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Vol 59

March - April 2012

Nos 3 & 4



**Dedication of a new room at Mar Thoma Ashram, Mulayam
on 19 February 2012.**

**L-R: Bishop Mar Awgin Kuriakose, Bishop Mar Yohannan
Yoseph, Mrs. Susheela George and children; Mrs. Honey Gray,
Dr. Sheena, Theresa and Varky George.**

VOICE OF THE EAST



Rev'd Antawan Mikhail and Mr Joseph Haweil of St George Church in Melbourne pictured with Rev'd Ian Smith, President of the Victorian Council of Churches at its Annual General Meeting in April 2012



Archdeacon Qardagh Hakim of Iraq celebrating Holy Qurbana in Chicago

Installation of the office bearers of the National Council of Churches in India held in Bangalore. Second from left is Mrs. Pearly Jose of the Church of the East in India



VOICE OF THE EAST

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Contents

1. Editorial
2. Patriarchal Epistle The Holy Feast of the Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ – 2012
3. Rev'd Narsai Youkhanis Receives MA in Sydney
4. H.G. Mar Aprim Khamis Ordains Deacons in Arizona
5. Syriac Hymn by Rev'd P.K. Varghese
6. Mar Narsai Assyrian College in Sydney Launches Construction Phase
7. H.B. Mar Meelis Zaia Calls on Syriac Orthodox Prelates in Sydney
8. Biography of Cor-bishop Paulus Benjamin of Chicago
9. Interview with H.G. Mar Awa Royel, Bishop of California
10. Egypt's Coptic Pope Shenouda III Dies
11. Former Syrian Catholic Patriarch, Ignatius Moussa Daoud Dies

Indian Archdiocese News

12. Blessing of Mar Timotheus Metropolitan II Arcade
13. Youth Summer Camp
14. Sunday School Prize Distribution
15. Vacation Bible School
16. Archdiocesan Clergy Conference
17. Budget Session Held
18. Feeding the 15,000 on May 1st
19. Ordination on July 3rd, 2012
20. Pearly Jos Elected to NCCI
21. Tour of Indian Prelates

Photos on 4 cover pages and pages 7, 8, 9 & 10

Voice of the East

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Editorial

14th Holy Synod to Convene in Chicago

His Holiness Mar Dinkha IV, Catholicos Patriarch of the Assyrian Church of the East has summoned the Holy Synod to be met in Chicago from May 25 to June 1, 2012. This is the 14th Holy Synod presided over by His Holiness Mar Dinkha IV.

The present Catholicos Patriarch is very practical in his approach to the convocation of Holy Synods whereby he endeavours to hold the important meetings in different countries where members of the Holy Church are scattered. His Holiness is democratic in his administration and therefore interested in gathering the thoughts and opinions of his fellow prelates concerning the governing of the Holy Church.

Over the 36 years of his Patriarchate, the Holy Synod has convened 13 times under the presidency of His Holiness Mar Dinkha IV. These occasions are as follows:

1. October 17 – 21, 1976: Alton, England
2. April 11 – 22, 1978: Baghdad, Iraq
3. October 15 – November 2, 1984: Chicago, USA
4. January 15 – 19, 1990: Baghdad, Iraq
5. July 18 – 29, 1994: Sydney, Australia
6. June 23 – July 1, 1997: Chicago, USA
7. April 19 – 27, 1999: Chicago, USA
8. June 4 – 14, 2001: Chicago, USA
9. 2004, May 10 – [?], 2004: Chicago, USA
10. Oct 30 – Nov 7, 2005: Chicago, USA
11. April 16 – 19, 2006: Chicago, USA
12. Oct 27 – 31, 2008: Duhok, Iraq
13. Jan 13 – 20, 2010: Trichur, India

Patriarchal Councils were also held in June 1989, December 1993, June 1995 (Chicago), June 4-6 1996 (Chicago), September 1998, 2001 (Lebanon), 16-22 February 2001 (Chicago), 2008 (Chicago), 12-14 December 2008 (Australia) and 2010 (Iran).

Mar Aprem

Patriarchal Epistle

The Holy Feast of the Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ – 2012

Our Beloved Brothers The Prelates, our Spiritual Sons the Pure Priests, The Honorable Deacons, all the Sons and Daughters of The Holy Church, the Assyrian Nation and all Christians of the world:

Prayers and Blessings receive:

Today the Christian community is celebrating the Great Feast of the Holy Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ from among the dead. This is a great feast and the fame of all other feasts. We are delighted by the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ from among the dead. By His Resurrection from among the dead He has enlightened the world that was living in darkness and renewed all creations. He, Jesus is the head of the new life and by Him the authority of death has been loosened. The good leader and the heavenly shepherd saved the children of Adam who were captured in the deadly net of sin and by His precious blood shed on the Cross, He, Jesus paid the price of their freedom. It was by His sacrifice on the Cross that He saved mankind from the death of sin.

Today the Holy Church is singing the hymn of glory to our Lord Jesus Christ who by His human death on the Cross lifted up the paralyzed race of mankind. Our Lord Jesus Christ out of His love for human race was crucified and by His Resurrection from among the dead provided Salvation and joy to the whole world. Our Lord Jesus Christ says: *“Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one’s life for one’s friends. You are my friends if you do what I command.”* (John 15:13-14) Therefore we should not forget the great love of our Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ by His Sacrifice as a paschal lamb offered His human body on the Cross and by His Resurrection from among the dead; He gave the Hope of Resurrection to the children of Adam. Those who have believed in His death and Resurrection have received eternal life. Thus the children of Adam are delighted that their humanity has been elevated from mortality to immortality by the Resurrection of our Lord from among the dead. Saint Paul the Apostle says: *“As was the earthly man, so are those who are of the earth; and as is the heavenly man, so also are those who are of heaven. And just as we have borne the image of the earthly man, so shall we bear the image of the heavenly man. I declare to you, brothers and sisters, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable.”* (1 Corinthians 15:48-50)

We believe in the death and Resurrection of the Lord, the king of peace who before His crucifixion declared to His disciples saying: *“All this I have spoken while still with you. But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you. Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.”* (John 14:25-27)

Today the Christian Church is enjoying the heavenly peace of the Resurrection which our Lord Jesus Christ conveyed to her. He taught us to pronounce the expression of peace to one another.

This is the reason we say to you all, O Sons and Daughters of The Holy Church, the Assyrian Nation and all Christians of the world:

The Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ be blessed unto you all:

By His Holy Resurrection, our Lord made the sun of Righteousness to shine brightly on the four corners of the world. By His divine knowledge, our Lord enlightened the thoughts and the minds of mankind and as a good shepherd directed the flock of the Holy Church on the bright path that leads towards peace, tranquility and good hope to mankind.

The Sacred Scriptures teach us that our Lord Jesus Christ rose victoriously from among the dead. By His death on the Cross, He has conquered death, sin and Satan. Then He has ascended into heaven and sat at the right hand of God the father. He is prepared to come for the second time to judge the dead and the living.

In order for us to comprehend, how did Jesus Christ rose from among the dead; we are bound first to understand how did he died? We do confess and believe that our Lord Jesus Christ is the true God and the true man. There is no doubt that Jesus Christ died in His humanity and was resurrected from among the dead by the eternal power of His Godhead. His human temple died and was quickened. By his resurrection His human body changed from physical body into spiritual body. Saint Paul says: *"it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body."* (1Corinthians 15:44)

The death and Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ is the essence of the Christian faith. He has ascended into heaven and has elevated with Him our human race. His Resurrection from among the dead has provided joy and hope of eternal life to all those who have embraced His gospel of Salvation. He has enriched us with His divine gifts and renewed our fallen nature. Therefore we should always remember and never forget His gracious sacrifice on behalf of our Salvation. In order for us to become faithful sons and daughters of the Holy Church and preachers of His life-giving words to gentiles so that they will not walk on the dark path of Satan, we are bound to listen and keep His Holy commandments. The Lord says: *"In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven."* (Matthew 5:16) Again the Lord says: *"I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."* (John 14:6) We are learning from the above mentioned verses that we, Christians should build the edifice of our faith upon our Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus is the stone upon which the edifice of the Christian faith has been erected. Since Jesus Christ is our Savior, therefore our hope and our guidance should be Jesus Christ. The living Jesus is the only one who can save us from our sins. He is the good shepherd who keeps watch over His flock. We should not stay away from Him so that we will not be dragged away by Satan our enemy.

Satan, because of his weakness uses many wicked and deceiving plans against mankind. Those who fallow the crooked path of Satan give away their faith and they learn from their master Satan to perform wicked actions. However those who take the straight path of the Lord learn to imitate the good pattern of their Lord by performing good deeds such as: humbleness, mercifulness, forgiveness, truthfulness, be engaged in fasting and prayer and adorned with good Christian behaviors.

Christians are obligated to have a sincere respect and love for one another. As members of one Christian flock, Christian communities should join their efforts in preaching the gospel of Salvation to the whole world.

We ask you all, O, sons and daughters of The Holy Church in the country in which you are a resident or Citizens be faithful, and obedient to the constitution and by-laws of your country. So that you may be respected and loved by officials of the Country of your residency and you will live in joy and peace, etc.

In conclusion, once again, we write to you all, rejoicing and declaring: May the Feast of the Resurrection be richly blessed unto you all! We beseech our worshipful Lord and God to keep you all in His love, blessed with good health and joy. We hope and pray O beloved Sons and Daughters of the Holy Church that you will celebrate this holy feast of the Resurrection of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ in all peace and joy. Where ever you dwell, together with the all of our Christian brothers and sisters throughout the whole world. We pray for peace and tranquility in the world in general and in the Middle Eastern counties in particular. Amen

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all, forever and ever: Amen

Khanania Mardinkha IV
By Grace
Catholicos Patriarch of the
Assyrian Church of the East

Written in our Patriarchal Cell
Morton Grove, Illinois
The Feast of the Resurrection – 2012

International News

Rev'd Narsai Youkhanis Receives MA in Sydney

Rev'd Narsai Youkhanis has received his Master of Arts in Early Christian and Jewish Studies from Macquarie University.

Currently the Chaplain of the Youth Association of Sydney as well as Mar Narsai Assyrian College (SHAPS), Rev. Narsai continues studying a Postgraduate Certificate in Ancient History (Research), focusing on the studies of the Apostles of the East, Mar Addai, Mar Mari, and Mar Thomas.

Part-time, he is also studying a Master of Arts in Theological Studies at Australian Catholic University, and a Diploma in Language Studies (Syriac) at the University of Sydney.

"I hope to start a PhD at Macquarie University next year with Professor Ken Parry, focusing on the ecclesiastical architecture of the Assyrian Church of the East," said Rev. Narsai.

H.G. Mar Aprim Khamis Ordains Deacons in Arizona

His Grace Mar Aprim Khamis, Bishop of the Diocese of Western United States, has ordained three faithful of the Assyrian Church of the East, raising them to the ranking of Lector (Qaroya).

Robert Oshana, Paul Joseph and Loay Yako were ordained on Sunday 22 April 2012 in St. Peter's Cathedral in Glendale, Arizona.

Following the ordination service, His Grace the Bishop consecrated the Eucharistic Liturgy in the presence of hundreds of faithful.

Present during the service were the Very Reverend Archdeacon Frederick Hirmiz and Reverend Kando Kando along with many deacons.

Syriac Hymn by Rev'd P.K. Varghese

SHOOKHA DASHME D'MARAN

(B'moosikee hindwaya)

Oonaya

Esho khaye deelan w'lashme:
Mwarkheen ger shmaya war'a:

Esthoksa

Shma d'yahew le sheen lr'yana:
B'yadh koorshana damle burchta
Shma tameema damdabber len:
B'shweela shareera yom l'yom

Oonaya

Shimmu deele ellat b'thawta:
Shma d'sa'ar l khulla booya'ah:

Esthoksa

Shma d'wane len esthooon nuhra:
Kad dean m'nakidh len
shalmayeeth:

B'yadh kool melle alahaye:

Min rgeegatha bisranaye.

Oonaya

shimmu d'nitil l'rookh poorkana:
W'esthwa rabba mle sooya'ah:

Esthoksa

Shma hisda damshowziw len kol:
B'yadh marchawta drachshai noora:
D'achma natar thoora d'sihyon:
L'weem malka mdheenath Orishlim

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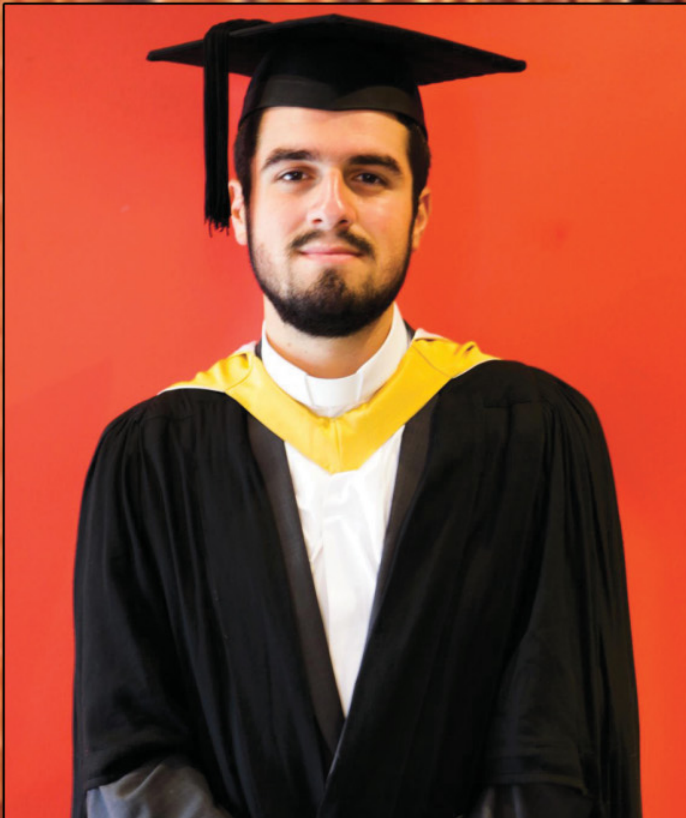
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[This lyric is taken from 'GPITA DASHRARA' True Vine, a book of Lyrics written by Rev. Fr. P. K Varghese, Thrissur, Kerala, India. It will shortly be released alongwith English and vernacular rendering.]



**Rev'd Narsai Youkhanis
Receives M.A. in Sydney**



**The leader of Egypt's Coptic
Church, Pope Shenouda III died
in Cairo on 17 March 2012.**



**Ordination of Robert Oshana, Paul Joseph and Loay Yako by
H. G. Mar Aprim Khamis on Sunday 22 April 2012
at St. Peter's Cathedral in Glendale, Arizona**



Mar Aprem Metropolitan, clergy and faithful pictured at Mart Maryam Cathedral, Thrissur on 1 April 2012 at the end of the hour-long Palm Sunday (Oshana) procession from Mar Yohannan Mamdhana Church to the Cathedral. The Metropolitan, clergy and children knock with the Cross at the front door of the Cathedral.



Rev. A C Antony, Rev. O A Jacob, Mar Aprem Metroplitan and Deacon V V Joseph alongwith twelve children for the washing of the feet ceremony on Maundy Thursday, 5 April 2012 at Mar Esthapanos Church, Nellangara



Mr. P V Joseph, Mar Aprem Metropolitan, Trustee Board Chairman I G Joy and Adv. Paul C Joseph leading Easter Procession on 08 April 2012 at Mart Mariam Cathedral, Trichur



Left to Right: Fr. Benu Joseph, Mar Yohannan Episcopa, Mar Aprem Metropolitan, Mar Awgin Episcopa, Sister Dr. Jincy, Chairman I G Joy and Youth Genral Secretary Biju Francis



Mar Aprem Metropolitan is seated in the front row 2nd from the left, Fr. Lijo Raphael, (Vicar) 2nd from the right along with the members of the congregation of Mar Qardagh Church in Chennai, after Holy Qurbana in February 2012.



Holy Qurbana in Calcutta: Bishop Mar Yohannan Yoseph and Rev'd Mohan Konikara (Vicar of New Delhi Parish) are seated in the center



Rev'd Gewargis Yosip pictured with church choir after Easter Qurbana in Kirkuk, Iraq

Mar Narsai Assyrian College in Sydney Launches Construction Phase

The first phase of the construction of Sydney's Mar Narsai Assyrian College (MNAC) has commenced, with His Beatitude Mar Meelis Zaia AM Metropolitan of Australia, New Zealand and Lebanon present to witness the progress.

The official commencement of construction, in March 2012, was also attended by MNAC principal, John Haskal, and Reverends from the Archdiocese of Sydney including Rev. Narsai Youkhanis, School Chaplain, and many staff.

The first phase of construction included the destruction of the on-sight old facility and removal of trees, as explained by the engineer on sight.

It is believed that the first phase will be completed by early 2013, when the first set of students is expected to be received at the newly built facility.

The construction site is located in Western Sydney's Horsley Park, 10-15 minutes from the School's current temporary location at the Assyrian Australian Social Centre.

In addition to a high school, His Beatitude has a vision to run an evening educational facility for Christian studies. The courses will have duration of two years and be run by some of Sydney's renowned university professors. It is hoped that the facility will be recognized as an accredited academic institute with a qualified award at graduation.

H.B. Mar Meelis Zaia Calls on Syriac Orthodox Prelates in Sydney

His Beatitude Mar Meelis Zaia AM Metropolitan of Australia, New Zealand and Lebanon has welcomed to Australia His Excellency Mor Philoxenos Saliba Özmen, Syriac Orthodox Metropolitan of Mardin, Turkey and head of the Deir Za'faran Monastery.

The visit took place at the metropolitan residence of the Syriac Orthodox Church in Sydney in the presence of His Excellency Mor Malatius Malki Malki, Metropolitan and Patriarch Vicar of the Syriac Orthodox Church in Australia and New Zealand.

During the meeting the Assyrian and Syriac Orthodox prelates discussed strategies to enhance ecumenical relations between the sister churches. His Beatitude Mar Meelis also stressed the important role played by the church in the provision of educational and social services to faithful in Australia.

Also accompanying His Beatitude Mar Meelis during the visit were Sydney priests; Reverend Narsai Youkhanis and Reverend Ninos Elya.

Biography of Cor-bishop Paulus Benjamin of Chicago

Cor-bishop Paulus Benjamin was born Korosh Benyamin, to his mother Roza Jacob (daughter of the late Qasha Keshto Yakob) and to his father Yoarash Benyamin on June 24, 1968 in the village of Qala, Urmia (Iran). He was tutored in the services of our Church by the late Archdeacon Qasha Aprim Mar Yonani, and was ordained a deacon by His Holiness Mar Dinkha on June 24, 1984 at St. George Cathedral, Tehran.

Qasha Paulus received his B.A. in Social Communications from the University of Tehran in 1993. He served the military from 1993 to 1995. In 1996, he was sent for higher theological studies to Rome by His Holiness. After studying at the *Pontifical Gregorian University*, he received the S.T.B. in Philosophy in 1998 and the S.T.B. (Bachelor of Sacred Theology) in Theology in 2001.

He was ordained a priest on September 13, 2001 at Mar Gewargis Cathedral, Chicago, by His Holiness Mar Dinkha IV. He is presently a candidate for the S.T.L. (Licentiate of Sacred Theology) in Canon Law and has already finished his doctorate courses as required by the *Pontifical Oriental Institute*, Rome. In the summer of 1999, he spent 3 months with Archdeacon Yonan Youel in London, England studying Aramaic, and did a course in French language at Bisancon, France in the summer of 2002.

Qasha Paulus came to the US in July of 2007 and in 2008 was appointed assistant vicar of Mar Gewargis Cathedral, Chicago. In 2009, he was appointed the vicar of said parish.

On March 20, 2011, he was raised to the rank of Cor-bishop by H.G. Mar Awa Royel, Bishop of California, at the directive of His Holiness Mar Dinkha IV.

It is hoped that he will be consecrated as a Bishop on Pentecost Sunday, May 17, 2012 at Mar Gewargis Cathedral in Chicago by Mar Dinkha IV.

The position of a bishop was vacant in the Chicago area following the transfer of Mar Aprim Khamis to Arizona some years ago.

Interview with H.G. Mar Awa Royel, Bishop of California

His Grace Mar Awa Royel, Bishop of California and Secretary of the Holy Synod, speaks exclusively to *news.assyrianchurch.org* following the launch of his new English-speaking text, *Mysteries of the Kingdom: The Sacraments of the Assyrian Church of the East*. The 398-page English-language theological text is described as “a modern-day treatise on the theology of the Assyrian Church of the East regarding the seven holy sacraments.”

Assyrian Church News: What inspired you to research and write *Mysteries of the Kingdom*?

His Grace: First, the original motivation for me was what I felt to be a great need among our youth and English-speaking faithful (whether first-second generation Assyrians born in the West, or simply non-Assyrian speakers) to have an elementary yet foundational grounding in the understanding and theology of the seven sacraments of our holy Church. The sacraments are indeed foundational for our faith because it is through them and by our participation in these sacred *Raze* that we truly participate in the mysteries of our salvation, indeed in the very Paschal Mystery of Christ itself—the suffering, death, burial and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. That is at the heart not only of the Church’s doctrine and theology, but of the every-day lived faith of the lay faithful. Second, each of the seven sacraments (including the two introductory chapters at the beginning) were originally presented on a local Assyrian satellite station for the benefit of the international viewing audience in a series of some 12 one-hour segments. His Holiness Mar Dinkha IV, Catholicos-Patriarch, followed the television presentations and requested that I be sure to

have each segment videotaped for archival purposes. Then, His Holiness came up with the beautiful idea of putting the presentations in book form, and directed me to work on that project for the benefit of the faithful (cf. His Holiness' *Imprimatur* at the beginning). What is now in the hands of many of our faithful is the fruit of that directive.

ACN: What length of time and effort went into researching and writing this exposition?

H.G.: The television segments began to be aired in early January, soon after the feast of the Epiphany (*Dinkha*) and they continued for about three months. The research, of course, was not only laborious but also very interesting for me as well because I could go back and re-read many of the Fathers, which I had once researched in my earlier 'school days'. In addition, much material from the various liturgies (Eucharistic, baptismal, ordination, etc.) of the Assyrian Church of the East is also included, in a fresh and modern English translation for the benefit of the reader. It took me about another three months to edit the presentations in book form, and a first edition came out in late June of 2011 just in time for the 25th Annual National Youth Conference of our Church, held in Los Angeles, California. As a gift, each youth member present was given a copy of the first edition. Then, I went back and re-edited that first edition, adding some more material, especially in Chapter Ten ('The Holy Cross'), and I also concluded the work with the new 'Epilogue'; the revised edition was released in September of 2011. I feel that the two appendices (the 'List of Scripture References of the Sacraments' and the 'Comparative Table of the Sacraments Among the Various Apostolic Churches') will also further help the reader to understand the sacraments. Finally, the re-edited Index will also be of aid as a quick reference guide.

ACN: What is the purpose of the book?

H.G.: The purpose is quite simple: to introduce the average layman of the Church, whose primary medium of communication is English, to have a solid grounding in the holy sacraments. In this regard, we might say that its primary purpose is *catechetical*, that is, to teach the faithful the faith. Secondly, it is my sincere hope that the book will also benefit non-members of the Assyrian Church of the East who would like to learn more about our Church and her theology. The book has been forwarded to some libraries in the U.S., Kerala and Rome to be shelved as a reference work for those of other Christian traditions who would like to research the sacramental theology of our holy Church.

ACN: The book makes the Church's theological foundations of the sacraments accessible. In your opinion, who will benefit from the book?

H.G.: It will certainly make accessible much of what our holy Fathers have written and taught in regards to the sacraments. As mentioned earlier, the average layman and the avid student of theology engaged in research will both benefit from this humble work. During the course of the writing of the book, it was challenging for me to maintain a stable and healthy balance between what one might call a simple 'catechism' on the one hand, and a 'handbook' on a theological subject on the other. However, that was the challenge that I really enjoyed engaging in as the author. Now, it is up to the readers to decide whether I have been successful in up-holding that balance or not. Be that as it may, I have always held the youth of our holy Church at heart as I authored this work, and had them in my mind as my ultimate audience. Also, I am sure that they will be much

more forgiving of any mistakes I might have made in the work than the ardent student of theology coming from a purely academic background.

ACN: You write, “The holy sacraments... are the living signs and types of God’s heavenly kingdom among us.” How important is it for the faithful to know and understand the seven sacraments of the Church?

H.G: It was Mar Theodore of Mopsuestia who, in writing extensively on the sacraments, drove home the point that the sacraments carry with them an innate pledge of both God’s grace to be experienced finitely here on earth, and the promise of the heavenly benefits to be experienced in their fullness in the Kingdom. In order for the faithful to be able to fully and effectively receive God’s saving grace in this life and enjoy His promises in the coming Kingdom, it is essential to have a basic knowledge of the sacramental life of the Church. Now, this does not mean that we will all become theologians; but, what is a ‘theologian’ after all, if not one who has come to a spiritual realization of the uncreated grace of God that is bestowed to us by the Father, in Christ, and made effective by the Holy Spirit? Thus, there is always a Trinitarian aspect to every sacrament. Living a Christian life that is steeped in the sacraments of God’s ordinary means of dispensing His grace to the Church, will ultimately prepare us for the realization of that blessed reality, in God’s kingdom and with all His saints. The faithful, therefore, in keeping with their Christian calling as those who have been buried, died and risen with Christ in baptism and thereby having participated sacramentally (*razanaith*) in the Paschal Mystery of Christ, ought to be catechized as to what the present and future reality of that Mystery, which is Christ Himself, is, means and entails.

ACN: Are there any new projects you are planning to work on in the future?

H.G: As President of the Church’s Commission on Inter-Church Relations and Educational Development (CIRED), it is my mandate by the Church to promote the teaching of our holy Church and her theology in printed materials. Just to give one example, CIRED plans to publish theological and synodical treatises translated by able clergy of our Church by the middle of this year. Other clergy have been contacted to have their doctoral theses published with CIRED, as well. Personally, I have a few other works ‘in the pipeline,’ as the saying goes. They deal with the historical development of the rite of the Assyrian Church of the East, her liturgical books and the liturgy of the hours as they are observed in our Church. Other proposed works include a catechetical introduction to the liturgical year (from *Subara* to *Qudash Edta*) and a catechism for adult-converts. Of course, these are all proposed and a good many of them have already been begun, or are getting quite close to completion. The printing of these materials for the greater benefit of our clergy, youth and lay faithful at large will no doubt require funding for printing purposes. However, the faithful sons and daughters of our Church have always supported this noble task of promoting education (especially religious instruction), teaching and the multiplication of material on the Assyrian Church of the East; for that, we are most grateful.

Egypt’s Coptic Pope Shenouda III Dies

The leader of Egypt’s Coptic Church, Pope Shenouda III died in Cairo on 17 March 2012. He died at the age of 88 after reportedly suffering from cancer. He led the Coptic Orthodox Church from 1971 until his death. Coptic Christians make up 10% of Egypt’s population of 80 million, making them the

Middle East's largest Christian minority. After attacks on Coptic Christians in recent years, Pope Shenouda had urged officials to do more to address the community's concerns.

A successor is yet to be elected.

Former Syrian Catholic Patriarch, Ignatius Moussa Daoud Dies

Rome: Pope Benedict XVI has condoled the death of Cardinal Ignatius Moussa Daoud, former patriarch of the Syrian Catholic Church.

The 81-year-old cardinal died in Rome April 7.

The pope remembered the cardinal in prayer and praised him in a telegram to the current Syrian patriarch, Ignatius Youssif II Younan.

"I wish to express to you my union in prayer with your Patriarchal Church, with the family of the deceased cardinal and with all those who are affected by this bereavement," the pontiff said.

He said the cardinal "dedicated himself with faith and generosity to the service of the People of God." In 2000, Pope John Paul II named Daoud to lead the Congregation of Eastern Churches, a post previously held by cardinals of the Latin rite.

Eastern rite churches are loyal to the pope but their ceremonies are similar to those of Orthodox rites. In 2007, Cardinal Daoud retired as prefect emeritus of the Vatican's Congregation for the Eastern Churches.

There are about 132,000 faithful in the Syrian Catholic Church, according to the Catholic Near East Welfare Association. The largest populations of Syrian Catholics are in Syria, Lebanon, and Iraq.

The present Syrian Catholic Patriarch is Patriarch Ignatius Joseph III Younan.

Courtesy: [*Catholic News Agency*](#)

Indian Archdiocese News

Blessing of Mar Timotheus Metropolitan II Arcade

A three-story commercial building was blessed on Sunday 22 April in the property adjacent to Mar Yohannan Mamdhana Church, East Fort, Thrissur. This land was donated by the late Mr. Cherookaren Mathunny Master in memory of his son late Jose who died young. The Arcade building cost about five million rupees. The monthly rent Rs. 90 thousand is to be spent for the maintenance of old men of our church who need care.

Mar Aprem Metropolitan, assisted by Bishops Mar Yohannan Yoseph and Mar Awgin Kuriakose conducted the ceremony. The Metropolitan urged the members to give to the poor and needy.

Youth Summer Camp

60 boys and girls participated in the two day annual Summer Camp. Mar Timotheus Memorial Orphanage, Kalathode was the venue. Speakers gave interesting talks. All three prelates attended this two day camp. Sister Dr. Jincy and the Women's Youth Committee gave able leadership to the program this year also.

Sunday School Prize Distribution

The annual Sunday school prize distribution was held in the premises of the Mart Maryam Cathedral. Mar Aprem Metropolitan presided over the function. The prizes were distributed by the Metropolitan as well as two Episcopas. A reception was accorded to Senior Bank Officers from our Church. The South Indian Bank promoted Mr Anthonykutty as one of the General Managers and Mr Bobby James as one of the Deputy General Managers. Mr. I. G. Joy, Chairman, Board of the Central Trustees also spoke on the occasion. Rev'd N.J. Abraham, General Secretary of Mar Aprem Sunday School welcomed the audience.

Vacation Bible School

Vacation Bible School classes were held in different parishes in April. Clergy and teachers worked hard in writing new VBS songs as well as teaching in different parishes. Rev'd N.J. Abraham, General Secretary of the Sunday Schools organized the VBS classes. Mar Aprem Metropolitan and Mar Yohannan Yoseph Episcopa gave leadership to the inaugural function of the VBS at Mart Mariam Cathedral.

Archdiocesan Clergy Conference

The annual clergy conference was held on 23 and 24 April, 2012 in Bet Nahrein, the farm house of Deacon Rajan Vattakuzhy near Koduvayur, about 60 kilometers far from Thrissur. About 28 clergy including Mar Aprem Metropolitan, Mar Yohannan Yoseph Episcopa and Mar Awgin Kuriakose were present. Professor Dr. Thomas Koonamakel Qashisha, PhD from Oxford University and Dean at SEERI, Kottayam led the classes and impressed upon the participants the need to learn the teachings of Mar Isaac of Nineveh and practice them in order to revive the great monastic heritage of the Church of the East.

Budget Session Held

The budget session of the Representative Council of the Church of the East met on Sunday 29th April in the Higher Secondary School in Thrissur.

Feeding the 15,000 on May 1st

As usual about fifteen thousand people ate in memory of the late prelates of our Church in India namely Mar Abdisho Thondanat who died in November 1900, Mar Abimalak Timotheus who died on 30 April 1945, Mar Thoma Darmo who died on 7 September 1969, Poulouse Mar Poulouse who died on 24 March 1998 and Mar Timotheus II who died on 6 August 2001.

After holy Qurbana in Mart Mariam Cathedral memorial prayers were said in front of the tombs of the prelates. A vegetarian dinner was then served to 15,000 people.

Ordination on July 3rd, 2012

Deacon Cyril Antony who has completed his three years of Philosophy studies in the Syro-Malabar Church Seminary in Thrissur and three years of Theology at Dharmaram College in Bangalore will be elevated as a priest on the Feast of St Thomas the Apostle. Two students from our Church Seminary in Tirur will also be ordained; Nimson Sunny as a deacon and Clinton as a Sub-Deacon.

Pearly Jos Elected to NCCI

The first lady Central Trustee of the Church of the East in India has been elected as one of the three Vice Presidents of the *National Council of Churches in India*. This is the first that a member of the Church of the East in India has been elected to the high post in this all-India organization. Mar Aprem Metropolitan and Bishop Mar Yohannan Yoseph had served the NCCI as members of the Executive Committee in the past. Now Bishop Mar Awgin Kuriakose has been elected to that post.

Tour of Indian Prelates

Mar Aprem Metropolitan, after attending the Holy Synod in Chicago will go to Dallas, Texas and celebrate Holy Qurbana and baptism in Dallas on Sunday June 3rd. He is planning to consecrate the Holy Qurbana in Detroit on Sunday June 10th and in Toronto on Sunday June 17th and celebrate Holy Qurbana on Friday June 22nd in Sharjah, UAE and reach Trichur on 23rd morning.

Mar Yohannan Yoseph Episcopa, who is coming to USA for the first time, will arrive in Chicago along with Mar Aprem on 23rd May and after the Holy Synod will visit some places including New York and return to UAE for Qurbana in Sharjah on June 15th and return to India along with Mar Aprem on June 23rd.

Mar Awgin Kuriakose Episcopa will visit USA 10 days prior to the Holy Synod. He will celebrate Holy Qurbana for Sulaqa Festival on Thursday 17th May at New Britain, Connecticut and on Sunday 20th May at Mar Mari Church, Yonkers, New York and after the Synod on June 3rd in one of the churches in Chicago before returning to India.

40th day of death

14 May 2012



Samuel Chacko Panancherry

Born: 31 July 1947

Death 05 April 2012

Remember me in your prayers. Amen.





H.B. Mar Meelis Zaia AM Metropolitan of Australia, New Zealand and Lebanon with Mor Malatius Malki Malki, Metropolitan and H.E. Mor Philoxenos Saliba Özmen, Syriac Orthodox Metropolitan of Mardin, Turkey and head of the Deir Za'faran in Syriac Orthodox Church in Sydney



H.H. Mar Dinkha IV, Catholicos Patriarch pictured at St George Cathedral in Chicago during the Commemoration of St George the Martyr in April 2012.