



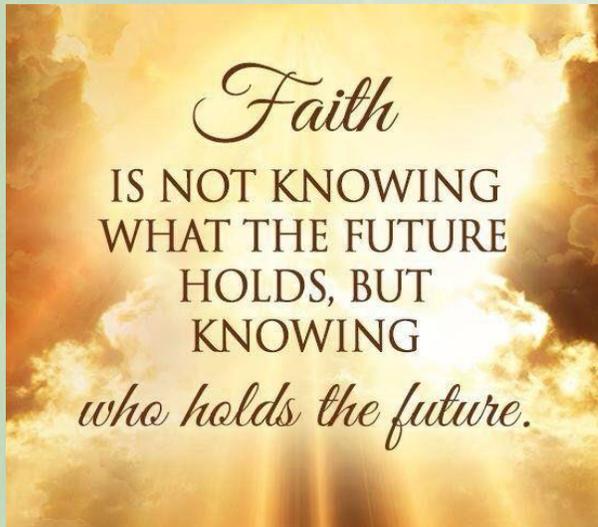
MESSAGE FROM THE DIOCESAN EPISCOPA

Dearly beloved in Christ,

I greet you all in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. I consider it a great privilege to serve the Diocese of North America and Europe, as the Diocesan Bishop starting April 2016. I am conscious of the magnitude of the challenges and responsibilities that I have to shoulder in the coming years. I thank God for the committed leadership of the Diocesan Bishops in the past and the participation and involvement of the clergy and Laity in managing the affairs of the Diocese.

Praise God for the immense possibilities bestowed upon the Mar Thoma community in this Diocese of North America and Europe. The commitment of the members and the matured leadership of the elders make the Diocese a welcoming place for many who come as seekers of truth and spiritual growth. I appreciate all who served in the Diocese during the past years and for their leadership in the smooth functioning of the activities with renewed vision and dedication. The untiring efforts of Rt. Rev. Dr. Geevarghese Mar Theodosius will be remembered especially for the progress achieved in the mission initiatives through the Diocese. I thank God for his ministry for the last seven and a quarter years in the Diocese and pray that God will continue to bless him in the new responsibilities in Mumbai Diocese.

As I look to the future engagements in this Diocese. I see good prospects and potentials. I do seek the cooperation of all members in the activities of the Diocese. It is necessary to find out the key areas to focus on when engaging with the people, which would be considered as the primary function as far as a faith community is concerned. Firstly, we need to work hard in building the community, which includes children, youth, women, and senior members. Secondly, proclamation of the Gospel as a mission mandate needs to be taken seriously within the parishes and homes. Thirdly, the commitment to serve the humanity should continue as the prime motive in the diaconal ministry of the church.



The Church is called to witness Jesus Christ, our Lord and Master. As a witnessing community, it is essential to share the goodness we received and the spiritual insights that we have inherited. This needs to be expressed through the creative involvement of all members within the community and also through the mission initiatives in the wider society. Let the motto of the Mar Thoma Church 'Lighted to Lighten' inspire us to enlighten the hearts and minds, and give new vision for the transformation of the lives of people. Let us uphold the ethos of the church and continue to be a beacon of light.

The question one needs to ask is: Can we remain complacent with the achievements of which we are proud of? The struggles of the people and the new challenges that we face in everyday life need to be addressed with decisive will and creative power.

Let the spirit of oneness in the bond of love prevail at all times. Let us praise God for the wonderful ways by which God guides us. We should continue to serve the people and the nation through our positive creative contributions. Yes, the God of grace and mercy, who led us thus far, will protect us from all evil and lead the church in the future to do His will for His glory.

With regards,

Rt. Rev. Dr. Isaac Mar Philoxenos

New Diocesan Episcopa Reception

As per the decision of the Episcopal Synod, our new Diocesan Episcopa Rt. Rev. Dr. Isaac Mar Philoxenos arrived on March 30th, 2016 at the Sinai Mar Thoma Center, New York. Thirumeni was given a warm reception by Theodosius Thirumeni, several clergy, and laity. The introductory remarks from Theodosius Thirumeni expressed that Philoxenos Thirumeni's vision and experience would lead the Diocese to new heights. Philoxenos Thirumeni conveyed his gratitude to Theodosius Thirumeni and sought the cooperation of all members.



2016 Diocesan Assembly



The Diocesan Assembly 2016 was held on April 1st and 2nd, 2016, at the Ascension MTC in Philadelphia. Rt. Rev. Dr. Isaac Mar Philoxenos gave the devotional talk by reflecting on Luke 24:28. Thirumeni shares that the risen Christ gives inspiration and reveals to us that God the giver of life, gives us life, and is in control of the universe. We must acknowledge Christ in our journey and reinterpret the scripture, refocus our mission, and redefine our commitment to service. The Annual Report, Accounts of 2015, Budget for 2016, and various resolutions

were passed unanimously. The Ascension MTC, Philadelphia made every arrangement well for the smooth functioning of the Assembly.

2016 Diocesan Clergy Conference

The 2016 Diocesan Clergy Conference was held at the Ascension MTC, PA from March 31st to April 1st forenoon. Rt. Rev. Dr. Geevarghese Mar Theodosius Episcopa presided over the conference. Thirumeni paid homage to the late Zacharias Mar Theophilus Suffragan Metropolitan and expressed condolences on behalf of the Diocesan Clergy Conference. Thirumeni welcomed the new Diocesan Bishop, the Rt. Rev. Dr. Isaac Mar Philoxenos Episcopa and expressed gratitude to the clergy who will be transferred.



The Send-Off Meeting and Welcome for the incoming and outgoing Diocesan Bishops was conducted. Both Thirumeni's expressed their gratitude in their reply speeches. After the vote of thanks, a group photo of the attendees of the Diocesan Clergy Conference was taken.

Send-Off and Welcome Meeting



The Diocese organized an official send off to The Rt. Rev. Dr. Geevarghese Mar Theodosius and welcome to The Rt. Rev. Dr. Isaac Mar Philoxenos on April 1st, 2016 at the Ascension Mar Thoma Church, Philadelphia. The meeting started with prayer by Rev. Dr. Philip Varghese. Then the Diocesan Secretary, Rev. Binoy J. Thomas, welcomed all to the meeting. In his welcome speech, he highlighted the various accomplishments of Theodosius Thirumeni and Philoxenos Thirumeni. Rev. Biju P. Simon, Dr. Mathew T. Thomas, Mrs. Neethi Prasad, Dr. Thomas K. Jose, Rev. Dennis Abraham, Mr. Reji Joseph, Mr. Roy C. Thomas, and Mrs. Mariamma Abraham gave the felicitations. Ascension MTC Choir, Southeast Region Youth Fellowship, and Baskiomos sang melodious songs. Theodosius Thirumeni and Philoxenos Thirumeni replied and expressed their gratitude. Mr. Philip Thomas proposed the vote of thanks. Philoxenos Thirumeni led the closing prayer and Theodosius Thirumeni pronounced the benediction. A large number of members attended. Fellowship dinner was served after the meeting.

Adieu

After seven years of exemplary service, Rt. Rev. Dr. Geevarghese Mar Theodosius Thirumeni returned to India to take charge of the Mumbai Diocese. Several clergy and lay members came together at the Sinai Center on April 4th, 2016. It was a time of fellowship and fond memories. At 6.30pm, everyone gathered in the chapel and the diocesan secretary expressed his gratitude to all who came. Philoxenos Thirumeni conveyed travel mercies and best wishes to Theodosius Thirumeni, who in turn, expressed his love and gratitude. Thirumeni said goodbye to all those who accompanied him to the airport on his way to Mumbai.



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