



Diocese of North America and Europe

The Mar Thoma *Besorah*

EVENTS

Ecumenical Fellowship Dinner

Hosted by the

Rt. Rev. Dr. Geevarghese
Mar Theodosius EpiscopaFriday, January 20, 2012 at 6pm
Radisson Hotel Philadelphia NE
2400 Old Lincoln Hwy
Trevose, PA 19053Contact Rev. Roy Geevarghese at
roygeevarghese@gmail.com

January is

Sabha Tharaka Month!

Diocesan Council Meeting

January 21, 2012

Maramon Convention

February 12-19, 2012

India Mission Trip

May 12-28, 2012

Family Conference

July 5-8, 2012 in Virginia

www.mtfc2012.org

*The Diocese of North America and
Europe, wish you and your family a blessed
new year full of God's love, hope, and joy!*

MESSAGE FROM THE BISHOP

Dearly Beloved in Christ,

Let us begin 2012 by thanking God for blessing us with another New Year. As always, each New Year fills us with a lot of hope to overcome our many challenges. We hope that the Diocese and its activities will continue to grow and flourish to a status where people from within and outside the Mar Thoma Church will see and understand the love of God through the actions of our reformed and reforming church.

We are starting with the various conferences scheduled for 2012. It is a pleasure to note that many of our youth have registered to attend the leadership conference at Tampa, Florida, during the first week of January. Our youth members are active in the regional and national Conferences. There is a dire need to bring them to the leadership roles within the Church. We have to continue finding ways to bring our young families and youth to take on positions of responsible leadership in the Church. This would require some conscious steps by both the elderly and the young people. Our mission activities have picked up more life and vigor during these years. We also have young people going abroad to places like India and Africa to involve in different kinds of mission work. Through our various mission activities, we must empower more people to go forth and spread the good news of God's love for the world.

Our Church is an ecumenical church. By our ecumenical relations, we understand sister churches and give opportunities for others to know us. On January 20th, we will host the Annual Ecumenical Dinner at Philadelphia. This is a great occasion for us to get together with leaders of sister churches to foster our love and fellowship and to exchange ideas for collaborative work.

We have commenced the registrations for the 2012 National Family Conference. Details are available in www.mtfc2012.org. I urge everyone to register before the end of January so that the Conference can be planned better. May God's blessings be with you throughout this New Year!

**With prayerful regards,
Mar Theodosius, Diocesan Episcopa**

IT FELLOWSHIP

The Diocese is inviting all members who are professionals in the information technology (IT) field to join the IT fellowship. Interested persons can send their name and contact details to their vicar or the diocesan office at marthomadiocese@gmail.com. The goal of the IT Fellowship is to bring together IT professionals for utilizing their skills and talents that could strengthen the mission and ministry of the church at the parish, regional and diocesan levels, while also providing opportunities for their spiritual nourishment and professional networking.



WAYS TO GET INVOLVED

1. Consider attending/participating in the appropriate events listed above.
2. Support the 'Manna' Project & 'A Tree for a House Project' in Mexico (\$30 for each tree sponsored). Contact marthomadiocese@gmail.com.
3. Consider attending the India Mission Trip, from May 12-28, 2012. Please contact Mrs. Laila Philip at varampath23@msn.com.
4. **Pray for:**
 - a. The Diocese of North America and Europe, all the individual members of our church, our vicars, and leaders.
 - b. Our nation as a whole and God's presence in this world.
 - c. The 30th North American Family Conference in 2012 at Leesburg, Virginia, from July 5 to 8, 2012. Register at www.mtfc2012.org.

CHRISTMAS CELEBRATIONS

Association of Physicians & Dentists of the MTC (APDM)

The APDM held Christmas celebrations on December 3, 2011 at the St. John's Orthodox Church, Orangeburg, NY. The APDM Choir sang melodious carols under the guidance of Dr. John Abraham. Rev. K. E. Geevarghese, Diocesan



Secretary gave the Christmas message. Rev. Dr. Varghese Daniel, vicar of the hosting church, also spoke at the occasion. The celebration was an evening of carol singing and prayers and about 70 people attended this celebration. The APDM website is www.apdmonline.com

Ecumenical Christmas Celebration, Philadelphia



The Ecumenical Fellowship of Indian Churches in Philadelphia celebrated Christmas at the George Washington High School, Northeast Avenue on Saturday, December 10, 2011. This was an occasion for the fellowship to thank God for its growth and ministry for the last 25 years in the city of brotherly love. The Jubilee Christmas celebration was attended by the Bishops of member churches, Clergy and a large number of people from different church denominations in Philadelphia. Rt. Rev.

Dr. Geevarghese Mar Theodosius attended this celebration representing the Mar Thoma Church, offered felicitations, and congratulated the fellowship on its Silver Jubilee.

The perfect church service would be one we were almost unaware of.

Our attention would have been on God.

- C.S. Lewis

“Wherever we see the Word of God purely preached and heard, there a church of God exists, even if it swarms with many faults.”

- John Calvin

YOUTH EVENT

Midwest Mar Thoma Regional Youth Conference

The 25th Mar Thoma Midwest Regional Conference was conducted at the Gull Lake Ministries Conference Centre, MI, from Dec 26-29, 2011. The theme of the Conference was “Won by One” based on Ephesians 2:13. One hundred and seventy-two (172) youths from the parishes of the Midwest Region participated in this conference. The Main speaker of the conference was Pastor Dwight Yoo of the Presbyterian Church of America, Philadelphia. The program included worship sessions and small group sessions. The Diocesan Episcopa spent time with our youths, talking and listening to them. On December 29th, Thirumeni led the Holy Communion service and gave the closing message.

MEXICO MISSION

Rev. Zacharia John and a team of volunteers from the Trinity Mar Thoma Church, Houston, visited Colonia Mar Thoma (Colonia), Mexico, with Mr. P.T Abraham on December 14, 2011. The team met the residents of Colonia, and experienced God's love for the world by singing and narrating the Christmas story from the Gospels. Rev. Zacharia John rendered the Christmas message. Christmas gifts were distributed to the 56 kids who attended the event and everyone enjoyed a fellowship lunch.



The Diocese is continuing the construction of kitchens and toilets for the homes at Colonia. We have completed the construction of bathrooms and kitchens for 18 houses, and the construction for 22 houses are in progress. The electrical wiring for all the houses has been completed and electrical connections are expected at any time. Thirty-eight (38) families are currently living at Colonia Mar Thoma. Food distribution is done regularly through the Manna program, which is initiated and supported by the Diocese. Due to water logging in the campus, as was seen in the previous years, we have raised the roads by putting more soil. The pond for collecting rainwater will be deepened and the sidewalls will be reinforced. Emphasis is being given for religious instruction for the residents and the residents are trained in a Christian discipline and practices.

PLANNING BOARD

The Planning Board is a diocesan subcommittee with the responsibility for developing short-term and long-term plans to enhance the faith, mission, activities, and growth of the Diocese. Last year, the Planning Board initiated several dialogue sessions between the Diocesan Episcopa, the youth and the young families, which served as a catalyst for the organization of the Young Families Fellowship Retreat. The *Besorah*, a monthly electronic newsletter is also a product of the Planning Board. A resource mapping initiative has helped identify the skills and talents of several volunteers within the diocese. The Planning Board also conducted a workshop on Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships programs. The Planning Board invites your thoughtful ideas and suggestions to further its work. Please send your comments to the attention of the Planning Board at marthomadiocese@gmail.com



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The Besorah is a brief overview of some of the Diocesan news and activities. For more information, please reference the Diocesan website and/or the Messenger.