



Diocese of North America and Europe

The Mar Thoma *Besorah*

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Message from the Diocesan Bishop

“Jesus said, ‘Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these.’” –Matthew 19:14

The world’s attention has been drawn to the news that about 57,000 unaccompanied minors have been apprehended by law enforcement authorities for entering the United States of America through its southern border since October 2013. This migration is termed as an “illegal flow of young migrants,” when in fact these children are refugees fleeing from their oppressors in Central America. They walk through thorny bushes, marshy lands where snakes are found, and dusty roads from the Rio Grande Valley seeking food, security, and prosperity. An open letter in the Spanish language from the Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security to the parents of children crossing the southwest border says, “In the hands of smugglers, many children are traumatized and psychologically abused by their journey or worse, beaten, starved, sexually assaulted, or sold into the sex trade” (NY Times, June 26, 2014).

The responses to the plight of these children can be mixed. For instance, the responses of people living in Texas, Arizona, California, and the like are not likely to be supportive of this sudden influx of undocumented minors in their neighborhood. The President sought \$3.7 billion from Congress to take care of and help deport many of these children, and, as expected, the members of Congress have differing opinions on how much to fund and what to fund. In the meantime, some of the clergy in Texas and other states are teaming up to shelter the minors and feed them.

What is the appropriate Christian response to the predicament of these children? I am reminded of the baby Moses who was sheltered by the daughter of Pharaoh in Egypt. Priest Eli was prepared to shelter the boy Samuel and train him. Jesus was only 12 years old when he went to Jerusalem from Nazareth and spent three days there. During His public ministry Jesus said, “Suffer the children come to me” (Matthew 19:13-15). He pointed to a child and focused the attention of the crowd, saying that the Kingdom of God belongs to such (Matthew 18:1-5). The divine mission is to respect life and enable everyone to find the fullness of life in Jesus.

–Mar Theodosius +

Mexico Mission Vacation Bible School



The VBS was conducted from July 11 to 13, 2014, with almost 30 volunteers attending from various parishes in Houston, Dallas, and Austin. Over 100 children from Colonia Mar Thoma attended the VBS. Rev. Binoy J. Thomas, Diocesan Secretary, stayed at the parsonage in Colonia Mar Thoma on

Saturday and conducted Holy Communion service on Sunday at the Mar Thoma Chapel in Mexico. Concurrent with the 2014 Mexico Mission VBS, the Diocese conducted a medical mission for Mexico Mission residents. A group of volunteer doctors and staff from Texas visited Colonia Mar Thoma on July 12 to conduct check-ups and counsel residents.

3rd Annual Midwest Junior Conference



The 3rd Annual Midwest Junior Conference was hosted by Detroit MTC. The conference was conducted from July 11-13. The theme was, “**Superheroes for Christ,**” based on Romans 5: 7-8. Rev. George Cherian, Youth Chaplain of the Mid-West Region, and Mathew Samuel were the main speakers. Conference activities included: praise and worship sessions, small group sessions, creative presentations, games, outdoor activities, talent night, and dedication.

35th National Mar Thoma Youth Conference



The 35th National Mar Thoma Youth Conference was held at the Trinity International University, Deerfield, IL, from July 17 to 20, 2014. The theme for the conference, hosted by the Youth Fellowship of the St. Thomas MTC, Chicago, was **“Facing the Giants: Know God. No Fear,”** based on Ephesians 6: 13. Rt. Rev. Dr. Geevarghese Mar Theodosius inaugurated the event on Thursday evening. Rev. Shaji Thomas, vicar of St. Thomas MTC, Chicago, and Rev. Daniel Thomas, vicar of Chicago MTC, participated in the conference. Mr. Sam John was the main speaker of the conference. 179 delegates attended this conference representing 30 parishes from both US and Canada.

11th MTVEA National Conference

The 11th MTVEA National Conference was held at the Chicago MTC from July 24 to 27, 2014, and was hosted by Chicago MTC Edavaka Mission. The theme of the conference was **“Share the Word: Save the World”** (1 Corinthians 9:23). Around 380 delegates attended. Rt. Rev. Dr. Abraham Mar Paulose Episopa, Bishop of Delhi Diocese was the main speaker. Rt. Rev. Dr. Geevarghese Mar Theodosius Episcopa inaugurated the conference. Rev. V. G. Varghese, Rev. Shaji Thomas and Mr. Reji Varghese led Bible studies. Theodosius Thirumeni spoke about Diocesan Mission activities and our involvement. A symposium titled, **“The Call of Mission: Our Response,”** and a workshop on **“Evangelism”** by Rev. Dr. Roy Oksnevad, were also presented.



XIII Southern Regional Mar Thoma Youth Conference



North Carolina MTC Youth Fellowship hosted the XIII Southern Regional Youth Conference from July 17 to 20, 2014, at the Ridgecrest Conference Center, NC. The theme of the Conference was **“Zero Gravity – Nothing can separate us from the love of God”** based on Romans 8: 39. 96 youth and 26 chaperones attended this conference. The main speakers for this conference were Ms. Betty Vattakunnel and Rev. George Jacob (Youth Chaplain of the Dallas Region). Rev. Binu Thomas (St. Luke’s Parish, FL and Hermon Parish, GA), and Rev. Renu John (North Carolina Mar Thoma Parish and St. Louis Mar MTC) led the morning worship and devotions. This was the first regional event hosted by the NC Youth Fellowship.

North East Region Jr./Sr. Conference



The Junior Senior Conference of the North East Regional Sunday Schools took place from July 10 to 13, 2014. The theme of the conference was, **“The Call”** (1 Timothy 4: 12). The conference was held at the Ramapo College in NJ and 200 students and about 33 chaperones attended. Rt. Rev. Dr. Geevarghese Mar Theodosius Episcopa inaugurated the conference. The juniors were led by Mr. Jason John and the seniors were led by Rev. Dr. Jerome Taylor. Rev. Dennis Abraham (Youth Chaplain Southeast Region) and Rev. V. M. Mathew (Youth Chaplain Northeast Region) attended. The conference activities included daily bible study, group discussions, organized basketball tournament, art challenge, the talent night, and dedication service. The grace of God was evident throughout this conference.



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