



Diocese of North America and Europe

The Mar Thoma *Besorah*

The *Besorah* is an Official Publication of the Diocese of North America and Europe.

Message from the Diocesan Episcopa

Dear friends in Christ,

The Jubilee celebrations of our Diocese are progressing. On July 6, 2013, we held the sixth regional jubilee celebration at the St. John's Mar Thoma Church, New York. All the parishes in the Diocese observed Jubilee Sunday on July 7th, and I believe that many people participated in the recent chain of prayer. The various jubilee programs energized our community to remember the past with gratitude, celebrate the present with praises and thanks giving, and look to the future with confidence and hope. Christ the Lord is with the church to journey from the known to the unknown, from safety and security to spheres of insecurity, and from the temporal to the eternal. As we look towards the next phase of the growth of our Diocese, there is a greater need to understand the rapid changes happening around us. We have the faith and assurance that with Christ in our vessel we can smile at the storm.

Among the unique initiatives during the jubilee year is the introduction of Altar Boys and Covenant Girls. The intent of these programs is to identify boys and girls above the age of 12 and who are communicant members to commit themselves to serve the Church by going through a training program for 3 years (before they begin studying at colleges and universities). Therefore, we are establishing a training for Altar boys and Covenant Girls at the regional and/or center levels. The training program covers topics such as (1) Introduction to the Bible and preparation of Sermon (2) Prayer habits and discipline for daily Meditation (3) Introduction to the Liturgy of Holy Qurbana, including Thooyaba (4) Sacraments and Faith practices (5) Church History, Mission and Ministry (6) Teenage challenges and leadership role.

The boys will assist the Achen at the Altar, the Covenant Girls will help in the Sanctuary. Once they complete the initial training and the dedication service, they will be given a badge for the parishioners to identify them. A dress code preferably white is ideal. Once they successfully complete the three years of training under the leadership of the parish priest, the Diocese will issue a certificate to each participant.

Let us journey with Christ for a brighter future.

Prayerful Regards, Mar Theodosius+

Meditation Blog

www.mtcreflection.com is a blog implemented by the IT Fellowship to publish the daily meditations of the Christian Education Forum. This blog includes all the meditations published to date. It is also available in a mobile format, which would be convenient for people who are travelling. This blog offers FREE subscription. Those who are interested in getting the meditations in email format can subscribe to this web site by entering their email id in the subscription field of the blog. Creating a link to this blog on the parish website will also help people to access this web site. For details contact Mr. Reji Joseph, NJ, (201) 647-3836.

Mexico Mission VBS 2013

A Vacation Bible Class (VBS) was held at Colonia Mar Thoma (Mexico Mission) from June 27 to 29, 2013. About 50 students from the local community attended the VBS. Twelve youth members from Immanuel MTC, and Trinity MTC, Houston, participated. Ms. Arlene Mathew, provided leadership for the VBS sessions. Several local teachers, including Betzy Murillo Silva (a medical student supported by our diocese) actively participated in the VBS. Rev. Saju Mathew, and Rev. Dr. Philip Varghese were also present and provided leadership. Philip Varghese Achen officiated the Holy Communion Service on Sunday. About 120 people attended the service and about 15 people participated in the Holy Qurbana. The Lessons were read in Spanish by Colonia residents. Also the message was translated to Spanish.



UPCOMING EVENTS JULY 2013

1. July 11-14, 2013-Jr./Sr. Conference of North East Region
2. July 13, 2013 at 8am-Ordination of Rev. Dn. Sonu Scariah Varghese at Epiphany MTC
3. July 13, 2013-Seminar on the Identity, Vision, and Mission of the Diocese at Epiphany MTC
4. July 19-21, 2013-Diocesan MTVEA National Conference at the MTC of Dallas Farmers Branch
5. July 25-28, 2013-Jr./Sr. Conference of South East Region
6. July 25 to August 4 – India Mission Trip to Delhi, Sattal, Tibetan Border, and Faridabad.
7. July 27, 2013-Lay Leadership Training at St. Luke's MTC, FL
8. August 1-4, 2013- Diocesan Youth Fellowship Conference in Toronto
9. August 10, 2013-Dialogue on the Journey and Growth of the Diocese at MTC of Greater Seattle

THE
BIBLE

Lay Leadership Training & Study on Church History in Philadelphia

The Lay Leadership Training and a Study on Church History was conducted jointly by the Edavaka Mission and Sevika Sanghom of the South East Region, on Saturday, June 8, 2013, at the Mar Thoma Church of Philadelphia. About 150 participants, including the Clergy of the South East Region, Executive Committee Members of the Organizations, Lay Leaders, Altar Boys, Covenant Girls and other members of the parishes of the South East Region participated in this successful event.



St. Mark's MTC, Tampa Provides Relief to a Family in Need

The members of St. Marks MTC, Tampa, offered assistance to the family of Jeffrey Bush, a resident of nearby town of Seffner, who lost his life on February 28, 2013, when the earth literally opened up underneath his bedroom and swallowed him along with the bed he was sleeping in. His brother Jeremy and sister-in-law Rachel and niece Hannah who were living in the same house were not hurt. The church members collected \$1900.00 and the Sunday School students raised \$311.00 for helping the family. The church wanted to instill in its children the Joy of giving and helping others and the members responded with enthusiasm and raised funds that surpassed the expected amount.



Diocesan Silver Jubilee Celebration North East Region, NY

On July 6, 2013, the North East Region Silver Jubilee celebration was held at the St. John's MTC. The Diocesan Episcopa presided over the meeting and Rev. Dr. J. Paul Rajashekhar was the chief guest. About 450 people participated in the event, which began with the Holy Qurbana. During the public meeting after the service the Diocesan Episcopa highlighted the history of the Diocese and acknowledged the hard work and dedication of the clergy and laity who helped to strengthen the church. Thirumeni challenged the younger generation to take up the responsibility of leading the parishes and the church in the days to come. Rev. Dr. J. Paul Rajasekhar gave a profound speech focused on the Jubilee Theme. The Diocese is grateful to the regional committee and St. John's Mar Thoma Church, NY, for hosting the event and making all the necessary arrangements.



Reception to Mar Stephanos Episcopa



The newly consecrated Bishop of the MTC, Rt. Rev. Gregorios Mar Stephanos visited some parishes in Canada. On June 22, 2013, the St. Mathews MTC hosted a dinner in honor of Mar Stephanos. The Diocesan Bishop Rt. Rev. Dr. Geevarghese Mar Theodosius, Rt. Rev. Dr. P. L. John Panicker and Rev. Varghese K. Abraham, and the Mar Thoma members in the Toronto region attended the dinner. The Diocese organized a reception for Mar Stephanos on Sunday June 23, 2013, after Thirumeni celebrated the Holy Qurbana at the St. Mathews MTC. The Diocese, the St. Mathews parish, and the Canadian MTC presented a gift for Mar Stephanos.

Training for Altar Boys and Covenant Girls

Training for "Altar Boys" and "Covenant Girls" was held at the Long Island MTC, NY, from July 5-7, 2013. About 40 participants from several parishes in the North East Region attended the program.



Report of Midwest Region - Bible Study

In connection with the Silver Jubilee Celebration of the Diocese, the Midwest Region conducted a Bible Study on Saturday May 25, 2013, at the Detroit MTC. Rev. Moni Mathew was the Chief guest and speaker. In addition, Rev. C. K. Kochummen, Vicar of Detroit MTC, Rev. P. Chacko, Rev. Philip Varghese and Rev. George Cherian, and the Youth Chaplain of the Midwest Region attended. About 70 people from the region also attended the Bible Study.



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