

صوت من الشرق

Vol 59

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Nos 7 & 8



Release function for His Beatitude Mar Aprem Metropolitan's 72nd book, Los Angeles to Dubai at Osmania University Programme Centre in Hyderabad on 29 July 2012. The religious head of the Buddhist religion, H. Bikku is pictured to the extreme right. Next to him is Bishop Theodore of the Church of South India (CSI). Two senior officers of the Indian Administrative Service (IAS) are on either side of the Metropolitan. Dr. Jetty A. Oliver, President of the Church History Association of India is on the left.

VOICE OF THE EAST



H.H. Mar Dinkha IV, Catholicos Patriarch meets with the Iraqi Ambassador to the United Nations, His Excellency Dr. Hamid Al-Bayati and Dr William Eshaya, Deputy Permanent Representative in Chicago. Dr Eshaya is a member of the Assyrian Church of the East.



H.H. Mar Dinkha IV consecrates Bishop Mar Paulus Benjamin in Mar Gewargis Cathedral in Chicago on 27 May 2012. Mar Aprem Metropolitan is seen to the right of the Catholicos Patriarch.

VOICE OF THE EAST

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Voice of the East

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Editorial

Theological Dialogues

Theological and ecumenical dialogues are not intended to bring about the merger of churches. Instead, dialogues should explore the theological beliefs of different churches and bring about greater understanding and appreciation of varying traditions.

Recently, an unfortunate caption appeared in a report published by the *Press Trust of India* (PTI) concerning the theological dialogue between the Vatican and the Assyrian Church of the East. This caption suggested a possible merger between the Assyrian Church of the East and the Catholic Church. As the individual interviewed by the PTI, I wish to deny having made a statement to this effect.

Were the Catholic Church and the Assyrian Church of the East seeking a merger, it would have already been achieved some time ago, considering that the *Common Christological Declaration* was signed between the heads of our two venerable churches in 1994. During the past 18 years only one other document has been prepared after study and this document has as yet not been signed.

Both churches are fully aware that our dialogue is not intended to bring about a merger. Our ecumenical rapprochement has come about through greater understanding between our churches as to history, doctrine, liturgy and theology. The Vatican has similar dialogues with other churches including the Orthodox and Protestant traditions. In all these dialogues the churches have attempted to come to an understanding of what is common in each church. As a result, many misunderstandings which can often be centuries-old have been resolved. Even the disappointing tendency to accuse each other of heresy and schism has also diminished among many Christians.

Let us not forget the biblical truth that the devil is active like a roaring lion trying to devour Christians. The devil has succeeded in dividing churches and creating enmity and misunderstandings between Christians. Let me conclude by saying that we have no hidden agenda to have a possible merger between our Church and the Vatican as some uniate Churches have done for various reasons.

Let us pray that such efforts for ecumenical understanding between our churches will find fruit without the interference of the devil. Theological dialogues are effective tools for enhanced understanding amongst Christian churches in this ecumenical era.

Mar Aprem Metropolitan

Iraqi United Nations Ambassador Calls on Catholicos Patriarch

His Holiness Mar Dinkha IV, Catholicos Patriarch has welcomed to the Chicago Patriarchate, both His Excellency Dr Hamid Al-Bayati, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Iraq to the United Nations, and Dr William Eshaya, the Deputy Permanent Representative of the Republic of Iraq. Dr Eshaya is a member of the Assyrian Church of the East.

During the meeting, on 6 May, the general political and social condition of Iraq was discussed, as well as general human rights concerns of the Assyrian people and their status as the indigenous people of Iraq.

The visiting delegation expressed the hope that greater political and social stability in Iraq will stem the exodus of Assyrian Christians from their ancestral homeland and that they may live in safety and security. Terrorism targeting the Assyrian people in Iraq and their persecution in recent years was a point of particular importance in the discussions.

His Holiness briefed the delegation on the current construction of a patriarchal complex in northern Iraq which is intended to be the centre of the Assyrian Church of the East following its completion.

His Holiness put to His Excellency the Permanent Representative, the desire of the Assyrian Church of the East to see Iraq become a model of peace and security in the Middle East region.

At the conclusion of the meeting, His Excellency Dr Al-Bayati presented a gift to the Catholicos Patriarch. In turn, the Catholicos Patriarch presented His Excellency with a commemorative memento bearing an image of the Holy Cross and the insignia of the Assyrian Church of the East.

Also present during the meeting was the Rev. Archdeacon Shlemon Khazqiel as well as Dr Odisho Khoshaba Primo, Sheba Mando, Yonadam Youkhana and Bobby Youkhana.

His Grace Mar Paulus Benjamin Consecrated Bishop for Eastern USA Diocese

In the Holy Synod of the Assyrian Church of the East, convened under the presidency of His Holiness Mar Dinkha IV, Catholicos-Patriarch in Chicago from 25 May to 1 June 2012, the Very Reverend Archdeacon Paulus Benjamin, vicar of Mar Gewargis Cathedral in Chicago, was elected bishop for the Diocese of Eastern USA.

The new bishop was given the title 'Mar Paulus' and his episcopal consecration took place on Pentecost Sunday, 27 May 2012, at Mar Gewargis Cathedral in Chicago. The consecration liturgy was presided by His Holiness Mar Dinkha IV, Catholicos-Patriarch, and assisted by all of the members of the Holy Synod acting as co-consecrators. The cathedral was packed, having greatly exceeded its seating capacity, and numerous deacons, priests and guest-clergy were in attendance.

The consecration liturgy began at 8:15 with the procession. The procession was comprised of the choirs, the deacons, priests, archdeacons, bishops, metropolitans, the bishop-elect and His Holiness the Patriarch. After reading his Oath of Obedience and Profession of Faith, the reading of the Gospel lesson for the feast of Ss. Peter & Paul on the back of the inclined ordained highlighted the ceremony. Then, the bishop-elect was made lie prostrate before the Patriarch, and the metropolitans and bishops assisted the consecration by extending their right

hand over the ordained who lay prostrate, His Holiness all the while reciting the consecration formula in an audible voice. After the prayer of consecration was recited over the bishop-elect, he was made to stand and the Patriarch vested him with the *ma'apra* (cope), crown, pectoral Cross and episcopal ring; then, he was given the episcopal crozier indicating his authority to shepherd the flock entrusted to his spiritual care. At the end of the consecration service, all of the prelates congratulated the newly-ordained with the kiss of peace, and His Holiness the Patriarch commenced to celebrate the Holy Qurbana.

His Grace Mar Paulus Benjamin was born Korosh Benyamin, to his mother Roza Jacob (daughter of the late Qasha Keshto Yakob) and to his father Yoarash Benyamin on June 24, 1968 in the village of Qala, Urmia (Iran). He was tutored in the services of our Church by the late Archdeacon Qasha Aprim Mar Yonani, and was ordained a deacon by His Holiness Mar Dinkha on June 24, 1984 at St. George cathedral, Tehran. He then received his B.A. in Social Communications from the University of Tehran in 1993. He served the military from 1993 to 1995. In 1996, he was sent for higher theological studies to Rome by His Holiness. After studying at the Pontifical Gregorian University, he received the S.T.B. (Bachelor of Sacred Theology) in Philosophy in 1998 and the S.T.B. (Bachelor of Sacred Theology) in Theology in 2001. He was ordained a priest on September 13, 2001 at Mar Gewargis cathedral, Chicago, by His Holiness Mar Dinkha IV. He is presently a candidate for the S.T.L. (Licentiate of Sacred Theology) in Canon Law and has already finished his doctorate courses as required by the Pontifical Oriental Institute, Rome. In the summer of 1999, he spent 3 months with Archdeacon Yonan Youel studying Aramaic, and did a course in French language at Bisancon, France in the summer of 2002. Mar Paulus came to the US in July of 2007 and in 2008 was appointed assistant vicar

of Mar Gewargis cathedral, Chicago. In 2009, he was appointed the vicar of said parish. On March 20, 2011, the new bishop was raised to the rank of Cor-episcopa by H.G. Mar Awa Royel, Bishop of California, at the directive of His Holiness Mar Dinkha IV, and was then ordained archdeacon by His Holiness on Ascension Day, May 17, 2012 at Mar Gewargis Cathedral, Chicago.

From the moment of his episcopal consecration onwards, the newly consecrated is fully a member of the Holy Synod, shepherd and overseer of the Diocese of Eastern USA of the Assyrian Church of the East.

Assyrians Killed in Damascus

Rev. Toma Oraha has confirmed the killing of an Assyrian in Damascus.

Mr. Ninos Isho of the Assyrian Democratic Party has also told Australia's SBS Radio that four Assyrians killed were killed in Hassaka, Syria.

There have also been disturbances in Qamishli, the 10th largest city in Syria where many members of our church live.

Pray for Syria and especially for our bishop Mar Afram Athniel whose headquarters is in Hassaka.

Church Members Move Into ACERO Duhok Housing Project

Dearest Honourable Supporters,

The Assyrian Church of the East Relief Organisation (Acero) is pleased to inform you that our people have moved into their homes in

Dohuk, (Iraq) after electricity and water were connected in the last month.

Thank you for your continued support, without which we could not complete this project. As you know, every penny received by Acero is either spent on actual projects or on those in need.

As people have seen the homes we have built, we have been inundated with calls to build more homes in Dohuk and also in Erbil. The Acero committee, headed by our beloved Bishop Mar Aprim Athneil of Syria, is strongly considering such requests.

Acero has been promised a considerable plot of land in Ankawa/Erbil, however we can only contemplate starting a new project when we have sufficient funding to complete it.

We look forward to your continued support.

Editor's Note: Footage of the first families taking up residence in ACERO's Duhok housing project can be seen here – <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aWiQKM9ZD8>

Inaugural Australian Archdiocesan Youth Conference Held in Sydney

26 July 2012

The first annual Youth Conference of the Assyrian Church of the East, Archdiocese of Australia, New Zealand and Lebanon has been hailed as a success, after taking place in Sydney, Australia from 5-8 July 2012.

The conference, held under the theme 'Youth Arise!' (Tlayeh Qoum), was held following more than a year of detailed planning by the Youth Conference Subcommittee, and with the

blessings of His Beatitude Mar Meelis Zaia AM Metropolitan. The committee, with the strength from God, worked diligently to bring the conference to fruition. The Metropolitan See of Sydney played host to more than 120 young people from Australia, New Zealand and the United States.

Day 1

Delegates arrived and registered for the beginning of the four-day event. In the evening, a welcoming night was held at St. Hurmizd Assyrian Primary School with HB Mar Meelis Zaia as the guest of honour and eight parish priests from Sydney and Melbourne. The highlight of the function was the screening of a specially recorded message from His Holiness Mar Dinkha IV, Catholicos-Patriarch, who bestowed his apostolic blessings upon the delegates and prayed for the success of the conference. "It was such an honour to receive a personal message from His Holiness. A great way to get the conference started," said one attendee.

Also airing that night was a short film, *Taleetha Qoum*, directly linked to the theme of the conference. The committee decided to direct and produce this film to give all participants a visual message of Christ saving sinners of all kind. "I couldn't take my eyes off the screen. I was drawn to the movie and when it ended, I had tears in my eyes. It touched us all. It got the message across".

In his keynote address, HB Mar Meelis Zaia discussed the increasing pressure that secularism is having on the Christian faith in modern society and the diminishing role of the family unit within this society. His Beatitude encouraged the delegates to be thankful to God for the opportunities given to them as citizens of democratic societies where few obstacles are present to actively participate and succeed in civic society whether in the religious, educational, social or political sectors.

The night came to an end with some light refreshments and Assyrian dancing. "I've been to many conferences in the past, this welcoming night was the best I have ever been to".

Day 2

The conference commenced with the consecration of the Eucharistic Liturgy by Rev. Father Narsai Youkhanis at St. Hurmizd Cathedral. During the remainder of the second day the delegates participated in a series of educational seminars given by clergy and faithful of the Holy Church. These successful sessions explored the theology, history, sacraments and moral teachings of the Assyrian Church of the East as well as the history of the Assyrian people. Session topics were: 'The Assyrians', 'How did the Assyrians become a Christian Nation?', 'Choosing the World or Christ', 'Mysteries of the Church', 'Relationships' and 'A History of the Church of the East in India'.

The second day of the conference concluded with 120 attendees enjoying a scenic cruise along Sydney Harbour. Boarding the cruise at 8pm, the delegates enjoyed three hours of food, fun and dancing. A special surprise was also organised by the committee for individuals celebrating their birthdays throughout the duration of the conference. "I have been to many cruise parties in the past, but this was the best I have ever been to. Everyone was so friendly and the night was a great success".

Day 3

The remainder of the sessions continued on the following day. At the conclusion of all classes, the attendees all gathered together wearing their

Youth Conference shirts and proudly took to the stage to smile for a group photo.

The day ended with a large group dinner aimed to enhance fellowship and interaction between the faithful in a Christian spirit and environment. "We took over the entire restaurant, but the staff enjoyed our company. Everyone returned to the bus with full stomachs and stronger friendships".

Day 4

The conference's final day commenced with all delegates attending the Eucharistic Liturgy at St. Hurmizd Cathedral in Sydney's west. The Liturgy was consecrated by HB Mar Meelis Zaia and fell on the Commemoration of the late Mar Yosip Khnanisho, Metropolitan of Iraq.

The offering of the Holy Qurbana was followed by a formal breakfast where HB Mar Meelis Zaia presented medallions to all participants. "We were all so excited to receive our medallions, having heard about them so much. However, our excitement increased when we discovered His Beatitude would individually present each medallion and take a photo with us. It was such a rewarding experience".

The ending of the conference was celebrated by a casual BBQ held at St. Hurmizd Assyrian Primary School, where friends and family of participants could attend. "Everyone had a great time, said their goodbyes and collected their belongings and left. The conference was a great success and we look forward to attending future conferences".



Laying foundation ceremony of the Parsonage by Mar Aprem Metropolitan and Mar Awgin Kuriakose Episcopa in Mar Aprem Parish Thrissur on 17 August 2012



Blessing foundation stone of Mar Pathrose Shleeha Church, Poochetti on 15 August 2012 by Mar Aprem Metropolitan, Mar Yohannan Yoseph Episcopa and Mar Awgin Kuriakose Episcopa



First Australian Assyrian Youth Conference held in Sydney in July 2012



Mar Isaac Yoseph, Bishop of Nuhadra & Russia ordains clergy in Dohuk



Dr. Anand Mangalam Ph.D. and wife Sonia with children Sara Ann Paul and David Paul along with Mar Aprem and Deacon Raumin Benjamin after Baptism in Dallas, Texas on 3 June 2012.



Archdeacon Frederick of Phoenix, Arizona who came for Qurbana and baptism in Dallas on June 3, 2012.



After Holy Qurbana at St. Mary's Assyrian Church in Warren, Michigan (Detroit) on June 10, 2012. Mar Aprem Metropolitan, Qasha Amir Brekha and Shamasha Rouel Shamon with members of the Choir.



Qasha Nilus and the church committee in Sweden with Rev. Dr. Sr. Jincy on 1 July 2012.



Reception at Mart Mariam Parish, UAE on 5 August 2012. Seated: Chacko Konikara, Sr. Dr. Jincy and Poovathingal Kurian. Parish kaikar Anil S. Immatty, Sunny Panakel, Blesson (son of Rev'd Antony Kangapadan), Sebulin Francy and others are in the back row.

List of Church Committee Members

Given below is a list of church committee members in two US parishes where I celebrated the Holy Qurbana in June, 2012. *Voice of the East* does not have adequate space to publish details from all parishes worldwide. It is our hope that a directory of all our parishes worldwide would be published. The Indian Church has a directory updated occasionally, but it is in the Malayalam language.

St Mary's Church, Warren, Michigan

| | |
|---------------------|--|
| Spiritual Guide: | Fr. Ameer Brikha |
| President: | Mr. Youil Ishmail |
| Vice President: | Mr. Yousif Odisho |
| Treasurer: | Mrs. Nariman Kako |
| Asst. Treasurer: | Mrs. Doreen Saraf |
| Secretary: | Miss. Adreen Younan |
| Building Committee: | Mr. Tom Tamou, Hanna Daniel, William Mooshe |
| Church Media: | Mr. Ibrahim Mirza, Mr. Bassil Anwia |
| Planning Committee: | Mr. George Hanna, Mr. Samir Lazer |
| Public Relation: | Mr. Ashoor Nastors, Mr. Victor Al Bazi Mrs. Mulke David |
| Sunday School: | Mrs. Julie Jajou |
| Youth President: | Mr. George Yousif |

St Sargis Church, Chicago

Parish Priest

Archdeacon Dr. William Toma

Church Committee

Nineveh Gewargis, Sargon Youkhanna, Flora Haji, Stella David and Linda Saliba

Ushers

Youssip Toma, Elia Saliba, John Nano, Jimmy Aiyo, Charbel Zakheria, Ninos Nissan, Dory Youkhanna and George Saliba

Teachers

Jenneh Yonadam, Madlene Zakheria, Wedad Bet-Shlimon, Sylva Saro, Sandra Saliba, Jeneh Brikha, Paulina Saliba, Jackie Saliba, Diane Brikha and Marie Brikha

Ladies Auxiliary

Anir Zabarowski, Najiba Zando, Samira Tchiko, Panna Toma, Helen Yonadam, Maryne Saro, Najiba Yomaran, Yolia Mikhail, Helen BethShimon, Soria Oshana, Mary Ghorbania, Nanajan Sarkis and Judet Shina

Youth

Vania Betshlimon, Janille Betshlimon, Jainie Brikha, Marie Brikha, Diane Brikha, Kelly Yousif, Paulina Saliba, Jackie Saliba, George Saliba, Cindy Lawando, Anthony Saro, Mary Tamo and Zaya Solayman

Choir

Julie David, Tony Yousif, Isabelle Yousif, Afram Iskandar, Athra Tchiko, Marilyn Kordou, Janson Kordou, Sonia Lawando, Helean Zando, Oshana Khoshaba, Helen Zaya, Albert Iskandar, Steven David, Anwar Lazar, Ellie Youkhana, Eivlin Saro, Jinan Home, Nahrin Zakharia, Linda Zaiya, Katea Yakhnis, Muna David, Nahrin Audicho, Nelly David, Nina David, Nina Nissan, Ninawa Botros and Robin David

Maintenance

Daniel Toma

Los Angeles to Dubai **A Travelogue** **Foreword**

By Dr. Jetty A. Oliver

It is a matter of great joy and privilege to write foreword for a book authored by H.B. Mar Aprem Metropolitan. The Metropolitan is known to me for the last four decades as Head of the Chaldean Syrian Church of the East, a Spiritual Guru, an Ecumenical Stalwart, a Historian par excellence. I have fond memories of my association with him in the National Council of Churches in India, the Church History Association of India, Churches' Auxiliary for Social Action and several events of National importance. I also had the opportunity of being his guest at the Metropolitan's palace on a few occasions during which time I had the privilege of closer interactions with the Metropolitan on issues of the Church and the State with a dominating discussion on unity of Christians in the Country. I also had the privilege to visit the Metropolitan's library during January this year and felt greatly encouraged at the new library facility he created at the Metropolitan's palace in Thrissur. His 71st book "**The Assyrian Manuscripts in India**" that is now placed in his Library is a great treasure adding to the common wealth of Literature in History.

The Metropolitan has the distinction of being the first Ph.D. in Syriac from India. The Metropolitan also was the first to conduct the Holy Qurbana in Dubai. He is the co-chairman of the joint committee for theological dialogue between the Vatican and the Assyrian Church. Showered upon him were many awards and titles for his life and service over the decades. He had the honour of being the guest of the Holy Father Pope Benedict the XVI recently in Assisi for the dialogue on prayer for peace.

Metropolitan has the great burden to tackle social evils in the society. He endeavoured a great deal to sustain and nourish the Assyrian Church traditions and to shape and nurture the faithful in those traditions in India and Overseas. It is this his burden that took him across the continents a number of times on his 59 overseas visits that began from the days of his studies as a WCC Scholar in the United Kingdom from the early 60s. The worldwide diaspora and the newly emerged Assyrian Churches across the Nations would top the list of places on every itinerary of his visits. The Metropolitan even produced a Ph.D. thesis under the faculty of Mahatma Gandhi University on the history of the Assyrian Church in the 20th century. This is how the little known Assyrian Church in India became a well known tradition of Christian faith in our country.

The Metropolitan's passion for writing is a well known fact. While he has his own style of writing, as Mathew Arnold says, "what he has to say he will say it clearly" driving home the point of significant information that he gathers as a historian, a pastoral aid provider, a spiritual leader and a value torch bearer making the reader understand the history and environment that he engages himself on his travels and encounters with people that he gets connected and reconnected. There is no "disconnect" in his dictionary and such is the urge and the passion for the Metropolitan and thus he is a much sought after peoples' Bishop.

I had the privilege to go through quite a number of books written by the Metropolitan - those of humour and of the history and those of the accounts of travelogues. The current one **“Los Angeles to Dubai”** is the 72nd book penned by H.B. Mar Aprem Metropolitan. It is indeed a daring act to have toiled for and made an achievement in bringing out one book every year in his life. The 72nd book comes out well in time for his 72nd Birthday. It is an inspiring evidence of adding life to every year that one lives than just adding years to one’s life. The Metropolitan is such a natural writer, passionate in his perusal to write and complete a book disregarding his own health. Every book that he wrote worked as an incentive for another book. This is how the tempo of writing was always on the upward trend and not otherwise for advance in age and fragile health never proved a deterrent to his zeal for writing. The feedback he gets from his admirers and other ordinary readers is such a source of strength to him that writing cannot but be a part and parcel of the work menu for the Metropolitan.

Writing in fact is a discipline in as much as it is a commitment. Many people endeavour to be writers but only a few will be the righteous remnant to be achievers and the Metropolitan is indeed an achiever. He is known for his art of writing, discipline and commitment. It is because of this determined effort that he is able to bring out one book a year enriching his own library and that of the Assyrian Church and the academic world at large.

His unassuming leadership qualities, fatherly approach to the issues of the church and the society endeared him to friends and colleagues, churches and organizations and thus he became a household name for many of us in the ecumenical fraternity.

The year 2012 is significant on many counts. He is able to bring out a new edition of the travelogue **“Los Angeles to Dubai”** for the

year and he is up to date on that count. It is also the 45th year of his graduation from Union Theological Seminary, New York. The year also signifies the bicentennial of the Princeton University, New Jersey of which he is an alumnus. Therefore, his forthcoming visit overseas is a special season of celebrations for the Metropolitan, the Assyrian Church fraternity and the worldwide community of admirers.

In a narration about Union Theological Seminary he readily recounts the ever running theme of the seminary “to strive for the spirit of a saint and the vocation of a prophet” acknowledges credit to the one who toiled for the theme – Donald W Shriver Jr., President emeritus of Union Theological Seminary and calls upon fellow Bishops and the clergy to be saints and prophets of our times and be worthy of the great legacy passed on to the successive leadership.

The current book **“Los Angeles to Dubai via Chicago and New York”** is an interesting reading. The Metropolitan records in an authentic manner the places, the people, the encounters, the pastoral overseeing and a host of things he was able to do. It is a good reading for the fellow pilgrims. The Metropolitan proves again what a keen observer he has been, what a memory he possesses and what a capacity he commands to connect to institutions, individuals and families. He reckons issues so easily and records details so plainly of people he comes in contact, the places he visits and situations he encounters. He is forthright in his expressions and this makes him a good teacher for behavioral correction and value orientation. His capacity to network with families, friends, fellow workers and places especially those of historical importance are simply amazing. He has the matching capability to cultivate the relations for the common good of God’s people everywhere in the world. He will not lose an opportunity to exhort the people and the families

including the reader on the values needed for spiritual life, greater belonging, Christian caring and sharing. The Metropolitan, true to his style, is magnanimous in highlighting the profiles of the people who have excelled in their lives.

The pastoral overseeing, the fellowship gatherings are the renewal exercises that he shares in his book and the reader is sure to journey with him in his travels overseas. The book is not only informative but thought provoking for a spiritual search of those in the midst of prosperity allurements to be truthful and faithful to the non-negotiable concern of God manifested through Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ – brotherly **Love** and redeeming **Grace** to Oikumene – the entire household of God.

Dr. Jetti A. Oliver

President, Church History Association of India
Pentecost 2012
Hyderabad-500017

Indian Archdiocese News

Mart Shmoni Mission Parish, Hyderabad

Mar Aprem Metropolitan was received by the mission parish in Hyderabad-Secunderabad area on Sunday 29th July. This is the 4th Holy Qurbana that was conducted in this city after the Mart Shmoni mission parish was organized last November. Rev'd. Antony Kaitharan is the Vicar who comes from Kerala for the purpose. Mr. Anto Neyyan and Mr. Binu Johny Cheeramban are the Kaikars.

In the meeting that followed the Holy Qurbana, Mar Aprem Metropolitan congratulated Mrs. Minni Mathew IAS, who was recently promoted to the highest post of the State, namely Chief Secretary. The Metropolitan recalled that he and Bishop Mar Poulouse gave a reception

to her when she became the first IAS officer from the Church of the East in India. During the last 36 years nobody from our church was selected for the Indian Administrative Service (IAS).

In the evening, Mar Aprem Metropolitan's 72nd book was released in a function arranged at the Osmania University Youth Centre. The bishop of the Church of the South India in Karimnagar Diocese, Bishop Theodore spoke. Two senior IAS officers and other VIPs attended the function. CASA, Church History Association of India, YMCA and other organization garlanded the Metropolitan for his achievement of publishing 72 books in his life of 72 years. Dr. Jetti A Oliver, President of the CHAI, organized the function in a superb manner.

Mar Pathrose Shleeha Church, Poocheti

The foundation stone for the Mar Pathrose Shleeha Church was laid on 15th August; 2012. This parish is to be formed for church members of the Mar Narsai Parish who are residing on the eastern side of the National Highway. Mar Aprem Metropolitan blessed the foundation stone and was assisted by the two Episcopas Mar Yohannan Yoseph and Mar Awgin Kuriakose. The Vicar, Rev'd K.R. Inasu expressed his hope that the major portion of the 2.5 million rupee project would be completed before the end of December 2012. The Board of Central Trustees, parish trustees and faithful were present at the function.

Chaldean Syrian Higher Secondary School

A three-story building was built recently costing about 25 million rupees for students in higher secondary classes. This building is a

continuation of the three-story building constructed about three years ago and opened by H.H. Mar Dinkha IV in January 2010 during the 13th Holy Synod. The blessing of this new building was done on 15th August 2012 at 10.45 a.m. by Mar Aprem Metropolitan assisted by Mar Yohannan Yoseph and Mar Awgin Kuriakose.

The function was attended by a large number of clergy, Representative Council members and guests. Mr. I.G Joy, Chairman of the Board of Central Trustees was congratulated for constructing this new building. He is also the Corporate Manager of our Church Schools.

Representative Council

The Representative Council which met in the new building after the blessing ceremony on August 15th (65th anniversary of Indian Independence Day) decided to name the new building of the school after the late Mar Abimalek Timotheus Metropolitan who functioned as Metropolitan in India from 27 February 1908 until 30 April 1945. It was this Metropolitan who founded the Chaldean Syrian Schools in 1927 after he won the civil suits filed by the Independents who became Romans Catholics later.

Mar Abimalek Timotheus Metropolitan who was from Mar Bhisho, Turkey, was a friend of Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru and is much respected by Christians, Hindus and Muslims in this area.

The High Road where the Metropolitan's Palace and the Mart Mariam Cathedral are located was named by the Government as **Mar Timotheus High Road** two or three years ago. The second High School started by our church, about one kilometer from the Higher Secondary School, was named Mar Timotheus High School from the time it was upgraded to a High School, some 13 years after the death of Mar Timotheus.

The Representative Council was well attended by clergy and laity had representatives from outside Kerala state also. The budgets for the various organizations of the church were passed in this long session from 11.45 a.m. till 5.15 p.m.

Foundation for Mar Aprem Parish Parsonage

On Friday August 17th, which is the first day of the Malayalam Era (*Chingam I*) the foundation stone of the parsonage for the Vicar and Assistant Vicar was laid in the second floor of the building where Sunday school and nursery classes are being held.

Mar Aprem Metropolitan, Mar Awgin Kuriakose Episcopa, Vicar Rev'd. Lazar Madathumpadi, Assistant Vicar Rev'd. Michael Vallavanthara, Deacon Sujo Jose, Mr. I.G Joy, Chairman of the Board of Central Trustees, Mrs. Susan Baby, Councilor of Thrissur Corporation, Parish Kaikars and others placed a handful of cement in the pillar to be raised. The Metropolitan expressed the hope that with Rev'd. Lazar Madathumpadi and his enthusiastic team the construction of the parsonage building will be completed before the present term of the Trustees ends in March 2013.

This Church was built by the late Mar Abimalek Timotheus Metropolitan 3 months before the present Metropolitan Mar Aprem (at that time named George Mookken) was born in 1940. After the unity of the two calendar groups this church was renovated. It has a separate auditorium built in the birth centenary year of Mar Abimalek Timotheus.

65th Anniversary of St. Thomas Church, Ernakulam.

The 65th annual day of St. Thomas church, Ernakulam, Cochin was celebrated on

19 August 2012. Mar Aprem Metropolitan and Bishop Mar Awgin Kuriakose celebrated the Holy Qurbana assisted by Fr. Vinod Timothy and Deacon Rajan Vattakuzhi. Foundation stone for the Commercial complex was blessed during the meeting that followed.

Ordination in Mar Thoma Shleeha Church, Pattikad

Sub Deacon Clinton Sobhan will be promoted to the rank of a full deacon on Sunday 2nd September 2012. He is a student of the Seminary of the Church of the East, Thirur, continuing his studies for a Bachelor's degree in secular studies. He is a member of Mar Thoma Shleeha Parish and was ordained a Sub Deacon (*Heevpadyaqna*) on St. Thomas Day, July 3rd this year. This church was built in 1800 A.D. and was renovated in 1920 by Mar Abimalek Timotheus Metropolitan.

Mar Dinkha I Parish

The Mar Dinkha I Parish was separated from the Mar Mari Shleeha Parish in Kuriachira, Thrissur from January 1, 2012. That building had been blessed by H.H. Mar Dinkha IV in January 2000. The altar was renovated and blessing of the altar will be done on Sunday 9th September 2012 by Mar Aprem Metropolitan and Mar Awgin Kuriakose Episcopa. Rev'd T.R. Jos is the Vicar and Rev'd. Franklyn Varghese is the Assistant Vicar.

Holy Qurbana in Muscat, Oman

Plans are in progress to conduct a Holy Qurbana in Muscat in the Sultanate of Oman in September. We are contacting people and other churches to arrange a place for the service. Please provide us with the e-mails and phone numbers of people working in Muscat.

We will appreciate if the Assyrians also come for Holy Qurbana as occurs sometimes in the

UAE. In the UAE, we have rented a chapel on a permanent basis on all Fridays from 7.15 am to 9.30 am in an Anglican Church in Yarmook area in Sharjah. We have rented a parsonage also in Sharjah for our two priests to stay. People from other emirates such as Dubai, Abu Dhabi, Ras al Kaima etc also attend. The Mart Mariam Parish in UAE is an active one.

Muscat and Qatar are on either side of the UAE parish. A UAE visa is not sufficient to visit Qatar or Muscat. Indian citizen need separate visas to enter Muscat or Qatar. Some of our church members live in these places. I had conducted a Holy Qurbana in Qatar in October 2005. It is a small congregation. Still I am trying to organize one more Holy Qurbana in Qatar.

Please contact me or Bishop Mar Yohannan Yoseph, if our friends would like to arrange Holy Qurbana in new locations in the region:

Mar Aprem Metropolitan's E-Mail:
hgmaraprem@gmail.com

Mar Yohannan Yoseph's E-Mail:
maryohannan@gmail.com

Although there are some church members living and working in Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Bahrain, it is not easy to arrange Holy Qurbana in all these places.

I pray that when our church members seek employment in the Gulf, that they look to the UAE first as we have an active congregation in this place and sacramental services are available on a weekly basis.

Amazon.com and Kindle Books

A number of Mar Aprem Metropolitan's books, including *Los Angeles to Dubai* and *The Assyrian Church of the East in the Twentieth Century* (2nd PhD thesis) are now available on Amazon.Com and Kindle Books for free. Please download if you are interested.



Sponsors of the children of Mar Timotheus Memorial Orphanage, Ms Mary Conraeds and others receive Sr. Dr. Jincy in Sweden.



Sr. Dr. Jincy O.U. presenting her paper at Symposium Syriacum in Malta in July 2012



Sr. Dr. Jincy with choir members at St Thomas Parish in Newburg, Sweden



New three storied buiding of the Chaldean Syrian Higher Secondary School named after Mar Abimalek Timotheus Metropolitan, founder of the School in 1927



Blessing of the new School building on 15 August 2012 by Mar Aprem Metropolitan, Mar Yohannan Yosepha Episcopa and Mar Awgin Kuriakose Episcopa