

Vol 67

November - December 2020

Nos.11 & 12



പൗരസ്ത്യ കൽദായ സുറിയാനി സഭ പുനരൊക്യ രജത ജൂബിലി ആഘോഷങ്ങളുടെ ഭാഗമായി ഐക്യ പ്രാർത്ഥനക്കു ശേഷം ഡോ. മാർ അപ്രേം മെത്രാപ്പോലീത്ത, ഡോ. മാർ യോഹന്നാൻ യോസേഫ് എപ്പിസ്കോപ്പ, മാർ ഔഗിൻ കുരിയാക്കോസ് എപ്പിസ്കോപ്പ എന്നിവർ ബൈദികരോടും സഭാ ഐക്യ കാലഘട്ടത്തെയും ഇപ്പോഴത്തെതെയും കേന്ദ്ര ഭരണസമിതികളോടുംമൊപ്പം

As part of the Reconciliation Silver Jubilee Celebrations H.G. Dr. Mar Aprem Metropolitan, H.L. Dr. Mar Yohannan Yoseph Episcopa and H.L. Mar Awgin Kuriakose Episcopa with the Central Governing Council of the Church Unity period, as well as the present Board of Central Trustees

VOICE OF THE EAST



H. G. Dr. Mar Aprem Metropolitan cuts the cake and inaugurates the 31st Choir Meet organized by Marth Mariam Valiyapalli Youth Association of the Church of the East in India. At the Choir Meet 2020, H.G. Dr. Mar Aprem Metropolitan, H.L. Mar Awgin Kuriakose Episcopa, Vicar of Valiyapalli Fr. Cyril Antony, Kaikaran Mr. I.G. Joy, General Secretary of the Central Youth Association Mr. Sojan P. John and Secretary of the Parish Youth Association Mr. Abhinav Charles, greeted the audience. H.L. Dr. Mar Yohannan Joseph Episcopa, famous music director Sri Jerry Amaldev, Hon'ble Chief Whip Sri K. Rajan, MP Sri T.N. Prathapan, renowned pianist Sri Stephen Devasy, famous filmmaker Sri Dev Mohan and Board of Central Trustees Chairman Sri Tenny C.L. greeted online. The best 6 choir teams from Thrissur performed in the Choir Meet 2020. There were live telecasts of the performance on YouTube, Facebook, ACV and TCV channels.

VOICE OF THE EAST

(A socio-Religious bi-monthly)

(Private Circulation only)

November-December 2020

Patron : **His Grace Dr. Mar Aprem**

Metropolitan's Palace,

Trichur - 680 001, Kerala, India

Phone : 91487 - 2420978

Personal : 91487 - 2442166

Email : hgmaraprem@gmail.com

Website Links

Official: www.news.assyrianchurch.org

Archdiocese of India & UAE: www.churchoftheeastindia.org

Archdiocese of Australia & New Zealand: www.assyrianchurch.org.au

Diocese of California: www.acoecalifornia.org

Diocese of Europe: www.assyrianchurch-europe.org

Assyrian Church of the East Relief Organisation: www.theacero.org

Unofficial: www.nestorian.org

Contents

1. Editorial
2. Patriarchal Christmas Epistle
3. Ordination in Saint Peter Cathedral

News from the Indian Archdiocese

4. Qudash Etha Festival
5. Festival of Tithe
6. 25th Anniversary of Unity
7. Nuhra -2020
8. Hymanutha - 2020
9. Dr. Joseph Mar Thoma Metropolitan
10. New Head of Mar Thoma Church
11. Friends on Social Media
12. Calendar - 2021

Voice of the East

Vol. 67

November - December 2020

Nos. 11-12

Editorial

November 13 marks the 25th anniversary of the Unification of our Church in India, which had been divided by sectarian strife and litigation for over 30 years. It is useful for us to ponder the current state of our Church in this period as we celebrate the Silver Jubilee of the Unification.

The Church Fathers signed the Covenant of Unity as a symbol of remembrance of God's will that our Church, which speaks the language of Jesus Christ, be united in one Spirit. It is the duty of every person in the Church to keep this unity intact. The individuals, priests, high priests, and organizations in the Church who work for the progress of the Church should not be for their own name and fame, but for the amelioration of the Church as a whole. Moreover, the path and aim of progress must be in good sense.

The progress of the Church is not only about building schools, hospitals and other businesses, but also of imparting spiritual knowledge in a way that is understandable to the new generation of children in the Church. The Church leaders must be able to do that. The Proverbs says that Knowledge is worth far more than gold and silver.

Often the path to the goal seems not right. People who argue that I have achieved the success by aiming at the goal, but through the wrong way, might have had to listen to a variety of criticisms. Critics are more inclined to blame these people who achieve the goal, rather than trying to correct the mistakes and complete the mission for Church. This can lead to a loss of peace and harmony in the Church.

"Glory to God in the highest, and peace on earth to people who enjoy his favour!". This is a song sung by the choir of angels two thousand and twenty years ago. This song was not first sung by humans. Today we are singing it all over the world in many languages and in different styles and tunes. This incident takes place in a small village called Bethlehem near Jerusalem. First, it is said that God is glorified in the highest. Such is the custom of the Jews. God's message of peace is great news for mankind on earth. That was the birth of Jesus. The whole world performs, celebrates, rejoices and sings songs as Christmas. These are all events that take place around Christmas. Ordinary shepherds were the first to hear this news from the angels on earth. Not the father of a church, nor the high priest, nor the chief priest, nor the king, but the common shepherds heard the news that night. It is the birth of Jesus.

This is great news for the world. That's what Christians around the world are celebrating today, at the end of December, or the beginning of January of each year. But it is wrong to celebrate and go head over heels beyond the limits. Christmas celebrations are often organized to celebrate alcoholism and other forms of harassments, as well as ways to make money with a business mindset. But is this really how Christmas should be celebrated? We all Christians have a responsibility to celebrate Christmas in spiritual way. It is good to realise ourselves whether we are experiencing peace and happiness today. When we think of Christmas at this time, we must remember that Christ was born in a simple situation. Not in his own home, hospital, or palace. Then come the kings and the wise men and it becomes a great event. Even today we know it is a big event. But Christmas is not just a physical event, it is a spiritual event that is to be celebrated and viewed in a spiritual sense. God incarnated and was born on earth to save mankind from their sin by the conception of Virgin Mary. That is the significance of Christmas.

May the Holy Spirit of God help each of us to have the blessing of this joy and peace in this world, and to move forward with the message of peace in the midst of the problems of this contaminated world.

Mar Aprem Metropolitan

PATRIARCHATE
of the
HOLY APOSTOLIC CATHOLIC ASSYRIAN
CHURCH OF THE EAST

Erbil, IRAQ



بطريكية
كنيسة المشرق الاشورية

ارميل، العراق

מלכות אלהים מלאה שלום ושלום לכל ישראל
אמן

Patriarchal Epistle for the Feast of the Holy Nativity 2020

"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men of goodwill..." Luke 2:14.

Our venerable brothers in the Holy Synod, the metropolitans and bishops; the reverend presbyters and the elect deacons, and the faithful sons and daughters of the Assyrian Church of the East:

A blessed Feast of the Nativity of our Lord Jesus Christ to all of you!

The Birth of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, in addition to be the most prodigious and spiritual event brought about for the salvation of mankind, was also the most historical event in all of human history. This holy Birth, by its spiritual and anthropological doctrine, brought about the age of a renewed humanity: *"For, behold, I shall create a new heaven and a new earth, and the former shall not be remembered nor come to mind..."* (Isaiah 65:17).

In accord with the promises of God spoken through the prophetic proclamations, the Lord brought about the holy Birth of our Lord Jesus Christ in the flesh. On the very day of His holy Nativity, the good news of salvation was pronounced by the angel, saying: *"Do not be afraid, for I announce to you great joy that shall be for the whole world. For, today is born to you the Savior, who is Christ the Lord, in the city of David..."* (Luke 2:10-12).

Beloved sons and daughters of our holy Church, and of our Assyrian nation, we are all witnessing in this present time the spread of the dangerous coronavirus through the world. However, as firm believers let us remember our forefathers the Ninevites. Let us imitate them in prayer to God, and in praising His holy Name saying: 'Yes, Lord and Savior, we shall not fear because we believe and are hopeful in Your great majesty;' *"And, behold, I am with you all the days, even unto the end of the age"* (Matthew 28:20).

On this blessed occasion, we say to all of the faithful of our holy Church and our Assyrian Nation, that notwithstanding all of the present crisis in the world, yet as those who believe firmly in the mercy of God, we are obliged to ensure that our love for God is true and firm, and that it is genuine also towards one another. For, it is only by our love for God and one another that we will be able to draw God's mercy to ourselves. On this blessed occasion let us recall to mind the example given at the time of Mar Sawrisho, and how God lifted the pestilence from them through prayer and fasting. Again, at the time of the Assyrian King Sardanapolis, through prayer and fasting God preserved Nineveh from destruction. Even today, in the likeness of our Assyrian ancestors and forefathers of all generations who were faithful to and hopeful in God, let us draw near to Him and came to His holy house, which is the Church. Let us offer prayer to God and glorify His holy Name, for He shall save us from every affliction, on which account St. Mar Narsai the Harp of the Holy Spirit said: "For this did God build a house for Himself on the earth, that whomsoever desires to see the Lord might come to His house."

In conclusion, again we say: may the Feast of the Nativity of our Lord Jesus Christ be blessed upon all of you, and may you have a blessed New Year 2021. We offer fervent prayer to God the Father that the new year might be delivered and free from the oppressive coronavirus, and filled with every blessing, peace, tranquility and good health to all the inhabitants of the earth. We also pray to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ for the greater rapprochement and understanding among all the nations of the earth, and among all Christians. May the Lord grant good health and prosperity to all of the children of our holy Church and our Assyrian Nation.

May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God the Father and the communion of the Holy Spirit with all of us, forever and ever; Amen.

Given at Patriarchal Cell, Erbil, Iraq, on the Feast of the Nativity, 2020 A.D.

G. Silva

 GEWARGIS III Sliwa

*By Grace: Catholicos-Patriarch
of the Assyrian Church of the East.*





***Holy Apostolic Catholic Assyrian Church of
the East
Saint Peter Cathedral Parish
17334 N. 63rd Ave.***

Ordination of Four St. Peter's Faithful to the Rank of Sub-deacon

On Sunday, of November 29, the First Sunday of Annunciation, in a magnificent church ceremony and with combined angelic church hymns and fragrance of incense, HG Mar Aprim Khamis, Bishop of the Western Diocese of the USA, placed his hand on four of St. Peter's faithful and elevated them to the rank of sub-deacon.

As is the tradition of the Holy Apostolic Catholic Assyrian Church of the East (ACOE), Reader Kameel Oraha (59), Joseph Kando (16), Joseph Toma (15) and Zaia Nesan (9) read the sworn oath and their commitment to work faithfully and be true to the Word of Christ and obedient to the law of the church and its hierarchy.

In light of the unfortunate situation with Covid-19, the ordination ceremony took place at St. Peter Parish Cathedral, Glendale, Arizona at 8:00 AM, and was attended by a congregation of parishioners who joyfully watched as His Grace Mar Aprim Khamis lay his blessed hand on the four faithful, ordaining them to serve at the altar. The new ordained faithful will serve the St. Peter Parish Cathedral.

Clergyman present at the ordination included: V. Rev. Frederick Hermiz, Rev. Sargon Yaro, the incumbent St. Peter Parish priest, and a large number of faithful deacons.

HG Mar Aprim Khamis, delivered a sermon on the significance of the annunciation and how this can apply to all those that receive Christ in His glory. Also, he encouraged the congregation to remain strong and always have faith that God will provide. Additionally, he reminded the faithful that they were a vital part of the church community and that it was imperative to bring their children to church to be taught how to truly worship through participation in spiritual services and teachings.

Unequivocally, the ordination of the three at such young age has brought an immense joy and filled the hearts of the Assyrian community with great hope that these young individuals and the like that are being schooled throughout the world in our churches will continue on all spiritual missions of the our glorious church, and will be the future leaders of the ACOE.

It's worth noting that Joseph, Joey and Zaia are enrolled in the St. Peter Ecclesiastical School of learning. Governed by HG Mar Aprim Khamis, and directed by Rev. Sargon Yaro, St. Peter Parish priest. The students go through rigorous teaching and training of the Holy Apostolic Catholic Assyrian Church of The East's, canons, sacraments, various spiritual service prayers (with all its format and structures), theology, history, church hymns, forefathers' teachings, hierarchy, etc. It's also required that students meet the graduation requirements of phase one of the ecclesiastical curriculum in order to be ordained a reader and beyond.

Although the school is in its infancy stages, it does offer substantial amount of learning in order for one to be ready to serve effectively and faithfully in our holy church.

We extend our congratulations to sub-deacons Kameel, Joseph, Joseph, and Zaia on their ordination who will carry the Lord's Cross and follow in His footsteps in demonstrating the love and faith which the Lord God has shown unto the world.

Rev. Sargon Yaro, Glendale, AZ, November 29, 2020

News from the Indian Archdiocese

Qudash Etha Festival

Qudash Eatha Festival (Festival of Purification of the Church) of the Church of the East in India was on October 29, 30, 31 and November 1, 2. The flag-off ceremony took place at the Marth Mariam Cathedral ground in the morning of Sunday 25th of September 2020 by H.L. Mar Awgin Kuriakose.

H.G. Dr. Mar Aprem Metropolitan wrote in his “Monthly thoughts” in the Malayalam Magazine about the *Qudash Eatha* Festival:

“According to the Church this is the last period of the Church Calendar. It is up to each of us, members of the Church, to cleanse our Church. Likewise purify the house of God, which is our heart. Only then can God dwell in our hearts. Let us remember the words of the Apostle Paul, “If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation”. May this year’s *Qudash Eatha Thirunaal* (Festival of Purification) be a blessing to all”.

In the wake of the Corona epidemic, festive celebrations were avoided and only the formal procedure were held. The believers were allowed to enter the church only in accordance with the government’s rules against Covid 19.

The Holy Qurbana in connection with the *Qudash Eatha* festival (Festival of Church purification) on Sunday 1st November 2020 was celebrated by H.L. Dr. Mar Yohannan Yoseph Episcopa in the Marth Mariam Cathedral. The public meeting in the evening was also inaugurated by H.L. Dr. Mar Yohannan Yoseph Episcopa. The meeting was presided over by H.G. Dr. Mar Aprem Metropolitan online at the Metropolitan Palace itself due to some health issues. H.L. Mar Awgin Kuriakose Episcopa delivered the festive message. The famous Malayalam film actress Miss. Aparna Balamurali, Singer Mrs. Manisha, Vicar of Marth Mariam Cathedral Rev. Fr. Cyril Antony, Assistant Vicars Rev. Fr. Sijo Johnny and Deacon V.V. Joseph, Kaikars Mr. Raju Emmatty and Mr. I.G. Joy spoke on the occasion. This was followed by some live arts programme by Sunday school children and parish members as well as live coverage of the same at their own homes through the online virtual platform.

On the second day, the Holy Qurbana was held at 7am in the Marth Mariam Cathedral. A donation by the Marth Mariam church has been handed over to the organization called ‘SWARAM’ to help the artists in lieu of the usual evening music performance. There was a live broadcast on the website www.marthmariambigchurch.org, for believers to watch church services.

The *Qudash Eatha* Convention of the Church of the East in India concluded on the 30th of November. The message was shared by Deacon V.V. Joseph.

There was also the inauguration of the Pulse-Oxymeter-handover to the Parish Youth Association for the free usage of the patients undergoing home monitoring from Corona infection prescribed by the Department of Health. Marth Mariam Big Church Vicar Fr. Cyril Antony, Assistant Vicars Fr. Sijo Johny and Deacon V V Joseph, Parish Kaikars Mr. Raju Immati and Mr. I G Joy presided over the function.

Festival of Tithe

Monthly Thoughts of H.G. Dr. Mar Aprem Metropolitan

(Translated from 'Paurasthyanaadham' Malayalam Magazine)

Our Church celebrates the Tithe on the Sunday, following the *Qudash Eatha Thirunaal* (Festival of Church Purification). This year it is on the Sunday, November 8th. Each of us is in the throes of the Corona epidemic this year. The last year, the Church received one Crore and Seventy Five Thousand Rupees as contribution of Tithe due to the conscious cooperation of the people and the efforts of the clergy. It is known that many people have lost their jobs and lost their income due to the Covid virus this year. I am not saying that collection to the Tithe is mandatory. But let each one come forward to give their contribution according to his or her ability.

The salaries of the clergy, gratuity, pensions, the pensions for the widows, the expense of the higher education for clergy, the interest-free loans for the development of the parishes etc. can all be paid from the Church as the result of Tithe. "Bring the whole Tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test me in this," says the LORD Almighty, "and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that there will not be room enough to store it. (Malachi 3:10).

Pandemic

After the breakout of the coronavirus from China at the end of 2019 it spread to the countries around the world in the last months of 2020, killing millions of people and infecting millions more.

The virus affects everyone, rich and poor alike. There is no prescriptive drug discovered in the world that will prevent the pandemic situation. Rather than living in fear at this point, we can overcome it with caution. Believe that nothing will be happened to us without God's knowledge. By trusting in God and following the instructions given by the government, we can get rid of this disease. God's mighty hand will save us forever by standing guard, fortress and shield.

Church Court Cases

The Church has been moving forward with the court cases over the years. But after the unity of the church, they are all withdrawn. But for some time now, some have been going back to that trend. May I remind that such cases are not conducive to the unity and growth of the Church. We can see peace in the Church, as well as the growth of the church when we walk the path of love bringing all together.

25th Anniversary of Unity

The Silver Jubilee of Unification of the Assyrian Church of the East in India
on 13 November 2020

November 13, 1995 is the day when the faithful of the Assyrian Church of the East, India took a decision to forgive and tolerate each other. His Grace Dr. Mar Aprem Metropolitan and the Board of Central Trustees light the candle at the Metropolitan Palace, Thrissur on November 22, 2020 at 7p.m. to commemorate the Silver Jubilee Anniversary of the Unanimous Declaration of the Unity. At the same time, believers lit candles in their homes and recited specially prepared prayers to preserve the unity of the Church.



Philipose Mar Chrysostom, Mar Thoma Metropolitan Emeritus pays his last respects to the mortal remains of Joseph Mar Thoma Metropolitan, the Supreme Head of the Mar Thoma Church.



Qudash Eatha (Hallowing of the Church) Festival flag raising at Marth Mariam Big Church in the morning of Sunday 25 September 2020 by H.L. Mar Awgin Kuriakose Episcopa



H.G. Dr. Mar Aprem Metropolitan presenting the prize to the Clergy Choir Team who participated in the Choir Meet 2020 conducted by the Marth Mariam Church Youth Association in the Christmas Eve



Sri K T Francis (Sound Engineer) presenting the prize to Marth Mariam High Church Choir, Thrissur who participated in the Choir Meet 2020 conducted by the Marth Mariam Church Youth Association in the Christmas Eve



Youth Association General Secretary Mr. Sojan P. John presenting the prize to Mar Adai Shleeha Parish Choir, Paravattani who participated in the Choir Meet 2020 in the Christmas Eve



Mr. I.G. Joy (Parish Kaikar) presenting the prize to Mar Dinkha Parish Choir, Chiyaram who participated in the Choir Meet 2020 conducted by the Marth Mariam Big Church Youths Association in the Christmas Eve



H.L. Dr. Mar Yohannan Yoseph Episcopa inaugurates the General Assembly of the Qudash Eatha Festival (Hallowing of the Church) at Marth Mariam Big Church, Thrissur. From L to R Mr. I.G. Joy (Kaikaran), Fr. Cyril Antony (Vicar), H.L. Dr. Mar Yohannan Yoseph Episcopa, Fr. Sijo Johny (Assistant Vicar) and Deacon V.V. Joseph (Assistant Vicar).



H.L. Mar Aprim Khamis, Bishop of Western USA ordains four faithful sons of the Assyrian Church of the East in Arizona to the rank of Sub-deacon at St. Peter Cathedral, Glendale, Arizona on 29 November 2020.

Translated Message of the Episcopal Council published in the Malayalam magazine “Paurasthyanaadam” on 20.11.1995 to the clergy and faithful members of the Assyrian Church of the East after the Unification of the Church in India on 13 November 1995.

Beloved in the Christ,

Let us praise God for His grace on this joyous occasion, when the Church, which for the past 30 years has been divided by factional strife and litigation, has been reunited with God’s blessing. We were compelled to take immediate steps to achieve the Unity under the pressure of the circumstances.

We are sending this message because we are convinced that the members of the Church should not be ignorant of the methods adopted and that the work of the Church should be improved in the way of Unity.

Efforts for the Church Unity have been taken place in various venues over the past two decades. The presence of Metropolitan H. G. Mar Narsai of Lebanon and Episcopa H. L. Mar Meelis of Australia, who arrived in India on November 6 as the special envoys of His Holiness Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV, added to the momentum of the discussions. The prelates, trustees and we from the both parties also held discussions on various stages to achieve the Unity. Conversations with our respected priests on various occasions have also helped to harmonize the discussion.

The ideas arising out of these discussions have been communicated with the Representative’s Councils convened separately from both parties and analyzed in detail. The Council of Representatives appointed the Bishops and Trustees of the respective parties to take the necessary steps to continue the unity discussions of the Church and to conclude the unity. The signing of the treaty on 13 November 1995 was the result of lengthy negotiations between the prelates and the trustees. We signed the covenant as a symbol of God’s Will that the Church of Jesus Christ be united in one Spirit.

According to the agreement by the recognition of the priesthood of both parties, the supreme head of the Assyrian Church of the East in India will be the Patriarch Maran Mar Dinkha IV who’s headquarter is in Chicago, USA. Under his leadership, the Indian Church will be headed for two years by an Episcopal Council consisting of two Metropolitans and an Episcopa of India. Mar Thimotheus Metropolitan will be the Chairman of the Metropolitan Council and Paulose Mar Paulose the Episcopal Secretary. The administration of the Indian Church will be under the control of the Metropolitan Mar Aprem. All festivals in the Church will be celebrated according to the Gregorian calendar.

The present Church Representatives, trustees and parishioners in both denominations will work together on a temporary basis for two years. Church properties, assets etc. will be consolidated during this period and brought under the same framework. But within two years, a new constitution will be drafted for the United Church in accordance with the existing constitution and in accordance with the rules and regulations of the Holy Synod. Accordingly, the Church will facilitate its activities by electing church representatives, trustees and parishioners.

Existing litigations in civil courts will be withdrawn by the parties concerned. We are pleased to inform you that the necessary court proceedings have begun for that.

For the past several years, the peace-loving believers of both parties in the Church have been constantly praying and striving for the fulfillment of their aspirations for the Unity. Your prayers are now answered. Your hopeful actions have been paid off. Many believers who wanted to see the Unity in the Church passed away from not being able to witness this joyous occasion. May their exemplary actions and their memory inspire the living Church members to carry out the relevant mission of the Church.

Let us repent for the great sin of dissenting against the will of God and, as a result failing to bear witness to God's peace in society and neglect the possibilities of action. We must show this repentance by working with greater responsibility and determination in obedience to God and commitment to society. Let us remind you on this occasion that this unity that we now have is a gift from God and that God's people must work with mutual fidelity, love and respect to strengthen this unity by relying on God's grace. Instead of looking back and evaluating successes and failures, the Church will humbly turn its attention to new areas of activity by planting its eyes on God, the Provider of the future and the center of hope. Let us glorify God for the great grace we have received by avoiding empty claims and exaggerated pleasures that hurt the feelings of others.

Perhaps the early days of unity were hard for us. It is only natural that people who have been at loggerheads and blaming each other for more than three decades come together to create various anxiety and misunderstandings. May the example of Jesus, who humbled himself in all such situations and became obedient to the point of death on the cross, be an example for us.

Let us learn from the apostle Paul's exhortation. "Therefore if there is any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and mercy. Fulfill my joy by being likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. Let each of you look out not only for his own interests but also for the interest of others. Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus". (Philippines 2:1-5). But the forces that unite us are so great and so enormous. It is God who reconciles and heals wounds. By relying on that grace of God, we can improve the work of the Church with courage and hope.

Our trustees have rendered in valuable service in making the negotiations for unity fruitful. We pray that God will reward them accordingly. From time to time our young people challenge us with the innate compulsion of youth when the hopes of unity are fading. May they be able to make the mission of the Church relevant from time to time and maintain the same attitude. The constant prayers of our *Mahilasamaajam* (Women's Organisation) have also helped to maintain peace and Unity in the Church. On November 17, we celebrated Unity Day. The necessary arrangements were made in a very short time. This unity is possible only through the collective action of the people, young and old. Undoubtedly, this collaboration was a trumpet of the infinite possibilities of our Church. We remember everyone with gratitude.

May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God the Father, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all always, Amen.

Mar Thimotheus Metropolitan, Mar Aprem Metropolitan, Mar Paulose Episcopa

‘Nuhra - 2020’

During this time of fear of the coronavirus, the Women’s Youth Association organised a three-day webinar on **‘Nuhra 2020’** at Mar Mari Sreeha Church, Kuriachira with the aim of bringing a new light to the individual, the community and the family. The online webinar was held on October 23, 24 and 25 from 7.30 pm to 8.30 pm.

The message on the first day was shared by Mrs. Mathew Kochamma, whom we are familiar with, through the YouTube channel ‘Merlins’. Although it was accepted that the inauguration could be performed by His Grace Dr. Mar Aprem Metropolitan, he was unable to do so due to physical ailments. Instead Fr. Vinod Timothy, Vicar of the Mar Mari Parish and President of the Women’s Youth Association of the branch officiated. Nellikunnu Mar Thimotheus Church Vicar Fr. Denny Thalokaran offered the opening prayer and the closing prayer was by Father O.A. Abimalek. Fr. Vinod welcomed everyone who attended the webinar and Fr Abin Daniel expressed his gratitude.

The message on the second day of the webinar was shared by International Arm Wrestling Champion Mr. Joby Mathew. The blessing speech was delivered by H.L. Dr. Mar Yohannan Yoseph.

On the closing day of the seminar, the blessing speech was delivered by H.L. Mar Awgin Kuriakose. His presence in the three-day webinar was a great inspiration to the Women’s Youth Association. On the concluding day, the message was shared by Fr. Geevarghese Koshy, DCYM President and Vicar of St. Thomas Orthodox Church. The opening prayer on the closing day was offered by Fr. Abin Daniel, Assistant Vicar of the parish.

Mrs. Shaija Anwin, Secretary of the Women’s Association, expressed her gratitude and attribution to the Bishops, Fathers, Sisters and the faithful who participated in the three - day webinar with great respect and love.

‘Hymanutha - 2020’

St. Mar Abimalek Timotheus Art Festival

The online Art festival of St. Mar Abimalek Timotheus was held on October 30, 31, and November 1 by Mar Aprem Sunday School and Mar Timotheus Church, Bangalore together. Mar Awgin Kuriakose Episcopa officiated the function. Although Mar Aprem Metropolitan was unable to attend the function due to health reasons, he conveyed his greetings in a video presentation.

Nevertheless Mar Yohannan Yoseph Episcopa was also unable to attend the function due to health issues His Lordship’s prayers and blessings were always upon the Sunday school children. It is only by the grace and mercy of God that such an art festival could be held with the help of technology in these corona times, when they could not see each other.

Dr. Joseph Mar Thoma Metropolitan of Malankara Mar Thoma Church

Dr. Joseph Mar Thoma Metropolitan (89), the supreme head of the Malankara Mar Thoma Church has passed away. He breathed his last at 2.40 on Sunday 18 of October 2020. Joseph Mar Thoma was the 21st Metropolitan in Mar Thoma Church. He was the Metropolitan of Mar Thoma Church for 13 years. The Metropolitan was undergoing treatment at the Believers Medical College Hospital in Thiruvalla for the past few days after his

health condition deteriorated due to pancreatic cancer. His health had worsened in the past week.

Joseph Mar Irenaeus, that was given the episcopal title (His real name was PT Joseph) became Metropolitan of the Mar Thoma Church on October 2, 2007, following the resignation of Metropolitan Dr Philipose Mar Chrysostom due to health reasons.

He was educated at Kozhencherry, Maramon, Aluva UC College, Bangalore UT College, Virginia Seminary, Wycliffe Oxford, St Augustine's Canterbury, and received his doctorate from Virginia Seminary, Serampore University and Allahabad Agricultural University.

The mortal remains of the Metropolitan were laid to rest in a specially made crypt beside the St Thomas Mar Thoma Church. All bishops of the Mar Thoma Church took part in the funeral service. heads of various other Churches, including Cardinal Baselius Cleemis Catholicos, Major Archbishop of the Syro-Malankara Catholic Church, Cardinal Mar George Alencherry, Major Archbishop of the Syro-Malabar Catholic Church, Basileos Thomas I, and head of the Jacobite Syrian Christian Church paid their last respects.

H. L. Mar Awgin Kuriakose Episcopa and Fr. Jacks Chandy were represented the funeral ceremony and laid the wreath on the physical body of Mar Thoma Metropolitan on behalf of Chaldean Syrian Church of the East. The accidental separation of Dr. Joseph Marthoma Metropolitan of the Marthoma Church is a great loss to the Chaldean Syrian Church.

When Mar Aprem served as the Acting Patriarch of the Chaldean Syrian Church of the East for six months, on his return from Iraq, Mass could not be celebrated in Qatar and Abu Dhabi due to the lack of Chaldean Syrian Church. As soon as Mar Aprem Metropolitan telephoned Joseph Marthoma Metropolitan the immediate response was that "Whatever Abun asked that would be done". At the behest of Metropolitan Joseph Marthoma, Mar Aprem could conduct Mass for the Chaldean Syrian members in both the St. Thomas churches.

His love with Mar Aprem is difficult to put into words. H. G Mar Aprem Metropolitan concluded his note of condolence by wishing eternal peace to the soul of Metropolitan Joseph Marthoma.

New Head of Mar Thoma Church

Dr. Geevarghese Mar Theodosius Suffragan Metropolitan took over as the new head of the Malankara Mar Thoma Church on Sunday 15 November 2020. He was installed as the 22nd Mar Thoma Metropolitan of the Mar Thoma Church. The ceremony began at about 7.45 in the morning and the holy mass was led by Euyakim Mar Coorilos Episcopa at 8am. Joseph Mar Barnabas Episcopa delivered the speech and by 10 am, the ceremony was completed.

Rev. Dr. Philipose Mar Chrysostom, Cyril Mar Basileos, Episcopas of other Marthoma churches participated in the installation ceremony. The felicitation ceremony will be inaugurated by Cardinal Mar George Alencherry at 11. am. The function was held abiding to Covid protocol. About 150 representatives took part in the function.

Friends on Social Media

Geo George, Mumbai

(Author of **Journey of Relationship**)

In recent years a considerable number of young women elope with their boyfriends and bring themselves in trouble. Here the influence of social media cannot be underestimated. Many among them are confronted with the painful process of divorce. They are spending a considerable amount of time in the Social media apps. There any one can chat and share, videos, photos and online experiences with others. Nowadays, besides Facebook there are numerous social media platforms to share with. Through these platforms they share their thoughts and emotions directly. The posts of young girls are pleasing to the prying eyes. Those watching them closely find out very quickly who needs what, especially on the matter of companionship. Facebook's "like button" is quick in transferring the likes and dislikes of everyone and this can be grabbed from anywhere in the world.

When they receive compliments even if it is from an unknown person they feel happy and if played with their emotions, they would without much thinking put blind trust in those persons and fall in love with them without further seeking the real identity of these flatterers. The reason may be that these girls are not getting enough attention and love from their parents and family. Once they are trapped, they run away from their homes, and from then on usually there is no return as their families cast them away. They end up without any thing to eat, nothing to dress and no job to earn a living. They are confused and without knowing what to do and nowhere to turn on many continue with their illicit relationships.

A Gynecologist said that in the metro cities each month the cases of three to five pregnant teens are to be dealt with. Their lives become miserable and immoral.

A few statistics as heading. Causes of suicide 2019:

- Family problems: 32.4% The proportion of female victims were more in marriage related issues (Specifically in Dowry related issues) Family problems (2468)
- Love affairs 1297
- unmarried female suicides -11202.

Religious values in marriage relationships are forgotten. According to the Bible, once in a wedded relationship they are not supposed to be separated. Christian values like honesty in relationship is trampled upon without any ethics or belief. Some are becoming depressive due to sudden changes in lifestyle. They feel themselves as a burden for their family and friends. Feelings like helplessness, hopelessness haunt them throughout. They also face sexual harassment. Some of them lodge police complaints / court cases as they are being constantly harassed.

The above mentioned are some of the major pain women suffer because of these issues. In addition, people meet and make friends with total strangers in the social media platform or online though they do not know the person in the real world and in fact have never met face to face ever, but still the friendship and relationship continues and lastly enter into a marriage relationship. But finally becomes a victim of crime. Churches should focus on these issues, to bring them to lead a Christian life. Community leadership role also is important. Church leaders may take time and offer help to comfort these victims. So that the light of Jesus love may fill their heart.

Calendar - 2021	
January 06.Epiphany 06.Mar Zaia Thoovana 08.Memorial of Mart Mariam 08.Memorial of Mar Yohannan Mamdhana 15.Memorial of Pathros & Paulose 22.Mar Esthapanose Sahda 25-27 Ba'utha of Ninevites 28.Kubalthaibutha 29.Greek, Syriac Malpans 31.Mar Yonan	July 02.Mar B'hisho 03.St. Thomas Day 09.Memorial of 72 Apostles 11.Nusardail & Memorial of 12 disciples 12.Memorial of St. Mar Yosip Khananisho (d.1977) 15.Mar Kuriakose and Mother Yolethe 16.Mar Yakob of Nisibis 23.Mar Mari Shleeha 30.Mar Eyyob Hdayyavaya
February 05.Mar Awa Catholicos 12.Friday of Departed 14.Lent Begins	August 01.Beginning of 15 Day Fast 06.Transfiguration of Jesus on Mount Tabor 13.Shmone and her Children 15.Death of Mart Mariam (Shunaya) 20.Mar Shimun Barsabbae 27.Mar Qardagh Sahda
March 05.40 Martyrs Crowned in Ghieda 10.Mid Lent 16.Mar Benyamin Shimun, Martyr (1918) 21.Mar Michael, Friend of Angels 25.Tidings to Mart Mariam from Angel Gabriel 26.Friday of Lazar 28.Oshana	September 01.Rabban Hurmizd 08.Birth of Mart Mariam 13.Festival of Cross 14.Mar Bhisho 18.Remembrance of Yonakhir & his wife Hanna, Mother of Marth Mariam 19.Mar Shallitha 27.Consecration of H. H. Mar Gewargis III Sliwa
April 01.Pis'ha of our Lord (Maundy Thursday) 02.Good Friday 03.Holy Saturday 04.Easter 09.Mar Shimun Bar Sabbae 09.Confessor's Day 11.New Sunday 19.Rabban Hurmizd 24.Memorial of Mar Gewargis 30.Mar Sargis, Mar Bachos	October 01.Mar Khananiya, who baptised St. Paul 12.Three Hundred Saints of Shigar 15.Mar Pithyon 15.Mar Elia Prophet 17.Mar Moshe Nwiya 31.Hallowing of the Church
May 01.Memorial of St. Mar Abimalek Timotheus (d.1945) 02.Mar Addai Shleeha 11.Shmoni & Children 13.Sulaqa (Ascension) 23.Pentecost 26.1st Holy Qurbana by Mar Yakob 28.Friday of Gold	November 01.Mar Gewargis Sahda 07.Day of Tithes 15.Memorial of All Saints 19.Mar Yaqob M'pasqa 19.Mar Augin Thoovana
June -----	December 1. Subara (Advent) Begins 3. Mar Gabriel of Karsa, 3. Mar Abdisho Armaya 19.Mar Awa of Nineveh 22.Memorial of 12000 Martyrs 25.Christmas



H.G. Dr. Mar Aprem Metropolitan inaugurates Christmas eve at the Metropolitan Palace by cutting cake under the auspices of the Men's Association of the Church of the East in India.

Mar Awgin Kuriakose Episcopa congratulated Sheeba Babu (Thrissur Corporation Councilor), Jay Gifton Pananchery (Nadthara Grama Panchayat Member), Anne Joy (Grama Panchayat Member) and Gino Cherian (Puthur Grama Panchayat Member). Dr. Mar Aprem Metropolitan presented them with certificates of appreciation and a gift. Church Men's Association President Fr. Jose Vengassery, General Secretary Anto D. Ollukkaran, Church Men's Association Vice President Adv. Baby Antony and Trustees Chairman C.L. Tenny spoke at the occasion.

Joseph Haweil, a member of the Assyrian Church of the East in Australia, has been elected new Mayor for Hume City in Melbourne.

Joseph has been helping for *Voice of the East* English magazine for a long time. He has visited our Indian Church 3 times since 2010.

We take this opportunity to thank Joseph for all his assistance extended to our Indian Church.

Voice of the East wish Mayor Joseph Haweil all the best in serving his city.



Joseph Haweil
New Mayor of Hume City,
Melbourne, Australia



A historic photograph taken on 17 November 1995 at Marth Mariam Big Church on the occasion of the unification of the Church of the East in India. From L to R: H.L. the late Paulose Mar Paulose Episcopa, H.G. the late Mar Narsai Metropolitan (Lebanon), H.G. the late Mar Thimotheus Metropolitan, H.G. Mar Aprem Metropolitan and H.L. Mar Meelis Episcopa (Australia).