buildings violation removals
Removal of Housing code violations

Environmental consulting
Asbestos, mold, radon and
Lead testing and abatement
Air and project monitoring
Soil testing and remediation
Phase I site assessments

Construction management
Site health and safety plan
Site safety managers
Scaffolding inspections
40 hour OSHA certified safety professionals

Commercial and residential Real estate investments in us, Canada and UK
Commercial and residential Real estate investments in Kerala, Bangalore, madras, Delhi and Mumbai

Branches in New York, Dallas, Houston, Cochin and Mumbai

A minority and women owned business entity

Email: unitedindustriesunlimited@gmail.com

Phone: 516 225 1502, 516 967 2763, 917 578 4679 and 917 578 2305

that a man can do is often ignored. There are few great women, who appear as saviours of people. The stories of Deborah, Ruth, Judith and Ester are important in the history of Israel. We have three books in the Old Testaments that bear their name, and yet none of these women are remembered elsewhere.

Jesus' attitude to woman was a departure from Jewish tradition of the day. He did not feel threatened by woman in any way; he was at ease with Mary, Martha, Simon's mother-in-law, Mary Magdalene, the Samaritan and the Syrophenician woman. In Jesus's relationships and dialogues with women we see him crossing a variety of geographical, ethnic, gender and theological boundaries. Our understanding of a good wife is the one who is silent, listens to her husband, looks after the children, add to the income of her husband, kind to the poor and needy, friendly to neighbours and provide hospitality. Keeping the family together is the greatest task for a woman, and God has given her a multitasking talent to cope with all these demands on her. As mothers they give the greatest contribution in the faith formation of the children through telling and retelling them faith-filled stories of their good times and bad times in settling in a new country and its diverse culture. As a result of this our children are mostly well educated and contribute to the common good of the community and the society. Our women are emancipated and have done well in giving leadership in many caring professions, education, and IT- related industries.

It is time that we changed our attitude towards separate sitting arrangement for men and women during worship service; I do appreciate Theodosius Thirumeni bringing more women into the decision making processes of the Diocese. We should also try to remove

MATRIMONIAL

- Marthomite Parents invite marriage proposal for their daughter, b/b outside Kerala, 34/170, B.Tech (IIT), MS + PhD (USA) currently working as an Associate Professor with one of the State Universities in the Mid-West. Preference will be given to US employed boys. For details please write with photograph to Email id: proposal0511@gmail.com; Tel: +971-50-6790179 or 001-701-367-8369 (prefer calls during weekends)

- Uncle invites marriage proposal for his niece, 26 years old, and 162 cm, fair, beautiful. She is completing the final year of MSN in Bangalore and working. We are interested in educated, Marthomite, Jacobite, or CSI gentlemen who are residing in the USA. Serious inquiries with biodata and photographs should be directed to grooms4sv@yahoo.com or 832.439.6002.

- US settled Mar Thoma parents invite proposals for their son, 31 years old, 5'8", BE, MBA, a strong dedicated God fearing and family oriented Christian, looking for a girl with similar values in the same field or other qualified professionals. Interested families please respond with details and recent photograph by e-mail to mlk20131234@gmail.com or telephone number 770-931-1220

- CSI Parents settled in Bhopal, India seek an alliance for their son, 30 years old, 5'11", MBA Graduate. He is God fearing, charming, personable and hard working. We welcome a suitable match from girls with similar backgrounds and values. Interested families, please respond with bio-data and pictures to minan12@gmail.com or 856-294-9873

- Marthomite parents invite proposal for their US born son, 29 years old, 5'11", medical graduate currently doing his 2nd year residency. We are seeking a girl with similar educational background from a conservative Christian family, preferably a Marthomite. If interested, please respond with details and recent photograph to youbthe1@yahoo.com or 956-966-0590.

- Proposals invited for daughter aged 25 in first year of Internal Medicine residency. She was born and raised in the USA and a member of a Mar Thoma Church in Chicago. God fearing and family oriented, she is seeking a professionally qualified boy with similar values and interests. If interested, please write with recent pictures and details to mabraham9999@gmail.com

compartmentalisation, age and gender-segregated activities to build a cohesive Mar Thoma community. Women from all the Mar Thoma Diaspora regions provided leadership for the three FOCUS seminars at Santhigiri, Alwaye, from 1999-2003. These were historically significant conferences for creating an awareness of our mission in the world stage as a global church.

Dr. Nirmala Mathew of the Sinai Mar Thoma Church, North London, was awarded the medal of the 'Member of the British Empire (MBE)' by the Queen for her outstanding contribution for providing treatment of patients with Parkinson's disease. The skills of our women are not arguing for gender equality, but for silently providing a shared mission and ministry by bringing women's intuitions, empathy, and talents for the total organic growth of the church. Jesus valued the poor widow's two copper coins more than the public contributions of the rich because 'she put in everything—all she had to live on.' Women provide a salient, silent, servant ministry, for establishing kingdom values. May they and their families be blessed through their work.

- Mar Thoma NRI professional parents seek suitable alliance for their daughter – God fearing, 24 years, B.Tech (Computer Science), fair, educated in the Middle East, employed with MNC in Pune, India – from parents of professionally qualified, well employed, God fearing Marthomite/CSI boys in US/Canada. Phone: 303-478-3652. Email: ernaks2020@gmail.com

- Uncle invites marriage proposal for his nephew (Marthomite), 29 years old, 168 cm (5'6"), fair, degree in Engineering and Communications (Anna University, Chennai - 2007), working as a Senior Electronic Design Engineer for engine and transmission control units (Automotive) for a German Company (BOSCH) in Coimbatore. He is currently working on a special project in Germany. Interested families, please respond with bio-data and recent photograph by e-mail to george.samuel05@gmail.com



In marriage, being the right person is as important as finding the right person.

- Wilbert Donald Gouch

Music and Singing in Worship

Susan (Benjamin) Mathew, I.A.S. (Retired)



Modern life is so stressed out that one looks for an opportunity to relax and recharge ones batteries. Listening to solemn music can relax and soothe ones weary spirit. The Mar Thoma Church services are rich in music. The role of the choir in enhancing the appeal of our church services and prayer meetings is significant.

The Mar Thoma Church has in its fold the Department of Sacred Music and in fact, has set apart one Sunday in the year as 'Choir Sunday'. This underlines the relevance and importance of singing and music in worship. Imagine how drab it would be, if there was no music in this world! Music has a great effect on human experience. Music transcends our understanding and appeals to our intuitive minds. It is little surprise that music played a remarkable role from time immemorial, in worship, as a pathway to approach the mystery of God and to express the joy of His presence.

There are numerous references in the Holy Bible to music in worship. In the Old Testament, it is a manifestation of praise of the Almighty and in the New Testament, an expression of the joy of salvation.

What evokes singing? Mostly happiness, joy and freedom from all anxiety, I would say. I have always thought that God loves music! He loves us to worship Him, singing for Him. The Bible is replete with references to songs of praise.

Music was there even before creation. Look at the Book of Job. Job cries out in unspeakable agony to God, unable to find a reason for his afflictions, for so much tragedy befalling him. God does not give specific answers to his questions, but He does respond to Job's faith, by overwhelming him with a poetic picture of His divine power! God speaks to him out of the storm and says,

"In the dawn of that day when I laid the corner stone of the world,
The morning stars sang together,
And all the sons of God shouted for joy."
It is such a beautiful image and a pointer to the fact that creation of the universe itself was to the symphony of music.

In Indian Vedic literature also it is said that the universe was created with the accompaniment of the symphonic "OM" - the fusion of musical notes. Music is the universal language and knows no boundaries.

Nature has an underlying musical current. It is inherent in the creatures of the land, the sea, and the air. Certainly it is not the monopoly of human beings. We have heard of the music of the birds, and even of the whales!

What kind of a place is heaven? How do we imagine it to be?
Heaven, we are told is a place that reverberates with the sound of music! In the popular Malayalam hymn, "Nithya veedonnundathu / Sobha sundaram..." we sing "Vastra shudharaam doothar/ Paadum simhasana mun..." Thus heaven is believed to be a place where we will be joining the angels in their unending triumphant hymns of praise and joy. In the vision of heaven granted to the prophet Isaiah, he sees the choir of seraphim constantly chanting, "Holy, holy, holy..." in praise of the Lord of hosts. In the book of Revelation, in the vision of St. John, hymns of praise before God's throne accompany the dramatic unfolding of events on earth. These hymns glorify the Creator.

Most of the Israelite prophets were musicians. We read in the book of Exodus about Miriam, the prophetess taking the tambourine and leading the women in song and dance celebrating the Lord's victory over the Egyptians. Saul, who was enthroned the first king of Israel, encountered a band of sanctuary prophets who prophesied accompanied by musical instruments. Isaiah composed songs. Ezekiel was acknowledged as one who had a beautiful voice and played well on a musical instrument.

David, the poet-cum-warrior king of Israel, the author of most of the psalms, breaks into a paean of praise as he looks up at the starlit sky and at the scenic beauty of nature in its myriad moods. His music on the harp soothed the frayed nerves of King Saul.

The New Testament greets us with the charming Christmas story. The choir of angels burst into a rhapsody of praise as they proclaimed the birth of the Messiah. There is a story of the power and magic of music. At the time of the Franco-German war in the 19th Century, on Christmas Eve, the soldiers of both the armies were hiding and resting in their respective trenches. Overcome by nostalgia and missing home, one young German soldier suddenly ran out of his trench and burst into singing the carol, "O holy night/ The stars are brightly shining / It is the night of our dear Saviour's birth..." His colleagues were stunned to a stupor at the recklessness of the youngster. There was pin-drop silence in the enemy camp. They did not open fire at the singer, but all on a sudden, a French soldier rushed out of his hiding place and responded with a French carol. Thus men of warring camps whose business was to kill each other were one at heart in praise of God. Peace and goodwill prevailed on the battlefield. Such is the amazing effect of music on human emotions and attitude.

It is not only joy, but grief and remorse also evoke singing in us. Look at David. Most of his life he was haunted by remorse at having sinned against God by manipulating the killing of Uriah and taking his wife Bathsheba for himself. David was driven to despair by Saul, his enemies and most tragically by his son Absalom. Even despair and sadness inspired poetry in him. Psalm 51 that we recite every Sunday in church was composed by David when the prophet Nathan pointed out his sin to him. Like any Eastern monarch, David could have ordered the instant killing of the prophet who pointed out his fault; but he did not. Instead he, through a musical composition prayed to the Almighty to restore to him the joy of salvation.

In the Sunday liturgy, we also have the Magnificat or the Song of Mary. It is a song inspired by the Holy Spirit, rich in praise and faith. Here was a young Jewish maiden who had every reason to be worried and frightened. Consenting to be the mother of the Son of God was ridden with serious risks. It meant the threat of divorce by Joseph, ostracism by her community and possible death by stoning; but Mary rose above these fears. She foresaw that thenceforth all generations would call her "blessed", that she would experience 'grace upon grace', that the joy of salvation would be hers. And that made her burst into the Song of Praise that you and I and millions of Christians around the world sing after her even today, Sunday after Sunday.

In Mary's song, we see the power of faith, the strength of surrender and the recognition of the significant and the non-significant in life.

Jesus promised us this joy of salvation. In New Testament language, the joy of salvation is possessing eternal life, the gift of grace, offered to every believer in Jesus Christ. Because Paul and Silas had it, they could sing in the Philippian jail. The jailor, who must have been observing them, had no doubt that these two men had the secret of salvation. Therefore he asked them "Sirs, what shall I do to be saved?" Except their demonstration of joy by singing, Paul and Silas had not done any preaching. Their joyful singing was a powerful witnessing that led others to be saved.

Joy is the hallmark of a Christian. A Christian has plenty to be joyful about- "The Lord is

at hand", here and in eternity. So as St. Paul exhorts us, let us rejoice. Rejoice always. Let it create music in our hearts and give a song on our lips. Let singing the praise of God be our habit not only on Sundays, not only when we are happy, but all the days of our lives, in sunshine and in shadow.

Mrs. Susan Benjamin Mathew belongs to the Chelikkuzhiyil family, Kozhencherry, and is the daughter of Prof. C.T. Benjamin who was Professor and Principal of the Union Christian College, Alwaye. She is the first woman I.A.S. officer from the Mar Thoma Church.

Mar Thoma Suvishesha Sevika Sanghom

Diocese of North America and Europe – An Overview of Activities

"So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand" (Isaiah 41: 10)

The Suvishesha Sevika Sanghom of the Diocese of North America and Europe functions under the blessed guidance and prayerful support of our beloved Diocesan Episcopa, Rt. Rev. Dr. Geevarghese Mar Theodosius, who serves as the Diocesan President. The clergy in the Diocesan Sevika Sanghom Council include Rev. Binoy J. Thomas, Diocesan Secretary, and Rev. Shinoi Joseph, Vice President. The Diocesan Sevika Sanghom held its elections on February 27, 2014, and elected the following Council members for the term of 2014-2017: Diocesan Sevika Sanghom Secretary, Mrs. Mariamma Abraham (Lalitha); Diocesan Sevika Sanghom Treasurer, Mrs. Lilly Simon; and the Diocesan Assembly Member, Mrs. Mariamma Abraham (Ammini). This newly formed Council met and discussed the plan and activities of the Diocesan Suvishesha Sevika Sanghom. The pertinent discussions and activities include:

World Day of Prayer (WDP): On March 24, 2014, almost all the Mar Thoma parishes in the diocese celebrated the world day of prayer either individually or in collaboration with sister churches belonging to the ecumenical fellowship of the region. The theme for this year's WDP was Streams in the Desert based on the Gospel of John 4: 4-15. The order of worship was written by the women of Egypt. The offertories collected on that day were sent directly to WDP, USA Committee, P.O. Box 13121, Demonizes, LA 50310, to be utilized for meeting the needs of women and children both in the United States and abroad who have been victims of poverty, violence and other injustices.

Sevika Sanghom Day: Sunday, September 7, 2014, was observed as Sevika Sanghom Day in the parishes and congregations within the Diocese. Sevika Sanghom Day offertory envelopes were sent to the parishes by the Diocesan Sevika Sanghom. Women delegates were deputed to the parishes for participating in the Sunday worship and preaching the sermon with the consent of the vicars.

Meeting of the Diocesan Sevika Sanghom Assembly Members: The Council decided to have a meeting with all the Diocesan Sevika Sanghom assembly members during the XV National Conference that will be held from October 2 to 5, 2014.

Mission Project: Mission projects for empowering women in the Mumbai and Delhi Diocese were allocated \$ 20,000.00 for the year 2014.

National Women's Day: Celebrations will be observed at the regional and center levels.

Feasibility of Ladies assisting at the XV National Conference: Encouragements are given for women to assist at the altar during the National Sevika Sanghom conferences. The concept of covenant girls in each parish was introduced by the diocese during the Jubilee year 2013, and is catching up in the parishes.

The Diocesan Sevika Sanghom members commit themselves to the Mighty hands of God to become useful vessels for God's glory and the furtherance of His Kingdom.

For and on behalf of Diocesan Sevika Sanghom,
Mrs. Mariamma Abraham,
Diocesan Sevika Sanghom Secretary

You will keep in *perfect peace*
those whose minds are steadfast,
because they trust in you.

Isaiah 26:3

Make Your Life Less Taxing

Get the Right Advice at the Right Time.

Philip Thomas, MBA, CPA

*Professor of Accounting
Brookhaven College, FB, Texas*



Certified Public Accountant since 1982

Member:

American Institute of CPAs

Texas Society of CPAs

Dallas Chapter of CPAs

*Tax Laws Change Always & Successful Retirement Living Requires
Professional Tax Planning*

For more information contact:

972.394.1349

Email: philipthomascpa@yahoo.com

A member of the Mar Thoma Church of Dallas, Farmers Branch

The Beginnings - Formation of the Mar Thoma Church in the Tri State Area of New York, New Jersey and Connecticut



Mrs. Aleyamma Ninan, St. Thomas MTC, Yonkers, NY

In September 1970, I arrived in the United States from Kerala, India, as a J1 exchange student in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. At that time there were only about 30-40 Malayalees. These first Kerala immigrants were mostly nurses or Bible College students. We used to worship regularly at the chapel of the Bible College. These services were mostly in the English language, and were led by either Methodist or Presbyterian priests. There was just one Syrian Orthodox Deacon in the Philadelphia area and under his leadership we used to hold prayer meetings and worship services in the Malayalam language.

With the passage of new immigration laws, my status changed from a non-immigrant exchange student to that of a permanent resident. Along with my friends I moved to New York City in search of a new job in a better location. In New York, we met more Malayalee families. We came to know that regular Holy Qurbana services in Malayalam were being conducted at the Union Theological Center chapel under the leadership of Simon Achen (Knanaya faith), Rev. Father Yohannan Shankarathil, and Rev. Father Thomas (the late Macarios Thirumeni) in the Orthodox faith tradition. Word of these services spread. Malayalee believers of the Syrian Orthodox, Indian Orthodox, CSI, Malankara Catholic and Mar Thoma denominations from Philadelphia to Boston used to travel to the New York area just to attend these combined services. Since there were four achen, each achen took turns for conducting the Holy Communion service once a month. The Indian community at that time in New York City was very small. People used to take the bus and/or train to attend the communion service. When there was no communion service, Malayalees would meet to have a common fellowship hour. These meetings were revitalizing and rejuvenating experiences.

In 1972, I went back to India and got married to Mr. Samuel Ninan, a Mar Thoma believer. He arrived in the US in 1972 September. We used to attend Simon Achen's service at the Union Theological Seminary or the service at St. Mary's Orthodox Church under the leadership of the late Rev. Father John Mathew and Rev. Father A. K. Cherian. We were part of the founding members of the St. Mary's Orthodox Church in the Bronx.

Changes in the US immigration laws allowed many people to migrate to the United States for job opportunities, especially those in the nursing field. As the number of Mar Thoma members grew, the need for the formation of a Mar Thoma church in the United States arose. The first Mar Thoma prayer group and ordinary worship led by elected lay leaders started at Queens, New York. Temporary committees were elected. In 1973, combined Mar Thoma CSI congregation worship services were held by the Rev. Father Oommen Koruth (now Rt. Rev. Dr. Zacharias Mar Theophilus Suffragan Metropolitan) who was then studying at the Princeton University Theological Seminary. We did not have a regular worship place. Also we still did not have permission to form a church from Thiruvalla, the Mar Thoma Church headquarters. At that time, the position of the Mar Thoma church leadership and administration was that since the United States was a Christian country our people should attend the local American churches. Despite this viewpoint, the Kerala community continued to worship together. The Mar Thoma and CSI congregation started to hold worship services on two Sundays every month in various places. The basement of the Fort Washington Presbyterian Church at 174th Street in Manhattan, New York, was a frequent venue. The Presbyterian Church Priest Rev. Father Lincoln was very helpful to us. We finally reached an agreement to rent the church basement. Due to significant internal disagreements among Mar Thoma and CSI members, this congregation was dissolved by Rev. Oommen Koruth.

By the grace of God, the Mar Thoma Congregation of Greater New York was formed on

May 18, 1975, by Rev. Dr. Oommen Koruth. His vision helped the growth of the Mar Thoma churches in the United States as we know it today. Regular Sunday Services were led by lay leaders in the achen's absence. The same Metropolitan who disagreed with organizing a parish here in August 1973 changed his views and issued a kalpana that approved the congregation in February 1976.

The approved Mar Thoma congregation of Greater New York paved the way for forming congregations in other areas within USA and Canada; in cities such as Houston, Dallas, Philadelphia, Chicago and Toronto. The Greater New York congregation started with about 80 families. Regular worship services and Sunday school started soon thereafter. At that time, very few members had cars and the majority depended on public transportation to get to church. Due to the request of the Mar Thoma congregation of New York, the late Rev. M. V. Benjamin was appointed as full time vicar (not a student achen) from September 1979 to 1981. Benjamin achen was also the vicar of the Philadelphia congregation. The late Rev. K. J. Philip who was at an overseas ministries center was appointed as the associate vicar for one year.

The Mar Thoma Congregation of greater New York continued to worship at the Fort Washington Presbyterian Church main sanctuary. The most significant contribution that the New York congregation made towards the growth of the Mar Thoma diocese was to bring together congregations at the regional and national level for common activities such as the Youth Conference. The 1st Youth conference in USA was held in 1977 and the first family conference was held in 1979. The first youth conference was held at the Stony Point Conference Center under the leadership of the Most Rev. Alexander Mar Thoma Metropolitan. The Metropolitan took personal interest in obtaining the Synod's recognition for the American congregation as an official body of the Mar Thoma Church in America. The close cooperation with the Episcopal Church enhanced our growth in America and strengthened our identity. When the most Rev. Alexander Metropolitan conducted the Good Friday Services in the year 1977, and saw the huge crowds, he realized the potential for growth for the Mar Thoma church in America. The Metropolitan appointed senior Bishop Rt. Rev. Dr. Thomas Mar Athanasius as the Diocesan Bishop for North America, and church operated as a zone of the Kottayam Diocese. In 1980 the Most Rev. Thomas Mar

Athanasius, known for his vision, laid the foundation for the Diocese of America.

By 1980 membership grew to about 400 Mar Thoma families within the Tri State Area of New York, New Jersey and Connecticut. The decision to divide the congregation was allowed by the late Most Rev. Alexander Mar Thoma Metropolitan after a visit to the area in August - September of 1980. After having a formal meeting with the congregation at Port Washington Presbyterian Church in Manhattan, the Metropolitan issued a kalpana dated September 7, 1980 authorizing the division of the Congregation of Greater New York into four parishes: (1) Manhattan, Bronx, Yonkers, and areas to the north; (2) Brooklyn, Queens, and the Long Island Area; (3) Staten Island; and (4) New Jersey.

The Kalpana further directed that ad hoc committees under the leadership of Vicar, Late Rev. M. V. Benjamin should be formed to prepare the members list in each area. The late Rev. K. J. Philip, former Sabha Secretary, who was in a study program at overseas ministries study center, was given the special responsibility of advising or guiding the ad hoc committees in their work.

Thus, St. Thomas Mar Thoma Church was formed and dedicated on January 25, 1981, at Synod Hall in Manhattan for people residing in Manhattan, Bronx, and areas north. The parish was dedicated by Rt. Rev. Paul Moor, Bishop of the Episcopal Church New York. The Epiphany Mar Thoma Church was formed for Brooklyn, Long Island, New Jersey and Staten Island Mar Thoma Church was formed. The Rev. N. M. Cherian took over as vicar in May 1981. He was also the vicar of other new parishes and continued in that capacity during the crucial formative years. Rev. Jacob Thomas, student at Union Theological Seminary was assistant vicar from July 1981 to May 1983. Rev. Jacob Thomas took charge as vicar of St. Thomas Mar Thoma church from June 1983 to March 1985.

Based on Metropolitan's kalpana, four parishes were formed, but a considerable number of families along with a few new members remained in the Fort Washington Church and continued services under lay leadership. They approached Thiruvalla for permission to form a separate parish. With the support of Rev. N. M. Cherian and the Most Rev. Thomas Mar Athanasius these families who remained at Fort Washington church formed the St. Andrew's Mar Thoma Church. Even after the formation of St. Andrew's church, some families remained at the Fort Washington church and later formed the Ebenezer Mar Thoma Church (Pelham, New York).

St. Thomas Mar Thoma Church grew in membership, in activities, church organizations,

and prayer groups. Many families belonging to the Manhattan Prayer group bought houses in Bergen County, New Jersey. They remained in St. Thomas itself and formed the Manhattan/New Jersey prayer group. During the time of Rev. George Varghese, most of the Manhattan/New Jersey prayer group members with some families from St. Andrew's and some families from the New Jersey Mar Thoma Church formed the St. Peters Mar Thoma Church in Teaneck, New Jersey.

In March 1990, St. Thomas Mar Thoma Church was able to purchase its present worship place at 34 Morris Street, Yonkers, New York. A significant number of families from Rockland County decided not to join the Yonkers church, and they formed St. James Mar Thoma Church. Later on a large number of people from Epiphany MTC moved, and formed the Long Island Mar Thoma Church in Merrick, New York. The Sinai Center was built under the leadership of the Diocesan Bishop, Rt. Rev. Zacharias Mar Theophilus.

In summation, the Mar Thoma congregation of Greater New York played a crucial and critical role in the growth of the Mar Thoma parishes in America. Thomas Mar Athanasius Thirumeni known for his vision laid the foundation for a Diocese in America. The Congregation of Greater New York foresaw the formation of a Diocese and started activities such as Sunday School to assure that the next generation will have a better future with the help of God and the earnest prayers of the early immigrants. These early immigrants are all senior citizens now. They still have the great responsibility of passing the torch to the next generation and the generations to come. We give glory to the Lord for our peaceful existence in the United States.

The Mar Thoma Echo



The Mar Thoma Echo, A new publication of the Council of Mar Thoma Parishes in Europe (COMPE) was released by His Grace the Most Rev. Dr. Joseph Mar Thoma Metropolitan on Saturday, August 16, 2014, at the St. John's Mar Thoma Church Hounslow, London. It was a commemorative event in the history of the Diaspora community in UK and Europe. The meeting started with Sandhya Namaskaram, led by our Metropolitan Joseph Mar Thoma. Rev. Dr. Thomas Philips presided over the public meeting 'Jyothirgamaya' that started with 'Thobashlom-Aaboon-Sahayo' – the singing of St John's Mar Thoma Parish choir. The Chief Editor and the Vicar of St. John's Mar Thoma Church, Rev. Jose Punamadam, Rev. K. P. Johnson, Rev. Vinoy Varghese, Rev. Fr. George Joy, Rev. P. Mathew, Dr. Zac Varghese, and Mr. Oommen Abraham spoke on the occasion. The mission of the Mar Thoma Echo is to enrich the lives through the message of the Bible, liturgical studies, Christian witness and experiences that engage, inform, and inspire with vision to build a

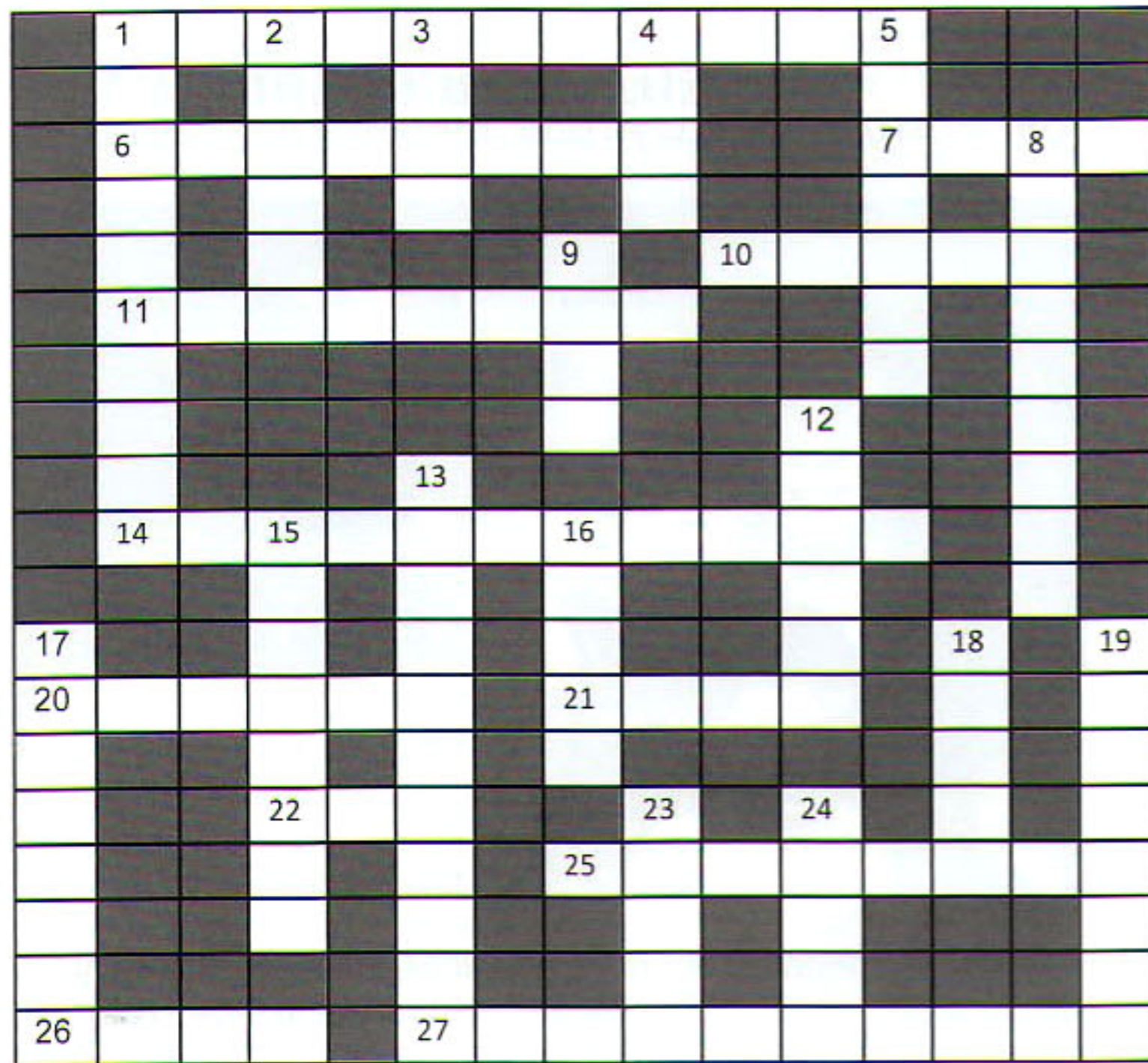
cohesive society within Europe with Kingdom values. The mission is also to help in the faith formation of our children, youths, and adults through providing access to theological discourses in the context of modern life situations. The aim of the Echo is to encourage our young generation to communicate their God-given talents through creativity and to promote human dignity for the Kingdom of God.

The digital version of the Mar Thoma Echo and the distribution of the print media was inaugurated by our Diocesan Bishop, The Rt. Rev. Dr. Geevarghese Mar Theodosius on August 31, 2014 in a public meeting held at Yarnfield Park Training Centre, Staffordshire, UK, where the 32nd UK & Europe Family Conference was held, hosted by the Tabore Manchester Mar Thoma Church. The COMPE Secretary Mr. P. M. Mathew spoke on the occasion, expressed thanks, and congratulated those who worked behind the scenes of the Mar Thoma Echo for furthering an echo friendly harmonious community. He expressed his sincere gratitude to the Metropolitan, the Diocesan Episcopa, Editorial Board members, and to the Mar Thoma Press and Publication Society for their whole-hearted support rendered to the success of the journal.

Rev Jose Punamadam,
Chief Editor, The Mar Thoma Echo

Bible Crossword Puzzle

As in NIV Bible
II Chronicles – Chapters 1-18



Deadline for Answers:
Nov 15, 2014
Mail to:

Philip Manuel
23 Lake Street
Billerica,
MA 01821

Phone: 978-663-3203
Scanned - via
E mail:
Varampath23@msn.com

Please include your name, your phone number, name of your Parish and State of residence.

Prepared by
Mr. Philip Manuel
and Mrs. Laila Anie Philip
Carmel, MTC Boston

July Crossword Puzzle Winner's list

Santha Varghese	Ascension MTC, PA
Susan Alex, Dr.	Atlanta MTC, JK-TN
Paul Isaac	Carmel MTC, Boston
Pranav George	Carmel MTC, Boston
Ammini Abraham	Detroit MTC, MI
Saramma Chacko	Epiphany MTC, NY
Shirly Wilson	Hermon MTC, Atlanta
Jejo Joji	Hermon MTC, UK
Aleyamma Mathews	Horeb MTC, LA
Sicily Skariah	MTC Dallas Farmers Br
Aleyamma Mathews	MTC Dallas Farmers Br
Mariamamma Daniel	MTC Dallas Farmers Br
Shaila Mathew	MTC Dallas Farmers Br
Thankamoni Abraham	MTC San Francisco
Sosamma Thomas	MTC, Greater Washington
Susan Mathews	Philadelphia MTC, PA
Anamma Abraham	Philadelphia MTC, PA
Rincy Thomas	Philadelphia MTC, PA
Fiona Thomas	Phoenix MTC, AZ
Mercy Abraham	Phoenix MTC, AZ
Allan Jiji	Phoenix MTC, AZ
Alvin Jiji	Phoenix MTC, AZ
Hannah Daniel	Salem MTC, NY
Saramma Varkey	Sehion MTC, Dallas
Marykutty Thomas	South Florida MTC
George Thomas	South Florida MTC
Sheela Thomas	St. Luke MTC, FL
Elizabeth George	St. Mathews MTC, Toronto
Aleyamma M Thomas	St. Peter's MTC, NJ
Annamamma P John	St. Peter's MTC, NJ
Roy John	St. Peter's MTC, NJ
Joanna George	St. James MTC, NY
Mary V George	St. James MTC, NY
Preethi Alex	Staten Island MTC, NY
Omana Rajee	Staten Island MTC, NY
Regi Mathew	Staten Island MTC, NY
John Samuel	Staten Island MTC, NY
Achamma Chacko	Trinity MTC, Houston
Shawn Varghese	Trinity MTC, Houston
Kunjamma Thomas	Trinity MTC, Houston
Lilly Varghese	Trinity MTC, Houston
Gracy P Vattakunnel	Trinity MTC, Houston
Mariamamma K Thomas	Trinity MTC, Houston
Saramma Sreeba	Trinity MTC, Houston

Across:

01. Hiram said, "Praise be to the Lord, who has given King David a wise son, endowed with intelligence and ____."
 06. Abijah told Jeroboam, "We are observing the requirements of the Lord our God. But you have ____ him."
 07. Solomon erected two pillars in front of the temple. The one to the south he named Jakin and the one to the north ____.
 10. When the Israelites saw fire coming down and the glory of the Lord above the temple, they ____ on the pavement with their faces to the ground.
 11. The Lord said to Solomon, "... I will make it a byword and an object of ____ among all peoples".
 14. The Lord his God was with Solomon and made him ____ great.
 20. Solomon took a census of all the ____ who were in Israel.
 21. The ____ struck Jeroboam down and he died.
 22. ____, son of Abijah, did what was good and right in the eyes of the Lord his God.
 25. Micaiah told Ahab, the king of Israel, "The Lord has decreed ____ for you".
 26. Rehoboam reigned seventeen years in Jerusalem, the city the Lord had chosen out of all the tribes of Israel in which to put his ____.
 27. The ____ and singers joined in unison, as with one voice, to give praise and thanks to the Lord.

Down

01. The Lord told Shemaiah, "They will, however become subject to Shishak, so that they may learn the ____ between serving me and serving the kings of other lands."

02. Solomon stood on the platform and then knelt down and ____ out his hands toward heaven.
 03. ____ was one of the towns that Rehoboam built for defense in Judah.
 04. The queen asked Solomon all she had on her ____ and he answered all her questions.
 05. There was nothing in the ark except the two ____ that Moses had placed in it at Horeb.
 08. The Lord said to Solomon, "Now my eyes will be open and my ears ____ to the prayers offered in this place."
 09. The Israelites ____ before Judah and the Lord delivered them into their hands.
 12. The men of Israel were subdued on that occasion and the men of Judah were victorious because they ____ on the Lord, the God of their fathers.
 13. The Lord was with ____ because in his early years he walked in the ways his father David had followed.
 15. Solomon prayed, "O Lord, God of Israel -- you who keep your ____ of love with your servants who continue wholeheartedly in your way."
 16. King Asa removed the detestable ____ from the whole land of Judah and Benjamin and from the towns he had captured.
 17. The queen said to Solomon, "Because of the love of your God for Israel and his desire

to uphold them forever, he has made you king over them, to ____ justice and righteousness.
 18. Then Solomon stood before the altar of the Lord in ____ of the whole assembly of Israel and spread out his hands.
 19. Solomon answered the Lord, " ... You have made me a king over a people who are as ____ as the dust of the earth."
 23. Solomon requested cedar logs and skilled workmen from ____, the king of Tyre.
 24. "For the eyes of the Lord ____ throughout the earth to strengthen those whose hearts are fully committed to him."

NEW ACHENS WHO JOINED THIS DIOCESE



Rev. Alexander Tharakan, B.A., B.D., joined the Mar Thoma Parish at Manchester, UK. His mother parish is the Immanuel Mar Thoma Church, Thevalakkara. Ordained on July 14, 2003, he has served as a missionary to the Christa Mitra Ashram, Ankola, and Shivanapura Mission, Shivanapuram, and as Vicar at the Jancy Mar Thoma Church, Gwalior, Agra, and Bethel Mar Thoma Church, Tannithode, and the St. Thomas Thekkuthode, Salem MTC, Manneera. His wife is Mrs. Smitha Koshy, a native of the Salem Mar Thoma Church, Kalayapuram. They have two children, Ashraya Alexander (9 years old), and Agatha Thankam Alexander (3 years old). Alexander Tharakan Achen can be reached by email at alextharakans@yahoo.com



Rev. Sonu Skariah Varughese, B.A., B.D., joined the Chicago Mar Thoma Church, Chicago, Illinois. His mother parish is the Epiphany Mar Thoma Church, New York. Ordained on July 13, 2013, he has served in St. Thomas Mar Thoma, Thiruvalla. His wife is Mrs. Sherin Mariam Sonu, a native of the St. Thomas Mar Thoma, Thiruvalla. Sonu Varughese Achen can be reached via his Cell phone at 224-304-9311 or via email at sonuachen@gmail.com



Rev. Shibu Samuel, M.A., B.D., joined the Canadian Mar Thoma Church, Toronto, Canada. His mother parish is the Trinity Mar Thoma Church, Kottanad. Ordained 2002, Shibu Achen served in the St. Thomas Mar Thoma Church, Gurgaon, the Immanuel Mar Thoma Church, Gaziabad, and the Immanuel Mar Thoma Church, Dewas. Achen also served as the Director Khrist Seva Kendra (KSK), Kshipra, Dewas in Madhya Pradesh; the Principal, St. Thomas Higher Secondary School, Kshipra, Dewas; and as missionary at the Tamilnadu Gospel Mission, Pollachi. Achen was a Diocesan Council Member of the Chennai-Bangalore Diocese. His wife is Mrs. Asha Mariamma Varkey,

a native of the Mar Thoma Valiyapally in Chengannur. Their two children are: Shalom Sam Shibu (11 years old) and Shlomo Sam Shibu (6 years old). Shibu Samuel Achen can be reached via telephone at (905) 472-4191 or (647) 294-8796 or via email at revshibukottanad@gmail.com



Rev. Roney Cherian, B.Sc., B.D., joined the Carmel Mar Thoma Church, Liverpool, and the Edinburgh Congregation (Scotland, New Castle, and Aberdeen). His mother parish is the Kallimel St. Thomas Mar Thoma Church, Mavelikara. Roney Achen was ordained a Deacon on December 24, 2004, and as Kassa on January 28, 2005. Achen served as the Assistant Vicar of the Mukhathala Mar Thoma Church, and as Vicar of Salem Mar Thoma Church, Mylachel; Jerusalem Mar Thoma Church, Chirakkunnu; Bethel Mar Thoma Church, Koranamcode; Horeb Mar Thoma Church, Vattaparambu; Salem Mar Thoma Church Villoor; and Immanuel Mar Thoma Church, Chakkuvarakkal. His wife is Mrs. Aniamma Thomas, a native of the Sehion Mar Thoma Church, Arayanpara, Kunnam. Their children are: Joash Roney Cheriyan (5 years old) and Joana Saira Roney (1 year old). Roney Cherian Achen can be reached via telephone at 0044-151-378-9905 or 0044-747-707-1494 or via email at roneybinu@gmail.com

If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal. If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. If I give all I possess to



the poor and surrender my body to the flames, but have not love, I gain nothing.

1 Cori 13:1-3

PARISH NEWS

The Metropolitan's Visit to Emmanuel Mar Thoma Church, Lubbock



The Most Rev. Dr. Joseph Mar Thoma Metropolitan visited Emmanuel Mar Thoma Church, Lubbock from July 18 to 20, 2014. Thirumeni conducted the cottage prayer meeting at the residence of Dr. P. John Lincoln. Thirumeni conducted the baptism of John Prakash Roe, the son of Mrs. and Mr. Matthew Roe, followed by the Edavaka Mission Prayer Meeting at the church. Thirumeni and Rev. Dr. Philip Varghese, the Program Manager of the Diocese of North America and Europe, gave devotional messages during this meeting. On Sunday, July 20, 2014, the Metropolitan celebrated the Holy Communion Service along with Rev. Dr. Philip Varghese and Rev. Aji Varghese. During the Communion Service, 5 children received their First Holy Communion. On Sunday afternoon Thirumeni conducted the dedication of the newly purchased parsonage at 5233 17th St. Lubbock, Texas 79416.

Mrs. Mercy Joseph, Secretary Rev. Aji Varghese, Vicar



Visit of the Metropolitan to St. Stephen's MTC, New Jersey



St. Stephen's Mar Thoma Church, East Brunswick, NJ, was blessed by the first-ever visit of The Most Rev. Dr. Joseph Mar Thoma Metropolitan, on Sunday, July 27, 2014. Metropolitan Thirumeni celebrated the Holy Qurbana, and our Diocesan Secretary, Rev. Binoy J. Thomas, and pre-theology trainee, Mr. Mathew Samuel, assisted in the service. Thirumeni led a special thanksgiving prayer and dedication service for our

post-graduate, college, and high school graduates, and presented them with a token of appreciation on behalf of the parish. Following the Holy Qurbana, a Felicitation Meeting was arranged in honor of Thirumeni. During this meeting, Thirumeni unveiled the theme of the 2015 National Sevika Sangham Conference, which the parish will be hosting, and kicked-off the fundraising drive for the conference souvenir. The parish also commemorated Thirumeni's 84th birthday with a cake cutting and a special fellowship lunch. St. Stephen's Mar Thoma Church expresses its appreciation to our beloved Metropolitan Thirumeni for finding time to visit our parish and is also grateful to our Diocesan Bishop, Theodosius Thirumeni, for making this visit possible.

Rev. Christopher Phil Daniel, Vicar

Dedication of St. Thomas Mar Thoma Church, Calgary



The new church building of Calgary St. Thomas Mar Thoma Church at #117, 3825, 34 Street NE, Calgary, was consecrated by the Diocesan Episcopa, Rt. Rev. Dr. Geevarghese Mar Theodosius and with the presence of the Rt. Rev. Dr. Thomas Mar Theethos, Diocesan Bishop of Mumbai on Sunday, June 29, 2014, at 6:30pm.

At the beginning of the dedication service, the trustee, Mr. George Jacob read out the deed handing over the keys of the church to our Diocesan Episcopa, Rt. Rev. Dr. Geevarghese Mar Theodosius. The church entrance door was opened by Theodosius Thirumeni; he led a procession with the priests, Executive Committee members, and the choir. Theodosius Thirumeni then conducted the dedication service and blessed the entire building with the mark of the cross on the walls of the Madbaha, Sanctuary, baptismal font, and lectern with Muron, the consecrated oil with the help of Theethos Thirumeni. The service ended with the benediction by Theodosius Thirumeni.

Rev. Dr. John Panicker, Rev. Mathew Baby, Rev. Rajan Koshy, Rev. Fr. Binny Kuruvilla from Orthodox Church, Calgary and Rev. Fr. Prince from Jacobite Church, Calgary, and the Vicar Rev. Biju K. George assisted the Consecration Service.

The consecration service was followed by a public meeting. Rt. Rev. Dr. Geevarghese Mar Theodosius Episcopa presided over the meeting. Welcome address was delivered by the Vicar, Rev. Biju K. George. A brief report on the new Church Building was delivered by the Secretary Mr. Viji Jacob. The Rt. Rev. Dr. Thomas Mar Theethos Episcopa, Rev. Fr. Binny Kuruvilla, Orthodox Church, Rev. Fr. Prince from Jacobite Church, and Rev. Rajan Koshy from Edmonton Trinity Mar Thoma Church also gave the felicitation messages. Special acknowledgement of the efforts of the various individuals who contributed to the building project was made by executive committee member, Mr. Anil George. The vote of thanks was

delivered by Vice-President Mr. George Kunchandy. The meeting ended with the prayer of Rev. John Panicker and the benediction by Theodosius Thirumeni. The meeting concluded with a fellowship dinner.

It was a blessed day with all the church members participating in the event along with guests from sister parishes of Edmonton, Vancouver, Toronto and even from Los Angeles, USA, along with members of sister churches including the Orthodox, Jacobite & Catholic churches.

On July 1, 2014, (Canada Day) Rt. Rev. Dr. Thomas Mar Theethos Episcopa celebrated the First Holy Communion service in the newly consecrated Church, which included the dedication of the first communicants. Five children received their first Holy Communion.

The service was followed by the 24th Parish day meeting. Secretary Mr. Viji Jacob presented the parish day report, and the Choir sang a special song. Rt. Rev. Dr. Thomas Mar Theethos delivered the parish day message and inaugurated the Silver Jubilee of the Parish. The meeting ended with the traditional Kaimuthu by Thirumeni, and this was followed by fellowship lunch.

The church's web site is: WWW.CALGARYMARTHOMACHURCH.COM
Rev. Biju K. George, Vicar.

Immanuel Mar Thoma Church, Houston, Texas, received the Stafford City's Beautification Award.



Mayor Leonard Scarella awarded the Stafford City Beautification Award to Immanuel Mar Thoma Church, Houston, for maintaining the 16 acre campus according to the city norms. The Immanuel Mar Thoma Church values this award as it celebrates its 10th Parish Day, and credits all its members for keeping the campus clean.

Mar Thoma Church of Greater Seattle - Parish day Celebration

Seattle Mar Thoma Church celebrated Parish Day on June 15, 2014, following the Holy Communion service. We were really blessed to have Rt. Rev. Dr. Thomas Mar Theethos, of Mumbai diocese as our chief celebrant. Rev. Renu John (North Carolina MTC) and Rev. Bju K. George (Calgary MTC) were also present during the celebrations along with our vicar Rev. Mathew John Achen.

Theethos Thirumeni's message was a blessing to all of us. The choir,



the English and Malayalam Praise and Worship teams, and the Sunday school children sang beautiful songs during the service. Our parish felicitated Thirumeni on this first visit.

Thirumeni inaugurated the 'Going Green' project of the church by planting two fruit trees in the church backyard. Altogether it was a blessed experience for the entire church.

Nitin Punnen, Secretary

DIOCESAN NEWS

THE REGIONAL FAMILY CONFERENCE 2014, Banff, Alberta



With the prayers of many and the blessings from Lord Almighty, Calgary St. Thomas Mar Thoma Parish hosted the 2014 Regional Mar Thoma Family Conference from June 27 to 29, 2014, at Rocky Mountain Resort (RMR), Banff, Calgary.

The theme of the conference was "Celebrating Life with Christ" (Luke 19: 9). Rt. Rev. Dr. Geevarghese Mar Theodosius and Rt. Rev. Dr. Thomas Mar Theethos led the conference in talks, sessions, and discussions. Delegates from Mar Thoma Parishes of Edmonton, Vancouver, Toronto, Portland/Seattle, and Los Angeles participated in the conference. Rev. Mathew Baby, Vicar of St. Mathews Mar Thoma Church, Toronto, led the sessions for youth and Miss. Alison Koshy of Trinity Mar Thoma Church, Edmonton, led the classes for kids. The choir led the singing sessions for the conference as well as the worship service and Holy Qurbana on Sunday. Rev. Dr. P. L. John Panicker, Vicar of Canadian MTC, Toronto, and Rev. Rajan Koshy, Vicar of Trinity Mar Thoma Church Edmonton, were also present along with Rev. Biju K. George of Calgary St. Thomas MTC.

182 delegates (including adults and children) attended the conference. The funds for the conference were raised through publication of a Souvenir, donations and individual registrations.

The inaugural meeting on June 27, 2014, commenced with a procession comprising the conference committee, Achens, and followed by Theodosius Thirumeni and Theethos Thirumeni. Miss Linda Kuruvilla was the MC for the meeting. The worship for the opening day was led by the Calgary St. Thomas MTC. Biju Achen welcomed the gathering. Theodosius Thirumeni delivered the inaugural message. A commemorative souvenir was released.

The morning worship on the second day, June 28, 2014, was led by the Trinity MTC, Edmonton. Panicker Achen and Rajan Koshy Achen led two separate group sessions for the adults, while the children and youths had separate sessions. Theethos Thirumeni delivered the main talk, and it was followed by group discussions. Mrs. Ponnamma Zachariah of Trinity MTC, Edmonton, led the intercessory prayers. After lunch, Theethos Thirumeni delivered the second part of his message, which was followed by a time for discussion with both the Thirumeni's responding to the questions from the attendees. After dinner, the evening worship was led by Vancouver MTC members. Theodosius Thirumeni and Mrs. Susan Koshy, Diocesan Council member, provided an update on various Diocesan activities. Members from various parishes displayed their talents and entertained the audience.

On Sunday, June 29, 2014, the Holy Communion service was in English led by Theodosius Thirumeni. After breakfast, a plenary session was held with Theethos Thirumeni. Mathew Baby Achen and Dr. Titus Mathews felicitated Theodosius Thirumeni in honor of his Silver Jubilee year of Episcopal consecration, and Biju Achen presented a gift to Theodosius Thirumeni. Theodosius Thirumeni offered the concluding remarks for the conference. Mr. Sandeep Sam Alexander, the conference convener, conveyed the vote of thanks to all the attendees during which special mementoes were gifted to Theodosius Thirumeni, Theethos Thirumeni, Mathew Baby Achen and Alison Koshy.

*Rev. Biju K George, Vicar & Conference President
Mr. Sandeep Sam Alexander, Conference Convener*

XIII Southern Regional Mar Thoma Youth Conference



North Carolina Mar Thomá Youth Fellowship was privileged to host the XIII Southern Regional Youth Conference from July 17 to 20, 2014, at the Ridgecrest Conference Center in Black Mountain, North Carolina. The theme of the Conference was "Zero Gravity – Nothing can separate us from the love of God" based on Romans 8:39.

Ninety six youth and 26 chaperones attended this conference. The delegates came from various parishes of the Southern Region (Atlanta, Florida, Tennessee and North Carolina). The main speakers for this conference were Betty Vattakunnel (Trinity Mar Thoma Church, Houston) and Rev. George Jacob (Youth Chaplain of the Dallas Region), Rev. Binu Thomas (Vicar of St. Luke's Parish, FL and Hermon Parish, GA), and Rev. Renu John Achen (Vicar of North Carolina Mar Thoma Parish and St. Louis Mar Thoma Church) led morning worship and devotions as well.

The conference was inaugurated by Rev. Renu John on Thursday, July 17th. Daily events included praise and worship, messages by speakers, small groups and question and answer sessions. Other activities included talent and fellowship night, cards for Duke Cancer Center, small group theme presentations, relationship talks, gender breakout, dedication and testimony.

The North Carolina MTC conference team met with the next hosting church, St. Marks MTC, Tampa, to discuss conference planning for 2015. This meeting was also attended by Rev. Renu John Achen (President of the Southern Regional Youth Fellowship), Lijo Athiyal (Vice President of the Southern Regional Youth Fellowship), and Elias Babu (Secretary of the Southern Regional Youth Fellowship). The conference ended on Sunday, July 20th with Holy Qurbana celebrated by Rev. George Jacob and Rev. Renu John and the closing message was given by Betty Vattakunnel. We humbly praise and thank God for helping us to host our first ever regional event. All glory to God!

*Rev. Renu John, Vicar of North Carolina Mar Thoma Parish
and St. Louis Mar Thoma Church*

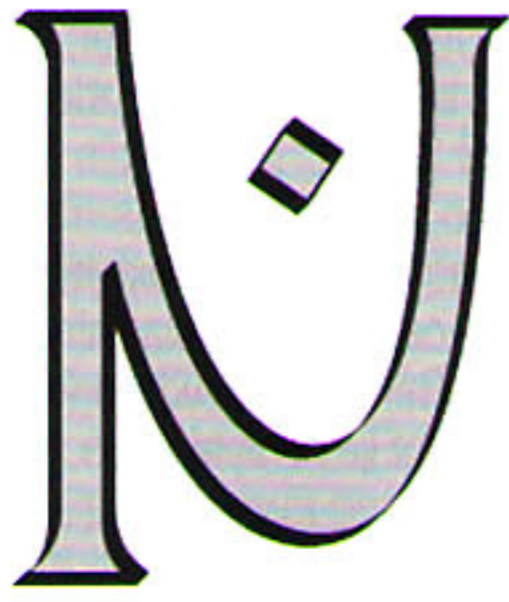
2014 Mar Thoma Junior / Senior Conference (Southeast Region)



The 3rd Annual Junior/Senior Conference of the Southeast Region Sunday School was held at Ramapo College in Mahwah, New Jersey from July 3 to 6, 2014. More than 290 delegates from all 13 churches in the region attended this four day conference. The theme for the conference was "Imitators of God" taken from Ephesians 5: 1. His Grace Most Rev. Dr. Joseph Mar Thoma inaugurated the conference on Thursday, July 3rd. Diocesan Bishop Rt. Rev. Dr. Gevarghese Mar Theodosius introduced the conference theme. Dr. Shaun Rajan, Ms. Betty Vattakunnel, Rev. Dennis Abraham, and Rev. V. M. Mathew delivered felicitations. Regional coordinator Mr. Tom Philip welcomed the leaders and dignitaries, and Secretary Mr. Thomas Philip gave the vote of thanks. The theme presentation on the opening night was staged by the students of Mar Thoma Church of Greater Washington Sunday School.



Main talks were led by Dr. Shaun Rajan, a dynamic youth speaker who is passionate about taking the Great Commission to the youths of our community. Main talks for juniors were led by Ms. Betty Vattakunnel from Trinity Mar Thoma Church in Houston, Texas. Rev. V. M. Mathew and Rev. Dennis Abraham, the youth chaplains of the northeast and southeast regions led the Bible Study sessions for both juniors and



NIDAL GROUP

Global Sources
General Contracting

Arabian Global

Global Sources
Engineering

Nidal Farms

IS4IS

International solutions
for
Industrial Services

Global Sources
InfoTech

RK
Interior Architecture

Nidal Real Estate

Schmidt + Clemens Saudi Arabia Ltd
شبهات + كلينس العربية السعودية المحدودة



Nidal Group

*** Global Sources**

www.arabianglobalsources.com

Industrial Civil & Mechanical construction, fabrication of structural steel, Piping, Furnace / Reformer tubing & re-tubing, shutdown and plant revamp.

*** Schmidt+Clemens Saudi Arabia Ltd**

www.schmidt-clemens.com

A J.V with Nidal Group. Manufacturers of Furnace Reformer Tubes.

*** International Solutions for Industrial Services (IS4IS)**

www.is4is.com

Chemical Trading Division representing Overseas Manufacturers, Providing range of Industrial Specialty Chemicals for Oil & Gas, Chemical, Petrochemical, Desalination & Mining Sectors

*** Global Sources InfoTech**

www.globalsourcesinfotech.com

IT consulting including SAP implementation and training in Association with Blue Pencil South Africa.

*** R.K Interiors**

www.rachakayali.com

Interior designing Company.

*** Nidal Farms**

Organic Food Supplier.

* Offices in Jubail, Al-Khobar, Rabigh, Thuwal, Yanbu, Al-Khafji and India.

* 15,000m2 fabrication facility in Juyamah.

* 50,000m2 fabrication facility in Jubail.

* Group Employee strength of more than 2000 skilled personnel.

* Representing 10 companies from USA and Europe in Saudi Arabia including SUD-CHEMIE-Germany (Industrial Catalysts www.sud-chemie.com), BluePencil-South Africa (SAP Training www.bluepencil.co.za)

GLOBAL SOURCES is an Integrated Management System compliant company having certifications of ISO 9001:2008, ISO 14001:2004, OHSAS 18001:2007

GLOBAL SOURCES has been Certified by ISO 29001:2010 in 2013 - The Only Certified Industrial Contractor in Saudi Arabia

We Serve the following Companies :-

SAUDI ARAMCO, SABIC, SAUDI ELECTRICITY CO. (SEC), EQUATE (Kuwait) , KUWAIT NATIONAL PETROLEUM COMPANY SATORP/JERP, PETRORABIGH, SASREF, SAHARA, FARABI, ROYAL COMMISSION, SIPCHEM, S-CHEM / CHEVRON, MARAFIQ, MA'ADEN, BECHTEL, K.B.R., SHAW - STONE & WEBSTER, SAIPEM / SNAMPROGETTI, TECHNICAS REUNIDAS, SAMSUNG, DAELIM, BEMCO, TYSSENKURPP UHDE AND TEKFEN.

P.O Box. 2705, Al jubail, 31951, Saudi Arabia, Tel: +966 3 344 5540 fax: +966 3 344 5541



Tharayilathu Puthen Bunglow | Venmoney | Alleppey Dist: | Kerala 689509 | india
Tel +91 996 12 81775 | 95 446 52852 | info@vensec.org | www.vensec.org

seniors. On Friday afternoon three different tracks were conducted for seniors: 1) Dating and Interracial Marriages 2) Appropriate use of Social Media, and 3) Mar Thoma Church: What's in it for me? On Saturday afternoon break-out sessions for guys and girls were led by Shaun and Betty.

Ascension Mar Thoma Church coordinated the talent night on Friday night with colorful programs from various parishes of the region. Staten Island Mar Thoma Church presented a special program honoring Independence Day prior to the Talent night. Christos Mar Thoma Church was in charge of the conference program. Tabore was in charge of registration and recreation. Media and Communications were handled by St. Thomas Mar Thoma Church, Delaware Valley. Security rounds were coordinated by Philadelphia Mar Thoma Church. Praise and Worship sessions were led by St. Peter's Mar Thoma Church. All churches were included in leading the morning and evening worship services. On Saturday evening, right after the Communion Preparation class by Rev. Dennis Abraham, juniors and seniors were split into two sessions for Witnessing and Dedication. Two separate teams consisting of leaders, clergy, praise and worship, and prayer warriors assisted the Witnessing and Dedication sessions. Anonymous prayer requests and commitment forms were collected and are included as part of the follow-up. Conference call prayer line is still ongoing every Thursday at 9:30 pm.

On Sunday, many parents joined the Holy Communion service with their children. Rev. Alex Kolath, the President of the Southeast Regional Sunday Schools celebrated the Holy Communion Service and shared the Word of God. During the closing program, a slideshow depicting the highlights of the conference was shown. Everyone held their hands together in unity as the Junior Senior Conference 2014 ended with a melodious song from the Praise and Worship team followed by prayer and benediction.

On Behalf of the 2014 Junior Senior Conference Planning Committee of the Southeast Region

Mr. Thomas Philip, Secretary

2014 Northeast Region Sunday School Junior Senior Conference



The 2014 Junior Senior Conference of the Northeast Regional Sunday Schools took place from July 10 to 13, 2014. The theme of the conference was "THE CALL" inspired by I Timothy 4: 12. The conference was held at Ramapo College in New Jersey and attended by 200 students and about 33 chaperones. The conference was divided into two groups (Juniors and Seniors) with the Junior group being led by Mr. Jason John,

and the Senior group being led by Rev. Dr. Jerome Taylor. The Southeast youth chaplain Rev. Dennis Abraham, and the Northeast youth chaplain Rev. V. M. Mathew, attended the conference. Students, chaperones, and guests were graced by the presence of Rt. Rev. Dr. Geevarghese Mar Theodosius, Episcopa for the inaugural program on Thursday evening, July 10th. Three churches participated in the theme video presentation project where they acted out scenes that best expressed their view of theme THE CALL in their lives. Students also participated in daily Bible Study and group discussions that extended the topics presented in the Main Talks. Students also participated in an organized basketball tournament and art challenge depicting the conference theme during recreation hours. Each church participated in the conference talent night on Friday night and on Saturday evening each group partook in separate testimony sessions in which many students dedicated their lives to Christ. The conference was hailed a huge success by the grace of God and through the careful planning of the NERSS Regional Committee and the dedicated cooperation of all superintendents and teachers in our region.

Midwest Junior Conference



Third Annual Midwest Junior Conference was conducted from Friday, July 11 to Sunday, July 13, 2014, and was hosted by the Detroit Mar Thoma Church for the children of ages eight to thirteen. The theme was, "Superheroes for Christ" based on the passage from Romans 5: 7-8, "Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous person, though for a good person someone might possibly dare to die. But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us." Rev. George Cherian the Youth Chaplain of the Mid-West Region and Mr. Mathew Samuel were the main speakers. Biblical characters like David and Daniel were introduced as superheroes, and how they were committed to serving God, despite the struggles that they faced. We too are called to follow Christ with our whole heart, and be superheroes in this world. In the last main talk, Mr. Samuel spoke about how Jesus is the ultimate Superhero, and He is the sole hope for humanity. Through His sacrifice, humanity has the chance to be saved, but it is up to us to share that message to others. Children from Detroit Mar Thoma Church, Bethel Mar Thoma Church, Chicago Mar Thoma Church, and St. Thomas Mar Thoma Church attended the conference. Several parents and older youths worked tirelessly to put the conference together. Other activities that occurred during the conference were: praise and worship sessions, small group sessions, creative presentations, games, outdoor activities, talent night, and dedication. Overall, the conference was a blessing, and left an impact in the lives of the children, so they may be better equipped to be heroes for Christ.

Mathew Samuel, Diocesan Pre-Theological Trainee

35th National Mar Thoma Youth Conference

Jason Varghese, Tibi Mathew, Rojin Thomas, Cheryl Thomas, Kiran Oommen, Zenia George, Ronish Jacob, Johnny Itticheria, Nancy Varghese, Cello Oommen, Sarah Kurien, and Ashley Thomas.



The 2014 National Mar Thoma Youth Conference was held at Trinity International University, Deerfield, IL from July 17 to 20, 2014. The conference, hosted by St. Thomas Mar Thoma Church Chicago Youth Fellowship, was themed "Facing the Giants: Know God. No Fear." based on Ephesians 6: 13. Rt. Rev. Dr. Geevarghese Mar Theodosius, the Diocesan Episcopa, inaugurated the event on Thursday evening. Rev. Shaji Thomas, Vicar of St. Thomas Mar Thoma Church, Chicago, and Rev. Daniel Thomas, Vicar of Chicago Mar Thoma Church, also participated in the conference. 179 delegates attended this conference representing 30 parishes from both US and Canada.

Powerful Praise and Worship

Thursday programs began with worship led by Rev. George Cherian (Midwest Region) and the St. Thomas Mar Thoma Church Chicago delegates. The Friday morning worship was led by Rev. V. M. Mathew (NE Region) and regional delegates. The Saturday morning worship was led by Rev. Roy A. Thomas (SW Region – Houston) and southwest regional delegates. Throughout the conference, the praise and worship team consisting of delegates from St. Thomas Mar Thoma Church Chicago and Chicago Mar Thoma Church led worship.

Captivating Bible Devotion

Every morning following the worship, the youth chaplains led the Bible Studies. V.M. Mathew Achen led on Friday morning session followed by George Cherian Achen leading Saturday morning session.

Convicting Main Talks

The main speaker, Sam John, member of Mar Thoma Church of Dallas, Farmers Branch, began with an introductory talk on Thursday evening, which set the tone for conference. Delegates began to reflect and characterize their personal relationship with Christ. Throughout conference, Sam led 3 additional talks followed by directing the dedication night.

Enlightening Tracks

All delegates attended 4 tracks. Rev. Dennis Abraham (SE Region) led the Missions track session to inform delegates of all mission activities they can get involved within the diocese. Participants from Alabama Mission trip and Oklahoma Mission trip shared their experiences from these trips. V.M. Mathew Achen led the track on "Spirituality vs. Religion," Roy Thomas Achen led the track on "Love, Sex, and Dating," while George Cherian Achen and Dennis Abraham Achen co-led the track on "Defending the Faith."

Genuine Small Groups

Delegates were divided into 16 small groups by age and gender. These groups were led by Shani Joseph, Cyril George, Levan Thomas, Jubu Panachakunnel, Devin Abraham, Shana Mammen, Abraham Thomas,

Engaging Service Project

The delegates participated in service projects led by MissionYear, a non-profit Christian organization working in the inner city. The delegates partook in three projects: creating care packages for the homeless, packaging educational supplies for students, and writing to incarcerated.

Interactive Social Events

Ice Cream Social was organized on Thursday evening as part of the Meet and Greet. On Friday evening, the delegates gathered for a bonfire wearing their college wear, making s'mores, and singing songs. Mini Olympics were organized for Saturday afternoon with 14 teams to improve teamwork and promote fellowship.

Sanctifying Dedication Night

Saturday evening's sessions closed with dedication night led by Mr. Sam John consisting of praise and worship, small group prayers, dedication talk, altar call, and testimony. Prayer Warriors comprised of small group leaders and youth chaplain achen's prayed for each attendee who came forward during the altar call. During this time, delegates came to dedicate their lives to Christ, to rededicate their lives to Christ, and to dedicate their lives to ministry. The conference concluded with Holy Qurbana celebrated by Rt. Rev. Dr. Geevarghese Mar Theodosius. May God continue to guide the youth of this Diocese for his ministry.

*Executive Committee, XXXV National Mar Thoma Conference
11th MTVEA National Conference*

11th MTVEA National Conference



The 11th MTVEA National Conference was held at Chicago Mar Thoma Church (CMTC) from July 24 to 27, 2014, and was hosted by the CMTC Edavaka Mission. The theme of the conference was "Share the Word: Save the World" based on 1 Corinthians 9: 23. Around 380 delegates attended the conference. Rt. Rev. Dr. Abraham Mar Paulos Episcopa, Bishop of Delhi Diocese was the main speaker. Diocesan Bishop, Rt. Rev. Dr. Geevarghese Mar Theodosius Episcopa inaugurated the conference after a procession and worship by Chicago MTC.

Mar Paulos Thirumeni, in his theme presentation, mentioned about Paul's heart for mission, and he reminded that mission begins at home. Thirumeni stressed the fact that we need an inner cleansing for an outer witness.

Rev. V. G. Varghese, the Vice President of Diocesan MTVEA Council, led the bible study with reference to 1 Corinthians 15: 3-11. This was followed by Paulos Thirumeni's second talk and small group discussion based on the talk. After lunch, Theodosius Thirumeni talked about Diocesan Mission activities and the people's involvement. This was followed by a symposium, "The Call of Mission; Our Response" in which Theodosius Thirumeni was the moderator and Mr. Kurien Varghese (San Francisco MTC), Mr. George Varghese (MTC of Dallas, Farmers Branch), and Mr. Vinod Varghese (Chicago MTC) talked about the different aspects of the subject. In the evening session, Mr. Reji Varghese, Secretary of Diocesan MTVEA, lead the Bible Study, followed by a musical night.

On the third day Rev. Shaji Thomas, Vicar of St. Thomas MTC of Chicago, Lombard, led a Bible Study. This was followed by the third talk led by Paulos Thirumeni and a workshop on Evangelism by Rev. Dr. Roy Oksnevad of the Wheaton College. A business session was conducted by the Diocesan Edavaka Mission Council and during that meeting the Houston Immanuel MTC Edavaka Mission agreed to host the 2015 Conference. In the afternoon, there was team Bible Quiz in which Dallas Farmers Branch and Houston Trinity won the first and second places, respectively. In the evening, "Praise Night" was led by CMTC Youth Fellowship, followed by a testimony and dedication session.

Final day's program started with Holy Communion Service. During the service, the first installment of \$10,000.00 to sponsor a new mission field at Udampur in Jammu Kashmir by the CMTC Edavaka Mission was handed over to Paulos Thirumeni. The amount was collected through the publication of a souvenir in connection with the conference. Various committees led by Vicar, Rev. Daniel Thomas, worked hard for months for the success of this conference. The conference was a blessing to everyone who attended.

2nd Carmel Youth Conference 2014



By the grace of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, the 2nd Carmel Mar Thoma Youth Conference 2014 was conducted successfully. This wonderful event took place at the Cefn Lea Conference and Holiday Park in Newtown, Wales, from June 27 to 29, 2014. The theme for the conference 'Lightened for Life' was deliberated from Ephesians 5: 8, 'For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light.' The subject matters explored were very relevant for the youths of this generation and was easy to relate to.

This three-day conference had over 85 delegates involving the participation of youths from 7 Mar Thoma churches across England. The speakers for the conference were Rev. Dr. Jacob Thomas and Dr. Sam George, both of whom were part of the 1st Carmel Youth Conference back in 2012. They were able to provide interactive, insightful and blessed messages for the young people. Rev. Vinoj

Varghese and family, Rev. Alexander Tharakan and family, Pushpa Kochamma, along with several other adult members supported the youth leaders for the smooth running of the conference. Rev. Vinoj Varghese and family's presence was a gift to the youths. His passion and enthusiasm provided an energetic atmosphere throughout the conference. The youths were blessed with a Holy Communion Service led by Rev. Alexander Tharakan.

The worship sessions led by Mr. Stanley Mathew John, Mr. Mathew Thomas & Mr. Subin Mathew were especially memorable and were most valued amongst the youths. The youth members were able to enjoy, bond and take away significant life lessons through the various programs that took place over the 3 days.

The main talks on the theme was delivered on the second day, however, a small brief was given during the evening of day one by both the speakers. Dr Sam George's message focused on placing Christ at the centre of our lives and giving Christ the spotlight. Working with youth groups in America, and taking part in numerous youth retreats and conferences, allowed Dr. Sam George to easily introduce topics of common interest within the youths, such as culture differences and social interactions.

Rev. Dr Jacob Thomas's sessions included a theme talk on light as a metaphor and its significance to the Mar Thoma Church. His interactive session of 'Questions and Answers' were highly beneficial for the youths as they were able to ask questions and doubts that they encountered in their lives.

Time set apart each morning for devotion allowed the youths to reflect and meditate on a short daily passage that was provided in their conference pack. The Testimony session allowed youths to share their experiences and be witnesses to Christ's work in their life. 27 people committed to the Lord for the first time and many others rededicated their lives for a closer walk with Christ. In addition, informal team games and activities were organized for the youths to grow their relationship with each other and help build networks. The conference allowed all who attended to have a deeper relationship with God and have a clear understanding of how to be shining lights within their church and community.

Moby Mathew,

Vice President, Carmel Mar Thoma Youth Fellowship

Southwest Regional Sunday School Jr./Sr. Conference



The Junior Senior Conference of the Southwest Region was conducted at the MTC of Dallas, Farmers Branch on August 30 & 31, 2014. The theme was, "Treasures in Clay." Ms. Sini Jacob from Immanuel MTC, Houston led the juniors' session, and Mr. Jojoy Koshy from St. Paul's MTC, Dallas, led the seniors' session. Various leaders worked together to organize the Praise & Worship, Dedication, games, food, and other arrangements, so that the 72 registrants could have an enriching experience.

EPISCOPAL VISIT

**Bethel Mar Thoma Church,
Philadelphia, PA**



Rt. Rev. Dr. Geevarghese Mar Theodosius visited the Bethel Mar Thoma Church, Philadelphia, PA, on Saturday, August 16, and Sunday, August 17, 2014. On Saturday evening, Thirumeni met the youths and addressed them with a message from Galatians 5: 1, thereby encouraging the attendees to understand that Christ's gift of salvation was one of freedom, and a call to live in that freedom. The Vicar, Rev. Giju John, Youth Chaplain, Rev. Dennis Abraham, as well as approximately thirty youths attended the meeting. On Sunday, August 17, 2014, the Altar Boys and Covenant Girls assisted with the Preparatory Service (Thooyaba) at 8:30 am. Thirumeni celebrated the Holy Communion in English at 9:00 am. Thirumeni gave the message based on the Gospel passage of Matthew 7: 21-27, exhorting the believers to study and grow in the Bible, to pursue God's will, as well as, to understand that the Bible is the basis of our Faith and Practices. During the Holy Communion, the Dedication Service for the First Communicants took place, where two young men and two young women made the decision to renounce Satan and follow Jesus Christ.

Eight young men and four young women accepted the high calling of being the Altar Boys and Covenant Girls of this parish. After the Communion, there was an Episcopal Silver Jubilee Felicitation, which was organized by the youths of the parish. Each organization offered words of felicitation and gave a gift to Thirumeni. The youths of the church also organized a tree planting in honor of Thirumeni's Going Green Project. After lunch, Thirumeni met with the Executive Committee of the church. After that, the Regional Activities Committee (RAC) of the South East Region met under the direction of the Diocesan Bishop. The RAC discussed the Family Enrichment Project, with positive feedback in moving forward to further establish the RAC.

Rev. Giju John, Vicar, Bethel Mar Thoma Church, PA

Ebenezer Mar Thoma Church, New York



Our Diocesan Bishop Rt. Rev. Dr. Geevarghese Mar Theodosius visited Ebenezer Mar Thoma Church on Sunday, July 27, 2014. The church choir led the opening song and Thirumeni celebrated the Holy Qurbana Service assisted by Vicar Rev. Abraham Oommen. Thirumeni gave a message on the topic of, "Theological Education Equipping the People." Thirumeni said, "Theology is God's Talk" and "Theology is part of our being." He pointed out that the first theological seminary is our home. He mentioned about the life of Sonia and son Dr. Ben Carson. Thirumeni discussed how the prayer and learning the word of God helped the Carsons to achieve new heights. Theological education is the reconstruction for the people of God. Thirumeni expressed the need for Bible Study and asked the church members, "Do we train our children to read the scripture and study Bible verse?" His closing remarks were to remind the parish members that the Holy Bible will keep us from sin, and sin will keep us away from the Bible. After the Holy Communion Service, Vicar Rev. Abraham Oommen welcomed Thirumeni and expressed his gratitude and thanks. Secretary Mr. Jacob Abraham in his felicitation speech praised the leadership, guidance, and support of the Diocesan Bishop. Mr. Abraham presented a brief report about the recent activities our church has been participating in. He explained about "The Going Green" project and how the church planned to plant a tree in order to honor the Episcopal Jubilee project. Mr. Abraham explained about the "Neighborhood Ministry" which the church has been participating in the past few years as well as the "clothing drive." Plenty of people from the neighborhood came forward to take benefit of this mission project. Diocesan Council member, Mr. Samuel K. Samuel and Mr. Thomas Oommen from the Diocese were also present. The program ended with a fellowship lunch.

Mr. C. S. Chacko, Vice President & Diocesan Assembly Member

Immanuel Mar Thoma Church, Virginia



Our Diocesan Episcopa, Rt. Rev. Dr. Geevarghese Mar Theodosius, visited the Immanuel Mar Thoma Church, Virginia on Sunday, June 1, 2014. Theodosius Thirumeni celebrated the Holy Qurbana service in English and delivered a powerful sermon on the Gospel of St. Luke 2: 41-52. Theodosius Thirumeni beautifully communicated the importance of biblical and godly parenting in every home for the growth of church and community. Thirumeni further exhorted that Christ was contextual and liturgical and so challenges us to relevantly respond to Him in our faith and witness. The clergy, Rev. George Mathew and Rev. Jaisen A. Thomas, as well as, lay leaders Mr. Anish Joy and Mr. David Pappy, and Altar Boy Mr. Nivin John assisted Thirumeni in the Holy Qurbana service. After the worship service, according to the direction of Thirumeni's kalpana the, "Going Green" project was launched in the parish as Thirumeni inaugurated the "Sow and Reap" project of the IMTC, VA, Yuvajana Sakhyam. Theodosius Thirumeni handed the first plant to be sown to the senior most member, Mr. C. G. Pappy and encouraged all to be ecologically conscious and promote habits that benefit the environment.

During a general session after the Holy Qurbana service Thirumeni commended the dynamic growth of the parish in just a few years and encouraged all to fulfill their true potential as a faith community. Furthermore, Theodosius Thirumeni challenged the congregation to look forward towards the future and take necessary steps to cater to the younger generation. Particularly, Thirumeni spoke of the need to have more English services and promote Covenant Girls in the parish.

Afterwards, fellowship and snacks were shared with all in attendance. Theodosius Thirumeni also took time to informally meet with the Executive Committee members. It was a blessed opportunity as all were able to share and discuss openly.

Rev. Jaisen A. Thomas, Vicar

Mar Thoma Church of Greater Washington

Diocesan Episcopa Rt. Rev. Dr. Geevarghese Mar Theodosius visited the Mar Thoma Church of Greater Washington (MTCGW) on Sunday, July 13, 2014. Thirumeni conducted the Holy Communion at the MTCGW. Thirumeni began with the Thooyaba (Preparatory Service) with the Altar Boys and Covenant Girls. During this service, Thirumeni welcomed ten First Holy Communicants to participate in the sacrament. He congratulated the children and their parents on this important milestone of their Christian lives.



After the Holy Communion service, the Sunday School students presented their closing program of the Vacation Bible School (VBS) which included songs and a slideshow. The MTCGW conducted a Felicitation program to honor Thirumeni on his Silver Jubilee. The program included a welcome, a speech of felicitation, presentation of a memento and purse to Thirumeni's Theological Fund, and a cake cutting. In conjunction with Thirumeni's "Going Green" project, Thirumeni and the members of the MTCGW planted a tree on the church grounds. After a fellowship lunch organized by the families of the First Communicants, Thirumeni met with the Sevika Sangham Conference committee. Thirumeni enquired about the progress of the National Sevika Sangham conference which is scheduled for Oct. 2-5, 2014 and is hosted by the MTCGW Sevika Sangham. The conveners of each conference committee gave a brief status update. Thirumeni thanked the Sevika Sangham Conference committee for their hard work in preparation for the conference.

*Mrs. Beena Philipose, Secretary
Rev. Thomas Samuel, Vicar*

Mar Thoma Church of Dallas, Carrollton



Diocesan bishop, Rt. Rev. Dr. Geevarghese Mar Theodosius Thirumeni visited the Mar Thoma Church of Dallas, Carrollton, TX, on June 21 and 22, 2014. On Saturday, June 21, 2014, Thirumeni met the Vicar & Executive committee members. Thirumeni also had a meeting with the Office Bearer's of the various organizations of the parish. Thirumeni then planted a sapling in the church premises as part of the 'Go Green project.'

Thirumeni had meeting with the First communicants and their parents. The combined prayer meeting (of all the prayer groups of the parish)

Thomas Mathew Properties

For all your Real Estate needs
To Buy, Sell, or Rent
RELOCATING TO HOUSTON



32
Years of
Trust & Service



Thomas Mathew, GRI
Broker/Owner

Office: 281.261.5589

Cell: 832.439.6002

E-mail: thomasvmathew@yahoo.com



MULTIPLE LISTING SERVICE
MLS

2207 South Main, Stafford, Texas 77477

www.thomasmathew.com



was held at the sanctuary of the church at 7:00pm. Thirumeni delivered the message in Malayalam. The gathering then joined with Thirumeni for dinner which was arranged at the fellowship hall.

The Holy Communion Service in English on June 22, 2014 (Sun) was at 9:30am. Four candidates (two boys & two girls) received their first Holy Communion. During the worship a dedication service was conducted for the First communicants. Four candidates who had undergone the training for Altar boys and Covenant girls were given badges during the special dedication service conducted for them.

Immediately after the service there was a photo session (First Communicants; Altar boys & covenant girl) Later Thirumeni joined the congregation in the fellowship lunch. Thirumeni then spent time interacting with the parish members. At 4:00pm, the holy Baptism was conducted by Thirumeni at the sanctuary and at 8:00pm Thirumeni presided over the meeting some of the members of R.A.C of the Southwest region which was held at the M.T.C.D. Carrollton parsonage.

Rev. Sam Mathew, Vicar

Mar Thoma Church Oklahoma

The Mar Thoma Church of Oklahoma was blessed to have His Grace, Rt. Rev. Dr. Geevarghese Mar Theodosius visit the church on June 7 and 8, 2014. On June 7th, His Grace led a wedding ceremony at the Mar Thoma Church of Oklahoma. On Sunday, His Grace celebrated Holy Communion in Malayalam and delivered a powerful message at the church.

As part of His Grace's "Going Green Project", after the communion service two trees were planted on the church premises.

There was a cake cutting ceremony to celebrate His Grace's 25th year as a bishop of the Mar Thoma Church. His Grace spent time to talk to various church members, discussing their needs and wants. His Grace also spoke to some of the committee members suggesting ways of addressing some of the needs of the church.

Rev. Shibi Abraham, Vicar, Mar Thoma Church of Oklahoma



The Mar Thoma Church Staten Island, New York

Our Diocesan Bishop, Rt. Rev. Dr. Geevarghese Mar Theodosius Thirumeni visited the Mar Thoma Church Staten Island, New York from



Saturday, June 14, to Sunday, June 15, 2014. On Saturday evening, Thirumeni kicked off the inaugural activities of the Diocese of North America & Europe Mar Thoma Yuvajana Sakhyam 2014-16. The theme of this meeting was "Churching the Diaspora". It was blessing for all those who attended. On Saturday evening, Thirumeni also met with our parish Executive Committee and addressed the committee's questions and concerns. On Sunday, June 15th, Thirumeni, along with our Achen, Rev. Mathews Abraham, our Diocesan Secretary Achen, Rev. Binoy J. Thomas and Rev. Y. George, Achen of the Tabore and Bethany Mar Thoma Churches joined us in celebrating the Holy Communion service. It being Father's Day, Thirumeni prayed for all the fathers and conducted a special the liturgy during service. Thirumeni also led the First Communicant's Dedication Service in which 19 youngsters participated, receiving Holy Communion for the first time. Following this, we had a service to dedicate 3 Altar Boys at our parish.

Following the service, the church celebrated its 34th Parish Day. The program began with a song by our choir, followed by the opening prayer done by Rev. Y. George, welcome by our Vicar and a brief parish report by Mrs. Marilyn Abraham (Secretary). After the report was read, on behalf of our parish, Mr. Philip Jacob, honored 7 senior members of our parish, and Thirumeni, placed a "Ponnada" as a sign of respect and honor for all their contributions and blessings to this parish.

And in keeping with our tradition, on behalf of the parish, Dr. Thomas K. Jose honored and recognized the 2014 Graduates. We had 10 students graduating from high school and 8 students that graduated from college.

Thirumeni handed them recognition certificates and the parish gave them each a copy of the book "Gifted Hands" by Dr. Ben Carson. Next Thirumeni inspired the parish with his message about empowerment and doing more for the community around us. Following this we did the drawing of our Yuvajana Sakhyam's Fundraising raffle - 80% of the money collected went towards our church building fund while 20% went to charity. We are happy to report that all three cash prizes were won by 3 of our church members.

The meeting closed with the vote of thanks by Mr. Aju Raju and prayer by Mrs. Checha John. Following the lunch provided by the First Com-

municants, in keeping with tradition of "Going Green" – Thirumeni planted a peach tree, at the front of our church. Over 400 members were in attendance.

*Rev. Mathews Abraham, Vicar
Mrs. Marilyn Abraham, Secretary*

Long Island Mar Thoma Church



The Long Island Mar Thoma Church commenced its Episcopal Visit and 27th Parish Day Celebration with a retreat for the executive committee members led by our Diocesan Bishop, Rt. Rev. Dr. Geevarghese Mar Theodosius on Saturday, July 5, 2014 at 7:00 pm. Based on I Cor. 12:12-31, Thirumeni led the retreat. Thirumeni reminded the executive committee members that God has chosen them to carry out the responsibilities.

His Lordship also said, each individual is chosen by the Church, so we should be trustworthy in carrying out the responsibilities. Every task of ours should be for the glorification of God and for the common good of the Church. The responsibilities have to be carried out in unity. Representatives from various organizations spent this time in fellowship and as a knowledge sharing session with our Diocesan Bishop, Rt. Rev. Dr. Geevarghese Mar Theodosius. Thirumeni listened and offered valuable advice to the organizations based on the strengths and areas of improvement that are possible.

The parish retreat was followed by a tree planting ceremony in the campus by planting a fruit tree in front of the parsonage. The Parish held its 27th Parish Day Celebration on July 6, 2014 with Thirumeni as the Chief Celebrant. The Holy Qurbana with thooyaba service along with the Altar Boys and Covenant Girls started at 9.00 am. That was followed by the parish day program and luncheon fellowship.

Our Diocesan Secretary & Bishop's Secretary, Rev. Binoy J. Thomas, also participated in the Worship Service and Celebrations for the day.

In addition, our Parish also had fourteen students come forward to receive Holy Communion for the first time.

Diocesan Episcopa gave a message at the parish day function, apart from his sermon from the Holy Communion service focus on the theme stewardship.

The luncheon fellowship gave an occasion for the members of the church to interact with to Diocesan Bishop. At the vicarage time was taken by the Diocesan Bishop to go through the registers and to give necessary guidance to the vicar and parish secretary.

*Mrs. Sarah A. Jacob, Secretary
Rev. Shinoi Joseph, Vicar*

Mar Thoma Church of Los Angeles



Los Angeles was blessed to have the Diocesan Episcopa of the Diocese of North America & Europe Rt. Rev. Dr. Geevarghese Mar Theodosius from August 1-4, 2014.

His Lordship met the First Communicants along with their parents at 6.00 p.m. on August 2, 2014. Thirumeni talked about various topics specifically: Place of Bible in our Spiritual life; Faith life & Spiritual experience; Importance of Sacraments esp. Baptism, Confirmation, Confession & Holy Communion; Importance of fasting, etc. Parents also came up with various questions they had in their mind and even the First communicants discussed and got clarifications. The first Communicants and their parents were then briefed about the Dedication service and about the preparations.

The Diocesan Episcopa celebrated the Holy Communion in English at 9.00 a.m. on August 3, 2014, which was preceded by the Thooyaba (Preparatory service). The Vicar of Horeb Mar Thoma Church, Los Angeles Rev. Larry P. Varghese also blessed the occasion with his presence and prayers along with few members from Horeb Mar Thoma Church.

August 3rd was the Mission Sunday of the Diocese and it was the time to remember those working in the mission fields and those who are giv-

ing leadership and support. Thus after the first part of worship service, special prayers for the Diocesan Mission Activities were offered followed by the Suvishesha Nidhi collection. Luke 4: 16 – 22 "Gospel: Good News to All" was the Bible passage & the theme of the sermon, respectively, and His Lordship spoke from the passage and challenged the church to get involved in the Mission activities of the Diocese or in the Neighborhood. We had five First Communicants and His Lordship spoke about the significance of the Holy Communion & then blessed them. It was a blessed moment when our children professed their faith statement publicly. After the worship service, Secretary Dr. Elsy Mathew welcomed all and made the announcements. The 38th Parish Day of the Mar Thoma Church of Los Angeles was celebrated with the Parish Day thanksgiving worship which was followed by prayer by the Vice President Mr. Abraham Mattackal. Then the Vicar Rev. John Oommen welcomed the august gathering to the Episcopal Jubilee & 38th Parish Day Celebrations. Dr. Elsy Mathew, Secretary gave a brief report of the Church which was followed by the Sunday School kids praise song. Mr. Charles John, Lay Leader felicitated His Lordship for the 25th year in the Episcopacy. Thirumeni in his reply speech congratulated and welcomed the First Communicants to the new fellowship and on reaching important a milestone in their personal Christian life. The First Communicants were given certificates by His Lordship. Thirumeni also took the opportunity to thank God for the guidance and invited the parish members to be the part of the vision and mission of the Church esp. in establishing the Kingdom of God. Then Mr. Robin Kuruvilla gave thanks to all present followed by cutting Jubilee Cake by Thirumeni.

His Lordship, in honor of the Going Green project planted an Olive Tree in the front yard of the Church.

*Rev. John Oommen, Vicar
Dr. Elsy Mathew, Secretary*

The Mar Thoma Church of Baltimore



The Diocesan Episcopa, Rt. Rev. Dr. Geevarghese Mar Theodosius visited the Mar Thoma Church of Baltimore on August 9 and 10, 2014. On the August 10th, Thirumeni celebrated Holy Qurbana in English. Thirumeni preached on the Sacrament of Marriage, which many found helpful and timely in their circumstance. Two of our members, Sara Puthur and David Suraj, received first communion. After service, a small program was conducted to celebrate Thirumeni's Episcopal Silver Jubilee. Thirumeni addressed the parish about diocesan and parish matters, encouraging us in our ministry in and through the parish and diocese. A felicitation by Dr. George V. George, in honor of Thirumeni's twenty-five years, was given. A 1st place volleyball trophy was presented to our volleyball team after recently winning at a regional tournament. After taking group pictures with Thirumeni, we planted a tree on the church grounds. This was followed by lunch which was sponsored by the families of our first communicants. Afterward, Thirumeni met with the office bearers of our parish.

Rev. Alex Kolath, Vicar

St. Andrew's Mar Thoma Church, Chatsworth, Los Angeles



The Diocesan Episcopa of the Diocese of North America & Europe, Rt. Rev. Dr. Geevarghese Mar Theodosius visited the St. Andrews Mar Thoma Church, Chatsworth, California, on August 1 and 2, 2014.

On August 2, 2014, Thirumeni celebrated the Holy Communion in English which started at 9.00 am. After the first part of worship service, we had special prayers for the Diocesan Mission Activities followed by the video presentation about the "Mission Activities taken by the Diocese in America and in India". And the Mission Sunday was celebrated by becoming part at least by involving in the offertory set apart for the Suvishesha Nidhi.

His Lordship spoke from Luke 4: 16 – 22 on the topic "Gospel: Good News to All". He reminded the gathering about their roots. He exhorted the gathering by saying:

- Who we are and what is our duty?
- We belong to Reformed Church. Therefore, we are a Missionary Church.
- Sabbath is a celebration, celebration among Creator and Creation.
- Celebrating the freedom in Christ, thus becoming part of reconciliation & healing ministry.
- We are called for empowerment mission & not to be conquerors.
- Called every one for active participation in the Mission activities.

After the Holy Communion, announcements were done by the Secretary Mr. Edwin Rajan, immediately followed by the Felicitation meeting. The meeting started with a word of prayer offered by Mr. Mathew C Vallipa-

North Coast Financial Group
an Office of MetLife

1979 Marcus Avenue,
Suite E-110,
Lake Success, NY 11040

Business Philosophy

My goal is to provide families and business owners with assistance in building their financial freedom. I have the skills, commitments, knowledge and experience required to help meet my client's established goals. My personal goal is to become a lifetime resource for each and every client.

SABU LUKOSE, MBA

Financial Services Representative
Financial Advisor



President Conference,
National Association of Insurance and
Financial Advisors (NAIFA) Member,
Member Million Dollar Round Table (MDRT),
National Quality Award
National Sales Achievement Award

E-mail: slukose@metlife.com

www.sabulukose.com

Ph: (516) 326-7033
Cell: (516) 902-4300
Cell: (813) 333-1999

Estate Conservation Strategies

Retirement Planning:

Fixed and Variable Annuities
IRAs and IRA consolidation
401(k), 403(b) Roll-Over

Insurance:

Life Insurance
(Term - Universal - Variable-Whole)
Disability Income Insurance
Long-Term care Insurance
Health Insurance

Investment Strategies:

Mutual Funds

Business Solutions:

Buy/Sell Agreement Funding
Key Person Insurance

Business continuation Strategies
Executive Compensation
Pension and Profit Sharing
Qualified Retirement Plans
(SEP/Simple IRA/IRA/401K)
Group Benefit/Disability PI

Education Funding plan:

529 College Plans/Life Insurance

Metropolitan Life Insurance Company (MLIC), New York, NY 10166. Securities products and investment advisory services offered by MetLife Securities, Inc. (MSI) (Member FINRA/SIPC) and a Registered Investment Advisor, New York, NY 10166. Some health insurance products offered by unaffiliated insurers through the Enterprise General Insurance Agency Inc. (EGA), 400 Atrium Drive, 3rd Floor, South Wing, Somerset, NJ 08873-4175. MLIC, MSI and the EGA are MetLife companies. I will work with you and your tax and legal advisers to help you select the most appropriate product solutions to suit your specific needs and circumstances. L0814388616[exp0816][AZ,IL,IN,KS,MA,MD,MI,NJ,NY,PA,TX]

MetLife®

rambil, and then the Rev. John Oommen, Vicar, welcomed all especially the Diocesan Bishop. Sunday school kids presented an energetic action song followed by felicitating Thirumeni on his Episcopal Silver Jubilee by the Vice – President Mr. Rajan Mathai.

His Lordship was thrilled with the enthusiasm of the Sunday school kids and encouraged them. In his reply speech Thirumeni remembered how the LORD lead him, Mar Athanasius & Mar Coorilos through the years serving the LORD and his people at large. The gathering praised God for the way the Almighty lead the anointed ones and his Lordship also exhorted all to be part of His Kingdom through words and deeds.

Mr. Abraham P. Mathew, the Trustee – Accountant offered the vote of thanks, and the meeting closed with prayer and benediction by Thirumeni followed by Kaimuth.

Then all gathered at the fellowship hall to celebrate the Episcopal Silver Jubilee by 'Cake cutting'. As part of the celebration 'Tree saplings' were distributed to members of the church. Then all joined together for the 'Fellowship Lunch'. Thirumeni took time to talk with youngsters and emphasized the importance of participation in the liturgical life of the Church.

*Rev. John Oommen, Vicar
Mr. Edwin Rajan, Secretary*

St. Thomas Mar Thoma Church, Chicago



The Rt. Rev. Dr. Geevarghese Mar Theodosius, Diocesan Bishop, visited the St. Thomas Mar Thoma Church, Chicago on July 20, 2014. Thirumeni celebrated the Holy Communion Service. 6 young people (4 girls and 2 boys) received their First Communion and became full communicant members of the church. After the Communion Service, there was a meeting to felicitate Thirumeni on his Episcopal Silver Jubilee. Words of felicitations were offered and Thirumeni's untiring efforts to meet the spiritual needs of his flock were praised. As a part of the "Going Green" project of the Diocese, a maple tree was planted in the church compound by Thirumeni along with the Achens and the parishioners. This was followed by a fellowship meal. Rev. V. M. Mathew (Youth Chaplain, North East Region), Rev. George Cherian (Youth Chaplain, Mid-West Region) attended the service. Thirumeni's visit was a blessing and an encouragement to everyone.

Rev. Shaji Thomas, Vicar

Tabore Mar Thoma Church, Staten Island

Diocesan Episcopa Rt. Rev. Dr. Geevarghese Mar Theodosius visited the Tabore MTC, Staten Island, on Sunday, June 15, 2014. The Holy Communion was arranged for 3:30 PM. Rev. Y. George, Vicar of the Parish welcomed everyone.



Holy Qurbana was celebrated by Mar Theodosius, and the Diocesan Secretary Rev. Binoy J. Thomas preached on the Holy Trinity, based on Matthew 28:16-20. There were 7 first communicants, and the Diocesan Bishop blessed them by conducting their dedication service. He also spoke on the significance of the Holy Qurbana. There was an interaction session after the worship service. The Secretary of the Parish Mr. Varghese made the announcements. The Vice-President Mr. Oommen Abraham said the concluding prayer followed by a fellowship meal.

Rev. Y. George, Vicar

Colorado Horeb Mar Thoma Church, Denver

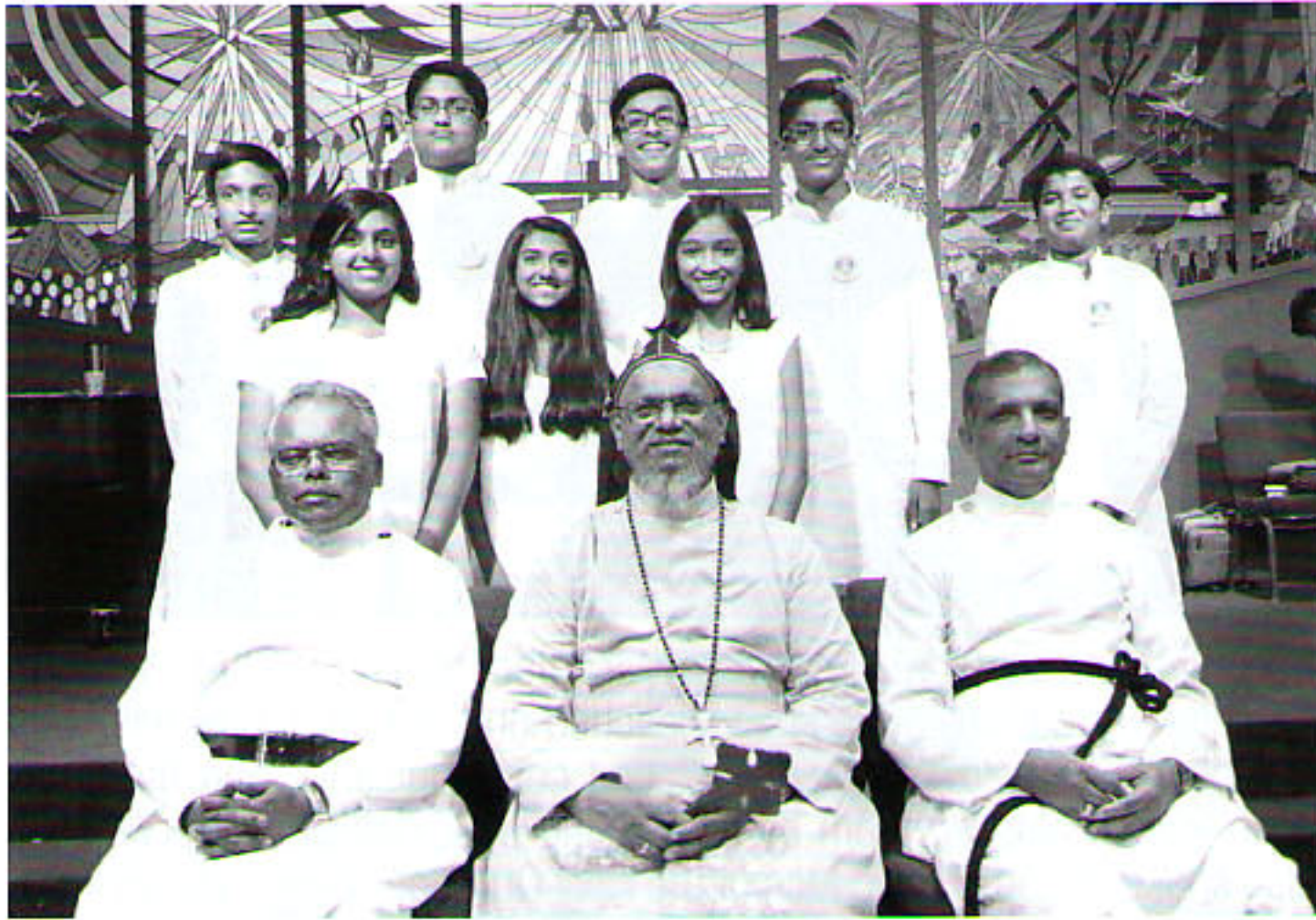


The Colorado Horeb Mar Thoma Church (CHMTC), Denver, was blessed with the visit of our Diocesan Episcopa, Rt. Rev. Dr. Geevarghese Mar Theodosius, from August 22 to 24, 2014. Thirumeni had an informal session with some of the youth of the church on the evening of August 22 at the residence of Mr. Babu George Mathew. On the evening of Aug 23, 2014, Thirumeni celebrated the Holy Communion service in English at 5:30 pm and preached on the need for being inclusive and reaching out to the community and others around us. Thirumeni also congratulated Rev. V. G. Varughese for celebrating 25 years in service for the Lord. Rev. V. G. Varughese, Vicar of CHMTC, gave the welcome address and Abigail Kayley George presented Thirumeni with a bouquet of flowers. After the Holy Communion Service, Thirumeni addressed the congregation and stressed on the importance of reading and expanding our vision. Thirumeni emphasized the need for the congregation to have not just Altar Boys but Covenant Girls also to participate in the regular church services. Thirumeni also addressed the Executive Committee members and offered insights for follow-up for the Committee members. This was followed by a short presentation by the Diocesan Assembly representative Mr. Joseph Daniel regarding the "Messenger." The evening ended with a fellowship dinner arranged by the members of the parish.

Rev. V. G. Varughese, Vicar of CHMTC

Phoenix Mar Thoma Church

The Phoenix Mar Thoma Church was blessed by the visit of our Diocesan Episcopa Rt. Rev. Dr. Geevarghese Mar Theodosius on Sunday, August 24, 2014. Thirumeni celebrated the Holy Qurbana Service at



5:30 pm in Malayalam. Vicar Rev. V. G. Varghese, the Diocesan Program Manager Rev. Dr. Philip Varghese, and lay leaders Mr. Rajesh Mathew and Mr. Ferrin Thomas assisted in the Qurbana service. During the service, eight youth from the parish received their First Communion. Thirumeni also dedicated Altar Boys using a special order of worship. Thirumeni's sermon on the sacrament of Holy Communion was enlightening and inspirational for all, as well as contextual for the first communicants. Following the Qurbana service, a meeting was held to felicitate Theodosius Thirumeni, who on December 9, 2014, will celebrate the 25th anniversary of consecration as Episcopa of the Mar Thoma Church. The Vicar Rev. V. G. Varghese welcomed Thirumeni to the Phoenix parish and expressed gratitude for Thirumeni's leadership and vision for the diocese. The Vice-President Dr. Simon Thomas, on behalf of the congregation expressed words of felicitation and prayed for God's grace in Thirumeni's continued ministry and leadership. Also at this meeting, new graduates were felicitated by the secretary Dr. Itty Itty, and Thirumeni presented them with new Bibles. The worship service was followed by a dinner which offered an opportunity for Thirumeni to meet with members individually.

Rev. V.G. Varghese, Vicar, Phoenix Mar Thoma Church

Rt. Rev. Dr. Thomas Mar Theethos Thirumeni's Visit to Trinity Mar Thoma Church Houston



Rt. Rev. Dr. Thomas Mar Theethos, Episcopa, visited Trinity MTC, Houston on June 8, 2014. Thirumeni celebrated Holy Communion Service in English at 9.00 am, and 13 children received First Communion. Thiru-



meni gave a message during the service and a talk to the First Communicants. After the Holy Qurbana, Thirumeni inaugurated the Thanksgiving Program and gave an inspiring message. Thirumeni also turned the switch 'on' to launch the redesigned and modified website of the Church, and the inauguration of Healing Hearts, which is a fellowship of survivors from cancer and other serious diseases to have fellowship together and to support others who go through serious illnesses or difficulties in life.

During the meeting, Thirumeni received the funds for the parish towards the Trinity Center Project and the 40th year Souvenir. The parents of the First Communicants arranged fellowship lunch for all. Thirumeni also attended an area prayer meeting on Sunday evening.

OBITUARIES

Mrs. Liza Mathai



Mrs. Liza Mathai of the London Prayer group Ontario, Canada was the eldest daughter of late Mr. V. J. John and Mrs. Annamma John, Vengallottu House, Kuttapuzha, Tiruvalla. She passed away at the age of 57, and was the beloved wife of Mr. P. M. Mathai, Plammoottil House, Othara, Kerala, and the loving mother Mr. Biju Mathai. Her son the late Mr. Libin Mathai predeceased her in 1998. The Mathai family came to Canada from Bombay about 22 years ago. Mrs. Liza Mathai worked as a Registered Nurse in Canada. She will always be loved and deeply missed by the family and friends.

Rev. Mathew Baby, Vicar, St. Mathew's Mar Thoma Church, Toronto

Mrs. Annamma Joseph

Mrs. Annamma Joseph (Kunjannamma) was born on April 27, 1939, as the youngest among five siblings, and raised in Vadasserikara until she got married and moved to Mazhavancheri Parambil, Eraviperoor. She was first diagnosed with breast cancer in 2010, and underwent treatment in CMC Hospital, Vellore. She came to Canada in May 2012 to live with her oldest son, Mr. Oommen Joseph (Saja). Unfortunately, the cancer relapsed in February 2014, and on March 28, 2014, she was called to her eternal home. She was an active member of the

St. Mathew's Mar Thoma Church, Toronto, and was a regular attendee at the Edavaka Mission, Senior's Fellowship and Sevika Sanghom functions. She was the wife of Mr. Joseph Oommen (Baby), and is survived by her children Saja & Gigi, Santosh & Leena, Suja & Saju and grandchildren Kiran, Kathleen, Karen, Allen, Aaron, Kevin, Christine & Kenny. She will always be loved and deeply missed by her family and friends.

Rev. Mathew Baby, Vicar, St. Mathew's Mar Thoma Church, Toronto

Dr. Joemon T. Varughese

Dr. Joemon T. Varughese (Milltown, NJ) was called to eternal rest on Sunday, June 29, 2014, at the age of forty-six. He was the youngest of the seven children of the late Mr. T. M. Varughese and Mrs. Kunjamma Varughese (Kolath Tholloor House, Kozhencherry, Kerala, India). Joemon is survived by his wife, Bibina, two beautiful children, Jonah and Angelica, his mother, four sisters, and a brother. His eldest brother passed away in February 2014. Joemon was a devoted, loving, and selfless husband and father and was also committed to serving the church and the community. Over the years, he had served St. Stephen's MTC (NJ) as its Secretary, Lay Leader, and Diocesan Assembly Member. Dr. Joemon Varughese's Wake and Memorial Service was conducted on July 2, 2014, at the St. Stephen's MTC. The Funeral Service, officiated by Rt. Rev. Dr. Geevarghese Mar Theodosius (Diocesan Bishop), was held on July 3, 2014, and Joemon was laid to rest at Elwood Cemetery in North Brunswick, NJ.



Rev. Christopher Phil Daniel, Vicar, St. Stephen's MTC, New Jersey

Mrs. Chinnamma Kochummen



Mrs. Chinnamma Kochummen, wife of (the Late) Mr. K.O. Kochummen, Kalarical House, Kozhencherry Kerala (25 Wilclay Avenue, Markham, Ontario) was called to her heavenly abode on Friday, the June 13, 2014. The Service of Committal was led by Rev. Dr. P. L. John Panicker and Rev. Mathew Baby on Wednesday June 18, 2014. She is the daughter of the Late Mr. Thomas Pappy, and the Late Mrs. Mariamma Pappy Meppurathu House, Elanthoor. P.O., Kerala. She was an

active member of the Canadian Mar Thoma Church, Toronto where she was a member of the choir, Sevika Sangam, and the Sunday School. She is survived by her daughter, Elizabeth, her son-in-law Baiju and her grandson Everest.

Rev. Shibu Samuel, Vicar, Canadian MTC, Toronto.

Mrs. Ponnamma Ninan

Mrs. Ponnamma Madathiparambil Ninan, wife of Dr. M. M. Ninan (Brother of renowned theologian of the Mar Thoma Church Dr. M.M. Thomas, Tiruvalla), passed away on July 16, 2014 here in San Francisco, CA. She was the Executive Committee member of the church and Vice-president of Sevika Sangham. Her unwavering faith in God, her leadership in church and Sevika sangham activities, and her motherly love and affection to our church family will be dearly missed. She is survived by her loving husband Dr. M. M. Ninan and four children - Premeela Ninan, Neal Mammen, Preethy Edamalla and Ajith Ninan. Rt. Rev. Dr. Geevarghese Mar Theodosius Tirumeni conducted the funeral service on July 12, 2014 at San Jose, CA. Rev. Biju P. Simon led the burial service.



Rev. Biju P. Simon - Vicar, San Francisco MTC

Mr. Easo George (Ranjith)

Mr. Easo George (Ranjith), son of the Late K. E. George of Kumbanad, Kannumpurath, passed away in Connecticut. He is survived by his wife, Mrs. Suja George (Vennikulam Pallakazha); his children, Tharika George and Tanner George; and his siblings, Pallathengal Susheela, Rajan, Dr. Neil (Sweden). He was a member of the St. Thomas MTC, Yonkers, NY. The Funeral worship took place at the United Methodist Church, and



the internment took place at the Center Cemetery in New Milford, Connecticut on Saturday, August 2, 2014.

Rev. K. K. Samuel, St. Thomas MTC, Yonkers, NY

Mr. Babukunju Lukose

Mr. Babukunju Lukose was born on Feb 9, 1948, as the second oldest child of three children to the late Mr. Mathew Lukose and Mrs. Sosamma Lukose in Puthoor-Quilon, Kerala, India. On July 20, 2014, the gates of heaven opened for him, now he is home with his maker Jesus Christ. As a young man, he was very goal oriented as well as a kind and caring person. With his charming personality, he was able to establish his first position in Indian Air Force. He is survived by his mother Sosamma Lukose (India), his wife of 40 years, Chinnamma Babukunju (Kunjumol), his two children, son Charles and daughter Ciby, and his daughter-in-law Mrunali and Son-in-law Sunil; his grandchildren, Sarina, Sonya, Sarah, his brother, P. L. Thankachan & family, and sister Mercy Subash & family. He immigrated to the United States in 1975 and held various positions in several companies. He remained as a strong as well as a positive influence to his family and friends. Mr. Babukunju Lukose is beloved by many and will be missed tremendously and will remain in our hearts forever.



Rev. Reji Thomas, Vicar, Philadelphia MTC, PA

Aby Idicula Cherian

Aby Idicula Cherian, age 33, Immanuel Mar Thoma Church, Houston, Texas, passed away on June 7, 2014. He is son of Kurien Idiculla (Kunjumon) of Chengannur, Therakathu House and Aliyamma Idicula (Kunjumol). He is survived by his parents and brother Sibi Kurian.

Rev. Saju Mathew, Vicar, Immanuel MTC, Houston, TX



Abraham Chacko



Abraham Chacko, affectionately known as Thampy, Thampichayan and Chachen, was born on August 21, 1937 to the late V.C. Chacko & the late Mariamma Chacko (Choorackal House) in Othara, Kerala, India. He passed away on June 7, 2014. Chachen studied at the Punalur English High School, the Vijaya Institute of Commerce, and at the Abraham Mar Thoma Memorial Bible Institute, where he worked in the Voluntary Evangelistic Association Office from 1959 to 1964. He came to the United States in 1986 and resided in Staten Island, New York, for twenty-one years and then Edison, New Jersey for the last seven years. Chachen had many interests and passions in his life, with the foremost being his love and dedication for Christ and the Mar Thoma Church. While in India, he was an active and dedicated member of St. Thomas Mar Thoma Church Piravanthoor. Chachen provided oversight throughout the construction of the Piravanthoor church. He served as the Sunday School Headmaster and Lay Leader for several years. He served as the first choir-master of The Mar Thoma Church Staten Island. He was also involved in various organizations as a Church Building Committee Member, Edavaka Mission Secretary, Area Prayer Group Leader, and Senior Fellowship Convener. Chachen's ability to recount verses in the Bible was commendable. Chachen was an avid writer. Chachen's love for the Bible inspired him to write and publish many biblical articles, summaries. He is survived by his wife Susy; his six children including his sons Saji, Viji, Aji, and Jose and his daughters Moni and Regi; their respective spouses Nisha, Siby, Minos, Dona, Jolly and Sunil; 14 grandchildren Sajin, Sanjana, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, James, Rhea, Alina, Isabella, Gina, Gini, Gianna, Sugil and Rogin; his sister Thankamma George in Wyanad, his brothers Cherian Chacko and Jacob Chacko; and his numerous nephews, nieces, grand-nephews and grandnieces.

Mary Jacob-Alex, The Mar Thoma Church Staten Island

Europe Region Family Conference



The 32nd UK & Europe Region Family Conference was hosted by the Tabore MTC, Manchester, and was conducted at the Yarnfield Park Training Centre, Staffordshire, UK from August 29 - 31, 2014. The theme was "Christian Family Life in a Migrated Context". The conference was conducted under the leadership of Rt. Rev. Dr. Geevarghese Mar Theodosius. Rev. Alexander Tharakan, Vicar, Tabore MTC, Manchester, welcomed everyone. Rev. Jaisen A. Thomas, Vicar of Immanuel MTC, Virginia, led the general session, Rev. Canon Dr. Jules Gomes led the youth session, and Rev. Dr. Thomas Philips provided leadership. All the Achens in Europe and about 560 delegates attended the conference, which was an enriching and blessed experience for all.

"Holding forth the word of life..."

Philippians 2:16

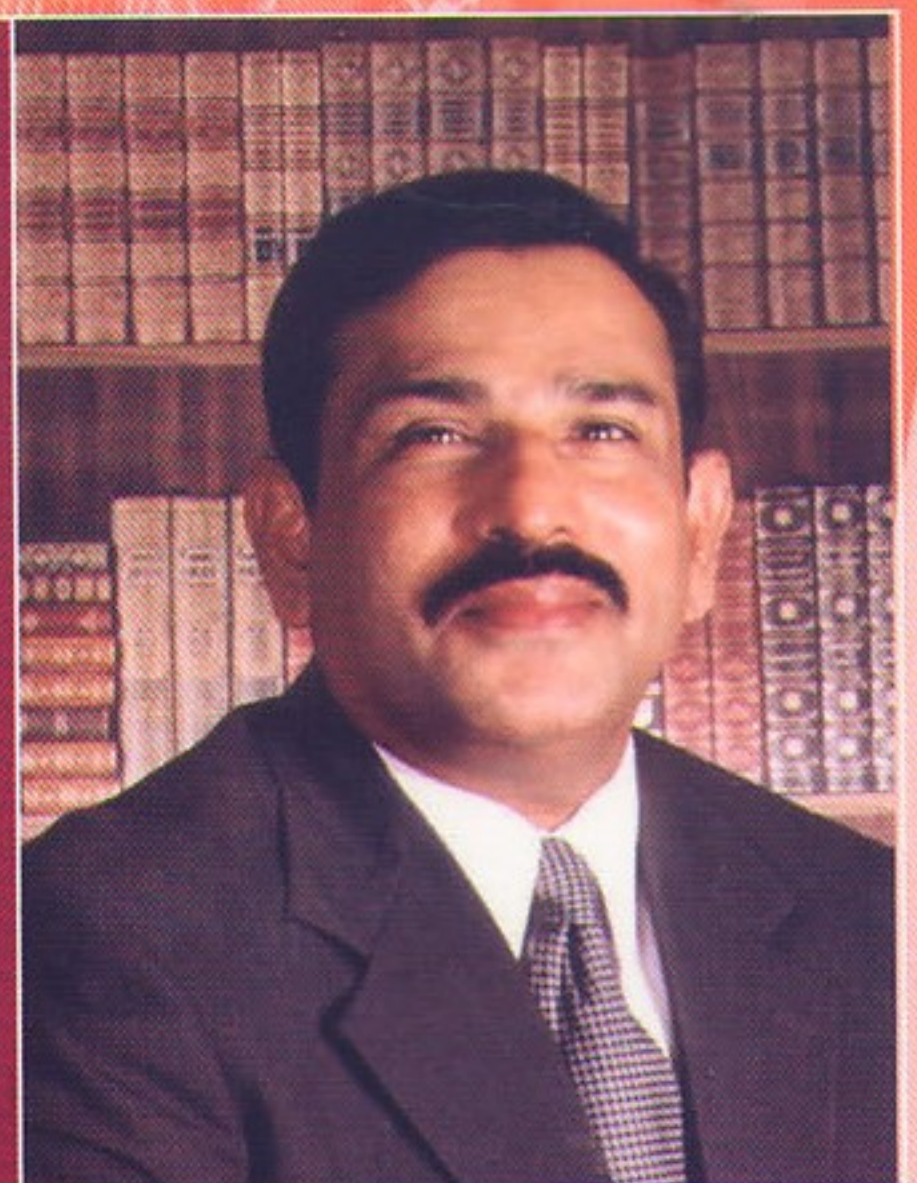


**Justice
is being
served,
to the
Asian
Community**

Lal Varghese

.....
Attorney at Law

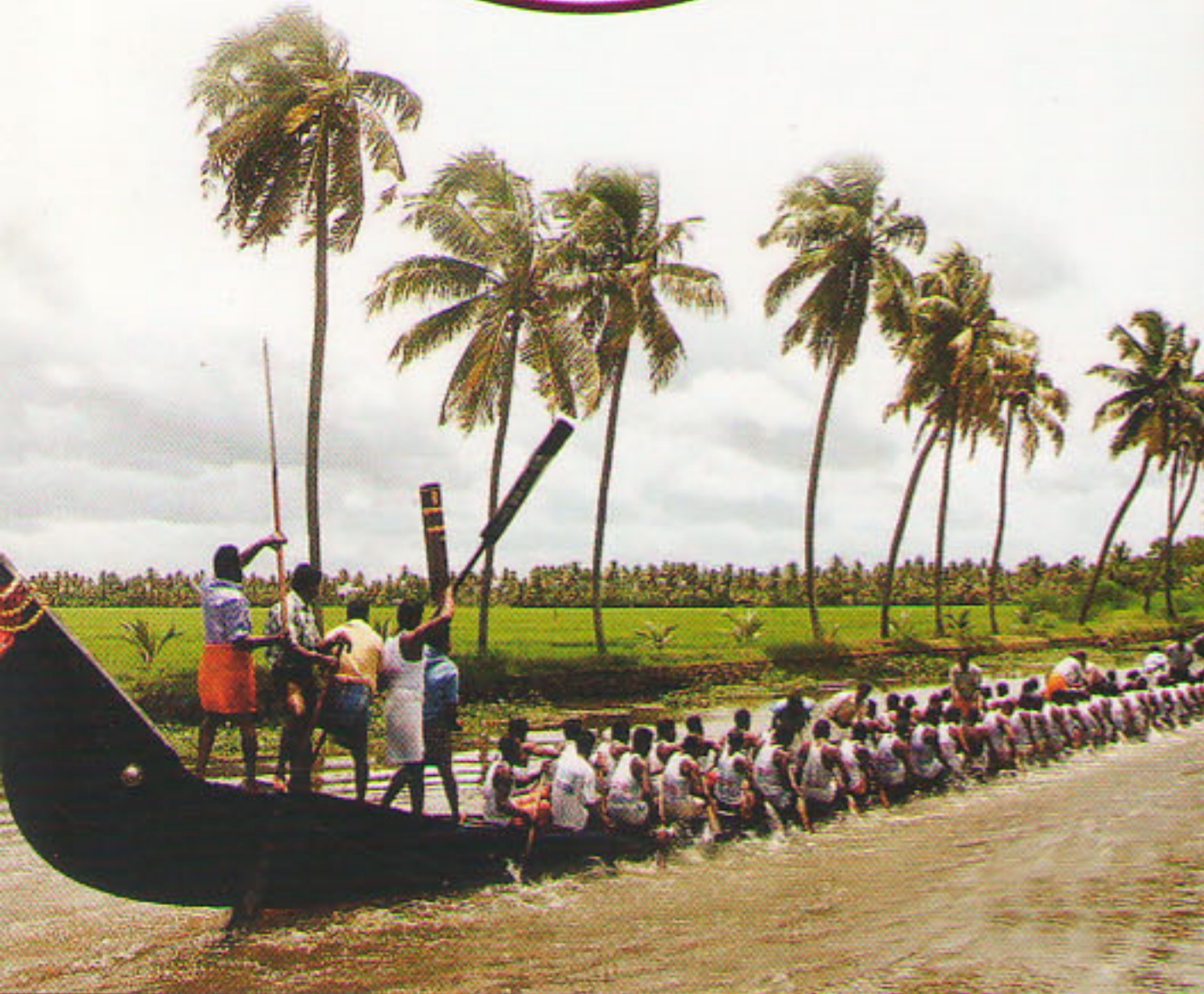
U.S. Immigration
H1-B Visa
Fiance Visa
Work Permit
Green Cards
Student Visas
Visitor Visas
K-1, K-3 Visas
R1 Visas, Etc



(972) 788 - 0777 (Main), (972) 788-1555 (Direct)
Fax (972) 556-1109, E-Mail: attylal@aol.com
www.indiaimmigrationusa.com

Law Offices of Lal Varghese, PLLC
1111 Kinwest Parkway, Suite 120,
Las Colinas, Irving, Texas 75063-3409

Diocese of N. America & UK
of Mar Thoma Church
2320 Merrick Avenue,
Merrick, NY 11566



Bom & MIPTV

BOM & Malayalam IPTV
Together can serve you
with better service.



Call for FREE M-Box: Toll Free 1-732-648-0576
PACKAGE STARTING FROM \$ 19.99



20,000 ൽ കൂടുതൽ നോർത്ത് അമേരിക്കൻ മലയാളികൾ ആസ്വദിക്കുന്ന The Best Quality Picture നിങ്ങൾക്കും ആസ്വദിക്കാം...

29 Malayalam Channels & Free 15 Hindi Channels

Order Online @ www.malayalamiptv.net

ഏഷ്യാനെറ്റ് ഉൾപ്പെടെയുള്ള എല്ലാ മലയാളം ചാനലുകളും ലഭ്യമാണ്

Shalom TV-യിലെ ആസ്വാദകരമായ ക്രിസ്തീയ പ്രസംഗ പരമ്പരകൾ ശ്രവിക്കൂ...
അമേരിക്കയിലുള്ള നമ്മുടെ കമ്മ്യൂണിറ്റി വാർത്തകൾ പ്രക്ഷേപണം ചെയ്യണമെന്ന് ആഗ്രഹിക്കുന്നവർ ബന്ധപ്പെടുക - www.malayalamiptv.net