

# ശബരം

Vol 62

January - February

Nos.1 & 2



Inauguration of the new building of Mar Thimotheus High School, Kuriachira, Thrissur on Monday 12th January 2015.  
L-R: Adv. Nancy Akkarapatty (Corporation Councilor), Adv. Therambil Ramakrishnan (M.L.A.), Bishop Mar Yohannan Yoseph, Dr. Mar Aprem Metropolitan, Bishop Mar Awgin Kuriakose, Mr. I G Joy (Corporate Manager of School).

## VOICE OF THE EAST





**Mar Gabriel Church Mumbai - Dr. Mar Aprem Metropolitan with Sunday School Children**



**Holy Qurbana in Mumbai - Fr. Michael Pazhumalil is assisting Dr. Mar Aprem Metropolitan on 22 February 2015**



**‘Shepherd Widows Home’ in Byculla, Mumbai - The inmates receiving Dr. Mar Aprem Metropolitan in the Medical Camp**

**VOICE OF THE EAST**

(A socio-Religious bi-monthly)

(Private Circulation only)

January - February 2015

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***Website Links***

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**Diocese of Europe: [www.assyrianchurch-europe.org](http://www.assyrianchurch-europe.org)**

**Assyrian Church of the East Relief Organisation: [www.theacero.org](http://www.theacero.org)**

**Unofficial: [www.nestorian.org](http://www.nestorian.org)**

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# Voice of the East

**Vol. 62**

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## *Editorial*

### **The Evils of Alcohol**

Kerala State is facing a crisis with regard to its policy for eradicating the evils of drinking in our society. The great Mahatma Gandhi, the Father of the Indian Nation who won freedom for the people of India from British masters had championed a movement leading to total prohibition of alcohol. Such policies have not succeeded in India. Despite this, the Indian National Congress and many religious people in India have been working for total prohibition.

Recently the Chief Minister of Kerala State announced a liquor policy favorable to those who advocated prohibition. He promised that by stage by stage Kerala State will save the people from the evils of alcoholism. He also announced that effective immediately Sundays will be dry days. Only five-star hotels will be given a license to sell alcohol. This is to encourage rich tourists to come to India and enjoy alcoholic drinks in their hotels. The licenses given to the 4-star hotels and below were cancelled.

The bar owners could not tolerate this policy. They obtained court orders from the Kerala High Court and the Supreme Court of India in New Delhi allowing even 4-star hotels with good standards to enjoy the status of the five-star hotels and thereby sell alcohol. This is to promote tourism in Kerala which is advertised as God's own country. The Government says that it is to protect the jobs of the staff in bar-attached hotels.

The Sundays declared to be dry days reverted back to ordinary days where everybody has the right to drink alcohol. The advocates of this policy say that Jesus performed miracles to provide good wine at the wedding at Cana. It is unfortunate that some Christians have a bad name with regard to the use of alcohol. It is true that the Christian clergy have the habit of enjoying "a little bit" of wine for pleasure.

The late Professor Sukumar Azhikode boldly remarked that sixty percent of Christian priests he knew used to use alcohol. I pray that his observation is wrong. If there is any truth in his statement Christian priests should be ashamed. I believed that the majority of the Christian clergy do not drink alcohol. I have heard the accusation from mothers that their sons learned drinking as a habit from the priests in the church.

Although the Kerala Government had decided to go slow, I believe that people of all religions should work together to eradicate alcoholism from our society. I have seen Hindus, Muslims and people from all political parties join with me in publicly opposing the policy favour bar owners. We should save our young people from becoming victims of alcoholism. Yes, alcoholism is a sickness. Let us save fellow beings from its evils.

Mar Aprem Metropolitan



*International News*

## **National Council of Churches USA Meets with the Assyrian Church of the East's CIRED**

On Friday, January 16, 2015 the Ecclesial Relations Committee of the National Council of Churches USA met with representatives of the Assyrian Church of the East. The cordial, all-day meeting took place at the rectory on the campus of St. Mary's church, in Roselle, Illinois. The Assyrian Church of the East was represented by His Grace Mar Awa Royel, Bishop of California and the President of CIRED (Commission on Inter-Church Relations and Educational Development), and His Grace Mar Paulus Benjamin, Bishop of the Diocese of Eastern USA. The National Council of Churches was represented by Jim Winkler, the General Secretary and President of the NCC-USA, Dr. Tony Kireopoulos, the Associate General Secretary of the NCC-USA, and other members of the Ecclesial Relations Committee.

†The meeting began with a general overview of the goals, mission and mandate of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA, founded in 1950 in the US in order to foster ecumenical cooperation among the various member Churches and to address social issues and concerns in the United States. There are 37 member Churches or communions who are members of the NCC-USA thus far, which include the various Orthodox, Protestant and Historical African Churches which have a notable presence and membership in the US. Then a deep exchange took place during which questions regarding the history, theology and ecclesiology of the Assyrian Church of the East were posed to the bishops by the attending members of the NCC. An amicable and informative exchange of information and clarifications on both parts took place during the course of the all-day meeting. The bishops extended the prayers and paternal benediction of His Holiness Mar Dinkha IV, Catholicos-Patriarch for the success of the meeting. At noontime, all those attending the meeting took a tour of the inside of St. Mary's church in order to get a feel and understanding for the liturgical architectural and ethos of the Assyrian Church of the East. An informative yet informal question-and-answer period ensued as the delegates of the NCC were introduced briefly to the liturgical set-up of the Assyrian Church. Then, the entire group shared in a fraternal meal together, prepared by the ladies committee of St. Mary's parish.

†The present application of the Assyrian Church of the East for membership is under formal consideration and study by the NCC and will be voted on in the near future.

## **Californian Youth Retreat a Spiritual Success**

This past weekend, from Friday January 9th to Sunday January 11th, youth from across the Diocese of California convened upon Mount Hermon near Santa Cruz, California, for the Diocese's 2015 Winter Youth Retreat. With the blessing and guidance of His Grace Mar Awa Royel, this year's retreat, was themed "Built by Him and for Him," and was dedicated to meditating upon the life and teachings of Mar Aphrahat the Persian Sage (born c. 270 AD) who was a member of the *bney qyama* (or Sons of the Covenant) and also an important teacher and defender of the true faith in the early Eastern Church.

The focus of the retreat was centered around three Bible Study sessions, based upon the Demonstrations of Mar Aphrahat himself; on faith, deeds, and communion with God. The sessions were taught by various deacons of the Diocese and invited the youth to imagine themselves as each being a dwelling for God, with their foundation in Our Lord Jesus Christ, and their walls built sturdily from righteous internal (such as prayer and fasting) and external (such as charity toward the needy) deeds. With a strong foundation and edifice, according to Mar Aphrahat, and through continual effort and dedication we can begin our journey in communion with God, and indeed, be ourselves inhabited by the Most High as lowly dwellings for His glory upon the earth.

These three Bible Study sessions based upon the teachings of Mar Aphrahat were then facilitated by an activity which asked youth to separate into groups and find building materials by way of a scavenger hunt with clues from the Bible and our Blessed Church's faith more specifically. Once materials were acquired, the teams were asked to then build something which would summarize the retreat's theme and all three Bible Study sessions.

As always, another key part to the retreat was practicing our faith through communal daily prayers, both in the morning and evening. Prayers were based upon the liturgical daily offices of our Blessed Church, with translated psalm selections for the youth to participate in, in our characteristic call and response (or *maqyapta*) tradition.

To further facilitate the learning and spiritual growth of the youth throughout the retreat, each individual was equipped with a workbook at the outset of the retreat. The booklet contained important tools like summary Biblical verses and review questions for each Bible Study session, but also daily journal entries based on proverbs from Mar Aphrahat's teachings and pre-retreat and post-retreat personal assessments to encourage the youth to reflect upon and analyze their own faith and spiritual strength at a deeper level.

The weekend's program was concluded and brought to a fitting completion with the celebration of the Holy Liturgy of the Mysteries (Takhsha d'Razeh Qaddisheh), celebrated by Qasha Genard Lazar on Sunday, which was preceded by the Matins (Sloth d'Sapra).

We pray that this year's retreat will be of great benefit to both the organizers and the attending youth of our diocese alike. We lift up continual praise and thanksgiving to our Lord, who has protected and preserved our amazing Church and all Her perfect teachings, originating from our eternal and immovable foundation, Jesus Christ, and all our holy and upright teachers, saints, and clergy who continue to labor in reinforcing the dwellings which are our very selves in a world filled with heavy winds and storms.

## **WCC Condemns Attacks on Churches in Niger**

*22 January 2015*

Attacks in Niger, resulting in the destruction of more than 70 churches and the killing of an undetermined number of people, were strongly condemned by the World Council of Churches (WCC). These events have come as repercussions following the Charlie Hebdo attack and the "Je suis Charlie" campaign in support of the controversial French weekly publication.

An official WCC statement issued on 22 January reads, “The WCC is grateful for the strong condemnation by the government of Niger of these attacks. President Mahamadou Issoufou denounced the anti-Christian violence, addressing his fellow citizens in these words, ‘What have the Christians of Niger done to deserve this? Where have they wronged you?’”

The statement also notes that Niger is a “predominantly Muslim country but one with a reputation of relative tolerance towards its Christian minority”, also stating that “over the past few years there has been a growing campaign of radicalization.”

The statement showed appreciation for remarks made on a BBC radio broadcast by the Christian pastor Sani Nomao, “I call on every single believer in Niger to forgive and forget, to love Muslims with all their heart, to keep up the faith, to love Christ like never before.”

## **News from ACERO: Aid Program with Iraqi Carmelites and Chaldean Catholic Community**

*Editor's Note: Please visit [www.theacero.org](http://www.theacero.org) for extensive coverage of the laudable work being done by the international aid agency of the Assyrian Church of the East throughout the Middle East in recent times. This is put one of countless reports.*

With the support of our institutional project partner the Barnabas Fund, ACERO has provided support during the December Christmas period to the Order of Discalced Carmelite Friars in Iraq for the implementation of a number of relief programs.

Through the commendable efforts of Fr Ghadir Karamli and Sister Mayada, relief programs were implemented to support displaced Christians from the Chaldean Catholic community and the Yazidi community.

Food rations and Christmas gifts were distributed to needy persons in Baghdad and Dohuk and a half-day recreation program was also hosted in the same locations. The total project value amounted to \$20,000USD.

This builds on the significant work done supporting all of Iraq's minority Christian communities in 2014 including those from the Assyrian Church of the East, Chaldean Catholic Church and the Syriac Orthodox and Catholic churches.

Fr Ghadir, offered his thanks to “so many benefactors who know how to give hope in the midst of this tragic situation. In the name of all the refugees . . . an infinite thanks”.



المجمع السونهادوسي المقدس  
كنيسة المشرق الآشورية



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❖ *The Holy Synod of the Holy Apostolic Catholic Assyrian Church of the East* ❖

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARIAT

## STATEMENT REGARDING THE HEALTH OF HIS HOLINESS MAR DINKHA IV

The Holy Synod of the Holy Apostolic Catholic Assyrian Church of the East wishes to inform the faithful of the holy Church, and all well-wishers, concerning the health of His Holiness Mar Dinkha IV, Catholicos-Patriarch, and the progress he is making thus far. The following information was provided and verified by His Holiness' personal physician.

His Holiness the Patriarch was admitted to the hospital on January 12, 2015 following an influenza episode. This later caused pneumonia and eventually evolved into respiratory distress. With this type of complication, a slow recovery is usually expected. His Holiness was discharged last week on Thursday, February 5, 2015 and is currently in rehab recovering at a remarkable rate.

His Holiness' lungs were affected only, while his heart and vascular system remain normal. The Patriarch's brain function and memory are as strong as ever, and his other organs are functioning well. It should also be indicated that this episode of pneumonia was a completely isolated and acute event, and was not related to his previous bleeding in July of 2014, from which he has completely recovered. Further, His Holiness' does not have any cardiac problems as well.

The Holy Synod wishes to thank all of the faithful who have prayed and continue to pray for the health of His Holiness and for his speedy recovery; Amen.

*Given from the Secretariat of the Holy Synod of the Assyrian Church of the East, this 12 day of February, 2015.*

By Grace,

†Mar Awa Royel  
Secretary of the Holy Synod;  
Bishop of California



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**‘Meditations For Daily Life’, a Book of Ayesha Nadakavukaren releasing on Friday 30th January 2015 during the festival of Mar Aprem Church, Thrissur**



**Rev'd Dr. Sr. Jincy Othotil pictured with Fr. Yokhana and Mr. Nenos Jack Audi in Lebenon**



# MAR GABRIEL CHURCH

CHALDEAN SYRIAN CHURCH OF THE EAST  
MUMBAI



**Free Medical Camp on 21st February, 2015 at 4. pm**

**Venue : Shepherd Widow's Home, Byculla**

: Chief Guest :  
**His Grace Dr. Mar Aprem**  
Metropolitan



Isaiah 9:6 For to us a child is born, to us a Son is given and the  
Government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called  
Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty God,  
everlasting Father, Prince of peace.

**A Motto of the Youth for this Year**

**"To share and care with the needy people of our society".**

Organisers  
Mar Gabriel  
Youth Committee

Supported by  
Mar Gabriel Church Members.





**Bishop Mar Paulus Benjamin of Chicago (1st from left) and Bishop Mar Awa Royel of California (3rd from left) meet with leaders of NCC USA in Chicago**



**Fr. Genard Lazar with members of 'Winter Youth Retreat', conducted from Friday January 9th to Sunday January 11th at Mount Hermon near Santa Cruz, California,**



**Mar Aprem Metropolitan preaching at the Ba'utha of the Ninevites on Wednesday 28 January 2015 at Mar Yohanan Mamdhana Church East Fort, Thrissur.**



**Newly renovated Mar Timotheus High School,  
Kuriachira, Thrissur**



*Indian Church News*

## **Visit to Lebanon**

*By Rev'd Dr Sr Jincy Othotil*

*M.Com, M.A., Ph.D. (Syriac)*

1<sup>st</sup> February 2015 early morning I started our journey from Cochin international airport to Beirut along with Fr Jacob Thekeparambil, the director of SEERI Kottayam. We reached there on the same day (Sunday) 10:45 am. At the landing time we can see Mediterranean Sea on the one side and other side is full of mountains. Syria and Palestine are the neighboring countries of this country. Prof. Abdo Badwi with his secretary and Fr Vibin Bernad (who is doing Masters Degree in Syriac Liturgy at University of Holy Spirit Kaslik [USEK] and who had studied at SEERI too) and other three youths from our Assyrian Church of the East in Lebanon were there at the airport to receive us. We were staying at the Guest House of USEK in the city of Juniuch where the 3<sup>rd</sup> Symposium Syro-Arabicum going to be held on 3-7<sup>th</sup> February 2015. After the lunch they brought me to show the snow in the mountain. For me, it was very new and marvelous experience but others are used to it.

On the 2<sup>nd</sup> day we went to attend the Holy Qurbana at USEK chapel at 7 am and they have a special celebration on the feast of the Entrance of our Lord into the Temple on 2<sup>nd</sup> February. Cor-Bishop Rev. Yatron Kolliana with Mr Nenos Jack Audi came to the university guest house and they took me to show Metropolitan House and Mar Geevarghese church and the Assyrian School also. It was nice to see the kids from various churches and other religion studying in our school. Around 600 students are studying there from the kinder-garten to 9<sup>th</sup> Grade. All students are learning the languages like English, French and Arabic along with the other subjects like History, Science, and Mathematics etc. From the 3<sup>th</sup> grade the students start to learn Assyrian language. Rev. Fr. Youkhana (who had studied at Iraq with our Bishop Mar Yohannan and the late Rev. Fr E. V. Antony) is teaching them the Assyrian language. He was shocked to hear the sad demise of our dear Fr. E. V. Antony and he showed me a lot of photos with him and Mar Yohannan also. While I was visiting the school I got a chance to see one man who came from Iraq and he told me lot of sad news especially about his sisters. Actually he did not know where his sisters are and if they are still alive or not. Very sad to hear about it.

From 3<sup>rd</sup> morning at 9 o'clock the conference started with the warm welcome to the participants by Rev. Dr. Abdo Badwi (Chief of Department of Sciences Syro-Antiochian USEK), Rev. Dr. Ronney El Gemayel SJ (Director of CEDRAC, St Joseph University) and Rev. Dr. Hady Mahfouz (Rector of USEK) at Amphitheatre Jean Paul II. HB Yousef III Younan, Patriarch of Syrian Catholic Church and a Monsignor from the Vatican Embassy also blessed us with their presence. Patriarch asked me about the people of Kerala. After the warm welcome a keynote address was delivered by Abbe Elias Khalife from USEK. After tea break we all went to the auditorium Jean El Hawa-Batiment H for the preliminary session of papers. Fr. Abdo Badwi was the moderator and Monk Roger Akhrass (Patriarchal Syriaque Orthodoxe, Damas and



Professor at USEK), Fr. Abbe Jean Tabet (Maronite priest from USEK) and Sr Jincy Othottil (Nun from Assyrian Church of the East) presented the papers respectively. Fr. Yokhana, Dr. Robin Beth Shmuel and Mr. Ninos Audi attended this conference. Lunch was served in the University cafeteria and after the lunch 3 parallel sessions were done from 3 to 5 p.m. in conference rooms Salle HS 315, 306 and 314. Fr Jacob presented his paper at Salle HS 315 4:30 pm on the same day. We met Bishop Emeritus Antonius Beiluni and Chaldean Bishop of Aleppo who was one of representatives of their Church for Vatican Dialogue with our Assyrian Church of the East.

On 4<sup>th</sup> day 9am - 4pm – three parallel sessions on the various subjects like archeology et Histoire, Langue, Theologie, Patrologie et Monachisme were held and at 4 o'clock there was an evaluation session at Auditorium Jean El Hawa. After that evaluation, everyone went to the Amphitheatre Jean Paul II for the musical concert by the choir of USEK. This music group is very famous and they sung the West Syriac melodies with four parts. We were in the blissful atmosphere for one hour. After the dinner everyone dispersed to their houses of stay.

On 5<sup>th</sup> morning 8:30 we started our picnic to the North of Lebanon – Holy Valley (Lot of wonders are situated in this valley) – the forest of Cedar (Cedar is growing very slowly but they are stronger even they will stay without losing its leaf at the winter or summer) – St Antonius monastery. There are a few hermits living in this holy valley and we were blessed to see one among them. We couldn't speak anything to him but he blessed and said some words to us. In this journey we passed through the Biblos and part of Tripoli. Lebanon people believe that St Paul arrived in their port when he was on the way to Antioch. At 6 O'Clock in the evening we were gathered at the USEK campus to go to St Joseph University at Beirut and it took around 45 minutes to reach there. Rev. Dr. Salim Daccache, Rector of USJ, welcomed us and officially inaugurated the Arabic Session of this conference and followed by a key note address by Rev. Dr. Samir Khalil Samir, Founder of CEDRAC.

I stayed at our Metropolitan Palace for four days and visited 4 parishes such as Mar Geevarghese Church close to the Metropolitan House. Cor-Bishop Yatron Kolliana celebrated Holy Raza over there. Then on Saturday we went to Zahle (East from here we can reach to Damascus by car within 20 minutes) to see Mar Zaia Church. We had lunch from the parish priest Rev. Aram Warda. He showed me the old photos of Mar Aprem Metropolitan, who visited this parish before finishing its works. Saturday late evening there was a party at church hall to congratulate Dr. Robin Bet Shmuel from Iraq, who got doctorate a few days before in the Modern Syriac from one of the Lebanon Universities.

On Sunday morning we went to Mar Geevarghse Church for Holy Qurbana. After the Holy Raza I had a meeting with the members from the Youth Association and Parish Committee. After the breakfast we went to visit the parish named Rabban Pithyon and then to Beth Hannanya. I also got chance to visit some of our parish members over there too. Very sad to hear their life at Syria! They lost everything there and just came here. 15 years old young people are working hard to get their daily food.

On Monday morning we went to the south of Lebanon and visited Cana, Tyre and Sidon. It was a very marvelous trip. Cana – for the Lebanon people, the first miracle of Jesus occurred at this place. There is a grotto of St Mary in this place and they engraved the pictures of infant Jesus, apostles and others in various small rocks. After the visit of Cana (Lebanese people called Qana as ‘Ana), on the way back we visited the archeological excavation places at Tyre and it gave us a lot of information about the Roman and Byzantine period. The cost of fruits and other items are very low compared to in the shops at Beirut. Then we had lunch from Sidon (Saida = the place for fishing) and visited the old cities and horse house (Kuthiralayam), Audi Soap company now it converted as a museum for soap manufacturing. These cities are very old with very narrow paths and shops are on the ground and they are staying in the upper rooms. They are trying to maintain the old fashion even now.

On Tuesday I went back to the guest house of USEK and we visited some monasteries over there.

Wednesday - we visited the Patriarchal Seminary and House (Syrian Catholic – HB Younan) and visited their manuscripts library and other library. Most of the monks and priests are speaking Surat here. An 84 year old monk takes care of this manuscript library and we also have seen the digitalization of these manuscripts. This day is very crucial day for us. Heavy rain (ice rain), wind, waves from the sea, very cold and snow at the mountain. The new road which they built near the seashore was seen damaged because of the waves and ice rain. Last day itself I used the same road to come here from our Metropolitan House.

Thursday – after the breakfast we started our journey back to India. I never expected such a journey. I am blessed with this opportunity from the Almighty. Praise the Lord!

## **Dr. P.P. Lizymol MSc., Ph.D**

Dr. P.P. Lizymol, wife of Mr. Pradeep Mookan, second son of the late Prof. Andrews Mookan (brother of Mar Aprem Metropolitan) was given a prestigious award in January 2015. This is the first time a member of our Church was given such a high award for scientific research. Chief Minister of Kerala State Shri Oommen Chandy was supposed to attend and inaugurate the function but due to the BJP hartal Mr. K C Venugopal M.P. from Alleppey (former Minister in the Central Government) attended and presented the awards. Chief Minister was delivering in absentia (video conferencing) the inaugural address which was screened at the function at the 27<sup>th</sup> Kerala Science Congress.

The Dr. S. Vasudev Award was presented to Lizymol P.P., Scientist D, Sree Chitra Tirunal Institute for Medical Sciences and Technology, (SCTIMST) Thiruvananthapuram. The award, which consists of a cash prize of Rs. 50,000 and a certificate, was given for her research work on ‘Development of smart dental composites consist of calcium containing resins and fillers.’ This discovery will save foreign money, as she can make indigenous and cheaper dental composites.

## **Syriac Orthodox Patriarch Visits India**

His Holiness Mor Ignatius Aphrem II, Syriac Orthodox Patriarch of Antioch, has made his first Apostolic visit to Kerala, India after becoming Patriarch. He was in Trichur on 13<sup>th</sup> February in the Jacobite Church at Kannara near Thrissur. Dr. Mar Aprem Metropolitan was present there at the invitation of Mar Elias Metropolitan. Our Metropolitan presented some of his books including his second Ph.D. thesis to the Patriarch who was known to him from the Pro Oriente (Vienna) dialogue and other meetings including the Assyrian Youth Conference in Los Angeles, California three years ago.

## **Mar Timotheus High School**

A new building was constructed in the same grounds in Kuriachira behind the Mar Mari Shleeha Church costing 30 million rupees. The inauguration ceremony was held on Monday 12<sup>th</sup> January 2015. This new construction was possible because the sons of Mr. M.O. Thomakutty, the founder manager of this School handed over the land of 96 cents (nearly one acre) to the church. The Trichur MLA Advocate Therambil Ramakrishnan delivered the keynote address. Dr. Mar Aprem Metropolitan, School Patron, presided over the function. Bishops Mar Yohannan and Mar Awgin spoke. Mr. I.G. Joy, the Corporate Manager of the Chaldean Syrian Schools was congratulated for this achievement in providing such a nice building to this school. This school was originally started by Mar Abimalek Timotheus Metropolitan in 1927 and was raised to the status of a High School in 1958 during the days of Mar Thoma Darmo Metropolitan.

## **Release of Book of Ayesha Nadakavukaren**

During the festival of Mar Aprem Church a copy of the book 'Meditations For Daily Life' was inaugurated on Friday 30<sup>th</sup> January 2015 during the public meeting. The author of the book Mrs. Ayesha Inasu Nadakavukaren was present on the stage. She spoke for a few minutes. Mar Aprem Metropolitan who wrote the Foreword to this publication encouraged all our English-knowing members to read this devotional book. The book costing Rs. 200 was offered at half the cost for one week in that parish. Ayesha's husband Inasu is the grandson of the late Athleta O.T. Inasu of Thrissur. They live in Toronto, Canada. We wish good sales for her book which can be obtained by emailing [hgmaraprem@gmail.com](mailto:hgmaraprem@gmail.com)

## **Ba'utha of the Ninevites**

Two weeks before the beginning of the Great Lent (Sauma Rabba) we had the Rogation of the Ninevites. Mar Aprem Metropolitan led the prayers starting at 7am and ending with Holy Qurbana at about 3.30pm. Bishop Mar Yohannan led the prayers in Mar Thoma Shleeha Church, Pattikad. Bishop Mar Awgin conducted prayers in Mar Yohannan Mamdhana Church. Small neighboring churches joined with the main centres. There were separate prayers in Ernakulam, Cochin and Madras.



## **Anneedha Friday**

Memorial Friday before the beginning of Lent was observed on Friday February 13<sup>th</sup> in most of our churches. Dr Mar Aprem Metropolitan conducted the service in Mar Yohannan Mamdhana Church cemetery; Mar Yohannan Yoseph Episcopa in Mar Addai Shleeha Church cemetery and Mar Awgin Kuriakose Episcopa conducted the service in Mar Mari Shleeha Church, Kuriachira. There was a large gathering this year. Many faithful people took leave from their work to pray in front of the tombs of their beloved ones.

## **200<sup>th</sup> Anniversary**

The 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Mart Mariam Big Church in Thrissur is being celebrated this year. The celebrations began in March last year and will conclude in April 2015. A souvenir of all events connected with the celebration of this oldest church in Trichur town is planned to be published soon. This publication will include all the history and the important events and pictures of this church. Order your copy soon.

## **53 Years as a Prelate**

On 11 February 2015 His Holiness Mar Dinkha IV completed 53 years as a prelate (14 years and a half as bishop of Iran and 38 years and a half as the Catholicos-Patriarch). Although it is not a record as compared to his predecessor the late Mar Eshai Shimun, Catholicos-Patriarch, it is perhaps a record amongst Patriarchs of all denominations around the world.

His Holiness was admitted to hospital in Chicago in January due to pneumonia. He has recovered but is still not fully well. Pray for his better health.

## **CASA, Delhi**

Mar Aprem Metropolitan attended the annual National Board meeting of the Church's Auxiliary for Social Action (CASA) on 20 February 2015 in New Delhi, the national capital. The Director of CASA and other leaders felicitated Mar Aprem Metropolitan who is the only surviving member of the founding members of the CASA in New Delhi in 1974. The history of the CASA was written by Mar Aprem in 1978. The title of this book is FROM RELIEF TO DEVELOPMENT: A Profile of CASA. Several years ago Mar Aprem had served CASA as a national Vice Chairman.

## **Free medical camp in Mumbai**

The youths of Mar Gabriel Church organised a free medical camp on 21st February, 2015 at 1600 hrs at Shepherd Widows Home, located at Byculla in Mumbai. This medical camp was organised as a part of the outreach programme by the youths of the Church, in line with this year's motto - 'To share and care with the needy people of our society.'

The highlight of the event was the blessed presence of **Metropolitan Dr. Mar Aprem**, who held a special prayer session for the residents of Widows' Home. In order to help the inmates

understand the background of the Chaldean Syrian Church and about Archbishop Mar Aprem, youth secretary, Geo George Kangappadan presented a brief backgrounder.

Free medicines, which were sponsored by the members of the Church, were handed over to the Staff of the Home by youth Joint Secretary, Dr. Deepa Chaklola and Treasurer, Mr. Shaju Paul. The medical camp included a free check-up of all the members of the House which included the inmates and their support staff. The doctors who helped with their presence were Dr. Inasu. Chakola, Dr. Deepa Chakola and Dr. Mrs. Lizzy Francis Emmatty.

There was active participation from the members of the Church who willing came forward as volunteers. The generally gloomy Widows' Home was a picture of vibrancy that evening and was a welcome change to the inmates who expressed their happiness, through words and actions.

## **Holy Qurbana in Mumbai**

Dr. Mar Aprem Metropolitan made a three- day visit to our parish of Mumbai and celebrated Holy Qurbana on Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> February in St. Gabriel Church in Thana, which is in the suburb of the historic city of Bombay now known as Mumbai. The Assistant Vicar of the parish Fr. Michael Pazhumalil M.Sc.(Computer science) is a Principal of a residential High School near Nassik and is serving our church without salary or allowance,

The congregation in Mumbai was very happy to have a visit from the Metropolitan who had worked hard to have a Church in Bombay. After the Holy Qurbana the Metropolitan recalled that as deacon he had visited this parish 54 years ago when he was going to study in England. In 1962 when he was returning from England he arranged a Holy Qurbana in Byculla with Fr. P. K. Varghese. Then in 1966 when he went to study in USA he stopped in Bombay and celebrated a Holy Qurbana with Deacon A. T. Joseph who was brought from Thrissur.

Mar Aprem Metropolitan expressed his happiness in getting this opportunity to meet several of the old members and some new members. He also arranged with some members to discuss with friends the possibility of selling the present church and buying a better church in a closer location to our members. He also visited two old sick members of the parish namely Mr. Mathala Timothy and the widow of the uncle of late Bishop Poulouse Mar Poulouse.

The members of the parish such as Aby Joseph Thekekara, Shelly Porathukaren, Varghese Emmatty, Joseph Emmatty, Mrs. Princy Mohan, Aby Timothy Maliakel, Mrs. Sicily Timothy, Mrs. Molly Baby, Dr. Inasu Chakola, Dr. Deepa Chakola, Geo George Kangappadan and his wife and many others made the visit of the Metropolitan offering him hospitality etc. The Sunday school children had a group photo with the Metropolitan.

## **PH.D. THESIS REPRINT AVAILABLE**

History of the Assyrian Church of the East in the twentieth century is a Ph.D. thesis written by Dr. Mar Aprem Metropolitan. Although this valuable book was out of print, it is reprinted. Those interested to purchase a copy please email to [hgmaraprem@gmail.com](mailto:hgmaraprem@gmail.com).

**TEACH YOURSELFARAMAIC** written by Dr. Mar Aprem Metropolitan is also available now.

Please note that the email id of Voice of the East since last three years is [hgmaraprem@gmail.com](mailto:hgmaraprem@gmail.com) and the mobile number is 9446621511.



**Fr. Lazar Madathumpady is celebrating Holy Qurbana in Sharjah on 10th January 2015. Fr. Victor Kollannur and Fr. Sachin Timothy are seen in the picture.**



**Dr. P P Lizymol is receiving the 'Vasudev Award' from Mr. K C Venugopal (Former Union Minister in Delhi)**



**Dr. Mar Aprem Metropolitan is leading the prayers for the *Annedha* Festival on Friday 13th February at Mar Yohannan Mamdhana Church, East Fort, Thrissur**

