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H.G. Dr. Mar Aprem Metropolitan officiates the procession of Oshana (Palm Sunday) at Marth Mariam Valiyapalli accompanied by H.L. Mar Awgin Kuriakose Episcopa, Fr. Jacks Chandy, Board of Central Trustees Chairman Mr. Tenny C L and the members of the Church of the East on 28 March 2021

VOICE OF THE EAST



H. G. Dr. Mar Aprem Metropolitan speaks at the Navathy Celebrations Valedictory Function of Christava Mahilalayam, Aluva on 18 September 2017 (File Photo)



Chapel situated in the Christava Mahilaalaya campus

VOICE OF THE EAST

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Voice of the East

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Editorial

The Pulpit

The pulpit in the church is the place where the Truth is preached and propagated. We all respect the word of God. Unfortunately, the word is sometimes misinterpreted. The Pulpit is also sometimes misused to introduce personal issues. It is important for the speaker to preach biblical truths and not personal issues between the preacher and the congregation.

All personal prejudices should be avoided. At the time of the early Church there were slaves in the Church. The slaves had joined the Christian community along with their masters. We read about Philemon and Onesimus. The first one was a master and the second one was a slave. It is not clear how the slave Onesimus was treated by his own master Philemon. To St. Paul both the master and the slave were treated with Christian love and affection.

In the Epistle to Philemon, St. Paul writes that he considers Onesimus not as a mere slave of Philemon, but as a brother. Later when the master became a Christian, he took his slaves also to the Christian community. But the slaves began to conduct their worship, separately from their masters. They were buried in a slave cemetery. Even in India in some places separate cemeteries for slaves were established. In the Epistle to Philemon verse 11, St. Paul writes that now Onesimus is useful to me and you. St. Paul considers both the master Philemon and his slave Onesimus as useful.

In India a caste system used to be in force. Hence separate cemeteries were established for the slave Christians. The pulpit is a place where the preacher could educate “the master and the slave” on the Christian principle of love. Even now that problem is not solved. Our sermons should be powerful that the faithful love Philemon and Onesimus as brothers as St. Paul loved.

The early converts of St. Thomas in India are said to be from a high caste. The Christian community claimed to be the “high caste” or at least a separate caste. All Christians in India are only less than 3 per cent of the total population including the 1st century converts of St. Thomas as well as the converts after the arrival of Portuguese in South India and the Protestant and Catholic Christians who came after the 16th century. By the end of the 19th century the Pentecostal movement also came to India.

In recent years the divided Christian Churches and missions began to work in co-operation. As the Christian population is only less than 3 per cent there is a new feeling that the Christians should work in co-operation. Even the Roman Catholic, Orthodox, Protestant etc., are working in co-operation in some areas, as there is opposition from the extreme Hindu groups. The minority Christian community should work in co-operation. The Christians should forget their differences and stop criticizing the majority Hindu community. Being a community of such small size, it is important that this spirit of love, support and solidarity exists. These themes are at the core of the Gospel and must be the focus of what emanates from the pulpit.

Dr. Mar Aprem Metropolitan

Slaves & Servants

(Fr. Jos Jacob Vengassary)

April, 2021

We celebrated Easter on the 4th of this month. We celebrate this feast in remembrance of Jesus' offer as sacrifice on the cross for our redemption and his resurrection on the third day. But what does it mean for us today? Why should we believe in His Resurrection?

We read in the epics of the Mesopotamian and Egyptian world about gods who died, or survived death or who even had tricked death and came back to active life. Some examples are the Egyptian Epic of Osiris, Sumerian Epic of Dumuzi (Tammuz), Ugarit Epic of Baal etc. All these Epics are closely related to the daily life of the people during those periods. Most of them deal with the issue of absence of rain and recurring periods of draught.

Though the theme of dying and rising gods is a recurring theme in those epics, this theme is by far not identical with the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. It might have provided the background for the concept of death and rising from the dead. But the Essence and Purpose of His death and resurrection are quite different from those epics. The Purpose of His Life, Death and Resurrection is depicted in the Christological Hymn we read in St. Paul's Letter to the Philippians 2:6-11. He was God himself. He was with God from the very Beginning. But he gave up this privilege and in humility he became man and created a model for mankind assuming the life of a servant. He who was one with the Creator became a created being. To fulfill His task, it was of primary importance to be born as a human. He embraced the life of a servant in all humility. To experience the life of common people, their sufferings and aspirations, he opted this way. His life was a life of service to others. But He never gave up the dignity of being a human. Instead, his task was to regain the lost status of those who were denied of their rights and existence.

In the Ancient Near Eastern World a servant is never accepted as son. But he is not treated as a slave either. A slave cannot free himself from the master unless he is granted freedom by the master himself. A servant had the right to work anywhere he wished to. By assuming the status of a servant, the mission of Jesus Christ was to regain the status of those servants, who because of their poverty were forced to give up their freedom as servants to become slaves. He called them not as servants but lifted their status calling them Sons and Daughters of God, the rank of the Son that was reserved only for the king in those days in Mesopotamia and Egypt. He upheld the dignity of those who were marginalized by making them co-workers in His mission.

God raised Him from the dead and upheld His status as His Son, so that at the name of Jesus every knee bends, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confesses that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father (Philippians 2:10,11). Accordingly, God will raise the status of those who believe in Jesus to be the Sons and Daughters of God (St. Paul's Letter to the Galatians 4:5-7; 3:26-29). But the prerequisite to be fulfilled is that they ought to have the same mind of Jesus, namely, His humility.

This should never be forgotten. Those who are not willing to assume the humility of the Son, will never be raised to the status of the son of God. Those who are not willing to submit to the Will of God, who are not ready to share the same mind of Jesus, who are not willing to be of service to the humankind, they will be denied the sonship. Furthermore, the Day of the Final Judgement is awaiting them (St. Matthew 25: 31-*).

Let the commemoration of the Feast of the Resurrection of the Lord be an occasion to guide us to assume the mind of Jesus Christ, in all humility be God's Stewards, be of service to the humankind, uphold His stewardship and learn to respect others who are also called to be the sons and daughters of God. Let us fulfil His Mission he entrusted us, fulfilling the duty as Sons and Daughters of God.

Monthly Thoughts of H.G. Mar Aprem Metropolitan

(Translated from the Malayalam Magazine *Paurasthyanadam*)

1. Bhagat Singh was a great martyr for India's Independence 90 years ago. When asked what his last wish was, as usual procedure before hanging, the brave Bhagat Singh, he asked for half an hour to finish reading the book he was reading. It was approved by the British authorities. Bhagat Singh, a brave son, was reading Venn's biography. Let us not forget Bhagat Singh who was hanged for the Independence of India. He was hanged on 23 March, 1931 in Lahore Central Jail. Bhagat Singh was only 23 years old at the time.

Those who worked for India's Independence were ready to die. But since Independence, politicians have been thinking on their achievements. People like Bhagat Singh are not seen today.

2. Honors

Not only politicians but even in Church matters we see people who think, instead of service, something that will benefit them. Those who are in public service, whether in the community or in the Church, should ask themselves what the purpose of his coming to the service is. They think if they would get any significant benefits personally. That attitude must be changed. Don't come to a leadership position if you are not interested in sacrifice. If we are not willing to work for others, we should not seek Church and community leadership. Some people come to work not only in Churches but also in the community in the hope of gaining some position or honor. If he does not get it, he becomes a problem for that position or the society. These kinds of leaders are the problem makers when they didn't get the positions they wanted. Moreover, if there are talented people, we must be willing to give way for them. Otherwise status seekers will create problems.

3. Celebrations

Celebrations are needed. Some say we need celebrations. But some want prestige in its name. Many want *Pooram* (A traditional festival of Hindus in Thrissur) and fireworks held and be its executors. There may be talented people in leadership. But in some places, incompetents are trying to become leaders in the name of *Pooram* and *Perunnal* (Festival of Christians). Then there will competition and voting over that. It is reassuring that not everyone is trying to be a leader. However, it is the nature of some to strive for leadership and create strife for it. We must have an interest in service without prestige. With that, we must move forward where there are no good people in the leadership. In some of our parishes there are no people to become handlers (*Kaikarans*). It is very compelling to become caretakers in parishes. The abilities of individuals are different. In our parishes, only two people are in charge. In some places one in two may be interested in the activity. The second one is just for a name.

4. New Batch of Seminary

New batch of students should send application forms for admission in the Thirur Seminary immediately. An application has been received from a student who passed M.A. Degree. I say that doctors and lawyers can also study in the seminary he who must be interested in Theology. Those who study well will have the opportunity to study higher. Our Church has started a theological college called 'Nisibis Assyrian Theological College' in Sydney, Australia. It is a golden opportunity for students from India who have good marks now, or who are well educated and ready to pursue higher degrees in the future.

In our Church there are opportunities to earn higher degrees without spending more money. The Nisibis Assyrian Theological College, established in Sydney, will facilitate gifted seminary students from India to study abroad. Two fathers in our Church are currently studying for a Ph.D. at Trichur. Fr. Lijo Raphael from United Theological College, Bangalore and Fr. Cyril Antony from Dharmaram College, Bangalore. The thesis is being completed. Therefore, those who are good at studying should immediately apply to join our seminary in Thirur.

The new batch at the seminary will begin soon. The applications are to be sent to the Principal, Fr. Franklin Varghese immediately. The application will not be rejected even if the marks are not good in high school. It is enough to be willing to study well after coming to the seminary. The students who had low marks in high school should have the mindset to study well while studying for B.A. at the expense of our Church. If you are studying in Seminary after passing B.A., you should study with readiness to get good marks from then on. In the new situation of studying in the seminary, one should study in a new way and get good marks. After B.A. graduation, B.D. etc., may study for the additional degrees. There may be students who are not good at learning; they can stop further study after B.D. However, after B.D., those who show special ability to study, can learn M.Th.

Similarly, after the master's degree, students can learn Ph.D. also. No Church demands that all priests of their community study for Ph.D. As a minimum requirement, it is good that one or two priests have a Ph.D. and two or three priests have an M.Th. to teach in seminary. Let us pray for the betterment of the education of our clergy.

5. Padmabhushan Narayanan Mooss

Sri. E T Narayana Mooss, Chairman and Managing Director of the Vaidyaratnam Group is a well known person. I consider it a privilege to meet him. People associated with him told me that his family and others were trying to publish a memoir about him and that I should include my memoirs in it.

Many of my Chaldean Syrian Church members would say that it was better for me to see Mooss and to be treated by him. One day Babu, the son of Palu, the owner of Chiriyankandathu Jewelry, who was going there for treatment, took me to Thaikattusery to meet Narayanan Mooss. When I tried to give him Rs.500/- after the consultation, he did not accept it. However, we were forced to put that currency on the table and left with thanks and bye. Mooss's residence is on the left side of the road and the nursing home is on the right side of the road. Soon I was admitted to the nursing home on the right for treatment. The staffs in the nursing home told me to stay in a normal room for one day and move to a more comfortable quarters the next day. As mentioned a day later the quarters became vacant. I was told to move into it and stay. In the meantime, I noticed the amount of rent that had kept in the room from day one. So I said I like to stay normal and don't need expensive special rooms.

One day I saw a news in the newspaper in the nursing home where I was staying that I had received an award in the name of P. Thomas. After a while, Narayana Mooss himself came to my room holding a bouquet in his hand and congratulated me and presented the bouquet. He had not been awarded the 'Padma Bhushan' then. At that time his father was awarded 'Padma Shri'. Narayana Moose was later honored as the Padma Bhushan. He was the founder of the Ayurveda College at Thykkadu.

I realised that Shri Narayana Mooss, the Chairman and the Managing Director of the Vaidyaratnam Group was particularly interested in visiting patients and prescribing treatment by himself. Moreover, I also realised that Mooss was careful to visit patients during any busy schedule. That is how he deserves the great honor of being Padma Bhushan. Recognition for the doctor who treated thousands of patients.

It was only recently that I learned that the family of Mooss had treated our Blessed St. Mar Abimalek Thimotheus. I'm reluctant to believe when I hear stories that people often praise. But, one day I was surprised when I checked the diary of St. Mar Abimalek Thimotheus in his own handwriting in Syriac. "I'm not able to walk due to the disease called Arthritis and finally our people brought doctor Musa to me". I wondered who the doctor Musa was. Then it is written that "when the second time, there was a doctor named Nambi also came with Musa. They are the famous doctors of Malayalees. Doctors advised to massage with the paste this month". Born in Turkey, Mar Thimotheus Metropolitan might have not heard about the Ayurveda or anything like that. After thinking for a while I realised that this is not Musa but Mooss, the father of Shri Narayana Mooss.

Accommodation in the Vaidyaratnam nursing home in Thykkatussery is very comfortable. Patients from far distance lives there. Physicians pay close attention to the treatment of patients. Food will be served in the room or can have it in the Canteen while talking to others.

When we go to the canteen for food, there we meet many friends and getting acquainted. One day I had visitors so I went to the canteen wearing a red cassock. When a boy saw me he came and called me Santa Claus. I told the children that I was not Santa Claus but they did not believe me. The kids believe that after a while I will give them Christmas presents out of my pocket. There is a festival once a year. Food will be served to the orphans on that day. We were also invited to that festival. Pudding is also included in the meals. Pudding is not good for diabetics like me but we patients all get together at the table for that annual festival meal. Sugar patients can go for a meal but it's good that people like me, who have been diabetic for 44 years, have decided never to eat Pudding. Most of our friends in this regard are the ones who say 'it doesn't matter just for one day, does it?' I do not agree with the advice of such friends.

Ayurvedic treatment is very beneficial. But even during the British rule, Allopathic treatment was given prominence by the general public. However, the Mooss lived near Thrissur and established the Ayurveda College and is being propagating the treatment. Narayana Mooss's father had treated the Indian Vice President. So when the Indian Vice President came to inaugurate a Medical College near Thrissur, Moose and I were sitting at the front row. As our names were not in the program list the Vice President was asking for our names to the Chief Minister, Mr. Karunakaran, who was sitting near the Vice President on the stage. The Vice President wants to address us as VIPs on stage while speak.

Narayana Mooss treated the sick as good friends. I also attended the wedding of his eldest son's daughter. As the family members spoke to the patients, I learned that Moose's family was close to the patients. In the last days he has had difficulty in hearing. I was happy when Shri E T Narayana Mooss was awarded the Padma Bhushan. It was the respect he deserved. My sincere congratulations to that great physician who treated and healed so many patients including me.



WOMEN YOUTHS' ASSOCIATION CENTRAL COMMITTEE 2019-2021



Sitting from L to R: Sr. Jincy O U (President of Women's Youth Association), H.G. Dr. Mar Aprem Metropolitan, Shinu Powel (Secretary of Women's Youth Association)
Standing from L to R: Nimmy Vinny (Member), Jiya Giften (Treasurer), Susy Sholly (Member), Blessy Saji (Jt. Secretary), Siji Nims (Vice President), Shanty Sony (Member), Shiny Justin (Member).



H.G. Dr. Mar Aprem Metropolitan with H. G. Dr. Philipose Mar Chrysostom (File Photo)

Tribute to the Doyen of CASA



Major Jaswant Kumar Michael

It is with deep sorrow and regret to inform the demise of Major J.K. Michael on 27th April 2021.

Major J.K. Michael, was the former Director of CASA from January **1977** to May **2001**. His enormous contribution of **24 years** in the life of this organization paved the way for where it stands today. He was a man of great intellect, vision and courage who dedicated himself to the cause of peace, justice and dignity for all. A formidable leader and a passionate soul, he touched the lives of many. CASA just lost a star!

Our heartfelt condolences to the Departed soul and prayers to the bereaved family.

Farewell & May the Almighty God rest his soul in eternal peace.

With Heavy Heart,

Dr Sushant Agrawal
Director - CASA

And

CASA Family

المجمع السونهادوسي المقدس
لكنيسة المشرق الآشورية



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

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARIAT

**STATEMENT FROM THE SECRETARIAT OF THE HOLY SYNOD
CONCERNING THE STATUS OF THE SPECIAL SESSION OF THE HOLY SYNOD OF THE
ASSYRIAN CHURCH OF THE EAST**

For Immediate Release

The Secretariat of the Holy Synod of the Assyrian Church of the East would like to update all of the faithful of the Assyrian Church of the East concerning the status of the special Holy Synod, summoned by His Holiness Mar Gewargis III Sliwa, Catholicos-Patriarch of the Assyrian Church of the East and due to have convened from 18 to 25 April, 2021.

After receiving reports from local governmental officials concerning the spread and status of the Covid-19 virus in the cities of Erbil and Dohuk, Iraq (KRG), His Holiness wrote to the hierarchs of the Church through the Holy Synod Secretariat (April 7, 2021) requesting their opinion in regards to the continuation of the Holy Synod previously scheduled. The majority of the hierarchs replied to His Holiness in writing, recommending that the Synod be postponed. Thus, His Holiness confirmed to all the hierarchs in his letter of April 10, 2021 that the Holy Synod will be postponed to a more opportune time later in the year, due to the dangerous spread of Covid-19 in Erbil and the neighboring cities. The new date of the convocation of the Holy Synod will be announced by His Holiness after consulting with the members of the Holy Synod.

Given this 16th day of April, 2021; from the Secretariat of the Holy Synod of the Assyrian Church of the East.

+ *Awa Royel*

† Awa Royel

By Grace: Bishop of California &
Secretary of the Holy Synod.





H. G. Dr. Mar Aprem Metropolitan inaugurates Victory Day 2021.

L to R: Sri. Tenny C. L. (Chairman of the Board of Central Trustees), Rev. Fr. Michael Valluvantra, H.L. Mar Awgin Kuriakose Episcopa, H.G. Dr. Mar Aprem Metropolitan, Sri. M. P. Surendran (Mathruboomi News), Rev. Sister Dr. Jincy O. U., Sri. Anto O. D. (Men's Association General Secretary), Sri. Sojan P John (Central Youth General Secretary), Shepherd John (Executive Committee Member), Sri. Roy John (Executive Committee Member).



Mar Aprem Church Choir, Chelakkottukara, Thrissur won the second prize in a choir competition conducted by St Mary's Assyrian Church of the East, Los Angeles.

Feast of Saint Mar Abimalek Timotheus Metropolitan and the Remembrance of the Late Bishops - May 1st

According to the proclamation of the Holy Synod of the Assyrian Church of the East, it celebrated the Feast of St. Mar Abimalek Timotheus Metropolitan and commemorated the day of the other Late Bishops who worked tirelessly to lead the Church in its true faith. His Grace Dr. Mar Aprem Metropolitan officiated and His Lordship Mar Awgin Kuriakose Episcopa assisted the Holy Qurbana, Incense Prayer and Eternal Services etc. Then there had held a public meeting in the courtyard of the church in regards to the commemoration of the prelates. Ceremonies held only under the Government restrictions in the event of a severe spread of Covid 19.

The Main Events

- The Eucharist presided over by His Grace Dr. Mar Aprem Metropolitan and His Lordship Mar Awgin Kuriakose Episcopa.
- Incense prayers to the Saint and the prayers of the Departed Bishops had been held at the Tomb Church.
- A blood donation camp had been organised jointly by the Central Youth's Association and the Big Church Parish Youth's Association.
- The inauguration of the book reprint "Messihakkedutha Padippu" had also taken place on that day. The book republished to commemorate the 100th birthday of the late Metropolitan Mar Timotheus II.
- As part of the computerisation the inauguration of the Computer distribution to all parishes had been held on that day.
- The inauguration of the Charity Box distribution to all parishes had also been arranged on the same day.

The Wonder on a Hill Top 'Christava Mahilalayam' (Deacon Rajan V L)

In education status, Kerala state is always in front row in India. The same status was here even before the constitution of Kerala State on a linguistic basis in 1956. It was the Church Missionary society that first organised educational institutions on western lines in Central Travancore and Cochin, while the Basel German Mission did it in North Malabar, and the London Mission Society in South Travancore.

A few Middle Schools and High schools had come up in different parts of North Travancore and Cochin, which helped the spread of education among boys of this area. But there was practically no English education among girls as they were seldom sent to boys schools above the primary stage and there was not a single High School for girls anywhere in North Travancore and in Thrissur in Cochin State. It was under these circumstances some leaders in the area began to consider the possibility of starting a High School for girls in North Travancore on an interdenominational basis. Then under the leadership of Adv. P K Mathew, Mr. A A Paul, and some eminent personalities from different Churches, except the Roman Catholics, came together for a preliminary meeting, presided by Dewan Bahadur Dr. V Varghese, on 23/05/1925 at Kulangara Puthen Veedu, North Parur. Mr. N. O. Inasu from Thrissur, attended the meeting representing Chaldean Syrian Church of the East. The first

official committee was constituted in 1926 and three members each from different Churches were elected. Rev. K L Paulose, Mr. N O Inasu, and Mr. K T Mathai Vakil, were the members from Chaldean Syrian Church.

After further preliminary work extending over a year, during which a constitution on the model of the Union Christian College, Aluva, had been drawn up and finalized. The institution was named 'Christava Mahilalayam'. Then without much delay, the team purchased a hill top measuring 34.82 Acres at Thottumukhom near Periyar River, Aluva, on 5/2/1927.

In May 1927, the School had opened in the CMS Bungalow in Aluva, with 21 pupils and 3 teachers. And in the next year itself, on 27/1/1928, the school shifted to the own new building on the hill top.

Miss. E T Stevens of the women's Christian College, Chennai, was the Principal of the School for the first two years, and Miss Hester Smith from England, took charge of the school from April 1929 and served the school up to 1962. The period of Miss. Smith was so remarkable by making so many developments to the school.

Mahilalayam was a residential school exclusively for girls, but due to continuous requests from parents, it was decided to make admission for boys from 1934 onwards. The residential system continued till 1990s and thereafter the system dropped due to the shortage of boarding students.

In the 1950s when the Government started the system of aided schools, Mahilalayam opted to become a recognized unaided school because the management did not want to surrender the freedom to run the school according to its ideals. Thus Mahilalayam became the first recognized unaided school in the state seeking God's grace and the dedication of the teachers for its sustenance. In 2002 when the school celebrated its 75th anniversary, the Government upgraded the school to Higher Secondary status in recognition of its commendable service to society. Now the school having a strength of 900 students and has a very good academic result of 100% in 10th as well as 12th classes for the last 6 years.

In 1999, a new educational institution came into existence and it marks the realization of a long cherished dream to start a Public School following the Central Board of Secondary Education system, alongside the existing Higher Secondary School. This school having a total strength of 1200 students and getting 100% result for the last 15 years in 10th and 12th classes.

A beautiful Chapel is situating in the campus of Mahilalayam without any statues or pictures for worship, but inside and outside, we can see the cross of our Jesus Christ, as a symbol of Christava Mahilalayam. And this Chapel was a gift from Miss. Hester Smith. There were regular English services in all Sundays up to 1960s. Then three Christian denominations (Malankara Syrian Church, Mar Thoma Syrian Church, Church of South India) who had been included in the Governing board, shared three Sundays in every month and the last Sunday with a combined service. Actually one Sunday was the slot of Chaldean Syrian Church, even though no service was held in the order of Chaldean Church till June 2016. But in 19th June 2016, the Chapel was flooded with the devotees from Chaldean Church in the first time and His Grace Dr. Mar Aprem, Metropolitan, Chaldean Syrian Church of the East, conducted the Holy Mass. Mar Awgin Kuriakose, Episcopa, Rev Fr. Franklin Varghese, and Deacon VL Rajan assisted the service. Central Trustees and a group of devotees not less than 60, came from Chaldean Syrian Church of the East, Thrissur to attend the service. And as per the request from the members who are residing nearby Aluva, Metropolitan agreed to conduct at least one service in every month, preferably on 2nd Saturday. Thereafter in every month, the service was conducted by the vicar of St. Thomas Church, Ernakulam.

Administration of Christava Mahilalayam is done by a Governing board of members selected from four Churches – Malankara Syrian Church, the Malankara Mar Thoma Syrian Church, the Church of South India in Kerala, and the Chaldean Syrian Church of the East in Kerala. Now Mr. N G Jose, Nadakkavukaran house and Deacon V L Rajan, Vattakuzhi House, are representing the Chaldean Syrian Church of the East.

Although Mahilalayam is a Christian institution, it has always tried to serve the people of the state irrespective of caste or creed. Teachers and Students from Muslim, Hindu, and other communities are moving in a harmony. Surrounding of the school premises are Muslim dominating area, and most of them are selecting this school itself, for their study. Different types of helps and concessions are given to the needy persons without any prejudice. The relief camp conducted in the School premises for the last flood happened in 2018 in Kerala was one of the biggest in the District by accommodating more than 2500 peoples for several days.

2017 was a memorable year for Christava Mahilalayam, because of its entry to the proud age of 90. Yes, the institution entered to its Navathy. Inaugural function of Navathy was conducted with a prayer meeting at Mariyamma Memorial Hall (An Assembly hall within the campus) and the prayer was jointly done by the Priests participated from all denominations. The valedictory function of Navathy celebrations were conducted on 18th September 2017. Hon'ble Justice Cyriac Joseph (Rtrd.) was the Chief guest and His Grace Dr. Mar Aprem Metropolitan was the Guest of Honour.

Christava Mahilalayam was a real example for ecumenism and its activities were always helped to make harmony between the different Churches even in the early decades of 20th century, and in that time the word ecumenism was an unknown to common people. The School has always tried to uphold academic excellence with emphasis on sound learning and building of character through inculcation of noble values of life. Now it looks forward to a future of richer service to society through the education and character building of its younger generations; while upholding the rich traditions of the past.

On the Passing of Philipose Mar Chrysostom (Mar Aprem Metropolitan)

The Malankara Mar Thoma Syrian Church Metropolitan His Grace the Most Rev. Dr. Philipose Mar Chrysostom (Valiya Metropolitan) is taken to eternal rest on 5 May 2021.

Philipose Mar Chrysostom Metropolitan is 22 years and 2 months older than I am. In 1968 when I returned to Trichur after my consecration as Bishop and 8 days later as a Metropolitan in Baghdad, Philipose Mar Chrysostom was the youngest Bishop in Kerala. He was only 50 years old.

The first time I saw Chrysostom Thirumeni in 1954, he was only 36 years old. The young Bishop had come to Trichur to inaugurate the Youth's Association of our Church. Then I saw him in Jabalpur during my B.D. studies along with V.T. Koshy (later Isow Mar Thimotheus Episcopa). I saw him in February 1964 when I was a deacon and stayed for one week in the clergy shed during Maramon Convention.

In 1970 when Chrysostom Thirumeni was elected the President of the National Council of Churches at the Kottayam Assembly I was elected to the executive committee of NCCI. At NCCI as well as CASA and KCC we were together for many meetings. If my memory is correct Chrysostom Thirumeni is the first Keralite to become President of NCCI. The second one to occupy that post was Marthoma Metropolitan Dr. Joseph Mar Thoma.

When I wrote the book **Bishop's Jokes** in 1983 Chrysostom Thirumeni who was a Suffragan Metropolitan of the Mar Thoma Church wrote an interesting Foreword. The second paragraph in the Foreword is noteworthy. Mar Chrysostom writes:

“Jokes are things said or done to amuse people. People are amused at what Bishops say or do. They dress queerly, live pompously, process somberly, preach obscurely, pray solitarily, appeal incessantly, cash liberally and work occasionally”

Some 46 years ago, when Metropolitan Dr. Joseph Mar Thoma was made a Ramban along with Rev. V T Koshy, Chrysostom Thirumeni who was the junior-most Episcopa could not find accommodation in the Thrissur Mar Thoma Church. I was happy to get Thirumeni to stay in my Aramana, which is a historic Palace in the sense that Jawaharlal Nehru, wife Kamala and 13 year-old daughter Indira had visited on 29 May 1931.

May I record our condolence at the demise of Chrysostom Thirumeni.

Victory Day 2021 in Thrissur

Victory Day 2021 was held at the Chaldean Center under the auspices of the Central Committee of the Youth's Association, Chaldean Syrian Church of the East. His Grace Dr. Mar Aprem Metropolitan inaugurated the Programme. Mar Yohannan Mamdana Parish, East Fort has received awards for various programs conducted by the Central Committee of the Youth's Association for the year 2019-2021 and the award for the best branch-work too. Abhinav Charles Chittilappilly was adjudged the best Secretary. Paulson J. Immitty, Mar Pathrose Shleeha Parish and Joffin John, Mar Yohannan Mamdana Parish received the Outstanding Worker Award.

Paulose Mar Paulose Festival, the overall 1st price was won by Mar Mari Shleeha Church Kuriachira and Mar Pathrose Shleeha Church Poochatti. Second prize went to Mar Narsai Church, Nadathara. Prizes were also given for the other programmes. At the meeting, H. L. Mar Awgin Kuriakose Episcopa delivered the blessing speech and the eminent journalist Shri M P Surendran addressed the keynote message. Father Michael Vallavantra, President of the organization presided over the meeting. Mr. Sojan P John, General Secretary of the Association welcomed the gathering. Shri Tenny C L, Chairman of the Board of Central Trustees, Sister Dr. Jincy O U, President of the Women Youth's Association, and Mr. Anto D Ollukkaran, General Secretary of the MACE Association, greeted the audience and Mr. Mareej Timothy, Vice President of the organization thanked to all who participated in the programme.

Oshana (Feast of the Hosannas)

The Assyrian Church of the East in India commemorated the entry of Jesus Christ into Jerusalem. The procession started from Mar Yohannan Mamdana Church, East Fort and reached Marth Mariam Big Church, Thrissur. This was followed by the 'Entrance to the Temple' and the Holy Mass. His Grace Dr. Mar Aprem Metropolitan and His Lordship Mar Awgin Kuriakose Episcopa presided over the function. All the ceremonies were in accordance with the Covid-19 criteria prescribed by the government.

Gospel Convention - 2021

The 30th Annual Gospel Convention of the Chaldean Syrian Church of the East was held from 24 to 28 March at 6.30 p.m. to 8 p.m. in the courtyard of Yohannan Mamdana Church, East Fort. The convention was inaugurated by His Grace Dr. Mar Aprem Metropolitan on 24 March, 2021. The choir of Thrissur Marth Mariam Big Church performed the songs. Rev. Fr. Y. T. Vinay Raj, Marthoma Syrian Church, Kottayam preached. Believers were admitted in accordance with the Covid-19 standards prescribed by the government. For those who could not reach the convention, there was a live broadcast on the Church's YouTube channel 'Kaldhaya Media'. The message was delivered by Fr. Bobby Jose Kattikad at the convention held on 25 March. Mar Pathrose Shleeha parish Choir performed.

International Choir Competition

An online International Choir competition on behalf of the Assyrian Church of the East was hosted by St. Mary's Parish of the Assyrian Church of the East in Los Angeles. Mar Aprem Church, Chelakottukara, Thrissur won the 2nd prize with a cash award of \$500, in which 9 choir teams participated. The four-parts Malayalam Oshana song was composed and conducted by renowned bass guitarist Shri. Francis C.T. The first prize went to Mar Andrews Church Choir, Chicago with a cash award of \$1000. H. G. Dr. Mar Aprem Metropolitan, H. L. Dr. Mar Yohannan Yoseph Episcopa and H. L. Mar Awgin Kuriakose Episcopa congratulated the members of the Mar Aprem Church, Chelakottukara.

Women's Youth Association - India

Summary of the Activity Report of the
Central Committee of the Women's Youth Association
for the Period of 2019-2021

It is very gratifying that this organisation is able to maintain the mutual love and fellowship of the youth by organizing social and spiritual events in the 22 parishes of the Indian Archdiocese. In the wake of the Covid-19 epidemic, there have been limitations to our work over the past two years, but we have tried to keep it going ahead. By the grace of God it was somewhat successful. The Sunday School Outgoing Children's Two Day Summer Camp, which is being held every year in April at the MTM Orphanage in Kalathod, could only be held in 2019 due to the Covid pandemic. On May 1, the day of remembrance of the Saint Mar Abimalek Timotheus and other Late Bishops, the tomb will be decorated by the members of the women's youth. Except for the Covid period, we were able to perform this task beautifully every year.

In the month of September 2019, the organization was able to participate even more vigorously in the events arranged by the Indian Archdiocese in celebrating the canonization of Saint Mar Abimalek Timotheus Metropolitan. It was a wake-up call and joy for the Women's Youth Association to meet the Patriarch, Mar Gewargis III Sliwa in person and to interact with him during the youth gathering. During these two years, Bible Quizzes were conducted as part of the organization's spiritual activities. The Bible Quiz competition is organized for 15 to 45 years old and above 45 years old in two categories. Due to the Covid issues, the 'Women's Youth Fellowship' with the participation of members from all branches could only be held in 2019. During this period an excursion was organized for the members.

Gift coupons were prepared and sold and gifts were given to find the working capital needed for the organization. The organization has been able to do a lot of charitable work in these two years. We were able to deliver food kits to deserving homes during the Onam, Christmas and Easter festival seasons. By the grace of God, we were able to help more than 200 families during the lockdown in Kerala due to Covid. In the pandemic situation that a Smartphone is required to attend online classes for all students, a few phones can be purchased and given to the children who are studying, and many who are sick can be helped to buy medicine for hospital needs. In the month of July 2019, the organisation was able to organize a medical camp in collaboration with Amala Medical College, Thrissur at Marotichal Mar Mathai Sreeha parish. More than 250 people attended the camp and sought medical help.

The role of mothers is very important in shaping the younger generation. A one-day relationship class was organised to help the mothers. Many mothers happily attended this class. Despite the many difficulties during the tenure of this committee in 2019-21, we

have always been able to bring relief to the community only with the cooperation of all the parishes in our Church. We may try to continue to be in close assistance to each other, and help members, who are the organs and the body, that becomes the Church.

The 'Learning Assistance Scheme', which was launched by the organization in 2008 with great foresight, now has 120 children under it. We regret to inform you that due to the Covid pandemic we are not able to select the new batch for this scheme. In addition to learning assistance, the organization also aims to bring them together three times a year and organize classes for their mental development. In addition, often we have to provide financial assistance to these children. Helping 120 children in and between grades 8 and 12 is costly. It is only with the help of each and every one of you generous donors that this project has been successfully carried out so far.

Your continued support and cooperation is essential for this event. You are requested to send your possible donations to the bank account given below for the project. So you too can take part in this great mission:

**"Students Education Fund, A/c No. 0086053000010711,
South Indian Bank, High Road Branch, IFSC: SIBL0000086,"**

We would like to express our gratitude to all the dignitaries and parishes who have assisted us in various activities during the period 2019-2021, especially to the parishes of Mar Awgin Thuvana Church, Mar Mathai Shleeha Church, Mar Yohannan Mamdana Church, Marth Mariam Valiyapalli and the UAE Martha Mariam Church.

We have sincerely tried to coordinate and implement as many activities as possible within our limits. Thanks to everyone who cooperated and helped. We would like to take this opportunity to thank our Metropolitan, the Bishops, the Presidents, the Vice Presidents, the Esteemed Clergy, the Central Trustees, the Parishioners, the other Trustees, the Sunday School, the Church Members, and the Financiers who are giving us the guidance and encouragement we need. At this time we also record the joy of being able to work as an instrument of Jesus Christ who taught us that what we do for this little one is for me. The new working committee for two years will start functioning from April 2021. We submit this humble activity report to the knowledge of the Church with the request that you each have the prayers and cooperation to make them work most beautifully.

Sister Dr. Jincy O U

Deacon Joseph Kunnathuparamban

Kunnathuparamban Joseph *Shemmasan*, 93 years old, was the eldest among the living clergy in our Church. The eldest priest in the history of our Indian Church was Panancherry Timothy *Kashisha*, ninety-five years old. Deacon Joseph, who passed away on May 19, was leading a life of rest in our Thirur Theological Seminary. Despite his old age, Deacon is in good memory even though not knowing the new generation but must have remembered our fathers. After the death of his wife, he moved from his home near Lourdes Church and settled in our Seminary in Thirur. Speaking of the deacon, it doesn't go without saying that he was a man who cared about the Church and the Seminary. In his Will, he stated that he would sell his house and about half of the amount will be given (45%) to his wife's household and distribute the rest equally to the Church and Seminary.

Let this be a good example for others. When Ovungal Jacob *Kashisha* died, the house where he was staying in Mannuthi, Thrissur was also donated to the Church. They died without children. Both priests were preceded in death by their wives.



H.G. Dr. Mar Aprem Metropolitan inaugurates the 30th Chaldean Gospel Convention 2021 held at Mar Yohannan Mamdana Church, East Fort, Thrissur on 24 March 2021



H.L. Mar Awgin Kuriakose Episcopa distributes certificates to blood donors in connection with the commemoration of St. Mar Abimalek Timotheus Metropolitan and other late Prelates on 1 May 2021



Mnerva

Deacon Joseph K (93)
Died on: 19.05.2021

H.G. Dr. Mar Aprrem Metropolitan, H.L. Mar Awgin Kuriakose Episcopa and clergy before the funeral service of Kunnathuparamban Joseph Shamashan