



# MAR THOMA MESSENGER

A Publication of the Diocese of North America & Europe

JULY - AUGUST - SEPTEMBER 2021

Vol. XXXX. No: 3



## APOSTOLIC LEGACY

MAR CHRYSOSTOM VALIYA METROPOLITAN &  
JOSEPH MAR THOMA METROPOLITAN



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Dear beloved in the Lord,

Greetings of love to all in the name of Jesus Christ.

Padmabhushan The Most Rev. Dr. Chrysostom Mar Thoma Valiya Metropolitan, who gave precious and august leadership to the Church and society, at the age of 104, joined the presence of the Almighty in whom he always placed his love and faith. Thirumeni, while in active service, handing over the administrative responsibilities of the Church to his successor, became very lively and vibrant in his ardent pursuit of social service programs. Mar Chrysostom was a nonpareil great shepherd with an inimitable personality, sense of humor, conceptual majesty, ingenuity of expression, scope of vision, leadership quality, power of observation, and empathy to fellow beings. Always active, though retired, he passed away peacefully and silently from this world during the early hours of May 5, 2021.

Valiya Thirumeni's demise caused deep sorrow not only to the Mar Thoma Church, but beyond boundaries that separate cast, creed, and religion. Let us thank God for Thirumeni's ennobling life and invigorating leadership. On April 27, 2021 Mar Chrysostom had celebrated his 104th birthday. Many persons from various strata of life had conveyed their best wishes to Thirumeni on April 27th. The funeral services were conducted in the most blessed manner, fully observing the Covid-19 protocols. The leaders of political, social, cultural, and religious areas, important officials of administration, leaders of faith communities, general public, and members of the Church visited and paid their homage and condolences to Valiya Thirumeni. The help rendered by the government officials and the media persons was commendable. The bishops from other sister Churches, along with the bishops of our Church, gave leadership in the funeral services. On behalf of our Church, I extend our gratitude to all. May God help us to be more enthusiastic and active, following the noble examples that Valiya Thirumeni had shown us throughout his life.

The Covid-19 pandemic has attacked thousands of people. As a result, countless people have become lonely, helpless, and famished. The responsibility of the Church in taking protective measures is huge. Through Circular numbers, 16 and 17, the Church members are aware of the steps they have to take in parish-diocese-center levels. Arrangements must be made to transform the parishes into emergency centers. This should be carried out under the leadership of vicars with decisions made by parish officials and the executive committee members. Each parish should take keen interest in protecting and caring for the needy people around, without any discrimination of caste and religion. I appreciate the sincere efforts of the Mar Thoma Yuvajanasakhyam volunteers, who help to cremate or bury the deceased decently in these covid times.

Medical experts have already given the warning that the pandemic has yet another third wave coming up in the near



MESSAGE

from The Metropolitan



future. So everybody should strictly observe covid protocols. Vaccination programs should be conducted in an urgent and regular basis. Our Christian duty is to seek the financially broken people and families due to Covid-19 and care for them. Everybody should relinquish flamboyance. Expenses must be cut down. We must expedite ways to protect Nature. Let us take an oath on June 5th, the World Environment Day, to be the ambassadors of nature protection program as a mark of our love and care for the environment that we live.

From April 22, 2021, our Hoskote Mission Hospital has set 45 beds for Covid patients. They get complete care there. An average number of 40 persons get treatments there every day in the inpatient section. With the help of persons of goodwill, efforts are being made to establish an ICU with four beds, one oxygen plant, and 50 beds that have direct oxygen supply. We were able to equip the Kattanam St. Thomas Mission Hospital having a Covid unit with 40 beds including eight ICU beds and three ventilators. This is certainly a very good example of philanthropic approach that clarifies our Christian witnessing before the general public, and I appreciate all those who gave leadership and assistance in this noble venture. We should always have our conviction that our faith totally is in Jesus Christ who resurrected, winning death and Satan.

God knows everything. He knows this world, whatever is in the world, and all the life experiences we are facing today. This God controls everything. Let us trust in this God. Let us pray, "Oh! Lord, be merciful to the land." Antonio Guterres, United Nations Secretary General, analyzed recently that Covid-19 is an aftereffect of human encroachment on Nature. He made this observation when Mr. Joe Biden, President of the USA, called forth the Climate Summit. "Man's war over Nature must come to an end," Mr. Guterres said. The moral is that from now on, our lives will be at ease only if Nature permits.

The Nineteenth Memorial Discourse of Dr. Alexander Mar Thoma Valiya Metropolitan was delivered by Justice Cyriac Joseph on April 10, 2021, that is the birthday of late Dr. Alexander Mar Thoma. "A true Christian's obligation is to ignite the lamp of Faith and to live the Faith," Justice Cyriac Joseph said, remembering the noble life of Alexander Valiya Thirumeni.

The transfers of the priests started on May 1st this year, the criteria being the needs of the parishes and the priests. The pandemic and the delay in getting the Visas of some foreign countries have caused inconvenience to parishes and priests. All must strive to overcome these difficulties through prayer. The parishes must

bid farewell to the departing priests by observing the methods decided by the Mar Thoma Church. All must try to serve their parishes without hindrance by accepting the priests happily and cooperating wholeheartedly in their ministry.

Owing to Covid-19 the meetings of the Diocesan Assemblies and the Mandalam could not be conducted by having people assembled in one place. So the Dioceses outside Kerala were allowed to hold Assembly Meetings and councils in 2019-20 year through online platforms, applying the 64th section of the Church Constitution. Proper arrangements must be made by the present Diocesan Councils to hold the election of Office bearers and Council members for 2020-23 period. Permission is given using the 64th section of the Sabha Constitution to hold the parish executive committee meetings and the general body through online arrangements. We are not able to hold Sabha Pradhinidhi Mandalam due to Covid-19. The present sections of the Sabha Constitution are not written in the context of Covid-19. So we must adhere to some general principles for the conduct of the Sabha Mandalam. For the progress and wellbeing of the Church, it is essential that we must hold the Mandalam Meetings. Everybody must acknowledge this reality. I invoke everyone's cooperation and seek everyone's help in making these arrangements. May the Almighty Lord who is the head of the Church help and guide us in this matter.

Congratulations to those who won in the recent elections held in Kerala and some other States. We wish the best to the new left ministry under the leadership of Mr. Pinarai Vijayan. Appreciations to Mathew T. Thomas, and Mr. Thomas K. Thomas who were elected to the Kerala Assembly, both being members of the Mar Thoma Church.

Dr. George Abraham, who is a member of the Boston Carmel Mar Thoma Church, USA was elected president of the American College of Physicians, an organization of US medical doctors. Dr. George Abraham was also awarded the prestigious John Clark Leadership Award recently, in honor of his contributions in the healthcare sector of the USA. He is the son of Rev. Dr. M. V. Abraham, one of the senior priests of our Church. I take this opportunity to congratulate Dr. George Abraham (Georgy).

War brings only sorrow and death. Progress and peace vanish. The war between Israel and Palestine reveals this truth. It is really sad and paradoxical that Jerusalem, the city of peace, has become a war concentrated area. It is time for us to think seriously about the conflicts going on in this land, which happens to be the Holy place of



three religions. Efforts for peace must continue. U.N.O. Has issued certain directives that accept the existence of both countries. Let us pray that all these efforts to bring about peace become successful without delay.

The demises of our dear and near ones are always painful. Rev. P. V. Thomas, the Senior Vicar General of our Church passed away. Rev. K. M. Isaac, another senior priest also passed away. We praise God for their noble ministry. Mrs. Mariamma Varkey, who made a mark in the area of education in UAE joined the heavenly crew. The death of Dr. P. A. Thomas, whose contribution to the medical field and the Church remains valuable, is a loss to the Church. Rev. Dr. Santanu K. Patro, Registrar of the Senate of Serampore University, and Rev. Dr. Emmanuel Matthew Thathapudi, Secretary of the Board of Theological Studies of the Senate of Serampore University passed away owing to Covid. Fr. K. P. Elias, the famous Theologian, and a leader in inter religious discussions passed away. Bishop Nirmal Minz of the Lutheran Church and a known Tribal Theologian bid farewell to this world recently. I Praise God for the glorious lives of such great persons and express the heartfelt condolences of the Mar Thoma Church on the demises of these great ones.

On May 2nd, the Church meditated on the topic, "The compassion which leads to the experience of the kingdom of God." We also observed May 2nd as Land-Home Donation Sunday. The topic of meditation for May 9th was, "The faith that sustains the Church-Jesus Christ is risen." This faith should become the emblem and life style of the Church. Then only we can fulfill the mission of the Church in this world. We meditated on May 16th, on the topic, "The conscious waiting for the Holy Spirit." The Church lives in the strength of the Holy Spirit. On the day of the feast of Pentecost (May 23), the topic of our meditation was, "The Holy Spirit who renews everything." Only when the Church is renewed, we become a transforming Church. May 30th was the Trinity Sunday. The subject of our meditation was, "We believe in Holy Trinity." The reality of God is revealed in Trinity.

June 6th was Student Sunday. Our subject of thought was, "Growing in grace and wisdom." Each person improves his/her personality through education and student life. It is also a path to learn, know, and accept God's plan about ourselves. June 13th was Environment Sunday. We were able to meditate the subject, "Creation praising the glory of God." Today's many problems occurred because of our misuse of Nature. A balanced understanding of our environment is necessary for the wellbeing of humanity. The Church meditated the topic, "Worship in Spirit and Truth," on June 20th, the fourth Sunday after Pentecost. The basic concept of the Church is it is a worshiping community. Worship is attributing worth to God. Our prayers and meditations on June 27th were based on the topic, "The cost of discipleship." Jesus teaches his followers that discipleship is complete surrender. He himself is their perfect model. The real shepherd as he is, he never forsakes his sheep, and with patience tries to understand their sorrows, sighs, and sounds. What a Christ disciple must be aware is that the Lord has so many other societies to care for. The true disciple must have an insight about this. Real discipleship is to risk one's life and take up the perils of the other with courage. In these days of the pandemic, what the Church needs is to have such heroic disciples who are able to strengthen the people in faith. For this, let us submit ourselves in God's hands.

The grace of our Lord and Savior be with you all.



**Dr. Theodosius Mar Thoma**  
**Metropolitan**

(Translated by Prof. Elias Abraham, Baltimore Mar Thoma Church, from the May - June 2021 issues of the Sabha Tharaka)



Dear beloved in Christ,

Greetings to all in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ!

We are glad that these days we could experience calmness and a secure feeling with the relaxation in the restrictions that curtailed our movements, and the possibility to meet in fellowship as a worshipping community after the lockdowns caused by the pandemic. Yet, we are cautioned to "Stay Alert," since the virus variants still threaten human life. We hope the world will tide over this difficulty and experience peace. Still many nations around the world struggle without access to the vaccine, and many people die from COVID-19. We do appreciate our parishes who responded promptly by sending COVID relief assistance to India. It has benefitted thousands of patients and families in Aluva, Hoskote, and Odissa. Let us uphold the needy in our prayers and do our best in supporting them at this time of crisis.

Church is often described as holy, catholic, and apostolic in nature. It acknowledges the holy Apostles who carried the gospel message to the ends of the earth, who were venerated as martyrs for Christ and for the church. Their faith and legacy are to be observed and always honored. The Apostolic tradition is followed through centuries to keep the sacredness of the new spiritual movement of the called-out community – the church. Jesus called the disciples primarily "to be with Him, and to be sent out to proclaim the message and to have authority to cast out demons" (Mk 3:14). Therefore, to be a disciple of Jesus is to live in constant company with the Lord. They are to represent Christ everywhere, the truth of God He manifested, the love of God that He communicated, the life of God that He shared and the eternal sacrifice that He offered. This mission given to the Apostles is kept alive by transforming the lives of the people and faith communities through their service. In order to keep the commitment to Christ, they are consecrated to continue the ministry through the power of the Holy Spirit.

This legacy of the Apostles continues through handing over the ministerial responsibility to the next generations. It is a historical fact that the religious rites that existed at the beginning of the formation of the community as church have taken different cultural forms as they took roots in different parts of the world. The episcopacy in the Mar Thoma church has such heritage that goes back to the first century. The two Metropolitans, who served the Lord and the church, and passed away within a span of few months, were ecclesiastical leaders who kept the light burning and dedicated themselves for sharing the Gospel in a meaningful way.

In this volume of the Mar Thoma Messenger, we try to unravel the unique features of the life and vision of Dr. Joseph Mar Thoma Metropolitan and Dr. Philipose Mar Chrysostom Valiya Metropolitan and how they carried on the legacy of the Apostles in the present century. The special qualities both the Metropolitans



from The Diocesan Episcopa

MESSAGE



exhibited resemble the way of the Lord in loving everyone and caring for the needy. The spiritual nurturing of the family, the association with wider community, and the guidance from the leaders of the church molded them to keep the ethos of the church and to be sensitive to the societal concerns. As a guide as well as spiritual father, the faithful looked to them for advice and clear vision. The inclusive nature of human relations and moving a step further in embracing the other as a friend show their openness and wider ecumenical outlook. Their whole life was committed in building the church and communities as part of enlarging the horizon of the kingdom values. The close association I had with them for the last twenty eight years as a bishop of the church gave ample opportunity to learn new lessons and emulate the richness of tradition and values rooted in Christ and the scripture.

The Diocese of North America owes a lot to the Late lamented Dr. Joseph Mar Thoma Metropolitan and Dr. Philipose Mar Chrysostom Mar Thoma Valiya Metropolitan for their contribution and timely advice for the progress of the Diocese. We also cherish the strong motivation given by Valiya Thirumeni as the first Diocesan Bishop of North America and Europe Diocese. We pray that God may continue to strengthen the church and the Diocese to keep the legacy and great vision of our forefathers for the progress of the faith community.

With regards,



**Rt. Rev. Dr Isaac Mar Philoxenos**  
**Episcopa**

### Prayerful greetings from The Diocese of North America & Europe



**Rt. Rev. Dr. Euyakim Mar Coorilos Suffragan Metropolitan &  
Rt. Rev. Joseph Mar Barnabas Suffragan Metropolitan**  
on the occasion of Installation as new Suffragan Metropolitans.





# Editorial

Dr. Cherian Samuel



Blessed Greetings to Fellow Marthomites!

I praise God and thank Him for the opportunity to serve on the Mar Thoma Messenger Editorial Board. I stand humbled—on the shoulders of many before me—seeking your prayers and support.

This Messenger issue for the 2021 third Quarter (July-August-September) celebrates the life and legacy of two spiritual giants of the Mar Thoma Church: The Most Rev. Dr. Philipose Mar Chrysostom Mar Thoma Valiya Metropolitan (1918-2021) and His Grace The Most Rev. Dr. Joseph Mar Thoma Metropolitan (1931-2020). As we mourn the loss of our beloved Bishops —Joseph Mar Thoma (Iraeus Thirumeni) and Chrysostom Thirumeni — it is hard to accept that they departed within a span of six months of each other. We take this opportunity, as the North American Mar Thoma Diaspora, to pay tributes to Iraeus Thirumeni and Chrysostom Thirumeni, praising God for their blessed and impactful lives. We are pleased to present a rich collection of perspectives from our Diocesan Bishop, Rt. Rev. Dr Isaac Mar Philoxenos, clergy, and laity, exploring the theme of Apostolic heritage in the Mar Thoma Church, and personal reflections.

As the North American Mar Thoma Diocese, we thank Chrysostom Thirumeni and Iraeus Thirumeni for their selfless service, dedication, and commitment to the growth and progress of the Mar Thoma Church. Many North American Marthomites have long-standing, deep personal relationships with Chrysostom Thirumeni and Iraeus Thirumeni. Chrysostom Thirumeni was the very first Bishop of the new "Diocese of North America and United Kingdom," and Iraeus Thirumeni was the Metropolitan of the Church during the growth and consolidation phase of the North American and Europe Diocese during the past decade or so. We declare wholeheartedly with the Psalmist, "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints" (Psalm 116:15).

The LORD Almighty granted Chrysostom Thirumeni an exceptional life of faith, love, and service for almost 104 long years, like the tree planted by the waters, with roots spread out, not fearing the heat, with green leaves (Jeremiah 17:8). Thirumeni served the Mar Thoma Church and the wider Indian society as a Bishop for almost 68 years, an Indian record for Bishops. Since becoming the Valiya Metropolitan in 2007, Chrysostom Thirumeni ministered extensively to the wider non-Mar Thoma community, becoming a most beloved spiritual leader and an elder statesman. Thirumeni's love for humanity was a true testament to his living faith, authenticating Jesus's Upper Room command to His disciples to love each other, just as Jesus loved them (John 15:12). In 2018, the Government of India honored Chrysostom Thirumeni with the Padma Bhushan — one of India's highest civilian honors — making Thirumeni the very first Indian Bishop to receive the award.

Iraeus Thirumeni served the Mar Thoma Church as a Bishop for 45 years, faithfully following the footsteps of his Maramon Palakunnath family forefathers, consisting of Abraham Malpan —the father of the reformation in the Malankara Church — and the first four Metropolitans of the Mar Thoma Church. Iraeus Thirumeni was an unparalleled visionary Metropolitan and institution builder, spearheading the Church's entry into new fields of education and expanding the Church footprint in major Indian urban centers. In all matters, Iraeus Thirumeni led the Mar Thoma Church from the front, like the mighty lion — majestic in pace and stately in walk — that does not turn away from any (Proverbs 30:30). Iraeus Thirumeni also had a deep interest in history and an abiding love for heritage, exemplified by the establishment of the Mar Thoma Church Animation Center and Museum (Thiruvalla, Kerala), featuring



historical artifacts, including the Malankara Throne, that was used for the consecration of the first Indian Metropolitan of Syrian Christians — Mar Thoma 1 — in 1655, following the historic “Oath of Coonen Cross” in 1653.

Chrysostom Thirumeni and Iraneus Thirumeni had a strong partnership, serving together as Mar Thoma Church Bishops for 45 years, leading the Church as consecutive Metropolitans, during a time of rapid growth and expansion of the Mar Thoma Church. Chrysostom Thirumeni and Iraneus Thirumeni also had strong connections to Maramon, where Chrysostom Thirumeni was born and raised and went to school — when his father, the Very Rev. K. E. Oommen, served as the Vicar of the Maramon Church — and lived when His Grace served as Valiya Metropolitan. In his memoirs, Chrysostom Thirumeni credits his Maramon middle and high school teacher — T. P. Koshy — as the inspiration for his brilliant humor and oratory. Chrysostom Thirumeni also thanked God on various occasions for preparing Iraneus Thirumeni to lead the Mar Thoma Church — when Chrysostom Thirumeni turned 90 — stating that Iraneus Thirumeni was a more capable leader for the Mar Thoma Church! Both Thirumenis excelled in taking the Gospel to the public square, building strong relationships with other religious leaders in Kerala and India, fully living up to the Mar Thoma motto of “Lighted to Lighten.” Chrysostom Thirumeni and Iraneus Thirumeni also built

solid partnerships with other Christian denominations in Kerala, India, and the World, serving in leadership positions in various Church Associations. Last, but not least, both Chrysostom Thirumeni and Iraneus Thirumeni were strongly committed to social programs for meeting the needs of the poor and the marginalized sections of society, through various organizations of the Mar Thoma Church. The passing of Chrysostom Thirumeni and Iraneus Thirumeni truly marks the end of an era for the Mar Thoma Church as the leadership transitions to a new generation of Bishops.

Let me close by thanking God for allowing us as a family (Keerikattu Tharayilethu, Venmoni, Kerala) to know Chrysostom Thirumeni and Iraneus Thirumeni personally. While the relationship with Chrysostom Thirumeni was primarily through our father’s generation, the relationship with Iraneus Thirumeni was with our generation. Iraneus Thirumeni was well known to us from his numerous visits to our Venmoni home with our parents and the extended family. When we started living in the Washington DC area, we also met Iraneus Thirumeni regularly during visits with his Venmoni Veppumthara cousins. We sorely miss Thirumeni’s photographic memory and encyclopedic knowledge of numerous cousins and the sweet warmth of his love and care. May the Lord Almighty sustain us All!

**Dr. Cherian Samuel**

Associate Editor

## Full Time Ministry

Those who are interested in serving in the full time ministry of the church and who are willing to pursue theological studies may contact the Diocesan Office. Candidates should be active members of their respective local parishes of the Mar Thoma Church and should demonstrate an eagerness to serve. The Diocese is planning to arrange an online prayer fellowship for all prospective candidates in the near future. Please send your name, parish name, and contact information to the following email address: [marthomadiocese@gmail.com](mailto:marthomadiocese@gmail.com)



# APOSTOLIC LEGACY

Very Rev. Dr. Cherian Thomas,  
Dallas



Most Rev. Dr. Philipose Mar Chrysostom Marthoma Valiya Metropolitan and Most Rev. Dr. Joseph Marthoma Metropolitan have become annals of history and have become part of the invisible Church. We need to read about the past in order to understand the present. People without a grasp of history are like people without memory. A knowledge of history of the past will help us to understand better both ourselves and those with whom we might disagree. Karl Barth, a renowned theologian observed that the correct attitude to our theological forbearers is summarized in the fifth commandment. Honor your father and mother. This commandment remains binding on children even when they have left home. We should listen with respect to the voice of the past. It will motivate us to go forward in life. Dr. Chrysostom Marthoma Metropolitan and Dr. Joseph Mar Thoma Metropolitan were the two legends of the Marthoma Church who kept the legacy of the past.

Mar Chrysostom Marthoma Valiya Metropolitan was a genius. A highly intelligent person of extraordinary ability who led a stupendous and unparalleled life. He was unique, multifaceted, sophisticated and a versatile personality. He was the oldest Bishop to live a blessed 103 years on this planet. He was the first Bishop to receive the Padma Bhushan, the third highest civilian award by the government of India. He was a voracious reader and an orator. Though he did not author any book, many books have been written on him and his life. His teachings were simple but profound, penetrating and touching. His sermons and talks were applauded and appreciated by all and sundry. Thirumeni's Holy Communion services were very inspiring. Though not known for melodious chants, his service was filled with awe and reverence to the Almighty, celebrating the Liturgy meticulously with utmost respect. He was particular in keeping distinction and similarities of the Church and the Kingdom of God. His concept of the Kingdom of God was inclusive and transcended all human barriers. I recall few of his theological statements made during different situations of life or during his sermons.

He said, "Jesus did not do anything a perfect man cannot do. Had he used his divinity in his public ministry our salvation would not have been possible."

"The way to heaven is through this world; to this reason God placed us in this world. The greatest work of God was done in this world through Jesus Christ. He lived in this world, crucified, buried, and was risen in this world. Jesus will be coming back to this world again. Fullness of salvation is not possible without involving in the affairs of the world. The ultimate purpose of God is the transformation of the world."

Once while visiting the Central Prison, Jail inmates, he said, "Heaven is crowded with thieves-Repented thieves. The difference between you and me is that you are caught, and I am not caught."

All these statements are loaded with theological ideas and revelation of Gospel truths. (some of the above lines are from my article in the recent edition of FOCUS, June 2021) Dr. Joseph Mar Thoma Metropolitan was the fifth Metropolitan from the Palakunnathu Family. Abraham Malpan, the person who gave leadership for Reformation was from Palakunnathu family. Mathews Mar Athanasius Metropolitan worked extremely hard to keep the historic episcopacy and nurtured the apostolic faith in the Malankara Church. Thomas Mar Athanasius Metropolitan led the church in its independence without compromising with foreign domination without counting the cost. Even though we failed in the court case we upheld the independence of the Malankara Church. He suffered a lot for the Church mentally and physically. Titus I and Titus II Marthoma Metropolitans preserved the identity of the Marthoma Church in its form of worship and administration. Dr. Joseph Marthoma being the architect and builder of the Marthoma Church, tread through a new path which was unique and the Church grew to new heights in a multifaceted manner. His contributions were tremendous and marvelous. His life was remarkably great, prodigious.





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They all lived and contributed their best, in guiding and nourishing the Church. These Metropolitans sailed the ship (church) through troubled waters in storm and stress.

## Ecumenical Personalities

Both Metropolitans lived ecumenically, and both were inclusive in their approach. Chrysostom Thirumeni attended the Second Vatican Council as an observer (1962-1965) and widened the ecumenical horizons. Both Metropolitans were very active in Kerala Christian Council (KCC), National Council of Churches in India (NCCI), Christian Conference of Asia (CCA) and World Christian Council (WCC). They were Presidents of KCC, NCCI and CCA. Joseph Mar Thoma Metropolitan was very active in Churches Auxiliary for Social action (CASA), Ecumenical Church Loan fund (ECLOF), and World Vision. Both led peace missions of the Central government to different conflicting communities. They respect people of other faiths and accept and respect their differences. Accept all what is possible to agree and respect all what we cannot agree - That was the principle adopted by Dr. Joseph Marthoma as the basis of his ecumenical vision. Both our Metropolitans accepted and respected all people as created by our God; and therefore God is our Father and all are brothers and sisters, and each person is different and the difference does not prevent us from loving one another. The bottom line is God's love, as Jesus-Their Master lived and practiced. Both were philanthropists and involved in developmental activities in the local level for the upliftment of the poor, downtrodden, and marginalized in the larger society. Their ecumenical views were not simply unity of churches but the unity of all humankind irrespective of caste, color, creed or gender and integrity of creation. Both taught the church the urgency and need of preserving the biodiversity of nature - the rivers, mountains and valleys, all flora and fauna. The animals were their friends. They loved nature and enjoyed its diversity and respected all life. They established a new tradition in the church. Dr. Joseph Marthoma started a work among the Transgenders and founded a center for them in Chengannur for their education and upliftment. Now the Government of Kerala has taken up projects like this for the upliftment and dignity of Transgenders.

## Theologians

Both were biblical theologians. Chrysostom Thirumeni by his wit and humor conveyed the gospel truths to the ordinary people. He was known to all as "The Man with the golden tongue." Dr. Joseph Marthoma expressed his theological views through his actions. When a severe earthquake occurred in Latur, Maharashtra (India), he immediately went to the site and gave leadership to lift them up through relief operations. He gave leadership and mobilized funds for the construction of houses for the poor people. Likewise, when the Tsunami hit the

coastal areas of Kerala and Tamil Nadu, he visited those places and made funds available to construct houses and gave leadership to relief operations. Another initiative by Thirumeni was to take care of people suffering from major ailments. The Sabha Council collected five crores rupees for helping people suffering from major ailments like cancer, kidney related problems and heart diseases. He was very concerned about Achens and families who were suffering due to various causes and he used to give away a good amount of money to help them to tide over their difficult situations as they were unable to bear the expenses. The building up of the Hermitage in Kozhencherry was his dream in connection with this cause. He shared his dreams with me many times about this project. He was a loving shepherd who knew his sheep by name. His personal relationship with people were astounding. He seldom used program diary. He knew it byheart. He remembers people with their history and maintained a loving relationship with them. He was sincere in his relationship and personally knew several heads of the state.

## Vision and Mission

Joseph Marthoma believed that Church is an agent, instrument, sign, and sacrament of the Kingdom of God. He believed that building up of the church is the building up of the Kingdom of God. Institutions of the church are a means to serve the people and in turn serve God in bringing about progress in their life. He tried his very best to keep up the purpose of each institution for which they were established whether it is a school, college, or a hospital. During his period as Metropolitan all the institutions bore good results. Thirumeni took keen interest in developing our hospitals including Kattanam. Under his initiative Kattanam, Kumbanad and Chungathara hospitals started dialysis as a part of their treatment. He was instrumental in starting different para-medical courses in Kattanam and he managed them efficiently. He secured properties in prime locations in Delhi for the Church, for the Diocesan Centre and Bishops house. He also secured properties for the church in Chennai, Anchal, Ayoor, Kollam, Kozhencherry and many other places. The Poolatheen, the residence of the Metropolitan was rebuilt during his time to accommodate Metropolitan's residence, suites for bishops and guests, office space, conference hall and other such amenities. During his time, it was decided to rebuild the Sabha Office and he contributed a substantial amount to complete the ground floor of the building.

Both Metropolitans kept the legacy and tread new paths to lead the church to new heights. Although each of them had their own way of doing things, they both worked hard for the upbuilding the Church, and in turn they were working for the growth of God's Kingdom. They both set their goal in Christ to fulfill His will for the transformation of the world.





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## The Vision and Ministry of Chrysostom Mar Thoma & Joseph Mar Thoma



**Dr. Usha George, Ph.D.**  
Canadian Mar Thoma Church, Toronto

Two of the senior Metropolitans of the Malankara Mar Thoma Syrian Church- Mar Chrysostom Valiya Metropolitan and Joseph Mar Thoma Metropolitan- were called to eternal rest on May 5, 2021, and October 18, 2020, respectively. The global Christian community came together to bid farewell to the two Thirumenis, who were genuine humanitarians with global vision. They were great leaders and lived ahead of their times and created history. The departure of our two Metropolitans is, however, an appropriate time to remind ourselves about their steadfast dedication to the vision and mission of the church.

It is difficult to do justice to the many and varied contributions of the two Thirumenis with regards to their contributions towards the growth and development of the Mar Thoma Church. Both had different approaches, personalities, and dispositions. What united them was their unwavering commitment to the mission of the Mar Thoma Church for which they offered inspirational leadership and fellowship and that is the focus of this article. Both Thirumenis embodied the "fruit of the spirit" listed by Paul for the Galatians. They exhibited true altruistic spirit - a willingness to give without expecting anything in return.

The goal and function of the Church as per the Mar Thoma Church website are:

To be the repository of the divine doctrines revealed by Jesus Christ and proclaimed by His Apostle.

To maintain these doctrines in their purity.

To promote the spiritual life of its members through the administration of sacraments and by the ministry of the WORD.

To make disciples of all nations by the proclamation of the Gospel to all the world, and through the administration of Holy Baptism in the name of triune God (Overview, Malankara Mar Thoma Church).

I have identified a number of interrelated features that can be described as the mission of the Mar Thoma Church, defended, and fostered by the two Thirumenis. I need to acknowledge a major limitation of this article. I had limited access to published works- mainly books- available in Kerala. I have depended mainly on resources from the internet.



## Bible as the ultimate word

The Mar Thoma Church defines itself as "Apostolic in origin, universal in nature, Biblical in faith, Evangelical in principle, Ecumenical in outlook, Oriental in worship, Democratic in function and Episcopal in character." The Church identifies its goal and function as: "...to be the repository of the divine doctrines revealed by Jesus Christ and proclaimed by His Apostles; to maintain these doctrines in their purity; to promote the spiritual life of its members through the administration of the sacraments and by the ministry of the Word." It believes in Jesus Christ and in the Triune God and accepts the Holy Bible, consisting of 66 books of the Old and New Testaments, as the basis for all matters of doctrine and faith. The most important mission of the church is to safeguard the word of God as revealed by Jesus Christ and taught by the Apostles and to promote the spiritual life of the faithful. Administration of sacraments and preaching the Word of God are essential components of worship. Increased use and study of the Bible is encouraged and preaching of the Word is an essential part of all formal church events. The understanding is that Christianity is not a set of rituals, but essentially a way of life. Salvation consists of communion with and obedience to Christ, and liberation from the bondage of sin is a matter of present experience.

Studying the word of God through Bible study and sermons is an essential element of all the suborganizations within the Mar Thoma Church. The Sunday School, Edavaka Mission, Youth Group, Sevika Sanghom and Seniors' Group, for example, to promote the study of the Bible in their regular meetings.

In addition to being biblical scholars, the two Thirumenis were exceptional in their ability to offer practical interpretations of the Word of God. They reminded us that what matters ultimately is not the length of time you spend in this world, but your ability to create positive impacts on other people's lives and to turn negativity into positivity.

## Evangelism

Proclaiming the Gospel to nations and baptising in the name of the Father, Son and Holy spirit form another feature of the Mar Thoma Church. Taking the Gospel to all communities was seen as revolutionary in a society that was deeply divided on the basis of caste and other social divisions. Christ demanded liberation for all people from all kinds of bondage. All human beings are to be united as one family in the kingdom of God and the church is to work for the extension of the kingdom

through out the world. Started in the wake of the Reformation Movement pioneered by Abraham Malpan, the Martin Luther of the East, a number of evangelistic associations were formed. The Mar Thoma Evangelistic Association, the missionary wing of the Mar Thoma Church was formed in 1888. Evangelistic endeavours in and outside Kerala have flourished over the years because of the untiring efforts of many evangelists and laymen. It is also expected that every member of the church will bear witness to the salvation of Christ and communicate the gospel message in their everyday interactions. The branch of the Mar Thoma Voluntary Evangelists' Association in the Parish is called Edavaka Mission and it emphasizes the ministry of the laity in the church.

The mission fields within and outside Kerala enjoyed enormous support by the two Thirumenis. They urged every Marthomite to be an evangelist and spread the good news of Jesus's redemption to the far ends of the world.

## Ecumenism

Ecumenism, the practice in which Christians who belong to different denominations work together to develop closer relationships among their churches and promote Christian unity, is fundamental to the Mar Thoma mission. Ecumenism emphasizes what is viewed as the universality of the Christian faith and unity among churches. Ecumenism is the movement to promote Christian unity.

Both Thirumenis were essentially ecumenists. They used the ecumenical platforms to spread the message of basic human rights, inclusion, sanctity of life, and dignity of all humans. They maintained that religious and ethnic discrimination have been the major contributors to the violation of basic human rights, and their advocacy for peace and justice are founded on the work on the ground. They occupied seats of leadership on several national and international bodies such as the World Council of Churches, Christian Conference of Asia, and the National Council of Churches. The Church enjoys full inter-communion relationships with the worldwide Anglican communion, CSI, CNI and Episcopal Churches in USA and Canada.

## Social Engagement

An eloquent testimony for being a true Christian is one's ability to translate faith into action. Jesus Christ was the most powerful example of faith and action. Jesus instructed the people by saying, "...do not believe me unless I do the works of my Father" (John 10:37). Our



faith has no impact unless it is accompanied by actions. So, our actions should therefore be a result of our faith.

In a society deeply stratified on the basis of caste, religion, and gender, the Thirumenis promoted Christianity, as a way of transcending social divisions. They challenged the status quo and offered a radical alternative – an alternative that translated faith into actions; aimed at the alleviation of poverty and homelessness as well as the promotion of the rights of the marginalized. Social Action- people coming together to tackle an issue and improve the lives of others- was seen as an integral part of the mission of the Church.

The Mar Thoma Church runs a large network of organizations designed to uplift and support the less fortunate in our society. Latest figures indicate that there are 38 social welfare institutions, 14 destitute homes, and ten hospitals run by the Mar Thoma Church.

The leadership of the church in the fields of education, medical mission and charity work is well recognized not only within India, but also globally; and has made a positive impact on the lives of many people.

The two Thirumenis were deeply committed to the growth and expansion of the Mar Thoma Church as

a caring and nurturing community, responding to the needs of the poor and marginalized. The activities related to their Navathi celebrations offer the best examples of their commitment to meeting the basic needs of the less fortunate in our society.

With the departure of these Thirumenis, we have lost two great spiritual leaders who exemplified genuine Christian qualities. Their simple and progressive approach to faith and life will be a lasting legacy. Their message is clear, and I quote from the documentary- 100 years of Chrysostom: "To live does not mean you are alive. Life is all about fighting and turning all the negativity around us to positivity."

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Deacon	- 1973, May 29
Kassissa	- 1973, June 12
Ramban	- 1993, August 31
Episcopa	- 1993, October 2
Suffragan Metropolitan	- 2021, July 11



### Rt. Rev. Dr. Abraham Mar Paulos Episcopa

S/o. K. C. Uthup & Sosamma

Kanjirathara, Manganam, Kottayam

Date of Birth	- 1953, August 16
Deacon	- 1980, May 31
Kassissa	- 1980, June 28
Ramban	- 2005, February 11
Episcopa	- 2005, May 14





**Rev. Eappen Varghese**  
Vicar, Houston Immanuel MTC



# The Tradition, Legacy, and the Lifeworld of Metropolitans Chrysostom Mar Thoma and Joseph Mar Thoma

## Introduction

Time and history play a key role in the formation of individuals. When history and mystery work together in the life of individuals, their life becomes transformative and archetypal. They surpass time and space and continue to influence and motivate generations. Metropolitans Mar Chrysostom and Joseph Mar Thoma are two eminent persons of this class. The outlook, spirituality, and the faith approach of these stalwarts moulded the church and community and equipped the Mar Thoma Church to face transitions at various levels. This article attempts to mark the lifeworld of Metropolitans Chrysostom Mar Thoma and Joseph Mar Thoma that shaped their visions and aspirations.

## Spiritual Revival in Travancore

The Mar Thoma Church is an eastern church. It comes under the Syriac family of churches, the ancient of the three traditions, Latin and Greek forming the other two. It preserved its continuity with the early church and its faith tradition through its apostolic succession, liturgical tradition, and historic episcopacy. The church revitalized itself through the reformation of Abraham Malpan which reinstated the church in Biblical foundation and evangelical zeal. Spiritual Revivalism which hit Travancore was crucial in the transformation of Mar Thoma Christians of the reformed faction. Spiritual revivalism which started in the 1870's and lasted until the 1940's with ups and downs was vital in the life of the Christians and others in central Travancore with far reaching consequences.

Spiritual revivalism kindled the spirit of repentance and desire for a true Christian life based on biblical faith. People started reading, learning, and meditating on the Word of God. There were many priests conducting Bible study groups in the evening in the houses and libraries adjacent to the schools established by the Evangelistic Association as part of its mission among the slave caste communities and for the general public. Mar Thoma youth and students enthusiastically participated in those Bible study series conducted by eminent priests like Kalamannil Oommen Achen (Very Rev. K. E. Oommen), Plavumkal Achen (Rev. P. I. Mathai), Mandapathil Achen (Rev. P. I. Jacob), Rev. M. C. George (father of Metropolitan Alexander Mar Thoma), and so on. Schools and colleges were vibrant with Bible studies which ignited fervour for mission. The mission of the Mar Thoma Church among Dalits and other outcastes in Kerala and elsewhere in India also formed a formative paradigm. The Maramon Convention was well known for its great legacy of biblical messages, spiritual renewal, and evangelical ardour. This was the spiritual paradigm of young Chrysostom Mar Thoma and Joseph Mar Thoma. They both were participants of those Bible study movements in their villages, schools, and colleges. They breathed the spirit of revivalism, Biblical narrations, and evangelical pietism. They both bore the hallmark of that spirit throughout their life.

## Biblical Humanism

One of the important features of the spiritual revivalism was repentance and confession of sins. The quest for true Christian life was a major theme. Caste and other





discriminations came to be noted as a serious obstacle for a true and biblical Christian life and witness. This was oriented by biblical humanism which emphasized equality of humanity before the creator and redeemer God. The exhortations at the Maramon Convention against caste, along with the social movements against it, had deep impact on Mar Thoma youth. They started inter-dinning as part of their spiritual and social program. They conducted inter-communion with Christians who were converted from the slave castes. Metropolitans Chrysostom Mar Thoma and Joseph Mar Thoma bore the mark of this biblical humanism. They always made their way to reduce the disparities between castes, communities, and gender, and thereby, bringing reconciliation among the communities and identities. Various developmental program for the Dalit parishes and the mission among the transgender people are some of the examples.

## Evangelical Zeal

The Malabar Mar Thoma Syrian Christian Evangelistic Association established in 1888 is the first indigenous missionary organization in British India and in any other princely state. It represents the church's earnest commitment to evangelism and Christian mission. Missionary engagement of the Association was transformative. It energized the church. All the

organizations of the church: Sunday School, seminary, students, youth, and women were involved in the mission of the church. Even the Mar Thoma schools and colleges organized mission trips to various mission fields. They conducted street side meetings, house visits, and prayer meetings. It oriented the youngsters and children alike in mission, scripture, worship, and exposed them to the sufferings and needs of the people. They grew in concern for the other.

Wherever they went, they continued to witness Christ and contributed for the cause of the needs of humanity. The very zeal of mission is central to the vision and action of both the Metropolitans. They remained a continued inspiration to the missionaries and evangelists of the church.

## Justice and Righteousness

From the time of Malayali Memorial,<sup>1</sup> the Mar Thoma Church is committed to social justice. The non-Malayali Brahmins who were less than 2% of the total population held 1,035 government jobs in Travancore having a salary between Rs. 10 to 50 and 21 jobs with salary above Rs. 50.<sup>2</sup> An Ezhava youth, Palpu, who passed the medical examination, could not get a job in Travancore medical service.<sup>3</sup> T. C. Punnen, a Syrian Christian who was a Cambridge graduate, also could not get a job in Travancore government service.<sup>4</sup> Malayali Memorial addressed this serious disparity and injustice in the society and demanded to redress it. Mar Thoma Metropolitan Palakkunnathu Thomas Mar Athanasius was in the forefront of this civic right movement.

The following years witnessed more struggles from the Christian, Muslim and Ezhava communities for more civic rights and democratic governance. The Mar Thoma Church and the Mar Thoma members

1 Malayali Memorial is a memorandum submitted by the people of Kerala to Maharaja Sree Moolam Thirunal in 1891. Signed by more than 10,000 people which includes Hindus, Muslims, and Christians, Malayali Memorial agitation requested Sri Moolam Thirunal to secure jobs for the educated Keralaite citizens in the Travancore civil service. During the time, the majority of the jobs were in the hands of Tamil Brahmins. This could be historically located as the first civic right movement in Kerala. It marked the transition of society from a feudal and caste oriented one to a democratic society with civic consciousness, a sense of equality, and civil rights.

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actively participated in those movements. In 1936, C. V. Kunjiraman, a leader of the Ezhava community, preached at the Maramon Convention against the caste and communal discriminations in society. He condemned the discriminatory policies of the government. When C. P. Ramaswamy Iyer, the Diwan of Travancore, followed a policy of communal divide in the society, the Mar Thoma Church and its Metropolitan Abraham Mar Thoma vehemently opposed it courageously.

The period between 1931 and 1947 was a dynamic period of political agitation. This formed the political and civic outlook of the Metropolitan Chrysostom Mar Thoma and Joseph Mar Thoma. They lived, studied, and grew up with the civic movements and agitations against caste. The national movement for Indian independence too had deep impact on them. Their patriotism and nationalism were incorrupt; nevertheless, it did not confine them with parochialism, hatred, and enmity to other nationalities. The biblical spirituality of the righteousness of the Kingdom of God and the historical paradigm of political and civic agitation of the time moulded them as global and cosmic humans with the aspirations of harmony and reconciliation among all differences.

## Ecumenical Approach

If the nineteenth century is recorded in world history as the age of mission, the twentieth century is marked as the age of ecumenism. The formative years of the Metropolitan Chrysostom Mar Thoma and Joseph Mar Thoma are marked by the ecumenical outlook which promoted harmony and fraternity among the newly educated generation of Kerala who outgrew the communal and caste divide. The students and the youth of Kerala who participated in the political agitations and missionary activities of the church developed fraternity which surpassed all divisions. The global spread of ecumenical ideas also influenced them. In schools and colleges they started various ecumenical organizations

to help the poor and needy. SCM, YMCA and YWCA, Student Inter-Religious Fellowship, etc. represent the aspiration of the youth for a wider vision of Christianity and humanity. M. A. Thomas and M. M. Thomas of the Mar Thoma Church started Waif and Stray Home for the slum children in Trivandrum. They worked for harmony among the denominations and communities. These movements and the participation in them became formative to the Metropolitan. Alwaye Union Christian College, where both studied, was an epitome of ecumenism and the national movement. The intellectual and socio-political atmosphere in the college also highly influenced them.

The Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church and the Mar Thoma Church held dialogue since 1968. The purpose of the dialogue was to consider their agreements as well as points of differences. Chrysostom Thirumeni led the Mar Thoma Church for the dialogue. It brought a "Common Statement" indicating the agreement between the churches. Joseph Mar Thoma Metropolitan also gave leadership to open dialogue with the Old Catholic Church, a traditional and progressive church spread out in Europe and America, and the Malankara Syrian Orthodox Church. His Grace also gave leadership in WCC, CCA, and NCCI.

## Conclusion

Spiritual revivalism in Travancore during the twentieth century, Bible study, missionary enthusiasm, socio-political movements in Travancore, and ecumenical outlook were the important formative factors that designed the lifeworld of the Metropolitan. Their vision and ministry enabled them to live out those realities that they perceived and became a part of their worldview. Their commitment to the Christian faith, humanitarian concerns, progressive thinking, missionary zeal, and the like, are a formative and continued inspiration to the church and to the wider community.

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## APOSTOLIC LEGACY:

### "The Vision and Ministry of CHRYSOSTOM MAR THOMA & JOSEPH MAR THOMA".

History is fascinating with its 'flora and fauna' of peoples and events. History is also challenging with its geographical and topographical colors and contours of local and universal import. Indian church history is riddled with persecution and martyrdom. Mar Thoma Church is a reformed wing of the Malankara church established by the Apostle Thomas who came to India with a clear vision and an undaunting message of the Gospel, "My Lord and my God." Mar Thoma church is all the following: Eastern, Ecumenical, Evangelical, and Episcopal. Open Bible is the mark and the 'Magna Carta' of the Mar Thoma Church. The Word of God is the guiding force of the theology of the church (ecclesiology) through her liturgical life.

As we ponder on the 'Vision of Ministry' of these two Fathers of the Church, Mar Chrysostom Valiya Metropolitan and Joseph Mar Thoma Metropolitan, we have to invoke the Incarnation model and Discipleship logic. Jesus is God incarnate. In the words of the Apostle John, Jesus is the "Word made flesh." Church is the continuation of Jesus' ministry of the Kingdom of God. Apostle Paul has called her the "Body of Christ." Jesus called the disciples and sent them out as the Apostles with authority. Church is a covenant community with the faith that has triumphed over the challenges and conflicts experienced by the community in this world. How do we know this? "God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life" (John 3:16).

As an ancient church in India, Mar Thoma Church was blessed with leaders of exceedingly high stature. As the reformed wing of the Apostolic Church of Malankara, we have celebrated the tenets of Malankara Reformation initiated by Palakunnathu Abraham Malpan, Kaithayil Geevarghese Malpan and like-minded people of the



**Rev. Dr. P.G. George**  
Sinai Mar Thoma Church, London

time.

From the Metropolitan Mathews Mar Athanasius, we have had five Metropolitans from the Palakunnathu family, Dr. Joseph Mar Thoma being the fifth in the great line of leadership over the Apostolic See of Malankara. Metropolitan Dr. Joseph Mar Thoma succeeded the Metropolitan Padma Bhushan Dr. Philipose Mar Chrysostom.

### Struggle to locate the emerging Mar Thoma ethos

When we think of a church or a family, both geography and topography are significant. The Mar Thoma Church was geographically a Central Travancore phenomenon to begin with. The 'lifeline' river Pampa and the land connected to this water source developed a 'civilization' of her own, especially with the beginning of Maramon Convention on the riverbed of Pampa, near Kozhencherry in Kerala.

The hardworking Christian community in this region did not have their own land or much resources. They were exploited by the higher caste people who owned the land. The faith and commitment of the 'Syrian Christians' made them special and helped to make the land prosperous. Church was more than a 'companion' in the struggles of the people, but she defined their identity and gave them a higher vision for success and prosperity.

The era of the Most Rev. Dr. Juhanon Mar Thoma (1949-1976) was a long and tumultuous era, but it was also a creative time during which we began pivotal outreach in the ecumenical world, especially through the World Council of Churches (WCC). The Mar Thoma Church crossed the oceans and began to establish worshipping



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communities in different parts of the world through the phenomenon of migration.

The era of the Most Rev. Dr. Alexander Mar Thoma (1977-1999) was an era of economic boom, and the Mar Thoma church became a global church with parishes in different continents of the world, especially in Europe and North America. We saw a steady increase in the number of Bishops and Clergy. Alexander Mar Thoma encouraged mission and evangelism. His Grace saw possibilities in reaching out to India through the villages. Thirumeni encouraged and promoted Ashrams in different parts of India.

The era of the Most Rev. Dr. Philipose Mar Chrysostom Mar Thoma (1999-2007) was an enterprising era. The Mar Thoma Church became more and more 'de-centralized' and the church became an exceptionally large entity with the establishment of dioceses and parishes in different parts of the world.

The era of the Most Rev. Dr. Joseph Mar Thoma (2007-2020) was an era of engagement. The face and shape of the Mar Thoma Church changed from a Central Travancore based community to a 'Global entity' with new generations added to its membership. Many churches were built or bought in different parts of the world and the Metropolitan Joseph Mar Thoma was available to consecrate these churches.

## Ministry of the Mar Thoma Church in the making

When we focus our attention on the ministry of these two church fathers, Mar Chrysostom Valiya Metropolitan and Joseph Mar Thoma Metropolitan, we have to recall our Motto which was a glorious gift of our Juhanon Mar Thoma Metropolitan, "Lighted to Lighten." Two dimensions of outreach of the church are beautifully blended in the Mar Thoma Church:

### Ministry and Mission

Let us look at the Vision of Ministry of Philipose Mar Chrysostom Valiya Metropolitan and Joseph Mar Thoma Metropolitan. They complemented each other and attempted to develop their own schools of thought to capture the imagination of the people of God as a community of faith in a globalized world.

### How did they see the People of God in the world?

Mar Chrysostom's world was large, and His Grace created an interactive space by negotiating with the ordinary people. When Dr. John Thatamanil and Dr. Athyal

edited a book on the Valiya Metropolitan, they called it "Mission in the Market Place." His lifestyle was simple and inclusive. We may use the word 'ecumenical' for his approach to people across the board! John Wesley, the founder of Methodism said that "I look upon all the world as my parish." The Mar Chrysostom magic was so persuading and pervading that Thirumeni attracted people from all walks of life.

The world of Joseph Mar Thoma was 'enveloped' by the charismatic personality of Mar Chrysostom. But he developed a creative space for his ministry by cashing in on his hardworking personality and the Palakunnathu family legacy. His Grace had firsthand knowledge of the working of the church during the period of Titus II Mar Thoma, when he spent quality time with the Metropolitan during his formative years. His Grace travelled far and wide and made ecumenical friends and engaged with people of eminence from a broad spectrum of society. He has spread the Mar Thoma ethos to the world-wide community with ease and commanded respect from international ecumenical bodies.

Both these leaders celebrated their life and ministry in the Mar Thoma Church community and did their best to be relevant in 21st century India and the world.

### How did they spread the love of God all around?

We cannot duplicate the Mar Chrysostom 'magic' and the theological world that His Grace created. His Grace used images from his own context or that of his audience and masterfully crafted messages with such 'gems' that would be so attractive that people would forget themselves. People would laugh for a while and wait for the next one to fall from his 'golden tongue'. The Mar Chrysostom magic had captivating and contagious effects so that people from all walks of life enjoyed him for his audacity and veracity.

The most popular dictum of Mar Chrysostom is "Love the world." He has taken his cue from John 3:16 "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life." Just as God loved the world, you also should love the world. In this act of loving, Mar Chrysostom included ministry, mission, evangelism, and even social work. Thus, all the ideas put forward by Bishop Chrysostom were clear and simple with creative logical transactions. The categories that His Grace had employed might have sounded outdated, but he skillfully adapted those categories to transact the issues and problems of the day. Thirumeni extended the love of Jesus as a good human being to one and all who came into the 'magnetic field' of his personality.

1 An adaptation from John Greenleaf Whittier's poem *The Eternal Goodness* (1965)



Joseph Mar Thoma was a praxis-oriented leader. His Grace was a 'doing person' rather than a thinker! In the words of Dr. Philipose Mar Chrysostom Mar Thoma Valiya Metropolitan, "Joseph Mar Thoma Metropolitan is noble in ancestry, rich in self-acquired abilities, well versed in relations, able and talented in construction work and blessed in leadership." When Joseph Mar Thoma was consecrated as a Bishop, a few lines recited by the then Metropolitan Dr. Juhanon Mar Thoma served as a charter or compass for the rest of his ministry:

Off the maddening range of things,  
Tossed by storm and flood  
To one fixed point my heart cling  
I know, God is good.<sup>1</sup>

The Metropolitan used to recite these lines to communicate to the people that he had to face very trying and challenging situations, but it was only God's grace that carried him through it all.

Whenever His Grace visited parish communities, he took time to listen to their hopes and aspirations with love and care. He took an ardent interest in resolving some of the local issues in the development of parish communities, especially in the building of new churches. He listened to their grievances and settled the issues for the good of the community.

His Grace Joseph Mar Thoma was skilled in translating Christ's love into action in areas of conflict. His Grace served as the co-chairman of the Joint Committee of CCA (Christian Conference of Asia) and Asian Bishops Conference. As a member of the 'Peace Mission' he reached out to conflicts in East Timor, Nagaland and Manipur. There were times when they were not given escorts or security and His Grace was ready to risk his life to bring peace and amity to those crisis-ridden areas.

For these Metropolitans, the Mar Thoma Church covered a large ground and they tried their best to reach the length and breadth of the community of faith around the world and shared the love of Christ. They served as Ambassadors of Christ's love and service.

## How did they build up the Kingdom of God?

Jesus used parables to convey to the crowd the mystery of the Kingdom of God. Mar Chrysostom used the rhetorical style to communicate the Gospel of Jesus Christ. His arguments were the platform on which he fired ideas of the Kingdom with great precision. It was so skillfully done that he was able to hold the interest of a single person, a group of people or a crowd. It was often so mesmerizing that people would assume roles and thus he had a captivated audience.

Mar Chrysostom was an earth-bound Bishop and a people-friendly Metropolitan. He practiced the incarnation principle in his ministry. The Mar Chrysostom Navathy Project was an ambitious project where the resources of the Church were channelized into building houses for the poorest of the poor in society. After His Grace's retirement from official duties, as the Valiya Metropolitan at his residence in Maramon and later at the Fellowship Hospital in Kumbanadu, he captured people's imagination. Media attention was something that he could not avoid. Mar Chrysostom was the "news" and a "news maker." Mar Chrysostom was followed and tracked by people with power and position, but they could not "possess" him. He stood tall and commanded their respect in one way or the other.

Joseph Mar Thoma believed in the healing of the nations and communities regardless of their caste, colour, or religion. His Grace's dream to develop a fund to help the economically weak and vulnerable sections of society for their hospital expenses is a beautiful expression of his vision for mission. The project called Sneha Karam (Loving Hands) is extended to patients who are affected by life threatening diseases like, cancer. Free dialysis is offered to patients with kidney ailments.

Metropolitan Joseph Mar Thoma's innovative initiatives supported and promoted the faith community in the diaspora context. It is of particular note that when the leaders in India would not understand the gravity of the situation here or support needs critical for the growth and survival of the diaspora community in the Western hemisphere, Thirumeni's interventions were creative. Thirumeni used these platforms in the West to promote the Mar Thoma Church and enter into deeper ecumenical relationships with the local episcopal church communities. In some cases, His Grace met with the best speakers personally and invited them to come as speakers at the Maramon Convention.

## Conclusion

Both these Metropolitans have left us with a great legacy to treasure. They did not build monuments in their memory, but they live in the hearts of the people through their acts of love like Navathy Homes and "Sneha Karam." They stood for the values of the Kingdom and promoted life in all its fullness. We thank God for these our Metropolitans who showed us the path forward and provided creative and powerful leadership in the power of the Spirit to witness the power of the Gospel. May the Lord of the church continue to bless the Mar Thoma Church with great servants of God who will carry on the rich traditions and tested values with much zeal for the glory of God.



# LIGHT TO LIFE

*Program in action...*

Light to Life is an initiative of the Mar Thoma Mission Board of the Diocese of North America and Europe that began in October 2017. The aim of Light to Life is to encourage social transformation by supporting the education and holistic development of less privileged children in different parts of India. Children supported through Light to Life are provided with educational resources, nutritious food, sufficient clothing, and opportunities for emotional, social, and spiritual growth.

The Mar Thoma Mission Board works in partnership with church-related agencies in different parts of India to support the Light to Life program. At present, there are approximately 3,400 children being sponsored through the following mission partners of the Mar Thoma Church: Christian Agency for Rural Development (CARD), South Travancore Agency for Rural Development (STARD), Mar Thoma Evangelistic Association (MTEA), Ranni-Nilackal Diocese, Chennai-Bangalore Diocese, and the Kottayam-Kochi Diocese. Holistic Child Development India (HCDI), based in Pune, is our monitoring agency. Throughout the global pandemic, HCDI and our mission partners have been able to provide our children and their families with food provisions, grocery supplies, hygiene kits, and educational materials.

Those who are interested in sponsoring a child may contact the Mar Thoma Mission Board ([marthomamissionboard@gmail.com](mailto:marthomamissionboard@gmail.com)) for more information. The sponsorship amount is \$20 a month (\$240 a year). The sponsor will be informed of the child's name and basic details and will be periodically updated about his/her progress.

The Mission Board is grateful to all those who have pledged their sponsorship and who continue to renew their sponsorship each year. Once again, thank you for supporting the Light to Life program.

"Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me."

St. Matthew 25:40

Rev. Christopher Phil Daniel  
Programme Manager





# Reflections on Chrysostom Mar Thoma & Joseph Mar Thoma



Varkey Abraham  
Long Island MTC, NY

Mar Chrysostom Valiya Metropolitan was a bishop with unconditional love and innate humour. A Bishop, known to the world! To experience his goodwill and to work with him is only possible by the grace of God. I have received such grace from God. The laughter and thoughts of Thirumeni had a significant influence on my life. In him, I saw a shepherd who cares for everyone. When Thirumeni was the Metropolitan, I had the opportunity to work with him as a member of the Sabha Council and the Episcopal Nomination Board for six years. I cherish it as a rare and precious experience in my life.

About ten years ago, when I was a member of the Sabha Council, I visited Thirumeni at the Aramana. After exchanging pleasantries, Thirumeni asked me, "Isn't Babu's house at Thiruvalla unoccupied?" He continued, "You should employ someone to take care of it. It is not good to leave a house vacant for a long time." I replied, "If I find a genuine person, I will employ them to take care of the place, Thirumeni." He then added, "I will give you a person, but you have to pay a fair salary." I agreed with his Holiness. He then continued, "Let us do one thing. Let my secretary Sunny George Achen and his family stay there. They will take good care of the house also." I agreed wholeheartedly. Achen and his family stayed at the house for years. There was a person to take care of my house and it turned out to be a blessing for Achen and his family. I appreciated the way Chrysostom Thirumeni broached the subject and make me agree to it! It turned out to be a comfortable home for another family.

There was care and love in all of Thirumeni's matters. His priority was always to meet the basic needs of the people. He constantly used to remind his people of this during his sermons, and it resonated in his actions.

Chrysostom Thirumeni was a great man who must be remembered with joy no matter how many years pass by. He made the whole community laugh and think beyond the spiritual realm of the Mar Thoma Church. His Holiness used to shoot arrows of humour without hurting anyone's feelings on a variety of issues. His humour was like a painless injection of thoughts that stuck in the minds of those who heard it.

Chrysostom Thirumeni shook up his audience with laughter while praising the greatness of others. During the Church dedication ceremony of Thiruvalla St. John's Cathedral, Mar Chrysostom and Bhagavathahamsam Malliyoor Sankaran Namboothiri, were present to deliver speeches. Chrysostom Thirumeni said, "This Mr. Namboothiri has not worn even one hundredth of the clothes we all wear. In fact, it was only because he was coming here today for this occasion that he wore these many clothes." He then asked the audience, "Do you know why?" Thirumeni paused for a minute, as everyone sat still and wondering how to respond. He then went on to say, "We all have a lot to hide in life, but Mr. Namboothiri here doesn't have anything to hide." Laughter and applause rose from the audience.

Chrysostom Thirumeni lived humbly and was an angel of God who worked for the upliftment of the poor and the common people.

Joseph Mar Thoma Metropolitan was a visionary with worthwhile relationships. The leadership that the church and the community received through the esteemed Metropolitan Joseph Mar Thoma was immense. Thirumeni was an individual with a clear vision at all times. Special mention should be made of Thirumeni's ability to stand firm on policy matters and act accordingly. While leading various movements in the Church, Thirumeni has taken care to set up establish new institutions and ensure their successful management and functioning, which is evidenced by the institutions that have been established in various places.

Joseph Mar Thoma's love and appreciation for the Mar Thoma community in the United States is remembered with gratitude. Thirumeni has always been instrumental in the growth of the diaspora community. I also cherish good memories of my association with Joseph Mar Thoma Thirumeni. The relationship between me and His Grace was deep. I consider it a great privilege to have had a close personal relationship with Thirumeni and to have worked closely in the Sabha Council for six years. I also consider it my good fortune to have learned good leadership lessons from Thirumeni, and I learned a lot of good things through it. I often become emotional when I remember Thirumeni's care and love for the church and its people.

I wish to share an event that I consider as a rare experience in my life. Many years ago, my daughter's wedding was scheduled to take place at the Long Island Mar Thoma Church, New York. Rt. Rev. Dr. Euyakim Mar Coorilos, the then Diocesan Bishop, had agreed to solemnize the sacrament. But before the wedding date Coorilos Thirumeni became ill and was admitted to the hospital. However, Joseph Mar Thoma Metropolitan, who became aware of our situation, came to the United States from India to conduct the wedding. Thirumeni postponed many of his official functions to help us in our time of need. Like this, I have always experienced the care and love of our respected Thirumeni in many small and big matters.

His Holiness' love and connection with various churches and communities is remarkable in the Ecumenical arena. Thirumeni offered remarkable leadership to the Kerala Council of Churches (KCC), and other ecumenical bodies (such as the NCCI, CCA and CCI and WCC). The decision to build a KCC headquarters in his memory is commendable. I hope and pray, it is completed as soon as possible. I convey my best wishes to His Eminence The Most Rev. Dr. Theodosius Mar Thoma Metropolitan, who has been appointed by God to lead the Mar Thoma Church after the mighty path set by Joseph Mar Thoma Metropolitan.





**Thomas Koshy**

Mar Thoma Church of Greater Washington

## The Vision and Ministry of Two Charioteers: Chrysostom Mar Thoma & Joseph Mar Thoma

Mar Chrysostom Valiya Metropolitan and Joseph Mar Thoma, Metropolitan are the two great Charioteers that God Almighty gifted to our church to lead us from the 20th century to the 21st century, and they left elegant legacies to be cherished forever. There are several common traits between them in the many decades of their blessed life and, at the same time, unique visions that our God almighty very finely sculpted to minister for the advancement of our church.

### Beginnings

First, let us juxtapose the childhood of these two icons of the Mar Thoma Church. Both were born into families of great Christian heritage and that has contributed to the early formation of their ministerial commitment. In the early days, the extended family had tremendous impact on value judgement, priorities in life, and determining life-time commitments. Chrysostom Valiya Metropolitan's family lineage traces all the way back to a Christian brought under the order of Edapally king exclusively to "consecrate the desecrated." The early leadership of Avira Thoma Malpan, Adangapurathu Yousef Kathanar, Adangappurathu Joseph Kasseesa, Kalamannil K.E. Jacob Kasseesa, Very Rev. K. E. Oommen (The father of Chrysostom Valiya Metropolitan) loudly proclaimed the ministerial lineage. The Godly parents named him with a divine vision as "Dharmistan" which means "someone who delights in fulfilling duties." We could see that God certainly honored the vision of the Godly parents to elevate Chrysostom Valiya Metropolitan to an increasing level of duties, including the highest call of duty to the church in the extension of His Kingdom.

God's another investment took place at roughly 4 miles apart and 13 years later, in the birth of a Joseph to fulfill God's plan for the MTC. Abraham Malpan of the Palakunnathu family, the early architect of the Mar

Thoma Church (MTC), visibly inspired his family, and God blessed the church with Mathews Mar Athanasius Metropolitan (Mar Thoma XIII), Thomas Mar Athanasius Metropolitan (Mar Thoma XIV) and Titus II Mar Thoma for continued leadership. The Hebrew name Joseph means "may God add" was a prayerful vision statement bestowed on Joseph Mar Thoma Metropolitan by his Godly parents. God did add an exceptionally long list of ministerial duties to this Joseph of Maramon.

### Turning Points

As a member of the extended family, I was privileged to have several personal conversations with Chrysostom Valiya Metropolitan. Once, I enquired if there was a significant turning point in his life such as his father's expectation or life event, to enter the church ministry. He said that the only statement that his father made, subsequent to his earning a BA degree from Union Christian College, was to "remember that your fees for your study was paid from the salary I received from Church Gospel work." He said that statement was a reaffirming experience to make a commitment to the church ministry.

The turning point in the life of Joseph Mar Thoma Metropolitan was also a choice he made following Union Christian College graduation to pursue a theological degree from UTC, Karnataka, in relation to the multiple opportunities that were available to a college graduate at the time.

### Church Administration

The history proclaims their commitment to church was the highest priority in life and they yielded their life to God's leading to serve the church in any capacity in response to the evolving needs. While the early apostles



divided the spiritual and administrative duties to different leadership, our church tradition dictates both on our Bishops. Both were exemplary in administration and while concurrently serving as spiritual fathers to the worldwide MTC.

## Focus Areas

God in His infinite plan equips and molds his chosen instruments to fill a void that He sees in the ministry. We could look back and appreciate divine order exercised in people and provisions with impeccable timing.

I had the distinct honor to drive for Joseph Mar Thoma Metropolitan for a ceremony that took about 3.5 hours each way. As a neighbor to my grandfather, Rev. Kalatharail Joseph Thomas, a mentor to him, and a collegemate to my father, Pulivelil Koshy in UC College, I had identified with the bishop for a long period and therefore, I was vigilant to serve his needs. Knowing that he had just arrived after a cross country travel, as soon as I met him, I enquired if he would like some soft music to suppress the road noise and take a nap, or chat for a while and then move on to rest. His answer was that he needs all that, but he does not remember when he last had soft music to sleep. He went on to say that they (his folks in India) all know it is daytime in the US and therefore, he will speak to me when he gets a break from his phone calls. He sure had many calls on administrative decisions and none that I recall on theological matters. The call I remember very well is his very calm and collected answer to the challenges on the quality of sand and gravel brought for mixing concrete at a church construction site. I never knew that Metropolitans had to deal with quality control of concrete for construction work!

Joseph Mar Thoma Metropolitan had several visiting lectureships in US universities in Detroit, Virginia, etc., in theological areas. He also had another unique talent and special focus on planning and building the infrastructure of the church with a clear vision to facilitate its growth. His leadership positions in the international & national organizations such as NCC of India, CASA, etc., provided an expert worldview on structuring major programs for growth and the techniques for feeding the growth for furthering the excellence. These skills that were acquired were put to practice for the MTC.

Following the basic senior management principle to look at a decade ahead, he envisioned and sponsored several actions such as (1) Pumba river project to protect the long-term interest of Maramon Convention, (2) DSMC studio, blogs etc., to reach out to the youngsters in the

modern environment, (3) Tharangam – the mission action center, and the list continues to support the ever-growing MTC dreams.

In addition, he had the most authoritative knowledge on the history of MTC that he has inherited from his lineage, and he advanced it through his continued commitment for excellence in the primary area of his service. He addressed the Junior/Senior Sunday School conference on several occasions and opened the floor for questions of any nature. In response to the children's enquiries, he even shared that his most joyous event at home was a dive into the Pumba river for a bath. He won the hearts of the teenagers while he offered well-founded answers to the questions on the faith and practices of the church.

Chrysostom Valiya Metropolitan's primary focus area was affirming our faith in our people, and a global interest in humanity, their happiness and well-being. He had an uncanny approach to achieve this goal. He was impressively effective in the use of his wit and wisdom to find an entertaining illustration to make a memorable lesson when expounding the Biblical facts or with a secular audience for exhorting a social responsibility. We have enough material to consider a new text book on homiletics based on the artistic mastery of wit in expounding Biblical mysteries.

Even as the presiding Bishop of the traditional and very historic church, he crossed the religious, ethnical, and the cultural boundaries to the greater good of the humanity and advancing the Christian Brotherhood. While some viewed such unconventional visits and participation to be very unorthodox, we need to analyze it in the backdrop of Jesus and His associations. Jesus did violate several of the then existing traditional boundaries for a Rabbi in traveling through Samaria, interacting with a questionable Samaritan woman, dining with tax collector, and allowing to be anointed with perfume by a sinful woman. I believe Chrysostom Valiya Metropolitan was emulating the great Master and His sublime messages visibly and exhorting us to re-examine our traditional interpretations.

I could emphatically state that Chrysostom Valiya Metropolitan did not operate from a pre-scripted line of jokes irrespective of any audience he was addressing. In the latter period, he had relied on some notes purely to remain anchored on the subject area and affirm the points he wanted to convey effectively.

During the 3-day Sunday School Jr/Sr conferences, he was very keen on staying at the conference facility and



took great joy in walking with the children to have meals and spending all the break times in loving interactions. He was always surrounded by a large group of young children who were eager to communicate with him. In one of the sermons, Chrysostom Valiya Metropolitan stated that the Wright brothers disobeyed their parents who said that humans do not fly and only the birds do. The disobedience resulted in developing aircrafts that accelerated national and international travel possible in extremely limited time. I wish I had heard that sermon in my younger days to try it on my mother to justify a bit of disobedience!

## Confidential Ministry

Let me also share a noble character they both had in the personal and confidential ministering. Deep within, they each had a compassionate heart that reached out to many for offering consolation to others in their personal needs. One evangelist, who served in the north Kerala border area, had a visit from Chrysostom Valiya Metropolitan. In his visit, he gathered that the evangelist had great difficulty in making ends meet. In a couple of weeks, the evangelist started receiving a personal money order from Chrysostom Valiya Metropolitan every month for meeting his most essential needs. It continued for a few years until the evangelist informed Chrysostom Valiya Metropolitan that his conditions improved, and the special help need not continue.

One of the church staff had to go through a transfer & transition under some unusual circumstances. Joseph Mar Thoma Metropolitan drove to his residence just to stop by and jokingly remarked that he could help to buy the weekly ration for sustenance. The recipient of this special act of care, shared in confidence with me, that he had lacked the means to buy his ration for the week ahead. A true adherence to the Master's words in Matthew 6:6 "But when you do a charitable deed, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, that your charitable deed may be in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will Himself reward you openly."

## Conclusion

Our God Almighty immensely blessed our MTC charioteers, Mar Chrysostom Valiya Metropolitan and Joseph Mar Thoma, Metropolitan with a long life. Their leadership, its schedule, and the faithful steps they walked were all part of the divine provision for blessing our church. This generation had the distinct privilege to witness two illustrious examples that God honored His humble servants and He lifted them up to the highest call of duty. We now clearly comprehend that "The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord, And He delights in his way." Psalms 37:23. May these lives continue to inspire us as envisioned by William Carey to "Expect great things from God, Attempt great things for God."

WELCOME



WELCOME

## New Clergy Assigned to the Diocese of North America and Europe

### Rev. Abu Cherian

Carmel Mar Thoma Church, Liverpool,  
St. Andrews Mar Thoma Church, Edinburgh

Wife : Angela Elsa Joseph  
Children : Anpin Cherry Abu  
Arpan Joseph Abu  
Home Parish : St. Thomas Mar Thoma Church,  
Niranam





# THE AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT OF 2021 SIX TOP TAKEAWAYS

The American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 is the most recent round of COVID-19 relief legislation. It was signed into law by President Biden on March 11, 2021.

**Prof. Philip Thomas CPA**

(Retired professor of accounting and a tax practitioner for over 37 years in the United States. He is a member of American Institute of Certified Public Accountants, Texas Society of CPAs and Dallas Chapter of CPAs. He is also a Chartered Global Management Accountant.)



## 1. ADDITIONAL STIMULUS PAYMENTS

Independent students, those not claimed as a dependent by someone else, who make up to \$75,000 per year will receive direct stimulus payments of \$1,400. Married couples making up to \$150,000 per year would receive \$2,800. Payments in lesser amounts will be disbursed to individuals and couples up to cut-off caps of \$80,000 and \$160,000 respectively. Eligible recipients will also receive \$1,400 for each dependent regardless of age.

## 2. CHILDCARE ASSISTANCE

The bill also increases the 2021 Child Tax Credit (CTC) to \$3,000 for families with children under the age of 17 and \$3600 for those with children under 6. Previous base-level income limitations have been removed, but income caps remain, the credit has been made entirely refundable, and associated refunds can be paid out throughout the year.

## 3. STUDENT LOAN FORGIVENESS IS NOW TAX FREE

The bill also requires any student loan debt forgiveness that passes between December 31, 2020 and January 1, 2026 be considered tax-free. Previously, any forgiveness student loan debt was treated as taxable income.

## 4. EXTENDED UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS

The bill extends many existing unemployment assistance provisions from the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act and the Families First Coronavirus Response Act including Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation (FPUC) at the current \$300 per week rate, Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA), and Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation (PEUC).

## 5. EXCLUSION OF UPTO \$10,200 TAXABLE UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION

If you are married, each spouse receiving unemployment compensation doesn't have to pay tax on unemployment compensation of up to \$10,200 in 2020 if adjusted gross income is less than \$150,000.

## 6. RELIEF FROM THE PREMIUM TAX CREDIT CLAWBACK- 2020

This affects people who underestimated their estimated annual income when applying for health insurance through the ACA marketplace. Previously, these individuals would have had to pay back some of the tax credits they received.





# EUROPE ZONE



Church Dedication, St. James MTC, UK



COMPE Foundation Stone Ceremony



Diocesan Tirumeni with the First Holy Communicants of All Saints MTC Peterborough, UK



Diocesan Tirumeni with the first Holy Communicants of St. Peter's MTC, London



Parsonage Dedication Hermon MTC, Midland



Dedication of Carmel MTC, Liverpool



First Communion St. John's MTC, London



# അനുകൂലരണം



പ.വ. സാമുവേൽ. പാപ്പാൻ

അഭിവന്ദ്യ ഫിലിപ്പോസ് മാർ ക്രിസ്തോസ് മാർത്തോമ്മാ വലിയ മെത്രാപ്പോലീത്താ തിരുമേനിയുടെയും മോസ്സ് മാർത്തോമ്മാ മെത്രാപ്പോലീത്താ തിരുമേനിയുടെയും സെക്രട്ടറി എന്ന ചുമതലയിൽ അരോടാപ്പം താമസിച്ച് ശുശ്രൂഷ ചെയ്യുവാൻ ലഭിച്ച അവസരം എന്റെ ജീവിതത്തിലെ വലിയ ഭാഗ്യമായും അനുഗ്രഹമായും സമ്പത്തായും ഞാൻ കണക്കാക്കുന്നു. ഈ രണ്ടു മെത്രാപ്പോലീത്താമാരും അടുത്ത കാലത്ത് നമ്മെ വിട്ടുപോയി അവരുടെ ധന്യവും ശ്രേഷ്ഠവുമായ ജീവിതങ്ങളെയും അവരിലൂടെ സഭക്കും സമൂഹത്തിനും ലഭിച്ച സംഭാവനകളെയും ഓർത്ത് ഹൃദയത്തിന് മഹത്വം കരുതുന്നതിന് ഈ അവസരം ഉപയോഗിക്കട്ടെ.

മലങ്കര മാർത്തോമ്മാ സുറിയാനി സഭയുടെ അപ്പോസ്തോലിക പാരമ്പര്യശൃംഖലയിൽ മുഖ്യ സ്ഥാനം വഹിക്കുന്നവരാണ് ഇരുവരും. ഭാര്യസ്ഥനാകാതെ അഭിവന്ദ്യ ഡോ. യൂഹാനോൻ മാർത്തോമ്മാ മെത്രാപ്പോലീത്തായിട്ട് നിന്നാണ് ഇരുവരും എപ്പിസ്കോപ്പാ സ്ഥാനം സ്വീകരിച്ചത്. അതുവഴി തന്നെ ഈ തിരുമേനികളുടെ വിടവാക്കൽ സഭയിലെ ഒരു യുഗത്തിന് തിരിച്ചറിയപ്പെടുന്നു. രണ്ട് തിരുമേനികളും പരമോന്നത പാരമ്പര്യമുള്ള കുടുംബങ്ങളിൽ നിന്നാണ് സഭാശുശ്രൂഷയിലേക്ക് പ്രവേശിക്കുന്നത് എന്നതും പ്രസ്താവ്യമാണ്. രണ്ടു തിരുമേനികളും വ്യത്യസ്ത ശൈലിയിലാണ് ശുശ്രൂഷ ചെയ്തിരുന്നത് എങ്കിലും അവരുടെ ശുശ്രൂഷകൾ സഭയ്ക്കും സമൂഹത്തിനും മുതൽക്കൂട്ടം പ്രദാനമാകുകയും ആയിരുന്നു.

വ്യത്യസ്ത കാലങ്ങളിൽ തിരുമേനികളുടെ സെക്രട്ടറി എന്ന നിലയിൽ ശുശ്രൂഷ ചെയ്തപ്പോൾ അവരുടെ സ്നേഹവും വാത്സല്യവും അനുഭവിക്കുന്നതിന് ആ നാളുകളിൽ എനിക്ക് ഇടയായിട്ടുണ്ട്. ആ നാളുകളിൽ തിരുമേനികളായുള്ള സഹവാസത്തിൽ നിന്നുമുള്ള അനുഭവങ്ങളാണ് ഇവിടെ കുറിക്കുന്നത്.

## ഫിലിപ്പോസ് മാർ ക്രിസ്തോസ് മാർത്തോമ്മാ വലിയ മെത്രാപ്പോലീത്താ

അഭിവന്ദ്യ ഫിലിപ്പോസ് മാർ ക്രിസ്തോസ് മാർത്തോമ്മാ വലിയ മെത്രാപ്പോലീത്താ തിരുമേനിയുടെ ജീവിതത്തിൽ പാലിച്ചിരുന്ന നിഷ്ഠ കൾ വളരെ പ്രധാനമാണ്. തിരുമേനി അനുഭവിക്കുന്ന ഹൃദയകുപ്പ അനവരതമാണ്. ദീർഘകാലത്തെ ശുശ്രൂഷ പാരമ്പര്യവും പൈതൃകവും തിരുമേനിക്കു നൽകിയ അനുഭവ സമ്പത്ത്, ഹൃദയനൂരവും എന്നിവ മുറ്റുമ്പോൾ നിന്നും തിരുമേനിയെ വ്യത്യസ്തമാക്കുന്നു. ഇവ ജീവിതത്തിൽ ക്രിയാത്മകമായി പ്രയോജനപ്പെടുത്തുവാൻ തിരുമേനിക്ക് സാധിക്കുന്നു എന്നത് തിരുമേനിയുടെ ജീവിത യാത്രയിലെ ഒരു പ്രധാനപ്പെട്ട കാര്യമാണ്. കുടുംബപ്രാർഥന കൂടാതെ എല്ലാ ദിവസവും മണിക്കൂറുകളോളം നീളുന്ന വ്യക്തിപരമായ പ്രാർത്ഥനയും ധ്യാനവും തിരു

മേനി ഒരിക്കലും മറക്കുകയില്ല. ഈ പ്രാർത്ഥനയും ധ്യാനവും മേനി തിരുമേനിയുടെ ആത്മീയ കരുത്തിനു നിദാനം.

മുറ്റുമ്പോഴുള്ള കരുതൽ തിരുമേനിയുടെ ജീവിതത്തിൽ വളരെ പ്രധാനവും അർഹിക്കുന്നതാണ്. സ്വന്തം കാര്യത്തിനു വേണ്ടി ജീവിക്കുക എന്നതിനേക്കാൾ മുറ്റുമ്പോഴുള്ളവയ്ക്കുവേണ്ടി ജീവിക്കുമ്പോൾ മുറ്റുമ്പോൾ നമുക്കുവേണ്ടിയും ജീവിക്കും. ഓരോരുത്തനും എല്ലാവർക്കും വേണ്ടി എന്നുള്ളതാണ് തിരുമേനി അവ തരിപ്പിക്കുന്ന സാമൂഹ്യ ആശയം. മനക്കൂട്ടത്തോടുകൂടി മനസ്സലിഞ്ഞ തേങ്ങ ശിശുവാൽ പഠിച്ചിട്ടുപോലെ ലോകത്തെ കണ്ട് മനസ്സലിഞ്ഞ ഹൃദയം ലോകത്തിനുവേണ്ടി സഭയെ ഒരുക്കി കൊണ്ടിരിക്കുന്നു. സഭയെ ഒരുക്കുന്നത് സഭ ലോകത്തിനു വേണ്ടി പ്രവർത്തിക്കുന്നതിനാണ്. ഈ ആശയം തിരുമേനി എല്ലായിടത്തും അവതരിപ്പിക്കുന്നു. എല്ലാവർക്കും അഭിപ്രായം ആവശ്യപ്പെട്ട് ലഭ്യമാകുന്നതിന് സഭയും സമൂഹവും ശ്രദ്ധിക്കുകയും അതിനുവേണ്ടി പ്രവർത്തിക്കുകയും വേണം എന്ന് മുറ്റുമ്പോൾ പ്രസംഗിക്കുക മാത്രമല്ല അങ്ങനെയുള്ള പ്രവർത്തനങ്ങളിൽ തിരുമേനി പങ്കാളിയാവുകയും അതിനു നേതൃത്വം നൽകുകയും ചെയ്യുന്നു.

മുറ്റുമ്പോൾ സ്നേഹിക്കുന്നതിനും കരുതുന്നതിനും തിരുമേനി പ്രത്യേകമായി ശ്രദ്ധിക്കുന്നു. ആരും കരുതുന്നില്ലാത്തവരെ തിരുമേനി കൂടുതലായി സ്നേഹിക്കുന്നു. ഓരോ ദിവസത്തിലെ അത്തരങ്ങളിൽ തിരുമേനിക്ക് പ്രത്യേക സ്നേഹവും കരുതലും ഉണ്ട്. തിരുമേനിയിൽ തങ്ങളുടെ പ്രത്യേക അവകാശമുണ്ടെന്ന് അവരും കരുതുന്നുണ്ട്. അങ്ങനെയുള്ളവർക്ക് എന്തെങ്കിലും പാകപിഴകൾ സംഭവിച്ചാലും അവരോടുള്ള മനോഭാവത്തിൽ മാറ്റം വരുത്താറില്ല. ഹൃദയം സ്നേഹിക്കുകയും കരുതുകയും ചെയ്യാത്തവർ ആരും ലോകത്തിലില്ല. അതുകൊണ്ട് ഹൃദയം സ്നേഹിക്കുകയും അംഗീകരിക്കുകയും ചെയ്യുന്ന എല്ലാവരെയും തിരുമേനി സ്നേഹിക്കുകയും കരുതുകയും അംഗീകരിക്കുകയും ചെയ്യുന്നു.

തിരുമേനിയിൽ നിന്നും സാമ്പത്തിക സഹായം ആവശ്യപ്പെട്ടു വരുന്നവർ അനേകരാണ്. അവരിൽ പലർക്കും തിരുമേനി സഹായം നൽകിയിട്ടുണ്ട്. എന്നാൽ എല്ലാവർക്കും നൽകിയിട്ടുണ്ടില്ല. ചിലർക്ക് തിരിച്ചു നൽകണം എന്ന വ്യവസ്ഥയിൽ സഹായം നൽകിയിട്ടുണ്ട്. മുഴുവനും തിരികെ നൽകരുതാൻ വിരോധമില്ല. തുടർച്ചയായി തിരുമേനിയിൽ നിന്നും സഹായം പറ്റുന്നവരും പലരുണ്ട്.

ഒരിക്കൽ പോലും അലസമായി സഭയ്ക്കു കളുത്തുന്നതിന് തിരുമേനി ഒരുമ്പെടാറില്ല. എപ്പോഴും പ്രവർത്തനങ്ങളിൽ വ്യാപൃതനാകുന്നതാണ് തിരുമേനിയുടെ ശീലം. അതുകൊണ്ടുതന്നെ കഴിയുന്നിടത്തോളം പരിപാടികളിൽ പങ്കെടുക്കുന്നു. പരിപാടികൾ തെരഞ്ഞെടുക്കുമ്പോൾ സഭ, സമൂഹം, രാഷ്ട്രീയം എന്നീ



പരിരണനകർക്കൊന്നും സ്ഥാനം നൽകാറില്ല. ചെറുതും വലുതുമായ എല്ലാ പരിപാടികളിലും ഒരുപോലെ സന്തോഷത്തോടെ പങ്കെടുക്കുകയും നേതൃത്വം നൽകുകയും ചെയ്യുന്നു. പ്രഭൃത്യക പരിപാടികൾ ഇല്ലാത്തപ്പോൾ അരങ്ങത്തിലെ സാധനങ്ങൾ, പുത്തേട്ടത്തിലെ ചെടിചട്ടികൾ എന്നിവയൊക്കെ പുനർക്രമീകരിക്കുന്നതിന് സജ്ജം കണ്ടെത്തുന്നു. തന്റെ മനസ്സിലേയും ഓരോ ഞായറും എപ്പോഴും പ്രവർത്തന നിരന്തരമായി സൂക്ഷിക്കുന്നതിന് തിരുമേനി ശ്രദ്ധിക്കുന്നു.

കച്ചവടസ്ഥപനങ്ങൾ സന്തർശിക്കുന്നത് തിരുമേനിക്ക് താൽപ്പര്യമായിരുന്നു. അതിലും സുവിശേഷ സാധ്യത തിരുമേനി കണ്ടെത്തിയിരുന്നു. വെറുവെ ഇരിക്കുമ്പോൾ കടകളിൽ പോകും. തന്നെ അരങ്ങത്തിൽ വന്നു കാണുവാൻ സാധിക്കാത്തവരെ കാണുവാനാണ് കടകളിൽ പോകുന്നത് എന്നാണ് പറയാറുള്ളത്. കടകളിൽ കാണുന്ന എല്ലാവരുമായും കുശലപ്രശ്നം നടത്തും. കുട്ടികളെ കണ്ടാൽ അവർക്ക് മിഠായിയും എന്തെങ്കിലും സമ്മാനമോ ആ കടയിൽ നിന്നും വാങ്ങിനൽകും. എന്തെങ്കിലും കടയിൽ കൗതുകമുള്ളതായി എന്തെങ്കിലും കണ്ടാൽ അത് തിരുമേനിക്ക് ഉപയോഗമുള്ളതല്ലെങ്കിൽ കൂടി വാങ്ങി സൂക്ഷിക്കും. ആരെങ്കിലും എന്തെങ്കിലും സമ്മാനങ്ങൾ നൽകിയാൽ കുറച്ചു നാളെങ്കിലും അത് ഉപയോഗിക്കും. ആളുകൾ സമ്മാനമായി തരുന്നത് അവരുടെ സ്നേഹമാണ് എന്ന് എല്ലാവരോടും പറയും.

തിരുമേനിയെക്കൊണ്ട് ആദ്യക്ഷരം എഴുതിപ്പിക്കുവാൻ വേണ്ടി ധാരാളം പേർ കുട്ടികളെയും കൊണ്ടുവരാറുണ്ട്. ആദ്യക്ഷരം കുറിച്ചിട്ട് പ്രാർത്ഥിച്ച് പറഞ്ഞുയക്കുമ്പോൾ കുട്ടികൾക്ക് ഒരു സമ്മാനം നൽകാറുണ്ട്. പരിപാടികൾക്ക് പോകുമ്പോൾ എത് നിറത്തിലുള്ള കുപ്പായം ധരിക്കണം എത് മാല ധരിക്കണം എന്നൊക്കെ തീരുമാനിക്കുന്നത് തിരുമേനിയുടെതാണ്. സാഹചര്യങ്ങൾക്ക് ഇണങ്ങിയ നിറത്തിലുള്ള കുപ്പായം ധരിക്കുവാൻ ശ്രദ്ധിക്കാറുണ്ട്.

സമൂഹത്തിലെ എല്ലാ ഭേദലയിൽ നിന്നും ആളുകൾ തിരുമേനിക്ക് സന്ദർശകരായിട്ടുണ്ട്. വലിയവരോടും ചെറിയവരോടും, പ്രായമായവരോടും കുഞ്ഞുങ്ങളോടും, വിദ്യാഭ്യാസമുള്ളവരോടും സാധാരണക്കാരോടും എല്ലാവരോടും ഒരുപോലെ ഹൃദയമായി ഇടപെടുന്നതിന് തിരുമേനിക്ക് സാധിക്കുന്നു. ഈ സന്ദർശനങ്ങൾ തിരുമേനിക്കും സന്ദർശകർക്കും ഒരുപോലെ ആത്മസംതൃപ്തിയുടെ സന്ദർഭങ്ങളായി മാറുന്നു. സന്ദർശകരുടെ താൽപ്പര്യമനുസരിച്ചുള്ള വിഷയങ്ങളാണ് മിക്കവാറും സംഭാഷണത്തിന് തിരഞ്ഞെടുക്കുന്നത്.

അരങ്ങത്തിൽ വരുന്ന സന്ദർശകരോട് വളരെയധികം സമയം സംഭാഷണത്തിൽ ഏർപ്പെടുന്നത് പതിവാണ്. യാത്രകൾക്കിടയിലും പല വിഷയങ്ങളെക്കുറിച്ചും സംഭാഷണത്തിലേർപ്പെടാറുണ്ട്. സദയമുൾക്കൊള്ളും ആനുകാലിക സമൂഹത്തെക്കുറിച്ചും തിരുമേനി സംസാരിക്കാറുണ്ട്.

ശിപാർശ കത്തുകൾക്കുവേണ്ടി അനേകം പേർ തിരുമേനിയെ സമീപിക്കാറുണ്ട്. മിക്കവാറും പേർക്ക് ശിപാർശ കത്തുകൾ നൽകാറുണ്ട്. എന്നാൽ ചിലർക്ക് നൽകിയിട്ടുണ്ടില്ല. ഈ ആൾക്ക് യോഗ്യതയുണ്ടെങ്കിൽ മോലി നൽകുക/പ്രഭവശനം നൽകുക എന്ന ആശയത്തിലാണ് എഴുത്തുകൾ എഴുതുന്നത്. ചില എഴുത്തുകൾക്ക് 'നിങ്ങളുടെ സ്ഥാപനത്തിലേക്ക് ആളെ എടുക്കുന്ന ഛത്തല ഞാൻ ഏറ്റെടുക്കുകയല്ല, അതിനു പറ്റിയ ഓരോ

ഞാൻ പരിചയപ്പെടുത്തി എന്നു മാത്രം' എന്ന ആശയത്തിൽ എഴുതിയിട്ടുണ്ട്. ശിപാർശകൾക്ക് നേടിയവയിൽ സന്തീപ്തിയും സമൂഹത്തിലും വിവിധ തലങ്ങളിൽ പ്രവർത്തിക്കുന്നവരുമുണ്ട്.

എല്ലാ മതവിശ്വാസികളും വിവിധ പ്രത്യയശാസ്ത്രത്തിൽ വിശ്വസിക്കുന്നവരും അവിശ്വാസികളും എന്നീ നാനാത്വരകളിലുള്ള ആളുകൾ തിരുമേനിയുടെ ആരാധനയും സ്നേഹിതരുമായിട്ടുണ്ട്. എല്ലാവരും തിരുമേനിയെ സ്നേഹിക്കുന്നു, ബഹുമാനിക്കുന്നു, ആദരിക്കുന്നു.

ദൈവം ഏൽപ്പിച്ച ദൗത്യം ദൈവിക സാന്നിധ്യ ബോധത്തിൽ ദൈവത്തിനുവേണ്ടി ലോകത്തിൽ നിറവേറ്റി തന്റെ ജീവിതയാത്ര ഏർത്തിയാക്കി നിത്യത്തിൽ പ്രവേശിച്ച സഭാ പിതാവാണ് അഭിവന്ദ്യ ഫിപ്പോസ് മാർ ക്രിസോസ്റ്റം മാർത്തോമ്മാ വലിയ മെത്രാപ്പാലീത്താ തിരുമേനി. ലോകത്തിനും സഭക്കും ലഭിച്ച അമൂല്യ വരദാനമാണ് അഭിവന്ദ്യ തിരുമേനി.

### മോസഫ് മാർത്തോമ്മാ മെത്രാപ്പാലീത്താ

അഭിവന്ദ്യ മോസഫ് മാർത്തോമ്മാ മെത്രാപ്പാലീത്താ തിരുമേനി ധാർമികബോധവും നന്മയും തന്റെ ജീവിതത്തിൽ നിന്നും ഒട്ടും ചോർന്നുപോകാതെ ശുശ്രൂഷകൾ ചെയ്യണം എന്ന് നിർബന്ധിച്ചിരുന്നു. തന്റെ ശുശ്രൂഷാഭേദലയിലുണ്ടായിരുന്ന ആളുകളെ പെരുപൊല്ലി അറിയുന്നതിന് തിരുമേനിക്ക് അനായാസം സാധിക്കുന്നു എന്ന് വലിയ കാര്യം തന്നെയാണ്. തിരുമേനി പട്ടക്കാമനായി ശുശ്രൂഷ ചെയ്തിട്ടുള്ള ഇടവകകളിലെ ആ കാലഘട്ടത്തിലെ യുവാക്കളായിരുന്ന അമ്മങ്ങളെ കാണുമ്പോൾ അവർ തിരുമേനിയോടു കാണിക്കുന്ന സ്നേഹവും ആദരവും തിരുമേനി അവരോടു കാണിക്കുന്ന വാത്സല്യവും എന്തെത്ര ശ്രദ്ധയുമാണ്. വ്യക്തിബന്ധങ്ങൾ സ്ഥാപിക്കുന്നതിലും അവ നിലനിർത്തുന്നതിലും തിരുമേനി വളരെ ശ്രദ്ധിക്കുന്നു. തിരുമേനി വിദേശ സന്ദർശനത്തിനും മറ്റുമായി കുറച്ചുനാൾ നാട്ടിൽ ഇല്ലായിരുന്ന് തിരിച്ചുവന്നാൽ ആ നാളുകളിൽ ഓരോരുത്തരുടെയും വേർപാടിന്റെ വേദനയിലിരിക്കുന്നവരെയും സന്ദർശിക്കുന്നതിന് പ്രത്യേകം സമയം കണ്ടെത്തും. എവിടെ പോയാലും ആ പ്രദേശങ്ങളിലുള്ള സന്ദർശകരുടെ ആദ്യകാല പ്രവർത്തകർ സുവിശേഷകർ എന്നിവരെ അവരുടെ ക്ഷണാവസ്ഥയിൽ സന്ദർശിക്കുന്നതും അവരോട് സൗഹൃദം പങ്കിടുന്നതും പതിവാണ്. അങ്ങനെയുള്ള സന്ദർശനങ്ങൾക്കുവേണ്ടി എത്ര ദൂരം യാത്ര ചെയ്യുന്നതിനും എന്തു യാത്രം സഹിക്കുന്നതിനും തയ്യാറാണ്. ആരെങ്കിലും സഹായം അർഹിക്കുന്നവരാണ് എന്ന് ബോധ്യമായാൽ അവരെ സാമ്പത്തികമായും മറ്റും സഹായിക്കുന്നതിന് മടി കാണിക്കാറില്ല. അങ്ങനെ നൽകുന്ന സഹായങ്ങൾ മറ്റുള്ളവർ അറിയാറുണ്ടില്ല.

അഭിവന്ദ്യ തിരുമേനിയുടെ ഭരണനിപുണത ശ്രദ്ധേയമാണ്. ഏതു തീരുമാനവും ദീർഘവീക്ഷണത്തോടു കൂടിയുള്ളതാണ്. സഭക്ക് ദാഷം വരുന്നതോ, സഭാപാലനവുമായി ബന്ധമുള്ളതോ വരുന്നതോ ആയ ഒരു തീരുമാനത്തോടും തിരുമേനി കൂട്ടുനിൽക്കുകയില്ല. താൻ എടുത്ത ഒരു തീരുമാനത്തിന് എന്ത് പ്രത്യാഘാതം ഉണ്ടായാലും അതിന്റെ ഉത്തരവാദിത്വത്തിൽ നിന്ന് ഒഴിഞ്ഞുമാറില്ല. തന്റെ ഓഫീസിൽ വരുന്ന എല്ലാ എഴുത്തുക



കുൽക്കും ഉടൻ മറുപടി അയക്കും. ഒരിക്കലും ഒരു തീരുമാനവും വെച്ചു താമസിപ്പിക്കാറില്ല. എത്ര വൈകി ഉറങ്ങാൻ പോയാലും അതിരാവിലെ എഴുന്നേറ്റ് ആപ്പിസ് പ്രവർത്തനങ്ങളിൽ വ്യാപൃതനാകും. എല്ലാ എഴുത്തുകളും സ്വയമായി വായിച്ച് അതിനുള്ള മറുപടി പാഞ്ഞുകൊടുത്ത് എഴുതിക്കും. ചില മറുപടികൾ ദീർഘവും അതിലെ ചില ഭാഗങ്ങൾ അത്യാവശ്യമല്ലെന്ന് മറ്റുള്ളവർക്ക് തോന്നുമെങ്കിലും അവയിൽ നിത്യപരമായ പഴുതുകൾ ഇല്ലാതാക്കുന്നതിന് പരമാവധി ശ്രമിക്കും. തീരുമാനങ്ങൾ എടുക്കുമ്പോൾ മറ്റുള്ളവരുടെ വികാരങ്ങൾ മാനിക്കുകയും തെറ്റുപറ്റിയവർ അത് ആത്മാർത്ഥമായി എടുത്തുപറയുമ്പോൾ, കരുണയുള്ള പിതാവായി അവരെ സഹായിക്കുന്നതിന് എന്തു വിട്ടുവീഴ്ചകൾ ചെയ്യുന്നതിനും തയ്യാറാകും. എന്നാൽ തന്നെ കബളിപ്പിക്കുന്നു എന്നു ബോധ്യമായാൽ അവരോട് ഒരു വിട്ടുവീഴ്ചയും കാണിക്കാൻ തയ്യാറാകില്ല. തനിക്ക് ശരി എന്നു ബോധ്യമുള്ള കാര്യങ്ങൾ പരസ്യമായി പറയുന്നതിന് സമയമോ സന്ദർഭമോ കാര്യമായി പരിഗണിക്കാറില്ല.

സാക്ഷിത്വത്തിലും സാപാരമ്പര്യങ്ങളിലുമുള്ള തിരുക്കേനിയുടെ അന്ധ പാണ്ഡിത്യം എടുത്തുപറയത്തക്കതാണ്. ഫാലുത്തിൽ തിത്താസ് ദ്വിതീയർ മെത്രാപ്പോലീത്താ തിരുക്കേനിയോടൊത്ത് സഹവസിക്കാൻ ഇടയായത് ഇത കാര്യത്തിൽ സഹായകരമായിട്ടുണ്ട്. നല്ല പാരമ്പര്യങ്ങളെ നിലനിർത്താൻ ശ്രദ്ധിക്കുമ്പോൾ തന്നെ പുതിയ ആശയങ്ങളെ സ്വീകരിക്കുന്നതിനും അവ നടപ്പിൽ വരുത്തുന്നതിനും ഒരിക്കലും മടിക്കാറില്ല. താമരയിലെ കത്തുകളിലും ഇതര സന്ദർഭങ്ങളിലും നടത്തുന്ന ചരിത്രപരമായ ഉദ്ധരണികൾ ആ സമയത്ത് പ്രത്യേക പരിശോധനയൊന്നും കൂടാതെ ഓർമ്മയിൽനിന്നാണ് നടത്താവുന്നതാണ്. സമകാലീന സംഭവങ്ങളിലും സാമൂഹ്യ പഞ്ചാതലത്തിലും തിരുക്കേനി അന്വീരശ്രദ്ധാലുവാണ്. തന്റെ ബോധ്യങ്ങൾക്കനുസരിച്ച് അവയിൽ ഇടപെടുന്നതിന് മടിക്കാറുമില്ല.

ഭക്തിയുടെ പ്രകടനത്തേക്കാൾ ആഴമായ വിശ്വാസ പ്രാപ്താതികരയിലാണ് തിരുക്കേനിയുടെ ജീവിതം കേന്ദ്രീകരിച്ചിരിക്കുന്നത്. വ്യക്തിപരമായ കാര്യങ്ങളിൽ ഒരു നിർബന്ധവും വെച്ചുപുലർത്താറില്ല. വാസ്തവാനുഭവത്തിലോ, ക്ഷണകാര്യത്തിലോ, സൗകര്യങ്ങളുടെ കാര്യങ്ങളിലോ ഒരു നിർബന്ധവുമില്ല. കൂടെയുള്ളവർ എടുത്തു വയ്ക്കുന്ന ഏതു വസ്തുതയും ഗമിക്കും, ഏതു ക്ഷണവും കഴിക്കും, ഏതു സാഹചര്യത്തിലും താമസിക്കും. സ്വന്തം കാര്യത്തിലായാലും സന്ധ്യയുടെ കാര്യത്തിലായാലും ചിലവുകൾ ചുരുക്കണം എന്നത് നിർബന്ധമാണ്. അതിനുവേണ്ടി ഏതു പദ്ധതികളിലും വ്യക്തിപരമായി ഇടപെട്ട് അതിനുള്ള ശ്രമങ്ങൾ ചെയ്യും.

ഉറച്ച ദൈവവിശ്വാസവും ദൈവശ്രദ്ധയും ആത്മവൈര്യവും തിരുക്കേനിയുടെ എല്ലാ പ്രവർത്തനങ്ങളിലും വ്യക്തമാണ്. എപ്പിസ്കോപ്പറായി അഭിഷേകം ചെയ്യപ്പെട്ടപ്പോൾ അഭിവന്ദ്യ യൂഹാനോൻ മാർത്തോമ്മാ മെത്രാപ്പോലീത്ത നൽകിയ ഉപദേശം എപ്പോഴും ഓർക്കുകയും അത് ജീവിതത്തിന്റെ ഭാഗമാക്കിയിരിക്കുവാൻ ശ്രദ്ധിക്കുകയും ചെയ്തുവരുന്നു. തിരുക്കേനിക്ക്

അസുഖം ബാധിച്ചപ്പോൾ, തന്റെ ശക്തമായ ദൈവവിശ്വാസവും ഇഷ്ടശക്തിയും ഭോഗമെന്നതിന് കാരണമായി എന്ന് ചികിത്സിച്ച ഭവനകൾ സാക്ഷ്യപ്പെടുത്തിയിട്ടുള്ളതാണ്.

അഭിവന്ദ്യ തിരുക്കേനി ദൈവം തന്നോടു കൂടെയുണ്ട് എന്ന ഉത്തമവിശ്വാസത്തോടെ ദൈവം തന്നെ എൽപ്പിച്ച എല്ലാ ഉത്തരവാദിത്തങ്ങളും വിശ്വസ്തമായി നിർവഹിച്ച് ദൈവ സന്നിധിയിലേക്ക് വാങ്ങിക്കൊണ്ടു പോകാൻ.

### പരസ്പര ബന്ധം, ബഹുമാനം

അഭിവന്ദ്യ വലിയ മെത്രാപ്പോലീത്താ തിരുക്കേനിയും മെത്രാപ്പോലീത്താ തിരുക്കേനിയും തമ്മിൽ വ്യക്തിപരമായി വളരെ ഹൃദ്യമായ അടുത്ത ബന്ധം കാത്തു സൂക്ഷിച്ചിരുന്നു.

സദഭ്യോധനം സദാനേത്യർത്ഥത്തോടും തികഞ്ഞ ആത്മാർത്ഥതയും ആദരവും വലിയ തിരുക്കേനി കാത്തുസൂക്ഷിച്ചിരുന്നു. അഭിവന്ദ്യ ബോസഫ് മാർത്തോമ്മാ മെത്രാപ്പോലീത്താ തിരുക്കേനിയെ എവിടെവെച്ചു കണ്ടാലും എഴുന്നേറ്റുനിന്ന് ആദരഭാവം സ്വീകരിച്ചിരുന്നു.

പത്മഭൂഷൺ സ്വീകരിച്ച് വൽഹിയിൽ നിന്ന് തിരിച്ചുവരുമ്പോൾ പുലാത്തറിൽ കയറിയിരുന്ന് ശേഷം മാത്രമേ മാർമാർ അരമനയിലേക്ക് പോകുന്നുള്ളൂ എന്ന് നിർബന്ധമുണ്ടായിരുന്നു. അവിടെ കയർ കുറെ സമയം ചിലവഴിച്ചതിനുശേഷമാണ് യാത്ര തുടർന്നത്.

വലിയ തിരുക്കേനിയെക്കുറിച്ച് സംവിധാനകർ ബൃഹ്ണി ബോക്സന്റെ എടുക്കുന്ന സമയത്ത് മാർമാർ കൺവൻഷൻ പ്രസംഗ കരുമായി ഒരു ഇന്റർവ്യൂ നടത്തണം എന്ന് പാഞ്ഞപ്പോൾ മെത്രാപ്പോലീത്താ തിരുക്കേനിയോട് അനുവാദം വാങ്ങിയാൽ മാത്രമേ അതിനുസമ്മതിക്കൂ എന്ന് പറഞ്ഞ് അനുവാദം ചോദിച്ചിട്ടു. അതിനുശേഷം മാത്രമാണ് അവരുമായി ഇന്റർവ്യൂവിന് സമയമായി.

മെത്രാപ്പോലീത്താ തിരുക്കേനി രണ്ടാഴ്ചയിൽ ഒരിക്കലൊരിക്കലും വലിയ തിരുക്കേനിയെ മാർമാർ അരമനയിൽ സന്ദർശിച്ചിട്ടില്ലെങ്കിലും, എവിടെയെങ്കിലും ദൂരയാത്രക്ക് പോകുമ്പോൾ അതിനുമുമ്പായി വലിയ തിരുക്കേനിയെ സന്ദർശിച്ച് യാത്രയെക്കുറിച്ചും അതിന്റെ ഉദ്ദേശങ്ങളെക്കുറിച്ചും അറിയിക്കും. യാത്രക്ക് ശേഷം തിരിച്ചു വന്നാൽ അടുത്ത ദിവസംതന്നെ വലിയ തിരുക്കേനിയെ സന്ദർശിച്ച് യാത്രയിലെ അനുഭവങ്ങൾ പങ്കുവയ്ക്കും. പുലാത്തറിൽ അരമനയിൽ പ്രത്യേക വിഭവങ്ങൾ എന്തെങ്കിലും ഉണ്ടാക്കിയാലോ, വിശേഷമായത് എന്തെങ്കിലും ലഭിച്ചാലോ ഒരു പങ്ക് വലിയ തിരുക്കേനിക്ക് കൊടുത്തതാകും.

സഭയിലും സമൂഹത്തിലും തങ്ങളുടേതായ തനതായ വ്യക്തിമുദ്രകൾ പതിപ്പിച്ചുകൊണ്ടാണ് രണ്ട് പിതാക്കന്മാരും കാലയവനികളുള്ളതിൽ മരഞ്ഞത്. അഭിവന്ദ്യ തിരുക്കേനിയുടെ സഭയ്ക്കും സമൂഹത്തനിക്കും ലഭിച്ച അനുഗ്രഹങ്ങൾക്കായി ദൈവത്തെ മഹത്വപ്പെടുത്താം.





# MATRIMONIAL

1. Mar Thoma parents settled in USA invite proposal for their 25-year-old 5 Ft tall daughter. She is presently working as an engineer in New York after completing masters. She is actively involved in all the church activities and is family oriented. Seeking a suitable professionally qualified God-fearing boy in US who is family oriented with strong Christian faith. If interested, please respond with details to [varche93@gmail.com](mailto:varche93@gmail.com)

2. Proposal invited from parents of boys professionally working in USA or abroad for a good-looking Mar Thomite girl (32), 5'6" Doctor with two specializations and fellowship for her second marriage, has no liabilities, working in New York, and living with parents. Please contact: [simm3865@gmail.com](mailto:simm3865@gmail.com)

3. Mar Thoma parents who have settled in the United States for 30 years are looking for potential partner for their 25-year-old daughter. She has a Master's Degree in Physician Assistant Studies and is a full-time Physician Assistant at a University hospital. She is a God-fearing, family-oriented, 5'4" woman. She is looking for a man between the ages of 25-29 with height at least 5'8", raised in the USA, has a stable job, good family values, and is also God-fearing. Interested parents can message [wtig823@gmail.com](mailto:wtig823@gmail.com).





# NEWS & EVENTS

## Episcopal Visits

### Ebenezer Mar Thoma Church, New York

Ebenezer MTC, New York was blessed to have the Diocesan Episcopa of the Diocese of North America & Europe, Rt. Rev. Dr. Isaac Mar Philoxenos, visit the



parish on June 20, 2021. Thirumeni's visit was on the 34th Parish Day. Thirumeni celebrated Parish Day Holy Communion service and 3 children received their first communion. Thirumeni shared the word of God from John 4: 13-26. Thirumeni exhorted the parish members to participate in the mission activity of the Diocese and Church. Thirumeni urged the parishioners to support the "Light to Life" program. The episcopal visit to Ebenezer MTC was a blessed time for the parish to feel and

experience the presence of a Great Shepherd leading and guiding the Church.

**Rev. Aju Abraham (Vicar)**

### Staten Island Mar Thoma Church, New York

The Staten Island MTC celebrated the 41st parish day on June 27, 2021. We were privileged to be blessed with the presence of our dear Thirumeni, Rt. Rev. Dr. Isaac Mar Philoxenos Episcopa, as the chief guest. Our Diocesan Secretary Rev. Aju Abraham Achen also blessed our anniversary with his presence and felicitation. Seven of our younger generation received the holy communion for the first time. The Qurbana was followed by the parish day celebrations which included felicitation for thirty-two of our Graduate Students for the year 2020 and 2021, felicitation of seven Senior Members for their



Milestone birthdays and two of our Senior couple for their milestone Wedding Anniversaries. Our parish was also blessed to be the venue for the kick-off event of our Diocesan Family Conference Souvenir which was



supported whole heartedly by many of our Church Members. The Parish Day Celebrations concluded with a Fellowship Lunch. We thank Lord Almighty for the blessings showered during the past years as well as the day's celebrations. We pray for Grace and Mercy from God for the years to come.

## St. Stephen's Mar Thoma Church, July 04<sup>th</sup>, Sunday

Our Diocesan Bishop Rt. Rev. Dr. Isaac Mar Philoxenos Episcopa visited our parish, St Stephen's MTC, located in East Brunswick, NJ, on July 4, 2021. Thirumeni



led the Holy Communion service and we can proudly state that 10 young boys from our church received the Holy Communion for the first time. Thirumeni also had a meeting with the executive committee of the church where we discussed various matters related to our church. It was indeed a blessing for all the church members and first holy communion participants and we are humbled that God gave us an opportunity to celebrate this day with our Diocesan Episcopa.

Rev. Thomas K. Thomas (Vicar)

## Salem Mar Thoma Church Eastern Long Island, New York

Salem Mar Thoma Church Eastern Long Island celebrated its 17th Parish Day on Sunday, July 11, 2021. On that day, the parish was blessed with the presence of our Diocesan Bishop, Rt. Rev. Dr. Isaac Mar Philoxenos Episcopa. Thirumeni celebrated the Holy Communion Service and was the Chief Guest of the Parish Day Celebration. Diocesan Secretary, Rev. Aju Abraham, also attended the service and provided the leadership to conduct the programs splendidly.

During the speech in the Parish Day Program, Thirumeni acknowledged the Salem members for their devotion



towards the Parish and the Diocese, and molding the young generation in the parish. Thirumeni appreciated the New Graduates, wished for well qualified future, and presented plaques during the Graduate appreciation program. Frontline and Essential Workers in the parish were honored during the program. Thirumeni presented certificates to the above mentioned, praised them for their service, dedication, and making other people happy. Harvest Festival kick off program was also held during the Parish Day Celebration.

Libu Koshy (Secretary)

## Episcopal Visits



# Bible Crossword Puzzle

## Winners List for April, May and June 2021 Issue

1	C.G.George	Ascension MTC, PA	38	Mariamamma K. John	Sehion MTC Dallas
2	Manju Mathews	Ascension MTC, PA	39	Saramma Varkey	Sehion MTC Dallas
3	Dr. Susan Alex	Atlanta MTC, JK-TN	40	Alice Thomas	St James MTC NY
4	Abraham Varghese	Carmel MTC, MA	41	Dr. Prathik M. Philip	St Luke's MTC Florida
5	Ethan Abraham (Gr 1)	Carmel MTC, MA	42	Liba Thomas Philip	St Luke's MTC Florida
6	Gianna Sage Aguiar (Gr 2)	Carmel MTC, MA	43	Sheela Thomas	St Luke's MTC Florida
7	Landen Philip Aguiar (Gr 5)	Carmel MTC, MA	44	Georgena Skariah	St. Mathews Canada
8	Mercy Simon	Carmel MTC, MA	45	Johann Sunil Jacob (Gr 8)	St. Mathews Canada
9	Paul J. Isaac	Carmel MTC, MA	46	Jubil Sunil Jacob (Gr 6)	St. Mathews Canada
10	Sheba Susan Aguiar	Carmel MTC, MA	47	Maria Stephen	St. Marks MTC FL
11	Jessy Philip	Detroit MTC, MI	48	Philip Mathews	St. Mathews Canada
12	Nancy Varghese	Detroit MTC, MI	49	Saramma Alexander	St. Mathews Canada
13	Usha Sara Thomas	Detroit MTC, MI	50	Annamma I. Varughese	St. Peter's MTC, NJ
14	Susan Kurian	Ebebezer MTC NY	51	Annamma P. John	St. Peter's MTC, NJ
15	Mathew T. Mathew	Epiphany MTC, NY	52	Elsie George	St. Peter's MTC, NJ
16	Saramma Chacko	Epiphany MTC, NY	53	Jibi P. George	St. Peter's MTC, NJ
17	Aleyamma Mathews	Horeb MTC, LA	54	Mary Simon	St. Peter's MTC, NJ
18	Sara Philip	IMTC, Houston	55	Sally George	St. Peter's MTC, NJ
19	Sosamma Abraham	Long Island MTC NY	56	Sosamma Varghese	St. Peter's MTC, NJ
20	Leelamma Chacko	Long Island MTC NY	57	Saramma Rajan	Staten Island MTC, NY
21	Susy George Abraham	Long Island MTC, NY	58	Checha John	Staten Island MTC, NY
22	Saramma Mathew	MTC Dallas F. B.	59	Elsy Philip	Staten Island MTC, NY
23	Joanna Zachariah	MTC Oklahoma	60	Mary Varghese (555)	Staten Island MTC, NY
24	T.C. Zachariah	MTC Oklahoma	61	Omana Rajee	Staten Island MTC, NY
25	Mary George	MTC San Francisco	62	Regi Mathew	Staten Island MTC, NY
26	Mathews George	MTC San Francisco	63	Lilly Varghese	Trinity MTC Houston
27	Annamma Abraham	Philadelphia MTC, PA	64	Luke Mathew (5 Gr)	Trinity MTC Houston
28	K.C. Jacob	Philadelphia MTC, PA	65	Thomas Varghese	Trinity MTC Houston
29	Kunjamma Jacob	Philadelphia MTC, PA	66	Achamma Chacko	Trinity MTC, Houston
30	Susan Mathews	Philadelphia MTC, PA	67	Gracy P. Vattakunnel	Trinity MTC, Houston
31	Susila Joy	Philadelphia MTC, PA	68	Jessy Baboo	Trinity MTC, Houston
32	Tharamel E Alexander	Philadelphia MTC, PA	69	Kunjamma Thomas	Trinity MTC, Houston
33	Hannah P. Daniel	Salem MTC, NY	70	Liby Saji Varghese	Trinity MTC, Houston
34	Lissha A. Varghese (Gr 7)	Salem MTC, NY	71	Nikhil Mathew (Gr 7)	Trinity MTC, Houston
35	Shabu Abraham	Salem MTC, NY	72	Reni George	Trinity MTC, Houston
36	Sharly Thomas	Salem MTC, NY	73	Saramma Sreeba	Trinity MTC, Houston
37	Biju John	Sehion MTC, Dallas	74	Shawn Varghese	Trinity MTC, Houston
			75	T.A. Mathew	Trinity MTC, Houston
			76	Valsa Mathew	Trinity MTC, Houston
			77	Vishal Mathew (Gr 5)	Trinity MTC, Houston

1.A	B	2.A	N	D	3.O	N	E	4.O			5.N			6.N
		G			B			7.A	N	G	E	R		E
		K			S			W		B				D
8.H	O	N	E	S	T	Y		N		9.P	E	A	G	E
		O			A					L				E
10.T		W		11.A	C	T			12.D		L			M
H		L			L			13.C		14.E	V	I	L	E
O		E			E			H		E	O			R
15.U	N	D	E	R	S	T	A	N	D	I	N	16.G		
G		G					I		S			17.E	A	R
H		E			18.S	I	N					N		
T					A		S		19.S		20.P	E	E	T
21.S	E	E	K		L				E			R		
					V			22.S	A	S	B	A	T	23.H
24.S					A			I				T		O
25.H	E	L	M	E	T			L				I		L
A					I		26.M	E		27.G	L	O	R	Y
R					O		N					N		
E		28.P	O	U	N	D	A	T	I	O	N	S		

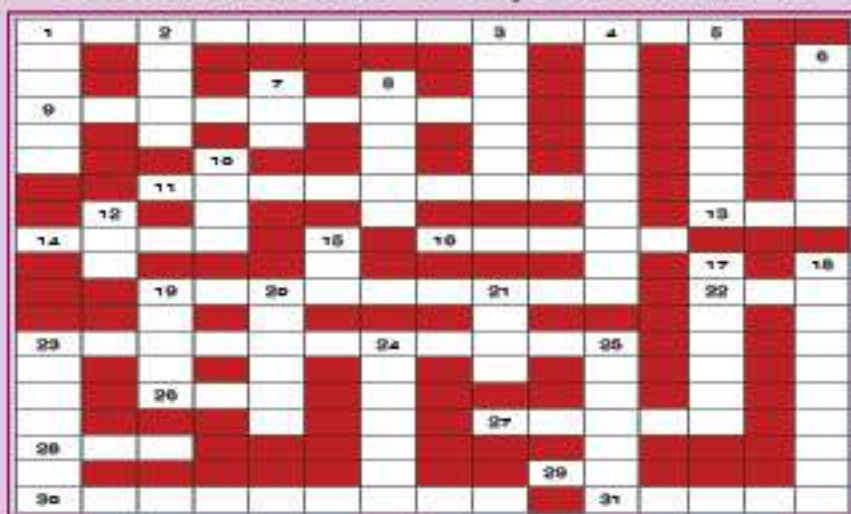
Answers to  
Bible Crossword Puzzle  
April, May, June 2021

Issue: Isaiah 51-60



# Bible Crossword Puzzle

## as in NIV Isaiah 61-66; Jeremiah 1-2



### ACROSS:

- The spirit of the Lord God is upon me, he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed, to bind up the \_\_\_\_\_.
- Whoever \_\_\_\_\_ a blessing in the land will do so by the one true God.
- The word of the Lord came to me again: "What do you see?" "I see a \_\_\_\_\_ that is boiling," I answered.
- I had planted you like a choice vine, of sound and reliable stock. How then did you turn against me into a corrupt, wild \_\_\_\_\_?
- In his \_\_\_\_\_ and mercy he redeemed them; he lifted them up and carried them.
- All of us have become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous acts are like filthy \_\_\_\_\_.
- Do not be afraid of them, for I am with you and will \_\_\_\_\_ you," declares the Lord.
- For with fire and with his sword the Lord will execute \_\_\_\_\_ on all people.
- As a mother comforts her child, so will I \_\_\_\_\_ you.
- The \_\_\_\_\_ and the lamb will feed together on all my holy mountain," says the Lord.
- Yet you, Lord, are our Father. We are the \_\_\_\_\_, you are the potter; we are all the work of your hand.
- "This is what the Lord says: 'I remember the \_\_\_\_\_ of your youth.
- "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were \_\_\_\_\_ I set you apart.
- I delight greatly in the Lord; my \_\_\_\_\_ rejoices in my God.
- Like cattle that go down to the plain, they were given rest by the Spirit of the Lord. This is how you guided your people to make for yourself a \_\_\_\_\_ name.
- You will be a crown of \_\_\_\_\_ in the Lord's hand, a royal diadem in the hand of your God.
- "He who dies at a hundred will be thought a mere \_\_\_\_\_."

### DOWN:

- They will not labor in vain, nor will they bear children doomed to misfortune; for they will be a people \_\_\_\_\_ by the Lord.
- See, today I appoint you over nations and \_\_\_\_\_ to uproot...to build and to plant.
- The Lord has sworn by his right hand and by his mighty arm: "Never again will I give your grain as food for your \_\_\_\_\_.
- The Israelites did evil in my sight and chose what \_\_\_\_\_ me."
- Then the Lord reached out his hand and touched my mouth and said to me, "I have put my words in your \_\_\_\_\_.
- The lion will eat straw like the \_\_\_\_\_ on my holy mountain," says the Lord.
- The Valley of Achor will become a resting place for herds, for my people who \_\_\_\_\_ me.
- "For I, the Lord, love \_\_\_\_\_; I hate robbery and wrongdoing.
- Their \_\_\_\_\_ will be known among the nations and their offspring among the peoples.
- Where are your zeal and your might? Your \_\_\_\_\_ and compassion are withheld from us.
- The Lord said to me, "You have seen correctly, for I am watching to see that my word is \_\_\_\_\_."
- Have you not brought this on yourselves by forsaking the Lord your God when he led you in the \_\_\_\_\_?
- They will be called the \_\_\_\_\_ People, the Redeemed of the Lord; and you will be called Sought After, the City No Longer Deserted.

**Deadline for Answers: September 25, 2021**

Mail to: Philip Manuel, 23 Lake Street, Billerica MA 01821

Contact Phone: 978-663-3203

Scanned - via Email: [Varapath23@msn.com](mailto:Varapath23@msn.com)

Please include your name, phone number, email address, name of your Parish and State of residence. (Children - Grade in School)

Prepared by: Mr. Philip Manuel and Mrs. Laila Anie Philip, Carmel MTC Boston, MA



## Thanksgiving and the Condolence Meeting in honor of Chrysostom Valiya Metropolitan



The Condolence & Thanksgiving Meeting in honor of Late Most Rev. Dr. Philipose Mar Chrysostom Mar Thoma Valiya Metropolitan was held on Sunday, May 16, 2021, at 4:00 p.m. EST via the Zoom platform and the Mar Thoma Media YouTube Channel. Diocesan Bishop, Rt. Rev. Dr. Isaac Mar Philoxenos Episcopa, presided over the meeting. Bishop Joy Alappat, Auxiliary Bishop St. Thomas Syro Malabar Diocese, Chicago, Archbishop Theethose Yeldho, the Archbishop of the Malankara Archdiocese of the Syriac Orthodox Church in North America, New York State Senator Kevin Thomas, H. G. Philippos Mar Stephanos, Syro-Malankara Catholic Church, Dr. Zac Varghese, London, Bishop Peter Eaton, Very Rev. Dr. Cherian Thomas, Dr. P. V. Cherian, Chicago, Mrs. Biji Joby, Dallas, and Ms. Sincie Chacko, Detroit, represented various churches and organizations.

## OBITUARY



### Mr. A.K. George

Mr. A. K. George (Georgekutty) was called to eternity on Wednesday, March 17, 2021 at the age of 81. He hailed from Ancheril Family of Anaprambal, Kerala, and was an active member of Trinity Mar Thoma Church, Houston, and served many years as the Trustee of the parish. He was also very active in the Mexico Mission Project of the Diocese and visited several times during the early stages of the project. Let us praise God for the life of Mr. A. K. George and remember with gratitude the services he rendered to Trinity Mar Thoma Church and to the Diocese.

**Rev. Roshen V. Mathews**  
Trinity Mar Thoma Church, Houston



# COVID 19 HUMANITARIAN RELIEF



A significant number of people in Kerala and different parts of India have been gravely impacted by the global pandemic. As the number of people infected with COVID-19 continued to surge exponentially, it was quite evident that there would be an immense strain on resources available for organizations and communities to properly deal with this humanitarian crisis. In the light of these critical circumstances, the members of the Diocese of North America and Europe joined hands to support those severely affected by COVID-19.

As per the guidance of our Diocesan Bishop, as communicated through Diocesan Circular 208/2021 on April 28, 2021, the parishes of the Diocese of North America and Europe contributed generously and collected a substantial amount of funds for the purpose of supporting relief efforts in various parts of India. The Diocese has distributed funds to Santhigiri Ashram in Aluva which has been designated as a COVID treatment center. Patients with COVID-19 can avail the services provided at Santhigiri Ashram such as treatment, food supplies, and medical and hygiene kits. The Diocese has also partnered with Holistic Child Development India (HCDI) to provide for 1,000 families in Karnataka and Orissa, whose children are supported by the Light to Life program, with food provisions, grocery supplies, hygiene kits, and educational materials. In addition to this, the Diocese has also distributed the funds collected



to purchase ventilators and to upgrade the ICU's at the Mar Thoma Mission Hospital Kumbanad and the St. Thomas Mission Hospital Kattanam. This particular effort was coordinated through the Mar Thoma Sabha Office.

Let us continue to pray for all the people affected by this pandemic and continue to support those who are in need. May God bring healing and wholeness to all of creation.



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Chinatown (Canal Street)	212.301.6863
Flushing	646.828.8850
Forest Hills	646.569.3600
Sunset Park	718.633.4528

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