

صوت المشرق

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His Holiness Mar Gewargis III Sliwa, Catholicos-Patriarch and prelates following the consecration of Mar Abris Youkhanan as the new Bishop of Erbil at St John the Baptist Cathedral in Ankawa. L-to-R: Mar Aprim Athniel of Syria, Mar Odisho Oraham of Sweden, Mar Meelis Zaia of Australia, H.H. Mar Gewargis III Sliwa Catholicos-Patriarch, Mar Abris Youkhanan of Erbil, Mar Aprim Khamis of Arizona, Mar Emmanuel Joseph of Canada and Mar Narsai Benyamin of Iran.

VOICE OF THE EAST



Bishop Mar Aprim Khamis of Arizona ordains Rev'd Fr. Sargon Korsh Yaro on 23 April 2017 assisted by Archdeacon Frederick Hermiz, Rev. Fr. Kando D. Kando and other clergy



H. L. Mar Awgin Kuriakose of India pictured with His Holiness Pope Francis during the visit of an ecumenical delegation to Rome on 10 May 2017

VOICE OF THE EAST

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Voice of the East

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Editorial

Terrorism Must End

We hear daily news of terrorist acts around the world. Whether we are living in the Middle East, Europe or elsewhere, global terrorism has become a part of our daily lives. Safety can no longer be expected in any part of the world today. When you travel by land, sea or air there is no guarantee of safe passage.

It is true that no religious books like Quran, BhagvatGita or the Holy Bible ever teach religious people to kill fellow humans and to create terror in the society. If we start small fights in one area it will spread like wildfire. The Evil One is always busy creating misunderstandings in the minds of friends, relatives and neighbours.

The atom bombs which the big powers possess will not bring peace either. The Japanese people who were affected by the use of nuclear weapons during the Second World War (1939-1945) are still suffering from the effects of such horrific weapons.

We find in our society some old people who lost hands or legs struggling to live in their old age. There are also people who suffer due to natural calamities. What is the cause of such suffering in our society today?

These realities around us should open our eyes to end violence or terrorism. We should practice peace in our homes and in the neighbourhood. We should also teach our children never to be a part of terrorist groups. Sadly, people young and old are full of anger and hatred against each other. Even within a family there is a lot of violence and suspicion. We should change our attitude towards our own family members and neighbours.

Today there is no real love between parents and children, between husbands and wives. Some people love money or worldly pleasures. Such attitudes do not create peace of mind. Don't be disturbed. Let us turn to the Lord and ask for forgiveness. Let us change our world from terrorism to peace.

At present some countries spend millions of dollars for the safety of their leaders. They also expend funds to protect us from the attacks of the enemy countries across the border. Tension and suspicion exist between India and Pakistan which was the part of the British India until August 15, 1947. Just imagine how such massive military expenditures could be better spent on building a better world.

Mar Aprem Metropolitan



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HOLY APOSTOLIC CATHOLIC ASSYRIAN CHURCH OF THE EAST
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DIOCESE OF WESTERN USA

Office of the Diocesan Bishop

His Beatitude Mar Aprem
Metropolitan of archdiocese of India.

Greetings Your Beatitude:

Prelates, clergy, central committee, and all the faithful of your archdiocese of India in the Holy Name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ to whom I offer supplication of prayers to keep you all in His merciful providence, grant you long and healthy life, and to be with you and guide you for the great glory of His Holy Name, Amen.

Please be informed that on the 2nd Sunday of Resurrection, April 23, 2017, by the grace of our Almighty, I elevated Deacon Sargon Korsh Yaro, MA. to the rank of priesthood to serve the St. Peter Cathedral Church of Glendale Arizona. The Church had a throng of faithful who attended the ordination.

The event began at 8:30 A.M with a procession that included the priests, deacons, choir, and Deacon Sargon Yaro. As they all proceeded down the nave, they praised and chanted the "lord of All" Hyam. The procession was followed by all, except the choir, entering the altar. The ordination began at 8:50. I officiated the ordination joined by Archdeacon Fredrick Hermiz and Rev Kando D. Kando.

The parish members (deacons and laymen) along with some visitors that out-of-state were feeling ecstatic during the long awaited ordination and were looking forward to working with the newly ordained priest. It was truly a splendid day. Undoubtedly, the heavens joined us in this Holy and spiritual event. The ordination was being streamed live via Facebook and generated close to 10,000 viewers.

After the conclusion of The Holy Eucharist, the clergy and parish members joined the faithful in the Church hall for a breakfast. We received several congrats from our church bishops and organizations and were read as the faithful were eating breakfast. The love of the people for the newly ordained priests was demonstrated after the conclusion of the breakfast where most of the parishioners stood in line to congratulate, bless, and show their support for Kasha Sargon.

Rev. Sargon Yaro, was a sub-deacon for one year and as a deacon for four years for Mar Gewargis Cathedral, in Chicago Illinois. He was schooled in the liturgy of our Church, the Aramaic language, and the Khoudra hymn by Archpriest Shlemon Hesequial of Chicago. His Education background is as follows: He has an Associate in Mechanical Design (AutoCAD) Oakton Community College, Bachelors in Management from National Louis University, Bachelors in High School Mathematics and ESL. English Teacher from National Louis University, a Master in Art of Education from National Louis University, (specialized in how to study texts, teach learning techniques and write curriculums (language and math for yearly semesters).

In conclusion, Your Beatitude, please keep our newly priest, Rev. Sargon Yaro in your prayers. Heartfelt greetings to you and the entire blessed Archdiocese of India.

Fraternally yours in Christ

+ *Mar Aprim Khamis*

+Aprim Khamis
Bishop Western USA.

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Consecration of Bishop Mar Abris Awshalem in Erbil, Iraq

The consecration of Bishop Mar Abris Awshalem was conducted by His Holiness Mar Gewargis III Sliwa at Ankawa, Erbil on Sunday 7 May 2017. The consecration was officiated with the presence of Mar Meelis Zaia (Metropolitan of Australia, New Zealand and Lebanon), Mar Aprim Khamis (Bishop of Western USA), Mar Odisho Oraham (Bishop of Europe), Mar Emmanuel Joseph (Bishop of Canada), Mar Aprim Athneil (Bishop of Syria) and Mar Narsai Benjamin (Bishop of Iran). The colourful ceremony was attended by archdeacons, co-episcopas, priests, deacons and a large congregation of faithful. The new bishop earned a Ph.D. from Rome in 2015 and has been designated as Bishop of Erbil to assist the Catholicos-Patriarch. He is 32 years old. He has been serving as the priest of the Erbil Cathedral.

We add an eye witness account of the consecration service in Erbil. Bishop Mar Aprim Khamis of Arizona writes: "Indeed, we felt His presence at the time of consecration of His Grace Mar Abris, Bishop of Erbil and assistant to His Holiness. The prelates from other Churches, the authority delegation, and huge throng of faithful were in attendance. It was live on air by Ishtar TV. All the prelates missed your presence."

Youth Conference Assyrian Church of the East Youth Association - Sydney 4th Archdiocesan Youth Conference 2017

Wednesday 5th to Sunday 9th July 2017

From India, His Beatitude Dr. Mar Aprem Metropolitan and Dr. Sr. Jincy Othottil will be among the leaders in attendance. His Holiness Mar Gewargis III Sliwa, Catholicos-Patriarch is expected to be the Chief Guest. Of course His Beatitude Mar Meelis Zaia AM, the Metropolitan of Australia, New Zealand and Lebanon will lead the Conference.

Consecration in Australia

Archdeacon Ninos Elya, aged 32 will be consecrated as bishop on Sunday 16 July 2017 at Coolaroo near Melbourne. He will be the Bishop of Victoria and New Zealand. He will be the second Assyrian prelate in Australia. He was born in Baghdad, Iraq in 1985, ordained a Deacon in 2002, ordained a Priest in 2013 and ordained as Archdeacon on Sunday 2nd April 2017 by H.B. Mar Meelis Zaia in Sydney. He is currently doing his Ph.D. studies in Sydney.

The Death of Sargon Aboona

By Solomon (Sawa) Solomon



Almas & Sargon Aboona, Skokie.



MAR ELIA ABOONA

Sargon Aboona, a grand-nephew of Bishop Mar Elia Aboona of Alkosh, Iraq died in Skokie, Illinois on April 25, 2017 of old age. He was laid to rest in Montrose Cemetery in Chicago following the funeral services celebrated by Bishop Mar Paulus and 8 priests. His father was Rab-Tremma Yacu Aboona (d. 1985). Sargon was married to Almas, the daughter of Deacon Guliad Antar, who was instrumental in building the church of Mar Qardagh in Baghdad. Beside his wife, Sargon is survived by his son Emil and his daughter Nadia. May he rest in peace in heaven.

The Death of Mrs. Florence Royel

Bishop Mar Awa Royel's mother Mrs Florence Royel died on 18th May 2017. Condolences from the Indian Church. May her soul rest in peace.

Indian Archdiocese News

Syro-Malabar Cardinal's Visit

His Eminence George Cardinal Alencherry, Major Archbishop of the five-million-strong Syro-Malabar Catholic Church, made his first visit to our Mar Addai Shleeha Church in Thrissur on Sunday 14 May 2017. He inaugurated the 85th anniversary of Mar Addai Shleeha Church, Paravattani. He exhorted the church to have co-operation with Syro-Malabar Church which in the past was one Church dating back to times of Apostle Thomas in the first century. Mar Aprem Metropolitan presided over the function. Bishop Mar Yohannan Yoseph spoke on the occasion.

Metropolitan Mar Chrysostom

The 100th Birthday of Metropolitan Philipose Mar Chrysostom aged 100, former head of the Mar Thoma Syrian Church of Malabar was celebrated in several cities in India. Mar Aprem spoke on the occasion in several cities like Kottayam, Trivandrum and Thrissur. Metropolitan Philipose Mar Chrysostom had written an attractive FOREWORD to the first book of humour **BISHOP'S JOKES** authored by Mar Aprem Metropolitan which gave name and fame to these two Metropolitans as the best humorous writers among the bishops in the world. This book and the second one captioned **LAUGH WITH THE BISHOP** were translated to the Russian language and launched in Moscow in 1992. As this Russian translation is out of print there are plans to reprint this edition. Interested people in Russia may contact the author via email: hgmaraprem@gmail.com

Tree Planting for World Environmental Day

The Youths Association of the Church of the East celebrated *World Environmental Day* on 5 June 2017 by planting trees at Mar Yohannan Mamdhana Church. Mar Aprem Metropolitan and Bishop Mar Awgin Kuriakose planted the trees and congratulated Fr. Michael Vallavanthara, the new Central President of the Youths Association and his committee of young people in giving leadership for all citizens of India to have an awareness of the need of planting trees in order to save this globe from the hot summers. In some parts of India the temperature has crossed 50 degree centigrade.

Rev. Dr. Sr. Jincy Othottil, Principal of our Chaldean Syrian College, who is also the president of the Women Youths Association of our Church, spoke on the occasion. All students of the Chaldean Syrian College participated in this function.

The Mar Timotheus Orphanage started a kitchen garden in the same evening. In addition to Mar Aprem Metropolitan and Bishop Mar Awgin Kuriakose, Mr. M. A. Thomas, Chairman of the Board of Central Trustees also spoke at the function. The Youths Association took initiative for this kitchen garden. All the speakers encouraged the inmates of the orphanage to find a few minutes daily to work in their kitchen garden.

Ordination of Rev'd. Fr. Abin Daniel

Deacon Abin Daniel, son of late Fr. T. P. Daniel was ordained a Qashisha (Priest) on Tuesday 13 June 2017 at the Mart Mariam Cathedral, Trichur. The service was led by Dr. Mar Aprem Metropolitan assisted by Dr. Mar Yohannan Yoseph Episcopa and Mar Awgin Kuriakose Episcopa and many of our priest and deacons. He was made a *Qaroya* (Lector/Reader) when he was only 15 years old and promoted as Sub-deacon later and after completing 18 years of age he was promoted as a full Deacon. He completed an engineering degree and is now a full priest. He is the only priest in our Church in India who has an engineering degree. There are two deacons in our church who have earned engineering degrees.

The new priest's father late Fr. T. P. Daniel was a priest in the Jacobite Syrian Church who later joined our Church before his marriage. Fr. Abin Daniel's mother is a retired headmistress from the Government School in Pattikad which was originally started by late Mar Abimalek Timotheus Metropolitan in 1908. Fr. Abin's only sister Dr. Sonia Daniel works in Abu Dhabi along with her husband Dr. Santhosh.

Fr. Abin Daniel is the only clergyman in India who served the Church in four different ranks, namely Qaroya, Sub deacon, deacon and Priest. The only other person who has served in four ranks of the Church is Mar Aprem Metropolitan namely deacon, priest, Episcopa and Metropolitan.

Forty-Ninth (49th) Qashisha

With the ordination of Fr. Abin Daniel, the number of priests in India has risen to 49. Mar Aprem Metropolitan announced that it was his 49th year of being a Metropolitan, the number of *Qashishas* has reached 49. As we have only 32 parishes in the Indian Archdiocese we need only 32 priests. But some junior priests are serving as assistant Vicars in large parishes. We have only 35 deacons including the senior- most who is 88 years old.

We have now 3 prelates, 49 priests, 35 deacons, 2 shamshanithas and 3 nuns making a total of 92 ordained clergy.

If God helps, the next year which is the Golden Jubilee year of the Episcopal consecration of Dr. Mar Aprem Metropolitan, the Indian church may reach a hundred clergy with new deacons and nuns.

The Metropolitan recalled that there was a day in 1911 when there was only one priest to assist Mar Abimalek Timotheus Metropolitan without any deacons and to serve two churches namely Mar Yohannan Mamdhana Church and Mar Thoma Shleeha Church in Pattikad. Mar Abimalek Timotheus Metropolitan from Mar Beesho Village in the Assyrian Homeland told the leaders of the Church that this Church in India will disappear, if you do not give your children for the service of the Church. The same evening the leaders of the church came to the Metropolitan and give 4 young brilliant people for the service of the Church.



85th Anniversary of Mar Addai Shleeha Church, Paravattani, Thrissur on Sunday 14 May 2017. L-to-R: His Eminence George Cardinal Alencherry of Cochin, Vicar Fr. K.R. Inasu, H.L. Dr. Mar Yohannan Yoseph Episcopa, H.G. Dr. Mar Aprem Metropolitan and Mr. Anto D. Ollukaran



Volunteers of Vacation Bible School (VBS) with Patron Mar Aprem Metropolitan on 1 June 2017 at the Metropolitan Palace, Thrissur



The Institute of Evangelism & Mission of the Church of the East was held on 14 June 2017. The Metropolitan and two bishops were present and twenty five students received diplomas



**The renovated Chaldean Centre
Thrissur – 13 June 2017**



Inauguration of the renovated 'Chaldean Centre', Thrissur by H.G. Dr. Mar Aprem Metropolitan along with H. L. Dr. Mar Yohannan Yoseph, H.L. Mar Awgin Kuriakose, Chairman of the Board of Central Trustees and Church members on 13 June 2017



H.G. Dr. Mar Aprem Metropolitan celebrating his 77th birth anniversary by cutting a cake along with H.L. Dr. Mar Yohannan Yoseph Episcopa, H.L. Mar Awgin Kuriakose Episcopa, the Board of Central Trustees, Fr. Binu Joseph and Councillor Sri George Chandi on 13 June 2017 at the Chaldean Centre, Thrissur



Ordination of Deacon Abin Daniel as Qashisha on 13 June 2017 at Mart Mariam Big Church by Dr. Mar Aprem Metropolitan assisted by Bishop Dr. Mar Yohannan Yoseph, Bishop Mar Awgin Kuriakose and many clergy

Golden Jubilee Plus Two

13 June 2017 marked the 52nd anniversary of the ordination of Mar Aprem as a Qashisha (Priest) along with Fr. O. A. Jacob who was also present in the same altar. Actually there were four priests ordained in 1965 on the same day. Two of them were Bishop Poulouse Mar Poulouse and Fr. P. K. Raphael who have passed away into life eternal. Fr. O. A. Jacob who is undergoing dialysis for three days every week in a hospital in Trichur was healthy enough to be present in the altar. Fr. O. A. Jacob is one year older than Mar Aprem. Fr. Jacob had executed his will donating all his wealth and his late wife's wealth including their house to the Church. They had no children in their marriage. It is a good example for other Christians to do similar charitable deeds.

77th Birth Anniversary of Mar Aprem Metropolitan

The Board of Trustees of the Church of the East in India celebrated the 77th birth anniversary of the Metropolitan along with the renovation celebration of the Chaldean Centre Auditorium on 13 June 2017. In a 50 minute extempore speech Mar Aprem Metropolitan narrated the history of the Church of the East in India including the visit of Jawaharlal Nehru the first Prime Minister of India to the Metropolitan Palace on 29 May 1931. He referred to the details of the converting a church pond into an air-conditioned auditorium where the Church members were gathered that evening.

He recalled the dream which he and Bishop Poulouse Mar Poulouse had shared together to have a conference centre for international leaders to gather. As we were progressing in this dream project the unity of the Church took place in November 1995. As a result new interest was shown by more people belonging to both calendar groups. The unity of the Indian Church in November 1995 pushed this project further. But the death of Bishop Mar Poulouse on 24 March 1998 brought the burden back to Mar Aprem's head. Being a financial project the Board of Central Trustees took upon themselves the major burden of executing this dream project into reality.

The 77th birthday celebration was a happy occasion. Presents were given to the Metropolitan from different organizations and parish churches. The auditorium was full to its capacity. Bishop Dr. Mar Yohannan Yoseph and Bishop Mar Awgin Kuriakose spoke on the occasion. Mr. M. A. Thomas, Chairman of the Board of Trustees, M. Jose Chiriankandath, Mr. T. J. Rappai and Dr. Rishi Emmatty spoke. The new priest Fr. Abin Daniel was also congratulated on this function.

Mar Aprem Metropolitan recalled the conversation he had with Bishop Poulouse Mar Poulouse about length of life of the prelates who were their immediate predecessors. Their consecrator Mar Thoma Darmo Metropolitan died two weeks before completing 65 years of age. His predecessor Mar Abimalek Timotheus Metropolitan died 4 months before completing 67 years. Bishop Poulouse Mar Poulouse who wanted to live longer and played his tennis game regularly died on the operation table of the Apollo Hospital in Madras by massive cardiac arrest. He was only 56 years and 6 months old.

God gave Mar Aprem 77 years more than his father who died at the age of 67 and less than his mother who died after completing 82 years, and much less than his mother's father who died aged 96. Thank you Lord, thank you for giving him 77 years. Mar Aprem Metropolitan prayed to God that "If you grant me more years, I dedicate it to your service".

New President for MACE

Fr. Jos Jacob Vengassery B.D., M.Th.(Germany) is appointed as the president of the Men's Association of the Church of the East in succession of Fr. Sunny S. Koola who served in this capacity for about eleven years. MACE is an organization for men of our Church above 45 years, when they are eligible to continue their membership in the Youths Association.

Mr. Joy Simon Mannuthi is the General Secretary of this organization. They do several charitable and religious activities for the men of our Church.

The Chaldean Centre Renovated

The Chaldean Centre, the prestigious Conference Centre of the Church of the East in India, was renovated on 13 June 2017. So far only the Upper floor was air-conditioned. Now the lower floor is also air-conditioned. The lower floor is widened to seat more people. When the Church was united in November 1995 the work of the Chaldean Centre had begun under the leadership of Mar Aprem Metropolitan and Dr. Poulouse Mar Poulouse Episcopa. After the unity of two groups the work began to speed up and His Holiness Mar Dinkha IV of Blessed Memory inaugurated the Chaldean Centre in January 2000. During his next visit in 2010 H.H. Mar Dinkha presided over a function held in the air-conditioned auditorium. Afterwards the bottom floor was built and rented it. Now we have renovated it further hoping to generate enough money from the rent of this building.

Mar Timotheus Orphanage, Trichur

We are happy to inform all the well-wishers and donors of the Mar Timotheus Orphanage that the Government of India from the Home Department in Delhi has renewed the licence to receive foreign donations. The present license of FCRA is for 5 years from 2016 to 2021. The orphanage was not able to receive its regular monthly donations from some individuals (not our Church members) in recent months. Many Orphanages of other churches in different parts of India had to close down due to the difficulty of renewing their foreign license.

The prayers of our people and sincere efforts of Fr. Michael and Bishop Mar Awgin Kuriakose helped the authorities in Delhi to renew our license. Let us also inform our well-wishers that the MONEY ORDER from America cannot be cashed in India. If it is a cheque, (cashier's cheque or personal cheque), it is credited through the Banks. You can also transfer **the amount through Bank transfer from your account abroad to the account of Mar Timotheus Orphanage.**

Mar Thoma Ashram, Mulayam, Thrissur

Mar Thoma Ashram, Mulayam, Thrissur, the home for the boys, also got their foreign donations license renewed at the same time. They too were getting help from Swedish friends mentioned above. God has intervened to renew our license so that these institutions can continue to serve the poor and the needy.

Unfortunately the license of the Board of Central Trustees is not yet extended in Delhi. Please pray that it can be extended soon so that the Church too can receive foreign donations as before. Our Church does not depend on foreign funds for its maintenance or administration or the salaries of the clergy. It is only occasionally that foreign donations are received.

Mar Timotheus Charitable Hospital, Trichur

We wish to inform all our well-wishers that our dialysis unit is working well with three machines. Please note our foreign donation permission is okay. Please don't send MONEY ORDERS. Banks in India do not credit it. So send only cheques in the name of Mar Timotheus Charitable Hospital, Trichur. Please write cheques with proper spelling. You can also transfer money through the Banks. If you have any doubt please write to hgmaraprem@gmail.com

Institute of Mission and Evangelism

The Convocation of the 3rd batch of the **Institute of Mission & Evangelism of the Church of the East** in India was held on Wednesday 14 June 2017 at the Prayer Hall near the tombs of the Metropolitans in the Mart Mariam Cathedral Church premises. Dr. Mar Aprem Metropolitan inaugurated the function. Fr. Sunny S Koola, President of the Evangelistic Association of the Church of the East presided. Bishop Dr. Mar Yohannan Yoseph and Bishop Mar Awgin Kuriakose, both of them Faculty members of this Institute, spoke on the occasion. Mr. M. A. Thomas, Chairman of the Board of Central Trustees, spoke encouraging our laymen and lay women to acquire some knowledge about the Bible and the faith of our Church. The oldest student in this 3rd batch was Mr. P. C. Joy aged 80.

Student representatives, namely Mr. M. A. Varghese and Mrs. Omana Sajan expressed their appreciation of the Bishops and priests who took the classes. Fr. Jos Jacob Vengassery B.D., M.Th (Heidelberg) spoke evaluating the classes especially Old Testament in which he had made extensive research for a Ph. D. Fr. Jacks Chandy, Secretary and Course Director who conducted a Historical Tour to places of historical importance including the Church in Diamper where the controversial Synod was held in 1599 by Archbishop Alexio de Meneses was also present. The class also visited the tomb of Metropolitan Mar Abraham buried in Angamaly in 1597.

Sunday School Anniversary

Mar Aprem Sunday School held its annual prize distribution on Sunday 30 April 2017 at the auditorium of Higher Secondary School. All the three prelates, Chairman of the Board of Trustees and Fr. Sijo Johny, General Secretary of the Sunday School conducted the function efficiently. This year the students and teachers of the Bangalore Branch of our Sunday School participated in the function.

The Convocation of the 10th class students who qualified for the Sunday School Diploma was held on Sunday 18 May 2017. All three prelates and the Chairman of the Board of Central Trustees gave leadership for this convocation ceremony held in the Chaldean Syrian Higher Secondary School, Thrissur.

New Liquor Policy

Leaders of all religions joined hands in protesting against the new liberal liquor policy of the Kerala Government. In a protest public meeting in front of the Corporation Building, inaugurated by Mar Aprem Metropolitan on May 7 many speakers spoke against the relaxation of rules for granting license for Bars in Hotels and permits in the homes for special celebrations.

There are strong protests in different parts of the Kerala state in relaxing the rules. The Kerala Government is saying that they need the revenues by granting licences for Bars and Liquor shops. Mar Aprem Metropolitan made it clear in his speech that the money State Government gets by relaxing the rules will not be sufficient to treat the people who are involved in motor cycle and car accidents by drunken drivers. It is not the birth right of a person to get drunk and become a nuisance to his family and to society.

Mahatma Gandhi had advised for total prohibition. But unfortunately the state governments were not sincere in their commitment to prohibition due to the revenue from the bar licences. There are states in India where there is total prohibition.

As bishops, priests and nuns we are leading the agitation against the relaxed liquor policy. Some critics from different religions are accusing the Christians of drinking wine in the Holy Qurbana in the churches so the drunkards can go to the bars and liquor shops to drink. Since the British days the churches are given license to manufacture mass wine of less alcohol content produced by the Church for the Holy Qurbana known as Mass Wine.

FOREWORD

(Metropolitan Dr. Yakob Mar Irenaios, Diocese of Kochi, Malankara Orthodox Church)

It is a pleasure skimming through a book by Archbishop Dr. Mar Aprem Metropolitan, and more so, writing a foreword to his seventy sixth publication, a fresh number from his kitty of endearing travelogues. This author of **Bishop's Jokes** and **Laugh with the Bishop**, among several others, who celebrated his 77th birthday recently, never appears travel-weary; and life for him is not a "joke", although, His Grace makes us laugh most innocently with his hilarious humour! Actually, humour is a deft way of exposing human foibles, sans injury to anyone; to tell perennial truths, at times, though unsavoury to the undisciplined minds, in a unique manner, that it strikes, and touches even those who normally resist such "overtures" of Truth! Some people are blessed with the talent to tell us some story which makes us laugh, usually holding our hips, without knowing that we are actually "learning" something indispensable to life, without much effort and formal learning techniques went to the world. Mar Aprem is an expert in this art of teaching and cleansing our minds: and obviously, that exactly is the reason that this honoured prelate is still young in mind, and also in body, though he claims to be in the twilight area of life. Really, we are blessed with his unimitable life and enthusiastic pen and penchant for brotherly love, that is infectious!

Travel comes natural to this blessed cleric, who loves life, and obviously, his church. The "Travel" books that he has brought forth, are not just documents of his wayfaring, which may not find favour with people, who always look for something new and exciting. A bishop's travels might interest his own churchmen; but in this instance, Mar Aprem writes for **all**; he becomes the poetically disinterested narrator, who takes the readers along with him, to whatever countries and climes he visits, with the enthusiasm of a guide and informed narrator. With utmost disinterest and maximally unbiased, this traveler, is a great spectator, who, like Tiresias of old, the visionary, who espied everything with divine interest, but kept his cool, surveys everything around him, pointing out the details to the "accompanying reader." To keep the "reader - friend" happy, Mar Aprem cracks jokes as he proceeds with the narration. Here are a few instances: Fr. Florovsky and I were the only two priests who

were wearing black cassocks all the time. Usually, in the western countries, even archbishops were wearing suits with dog collar. Dog collar is the clerical collar which the clergy wear around their neck in western countries. Please don't blame me for referring to it as dog collar. When I studied in England, in 1961-62, the seminarians and clergy were referring to it as dog collar. I do not know who started wearing it first, the dogs or clergy. (Flood Victims) Although the Russian Metropolitan of the area was not present, the bishop of that diocese was present. That bishop is the biggest bishop in body shape. (Rostov on Don)

Not that Mar Aprem has an obsession for his Assyrian Church, naturally he has his native concern for it, though. The larger picture of the author, emerging from the narrative, **Russia to England via UAE**, is a high ranking ecumenical leader par excellence. He has healthy connections with all other churches of the East and the West. His education, spanning secular and theological centres of the East and the West, makes him to appreciate and accept the best in every culture and language. The Primate of the Chaldean Assyrian Church in India, Mar Aprem, is highly qualified and still keeps the mind of enquiry and the curiosity and enthusiasm of a child, while visiting countries and preparing stories and narratives.

Travelogues are of different modes and varieties. The travelogues of Mar Aprem are never the dry catalogue of places and the traveler's preferences; rather, every time, the researcher in the narrator comes alive. He collects all historical and social background of the place and tries to describe its present status through the eyes of a connoisseur of beauty and a lover of mankind. However, he remains faithful to the faith and traditions of his church, and would never claim any kind of exclusiveness. He feels at home, whether in Russia, England, the US or Arab countries. One notable and laudable feature of the narrative is that the author has got lots of human sympathy and love of the greatest gift that God has endowed us with – life. Such an attitude is indispensable in a writer, who speaks with the hearts and minds, and imagination of his readers. Never for once, the readers feels boredom, while moving through the pages of any book from the pen of Mar Aprem. That is again proved in this 76th number of the “Mar Aprem Corpus.” Even while giving an interlude of the sudden and sad demise of his brother, the words are devoid of any emotional outbursts, the description is just another passing incident, and thus it becomes an obvious part of the narrative.

Details regarding the Russian Orthodox Church, the biggest Church in the Orthodox World, numerically, are extremely informative and educative. The Assyrian community is a miniscule one in the “sea” of the Russian Church; yet, it keeps its heritage and dignity, and sisterly relations with the Russian Orthodox Church. Mar Aprem, in the present narrative, proves to be a “missionary” bishop of the Chaldean Church, visiting the Assyrian communities spread around the world, catering to their spiritual needs and strengthening them in the faith of the church. Every such ‘missionary journey’ brings out a book, which are the permanent memorials of this church father's efforts to keep the faith alive and gleaming! The author has used good, legible and appreciable language. I feel some of the interesting details could be rearranged for easy reading by those who have never been to places like Russia. Anyway, the author deserves kudos for this interesting number. We, who love and respect this unique Church Father, look forward to the next “yearly number” of his publications. May his pen never dry up!

I feel honoured for having been invited to write a foreword to this book. May the innocent and welcome enthusiasm of Arch bishop Mar Aprem move ‘forward’; for, every such book is a milestone in his blessed journey forward. My greetings to this real “Guru”, Mar Aprem!

Continuing From Previous Issue ...

Sam Higginbottom University

In the following pages I have described the life story of Sam Higginbottom. Till recently it was only the Sam Higginbottom Institute, considered deemed University. But since a Bill was passed in the Legislative Assembly of the Uttar Pradesh state in December 2016 it is a regular University with the Governor of U.P. as the Visitor. As my friend of three decades Dr. Jetty Oliver is the Chancellor of this University, I am exploring the possibility of starting a B.A.(Theology) or a B.D. degree course in our Seminary.

As a matter of fact I was a student in the Allahabad Agriculture Institute in 1958; that was 59 years ago. Mr. Mathai Zachariah (later General Secretary of the National Council of Churches) was the Chaplain. He had finished his B.D. at Yale University in USA. He asked me to lead the chapel worship one day. Prof. Zachariah, son of the first Indian bishop of the Anglican Church was the Principal. Dr. J. R. Chitambar, son of the first Indian Bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church was the Vice Principal.

I was one of the students sent from the Leonard Theological College, Jabalpur to acquire practical knowledge about the rural Church. We were given training to make cheese. Probably that was the first time I ate cheese at the age of 18. In ordinary Indian homes we do not eat cheese. When the teachers asked us the future pastors of India to mix cattle feed with our hands some students refused stating that we are theological students and future pastors and not cattle farmers. But I obeyed the teachers and learned something about the needs of the rural people. The ordinary people around Allahabad will be always grateful to Dr. Sam Higginbottom for his Vision and Mission.

The Allahabad Agriculture Institute has grown as a university with permission to teach theology.

Here is the amazing history of the founder of this Christian minority University:

Sam Higginbottom, the founder of Allahabad Agricultural Institute belongs to this category of leaders. Born in 1874 in a humble family in England and brought up in very indigent rural circumstances, Sam acquired school education by supporting himself and his studies by selling milk and doing other odd income-generating jobs. Later he migrated to the United States and pursued theological studies with the objective of becoming a missionary, to go to Latin America, Africa or China as was wont in those days of active evangelization of the colonized nations.



*Dr Sam Higginbottom
A Farmer
A Teacher
A Servant of God*

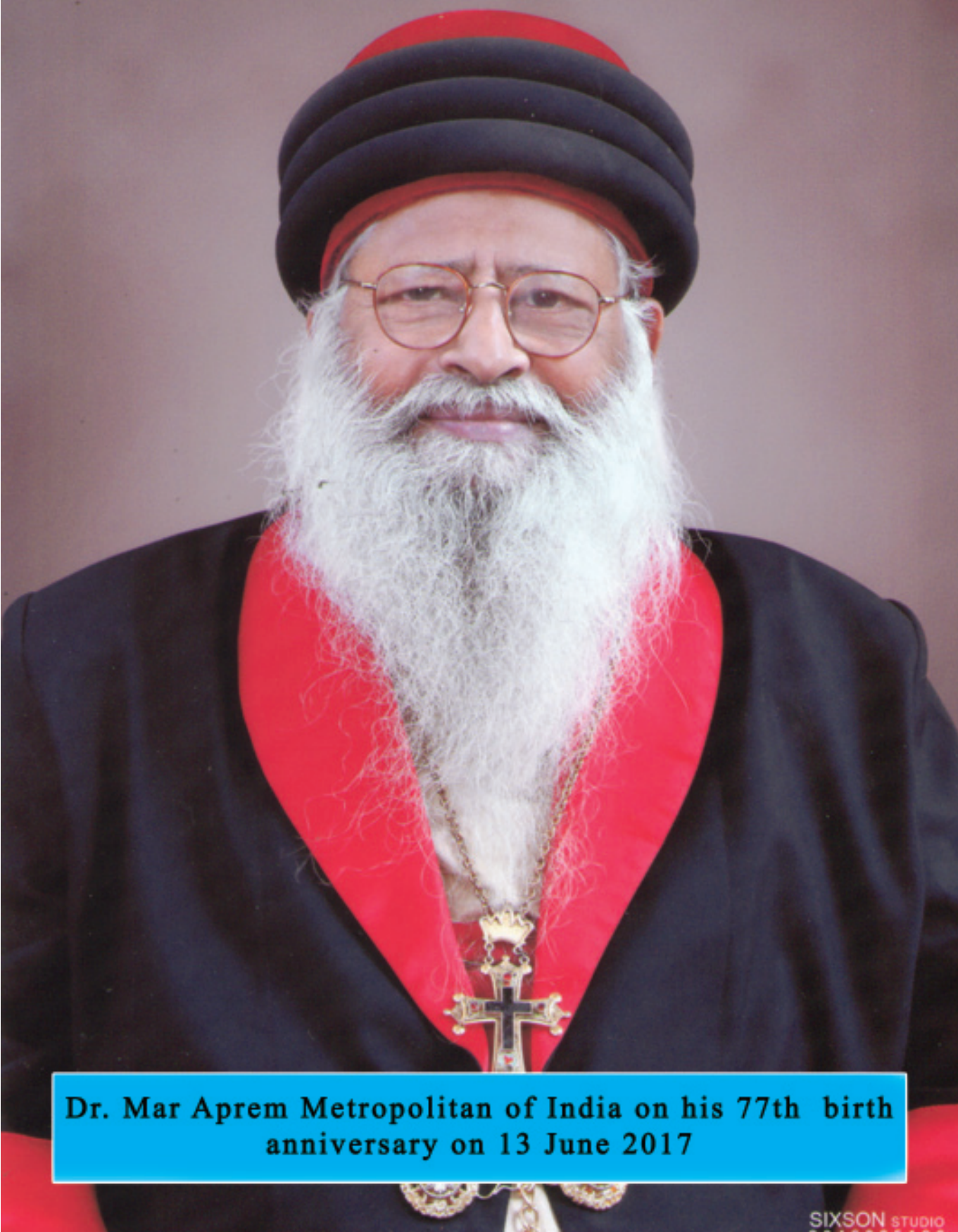
By a strange turn of destiny, finally Higginbottom was assigned to India, especially the district of Etah in the present Uttar Pradesh, by his superior of the Presbyterian Church, North India Mission. Again by an unexpected change he was re-routed to Allahabad, the then capital of the Central Provinces under the British rule. At the age of 29 in 1903 Sam arrived at Allahabad and joined the Allahabad Christian College located on banks of Yamuna river near Sangam, the confluence of Rivers Ganga, Yamuna and the legendary river Saraswati which had dried up long ago. Sam began his career as a teacher of economics and tried innovative methods of problem-solving, teaching and learning. His mind was deeply disturbed by the abysmal poverty of the farmers in the neighbouring villages and districts, where the land was barren and agriculture was of very low productivity. He realized that his mission in life would be improving the plight of the Indian farmers through modern agriculture. He decided to set up an agriculture school near *Sangam* in Naini with the help of his wife Ethelind. The courses offered included agricultural engineering, dairy technology, animal husbandry, high-yielding seed production and farm management.



Mar Aprem Metropolitan and Mar Awgin Episcopa presenting plants to Sr. Dr. Jincy Othottil (President - Womens' Youth Association), Thrissur on 5 June 2017, World Environment Day. Fr. Vinod Timothy, Vicar of Mar Yohannan Mamdhana Church, Fr. Michael Valluvantra (President, Youths' Association), and others are seen



H. L. Mar Awgin Kuriakose Episcopa with Qatar Mission Parish members in May 2017



Dr. Mar Aprem Metropolitan of India on his 77th birth anniversary on 13 June 2017