

Diocese of North America and Europe

# The Mar Thoma *Besorah*

The *Besorah* is an Official Publication of the Diocese of North America and Europe

## MESSAGE FROM THE DIOCESAN EPISCOPA

*“The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.” -Proverbs 9: 10*

What do we expect in a ‘Talent show’? What do we want to show? What do we want the world to see? In a recent Diocesan Conference at Houston, a young teenager stood before an audience of about 600 grownups and recited Psalm 119 verses 1 to 50 from her memory. That was impressive! The diocese witnessed a number of conferences for children in July: Junior-Senior conferences for the children in the Northeast, Southeast and Midwest regions. Most of our parishes held Vacation Bible School classes for our children. In a casual conversation, I heard that our “modernized” community considers asking children to memorize Bible verses as something that causes them stress. Is it true? While little children may obey when asked to memorize Bible verses, the adolescents might ask, “Why should we memorize Bible verses when any Bible verse is visible and readily accessible through our smart phones and other electronic gadgets?” In a technocratic world, it is easy to have our hearts and minds replaced by technological tools. Information drawn from Google seems to minimize the significance of grasping revelatory truths. Reasoning seems to dominate and overcome the need for developing the depth of understanding the vast mysteries and miracles around us. Rational discourses replace emotions and feelings that are expressed through hearty conversations. True! Updated information may be available at our finger tips, but not wisdom.

Do we find delight in the law of the Lord and in practicing them in our daily life? In a home where I visited and stayed I found the father and mother spending time with the children first, before they said their family prayers. Each child was helped by the father or the mother to read the Bible portions (stories), interpreting them and helping the child to say the story in his/her own words. I could see the delight of the children in reading the Bible. Wisdom is different from knowledge. The wise king Solomon says: “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.” Dear parents and Sunday School (and VBS) teachers, engage in teaching the children to memorize Bible portions. This will help nurture our children spiritually.

The Psalmist says, “*I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you.*” (Ps. 119: 11)

**Mar Theodosius+**

## MTVEA Diocesan Conference

The 12<sup>th</sup> Diocesan MTVEA conference was held on July 23<sup>rd</sup> to July 26<sup>th</sup>, 2015 at Immanuel Mar Thoma Church, Houston and hosted by its parish mission. On Thursday July 23, 2015, Rt. Rev. Dr. Geevarghese Mar Theodosius Episcopa inaugurated the conference. The conference started with a colorful procession, followed by the worship. Rev. Dr. Saju Mathew welcomed all the delegates. Rt. Rev. Dr. Thomas Mar Theethose Episcopa from our Mumbai Diocese was the main speaker. Dr. Vino Daniel led the

Bible studies and various sessions. Rev. V.G. Varghese and Mrs. Annie George Varghese also led various other sessions. The program included intercessory prayers, songs, talent show and witnessing session. Mr. Reji K. Varghese served as the convener. Around 550 delegates participated this blessed occasion.



## Junior-Senior Conference: Northeast Region

The 32nd annual Junior-Senior Conference of the Northeast Regional Sunday School was held at Ramapo College, Mahwah, New Jersey from July 9<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup>. More than 250 delegates from various churches in the region attended this four-day conference. This year's theme, "Purpose Driven," was centered on John 15:16 *"You did not choose me, I chose you and appointed you so that you might go and bear fruit – fruit that will last – and so that whatever you ask in my name the Father will give you."* Diocesan Bishop Rt. Rev. Dr. Geevarghese Mar Theodosius inaugurated the conference on Thursday,



July 9<sup>th</sup> and introduced the conference theme. Regional secretary, Mrs. Shiby George, welcomed the leaders and dignitaries. Treasurer, Mr. Abe Tharakan, introduced speakers of the conference. Rev. Jacob John, regional president, gave the presidential remarks. The vote of thanks was given by Mr. George Babu. The regional coordinator, Mr. Jojoy Koshy, Rev. Abraham Kuruvila, Rev. Dennis Abraham, and Rev. Shibi Abraham led various sessions. Sunday School students shared the theme using video presentations. All Sunday Schools participated at Friday's Talent Night, coordinated by Ms. Anitha Oommen from Carmel Mar Thoma Church, Boston. The conference ended with Holy Communion service on Sunday July 12, 2015. The conference was a great blessing to all those who attended.

## Junior-Senior Conference: Southeast Region



The 4<sup>th</sup> annual Junior-Senior Conference of the Southeast Regional Sunday School was held at Ramapo College, Mahwah, New Jersey from July 16<sup>th</sup> through 19<sup>th</sup>. Over 200 delegates from many churches in the region attended this four-day conference.

The theme for the conference was "Fear of the Lord is the Beginning of Wisdom" taken from Proverbs 9:10. The symposium for juniors, led by Justin and Mr. George Sam, on Saturday discussed "Applying Wisdom in School Life." Two separate teams consisting of leaders, clergy, praise and worship, and prayer warriors assisted the Witnessing and Dedication sessions. A large number of juniors and seniors including teachers witnessed and dedicated/rededicated their lives to Jesus Christ. A special conference call prayer line was set up to pray for the youths of the region. It is still active and meets on every Thursday at 9:00pm for prayer. During the closing program, a slideshow showcased the highlights of the conference. Holding hands in unity, the 2015 Junior-Senior Conference ended with a special song from the Praise and Worship team, followed by prayer and benediction.

## Europe Regional Youth Conference

By the grace of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, the 1<sup>st</sup> Mar Thoma Youth Conference of Europe was conducted successfully. Carmel Mar Thoma Youth Fellowship, Liverpool was the host to this blessed event, and it took place at the Cefn Lea Conference and Holiday Park in Newtown, Wales from the June 26<sup>th</sup> to June 28<sup>th</sup>, 2015. The theme for the conference 'Soar on Wings like Eagles' was deliberated from *Isaiah 40:31 "but those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint."* The subject matters explored were very relevant for the youths of this generation and was easy to relate to.



This 3 day conference had over 125 delegates involving the participation of youths from 9 different Mar Thoma parishes and congregations across Europe. The conference was blessed with the presence of Rev. Jameson K. from Dublin, Ireland as a speaker along with the well renowned authors and missionaries Rod Gilbert and Ruthie Gilbert. Rev Dr. Thomas Philips and family, Rev. Vinoj Varghese and family, Rev. Roney Cheriyan and family, Pushpa J. Punamadam Kochamma, along with several other adult members who participated and supported the conference for its smooth running. The youth members were able to enjoy, bond and take away significant life lessons throughout the various programs that the conference provided.

# North America Regional Youth Conferences

## Southern Region



The XIV Southern Regional Youth Conference was hosted by the St. Mark's Mar Thoma Church in Tampa, Florida. The conference began on Thursday, July 16, 2015 with registration at 5:00pm. The conference officially started after a session of praise and worship, a welcome speech by Ann Mary and a prayer led by Rev. Joykutty Daniel. The main speakers of the conference were Rev. Jaisen A. Thomas and Mr. Sam John. One hundred and one youth delegates from a combination of 8 different churches attended the conference. The theme of the conference was "More Than Conquerors", with the main verse taken from Ephesians 6:10-11. This conference has been a life-changing experience for many youths. The powerful messages from Mr. Sam John and Rev. Jaisen A. Thomas have struck an interest for personal change in the lives of both the older and the younger youths who were present.

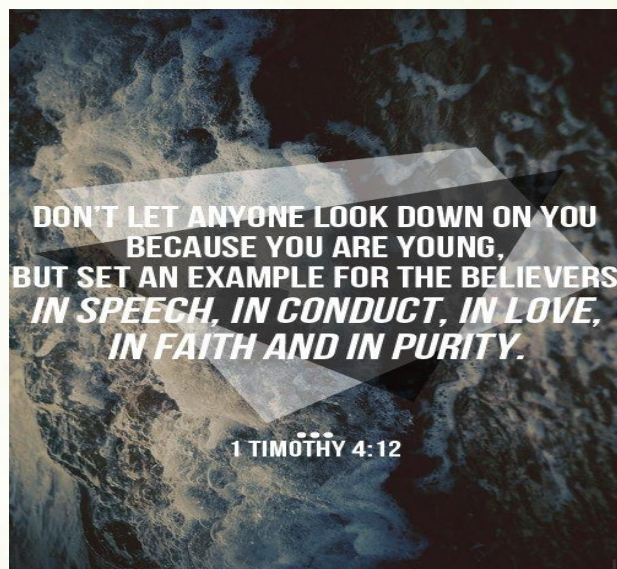
## Western Region



The Mar Thoma Church Western Regional Youth Conference was held on July 9<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup>, 2015 at Alliance Redwoods Conference Center in Occidental, California. The conference was hosted jointly by the Youth Fellowships of The San Francisco Mar Thoma Church and The Mar Thoma Church of Silicon Valley. Rev. Larry P. Varghese, Vicar of Horeb Mar Thoma Church, was the main speaker for the conference. Achen led the talks on the theme, "Journey" based on Matthew 17: 20. Achen talked throughout the sessions about "Faith & Truth, Faith & Hope, Faith & Testing and Faith & Works" in our Christian Journey of Faith. All the main talks and bible studies were a blessing to all. The new spiritual experience was a blessing to all of the attendees.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

- August 21-23  
**Europe Region Family Conference**  
Yarnfield, UK
- September 1-3  
**Sabha Prathinidhi Mandalam**  
Thiruvalla
- October 2-4  
**Diocesan Yuvajana**  
**Sakhyam Conference**  
Silicon Valley, San Francisco
- October 8-11  
**Diocesan Sevika Sanghom Conference**  
New Jersey
- October 14-17  
**Diocesan Senior Fellowship Conference**  
Houston, Texas
- October 23-25  
**Southern Regional Family Conference**  
Tampa, Florida



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*The Besorah is a brief overview of some of the Diocesan news and activities. For more information please refer to the Diocesan website and/or the Messenger*