

joy to the
World
the Lord has come



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

Dearly beloved in Christ,

Once again, it is the Christmas season. All around we see the decorations and the scenes that depict Christmas. For some it is merely a holiday season and the secular world is attempting to take the religious aspects away from Christmas. The decorations beckon us for merriment, partying and late night events. Amidst all such activities, it is imperative for us to pause for a moment and catch the essence of Christmas.

We are in the advent season. The Bible tells us about how even God prepared the world and history for the Christ-event. God sent John the Baptist to prepare the way for the Lord. God prepared Zachariah and Elizabeth as well as Joseph and Mary to be obedient to God's call. Their obedience and commitment enabled the shepherds and the wise men to see the baby Jesus in a spirit of worship. Should we not have this preparation and worship experience during this advent season to see what the Lord is doing in our life and history?

Christmas is the Good news of God incarnating in human situations. The spirit of humility, kindness, and self emptying are all seen in God, who initiates to incarnate in baby Jesus and identify with the suffering humanity and the marginalized. The "good tidings of great joy" to all humanity is the salvation that God has brought to all in and through Jesus Christ. Let us have the joy of God entering into our lives in Christ Jesus and proclaiming the good news to all around that God's love beckons all of us to God's Kingdom. Being in God's Kingdom is the greatest treasure one can possess and celebrate.

I wish you all a very blessed Christmas!

Mar Theodosius+, Diocesan Episcopa

Silver Jubilee of the Episcopal Consecration of Mar Theodosius



Rt. Rev. Dr. Geevarghese Mar Theodosius, the Diocesan Bishop of the Mar Thoma Diocese of North America and Europe, will be completing 25 years as an Episcopa of the Mar Thoma Church on December 9, 2014. Mar Theodosius was consecrated as Episcopa on December 9, 1989. Mar Theodosius' vision is to give administrative participation to the regional level in order to increase the involvement of the members of the Church and to strengthen the growth of the Diocese. He has a keen interest in responding to the concerns of the younger generations and is attempting new initiatives to make the church have a more relevant and meaningful ministry to the church members and to the community living in and around the local parishes.

Diocesan Silver Jubilee Grand Finale in New York

The yearlong celebration of the Silver Jubilee of the formation of the Mar Thoma Church Diocese of North America and Europe concluded with the finale program in New York on Saturday, November 23, 2013. This was also an occasion for the inauguration of the Silver Jubilee of the Episcopal Consecration of the Diocesan Bishop Rt. Rev. Dr. Geevarghese Mar Theodosius. The Metropolitan of the Church, Dr. Joseph Mar Thoma, was the chief guest of the event. **(For details visit the Diocesan Website [www. marthomanae.org](http://www.marthomanae.org))**



Seminar in the Midwest Region



A Seminar on the “*Challenges and Vision of the New Generation in the Spiritual Journey of the Diocese*” was held on November 2 at the Bethel MTC, Frankfort. This was the 4th seminar held in the Midwest region to commemorate the Silver Jubilee of the Diocese. The Seminar began with prayer by the Rev. Biju P. Simon and Rev. George Cherian welcomed the participants. A paper on the aforementioned theme was presented by Joe Thomas, Superintendent of the Chicago MTC Sunday School. Reba Varghese from Chicago MTC and Sanil Thomas from Bethel MTC shared their reflections on the topic.

Dialogue in Dallas on the Journey and Growth of the Diocese

The Mar Thoma Churches in the Dallas Center organized a dialogue, which was held at the MTC of Dallas Farmers Branch on November 2, 2013. Rev. Saji Thomas presided this meeting. Mr. Thomas Mathew, member of MTC of Dallas presented a paper on “The Challenges faced by the Diaspora Community during the formative period” and Mr. Bobby C. Mathew, member of Sehion MTC Dallas, presented on the topic “Challenges and vision of the new generation in the spiritual Journey of the Diocese”. More than 100 people from the Dallas area attended this session and many people participated in the discussions.



Dialogue in Atlanta on the Journey, Growth & Future Vision of the Diocese



A ‘Dialogue on the Journey, Growth and Future Vision of the Diocese’ was held at Atlanta MTC on October 26, 2013. Rev. K. E. Geevarghese, Diocesan Secretary was the main speaker and moderator. Rev. Skariah Varghese presented a paper on “The Challenges Faced by the Diaspora Community during the Formative Period of the Diocese”. The presentation titled

‘Challenges and Vision of the New Generation in the Spiritual Journey of the Diocese’ was done by Diocesan Youth Fellowship secretary, Mathews Athiyal. Rev. K.E Geevarghese’s talk focused on ‘The Milestones of the Diocese: Challenges, and Vision’.

San Francisco - Seminar on Identity, Vision and Mission of the Diocese

The San Francisco MTC conducted a one-day seminar on the Identity, Vision and Mission of the Diocese under the leadership of Rev. T. K. Viji on November 9, 2013. Rev. Dr. Philip Varghese was invited to be the key speaker of this program. The theme of the seminar was ‘Understanding the depth of Mar Thoma Church History and Liturgical form of Worship’. Rev. Dr. Philip Varghese talked about the birth of Christianity in India and its



progress and evolution through the past centuries. Dr. M. M. Ninan also gave valuable inputs during this discussion. Rev. T. K. Viji gave some musical training in the chanting of some of the liturgies. Mr. John Chandy gave a brief presentation on the ‘Growth of the Diocese, our parish and future of our church.’ Video presentations on the MTC Liturgy were made by Mr. John Geevarghese.

UPCOMING EVENTS

January 2-5, 2013: National Youth Leadership Conference hosted by San Francisco MTC

Saturday, January 11, 2014: Ecumenical Fellowship Lunch at St. Mathew’s MTC, Toronto, Canada

Diocesan Publications in the Jubilee Year

The Diocesan Silver Jubilee year was eventful with many publications. Various books, centered on the theme: **Church - Journeying with Christ** played a vital role in continuing the theme discussions, to document the history, and to create a vision for the future. The following publications were released during the Jubilee Finale on November 23, 2013 by the Mar Thoma Metropolitan Dr. Joseph Mar Thoma.

1. **Churching the Diaspora, Discipling the Families** - written by the Diocesan Episcopa Rt. Rev. Dr. Geevarghese Mar Theodosius.
2. **Church: Journeying with Christ** - the Jubilee Volume prepared by the Diocese.
3. **Focus on the word: Journeying with Christ** - a Bible study book containing 12 Bible studies. Editor - Dr. Mathew T. Thomas.
4. **Diocesan Jubilee Memoir** - a unique publication of the Jubilee year. Chief Editor - Mr. Varghese P Varghese.
5. **Diocesan Directory** - the 5th update and a Jubilee Special issue. Convener - Diocesan Treasurer Mr. Chacko Mathew.
6. **Word for the Day: Vol. II** - the daily devotion book, prepared and published by the Christian Education Forum of the North East Region of the Diocese. Convener - Rev. V. M. Mathew.
7. **Mar Thoma Messenger** - the official magazine of the Diocese of North America and Europe. Chief Editor - Dr. Eapen Daniel.
8. **Silver Jubilee Souvenir** - Convener Rev. Joji K Mathew

UK Regional Sunday School Program



The 2nd All UK Regional Sunday School Meeting was held on November 2, 2013, on the auspicious occasion of The World Sunday School Day. This meeting was hosted by Carmel MTC, Liverpool. Three Achens and almost 300 adults and children from 6 parishes and a prayer group attended the meeting. The program began with a Holy Communion service celebrated by Rev. K.P. Johnson. The retreat for students was led by Mr. Sajeew Abraham and Mrs. Reena Abraham and the teachers' retreat was led by Rev. Jose Punnamodam.

Mar Thoma members visit Yale University Divinity School

On Wednesday, November 6, 2013, Rev. Dennis Abraham (Youth Chaplain, South East Region), Rev. Christopher Phil Daniel (Vicar, St. Stephen's MTC, New Jersey), and Mrs. Neethi Prasad visited the Yale University Divinity School in New Haven, Connecticut. Rev. Daniel presented a paper in a liturgy class on the historical development of the Mar Thoma Syrian Church of Malabar which emphasized the reformation movement and its impact on the church. The team visited the Overseas Ministries Study Center. The Holy Qurbana using the revised liturgy of the Mar Thoma Syrian Church of Malabar was conducted in the divinity school chapel.



Kottarakkara-Punalur Diocese – The 13th Diocese of the Mar Thoma Church



The new Diocese of the Mar Thoma Church with the name Kottarakkara – Punalur Diocese was installed and dedicated on December 1, 2013. The new Diocese will have 90 parishes under its jurisdiction. This is the 13th Diocese of the Malankara Mar Thoma Syrian Church. The Most Rev. Dr. Joseph Mar Thoma, Metropolitan, inaugurated the Diocese by lighting the lamp at the new Diocesan Center in Kottarakkara.

Diocese of North America & Europe Mar Thoma Merit Award Winners of 2013

1. Mr. Robin K. Roy, son of Mr. Roy K. Cherian & Mrs. Susy K. Cherian from the Chicago MTC, Chicago, IL.
2. Mr. Stanley G. Joseph, son of Mr. George K. Joseph & Mrs. Valsamma Joseph from MTC Dallas Farmers Branch, Dallas, TX.
3. Ms. Neeta A. Abraham, daughter of Dr. Abraham George & Mrs. Sujatha Abraham from Chicago MTC, Chicago, IL.
4. Mr. Mark J. John, son of Mr. John Joseph & Mrs. Prassana John from St. Thomas Mar Thoma Church Vancouver, BC, Canada
5. Ms. Rinju Ann Philip, daughter of Mr. Philip Mammen & Mrs. Mini Philip from Carmel Mar Thoma Church, Liverpool, UK.



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