

## CHURCH HISTORY FOR THE MONTH OF DECEMBER

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**The Advent (Lent from 1 to 25 December).** For Eastern Churches this is the season waiting for the birth of Christ. During this time the church prepares herself through cleansing and renewal for the advent of her Lord. It serves as a time of spiritual discipline and renewal in preparation for Christmas. Christians observe lent with fasting, prayer and self-sacrifice.

**First Sunday of December - Bible Sunday.** The First Sunday of December is observed as Bible Society Day. It was the British and Foreign Bible Society, established in London in 1804, that first made a concerted effort of translating, printing and publishing Bibles in different languages. Its auxiliaries were formed in Calcutta in 1811, in Bombay in 1812 and in Madras in 1820 and in Kerala in 1956. Other auxiliaries were formed later. Even before the formation of the auxiliaries in India, the work of translation of the Bible to Indian Languages had been taken up by William Carey and his associates in Calcutta. In obedience to the commandment of the Lord "Go ye unto the uttermost corners of the earth and preach my gospel". The Bible Society aims at making available, copies of the Bible, New Testaments and portions of the Bible to

1. To Every Person in his / her own language.
2. At a price within his / her reach
3. In a style which is easily understood

It is in pursuance of this objective that it brings out special editions for students, members of the armed forces, in Braille type for the blind, etc.

**1 December, 1973:** Mathews Mar Athanasius Episcopa passes away (b.7 Jun 1900). Dr. Mathews Mar Athanasius Episcopa was a member of the Kurudamannil family of Ayroor. After obtaining the B.A., L.T Degrees he became the Headmaster of Keezhillam School. He took the initiative for the establishment of the Ashram High School at Perumbavoor. He became a priest in 1929 and Bishop in 1937. He gave able leadership to various organizations of our Church. He was called home on 1 Dec, 1973.

**1 December, 1930:** Birth of Rev. C. A. Kuruvilla, Ranny (d.25 May, 2004). He became a deacon on 29 Jun, 1957 and priest on 17 Oct, 1957. He served parishes in Trichur, Mysore, Mallappally, Kochi and Poovathoor. For few years he was the North Travancore Missionary of the Evangelistic Association.

**2 December, 1842:** Birth of Iype Thoma Kathanar (Kovoor Achen d.27 Jan, 1917). Ipe Thoma Kathanar was one of the prominent priests of the Mar Thoma Church. He bought the Panchayathu Purayidam (present SCS Compound in Tiruvalla) for the Church in 1892 for Rs.600. It was he who started the Kettuthengu - practice of dedicating coconut trees from each house for fund collections for the welfare of the Church.

**3 December, 1552:** Death of St. Francis Xavier. Jesuit Missionary, St. Francis Xavier who came to India in May, 1542, died on 3 Dec, 1552 on his way to China. He is known as one of the greatest missionaries and converted 700,000 people in Portugal, India, Indonesia, Japan and elsewhere.

**3 December, 1818:** Meeting of the Church representatives in Mavelikkara. To eradicate the evil practices in the Malankara Church, a meeting of the Church representatives and clergy was convened by Metropolitan Punnathra Mar Dionysius in Mavelikkara. 40 clergy and about 700 lay representatives attended this meeting. CMS Missionary Rev. Joseph Fenn was the main speaker. A committee consisting of Abraham Malpan, Kaithayil Geevarughese Malpan and others were selected to study this topic in detail.

**4 December, 1998:** Death of Rev. K.V. Thomas, Karipuzha (b.31 Jul 1931). After passing his B.Sc., B.D. exam, he became deacon on June 1958 and priest on 25 October 1958. He served many parishes including Nilambur, Pooyappally, Kollam, Karunagapally, Eraviperoor and Chathannur.

**5 December, 1974:** Dr. Juhanon Mar Thoma lays foundation for the Callaway Memorial Library. Miss. Callaway, a Church Missionary Society Missionary from Australia, was the first principal of the Vanithamandiram (Tiruvalla) of our Sevika Sanghom. She served the Sevika Sanghom and Vanithamandiram from 1925 to 1946, and after that she returned to her native place in Australia.

**5 December, 1884:** Birth of J Joseph Kasseesa, Mannanchalil, Thevalakkara (d.7 Oct.1951). After learning Syriac and Tamil he became deacon on 10 Nov 1908 and priest on 18 Nov 1913. He was a convention speaker. He took initiative for the establishment of Mar Thoma Parishes in Kadampanadu, Mannaroad, Kunnathur, Kalleli and Poruvazhi. Rev. J John is his son.

**6 December (St. Nicholas's Day):** Pray for the Mission to Seafarers. The Mission to Seafarers is a voluntary society of the Anglican Church. It is at work in some 300 ports around the world including Dubai and Cochin Port in Kerala. In over 100 of these ports. seafarers' centers are run; many of them in partnership with other Churches. Seafarers need our support through prayers. Over 90 percent of the world's trade is carried out in ships. They leave their homes and families to work at sea, one of the most dangerous and exacting working environments. The Mission to Seafarers is committed to meeting the spiritual and practical needs of seafarers regardless of nationality and creed. Saint Nicholas is the Patron Saint of sailors and 6 December (St. Nicholas's Day) is set apart as a special day for prayer for the seafarers all around the world.

**6 December, 2000:** The Most Reverend Vinod A.R. Peter, Moderator of Church of North India (CNI) and President of the National Council of Churches in India (NCCI) died in a road accident on 6 December 2000 near Jodhpur, Rajasthan. Born on March 4, 1939, in Chandrapur, Maharashtra, he was a man who believed in simplicity and humble service,

and always inspired people to bring out the best in them. His humility is an example for all church leaders in India.

**6 December, 345:** (traditional date): Nicholas, Bishop of Myra, one of the most popular saints in the Greek and Latin churches - and Santa Claus's namesake dies.

**7 December, 430:** Cyril of Alexandria condemns the Antiochene monk Nestorius, who claimed Christ was two persons (divine and human) rather than one person with two natures. Saint Cyril of Alexandria (. 378 - 444) was the Pope of Alexandria when the city was at its height of influence and power within the Roman Empire. Cyril wrote extensively and was a leading protagonist in the Christological controversies of the 4th and 5th centuries. He was a central figure in the First Council of Ephesus in 431 which led to the deposition of Nestorius as Archbishop of Constantinople. Nestorianism is a Christological heresy which originated in the Church in the 5th century out of an attempt to rationally explain and understand the incarnation of the divine Logos, the Second Person of the Holy Trinity as the man Jesus Christ. Nestorianism teaches that the human and divine essences of Christ are separate and that there are two persons, the man Jesus Christ and the divine Logos, which dwelt in the man. Thus, Nestorians reject such terminology as "God suffered" or "God was crucified".

**7 or 14 December, 1883:** (Correct date doubtful): Birth of Sadhu Kochoonju Upadesi. Muthampakkal Kochoonju Upadesi was one of the most prominent voluntary Evangelists/ Hymn writers of the Church. Many of his hymns are included in Hymn books. He passed away on 30 Nov, 1945, and was buried in the Lakha (Edayarammala) St. Thomas Church cemetery on 1 Dec, 1945.

**8 December, 1843:** First Christmas Cards Sold. The first Christmas cards – actually more like postcards – were created and sold for a shilling in England.

**9 December, 1989:** Mar Thoma Church consecrates three more bishops. Our bishops Rt. Rev. Geevarughese Mar Athanasius, Rt. Rev Geevarughese Mar Theodosius and Rt. Rev. Euyakim Mar Coorilos were consecrated on 9 Dec 1989 at Tiruvalla.

**9 December, 1936:** Birth of Rev. M.V. Benjamin (Grandson of Sadhu Kochoonju Upadeshi), Edayarammala (d.20 Apr.1995). Born as a member of the Moothampakkal family of Edayarammala, he became priest in 1962 and served 18 parishes. For a few years he was the Chaplain of Santhi Mandiram and Balika Bhavan in Elanthur.

**10 December, 1952:** Rev. C. Cherian, Thazhumadthil, Adoor passes away (b.25 Nov 1885). After passing matriculation he started his career in Adoor, with the judicial department of the Travancore government. At the age of 35 he resigned from his government job and went for theological training in Kottayam. He became deacon on 15 Feb 1924 and priest on 1925. He took initiative for the establishment of Adoor Immanuel, Elabikkal and Munnalam parishes. From 1928 to 1944 while serving the parishes in Adoor he did not take any salary.

**11 December, 1640:** English Puritans introduced a petition with 15,000 signatures to Parliament, seeking to abolish the church episcopacy, "with all its dependencies, roots and branches." The House of Commons accepted what has become known as the "Roots and Branch Petition," but the House of Lords (many of whom were bishops) rejected it, and the Episcopal organization of the Church of England remained.

**12 December, 1712:** The colony of South Carolina requires "all persons whatsoever" to attend church each Sunday and refrain from skilled labor and travel. Violators of the "Sunday Law" could be fined 10 shillings or locked in the stocks for two hours.

**12 December, 1912:** Consecration of Bishop V. S. Azariah. Rev. Vedanayagam Samuel Azariah was consecrated as the first Indian Bishop of the Church in India (Anglican Church) on 12 Dec 1912, in the St. Paul's Cathedral in Calcutta. Most Rev. Dr. Copleston, assisted by ten other bishops, conducted the consecration ceremony. The first Indian bishop of the Anglican Church in India, Vedanayagam Samuel Azariah was born in 1874 in a small village in Andhra Pradesh, the son of Thomas Vedanayagam, an Anglican priest, and Ellen, a woman with a deep love and understanding of the Holy Scriptures. Samuel became a YMCA evangelist at nineteen and secretary of the organization throughout South India only a few years later. He saw that, for the Church in India to grow and to bring ordinary Indians to Jesus Christ, it had to have indigenous leadership. He helped to create the Tinnevely-based Indian Missionary Society in 1903, and was a co-founder of the National Missionary Society of India, an all-India, Indian-led agency founded in December 1905. At the age of thirty-five he was ordained to the presbyterate, and three years later (December, 1912) he was consecrated as the first bishop of the new Diocese of Dornakal, with eleven bishops of the Anglican Church in India participating in the liturgy at St Paul's Cathedral in Calcutta. Bishop Azariah was the first Indian to be consecrated a bishop in the Churches of the Anglican Communion. Azariah died on January 1, 1945, two years before the inauguration of the united Church of South India (CSI).

**12 December, 1976:** Death of Rev. C.T. Oommen, Kuzhikkala (b.31 Oct 1908). After the theological education in Serampore, became deacon on 4 April 1938 and priest on 20 Feb 1939. Served many parishes including Ranny, Maramon and Bangalore. Few years he served as the North Travancore Missionary of the Evangelistic Association.

**13 December, 1901:** Birth of Very. Rev. T.N. Koshy, Kumbanad (d.13 Oct.1979). Became deacon on 12 Oct 1935 and priest afterwards. In 1936, he was sent to Singapore-Malaysia to take care of the Mar Thoma community. During his 26 years of service he established many parishes in Singapore and Malaysia and established a diocese as well. Later he became the Sabha secretary.

**13 December, 1971:** Death of V. K.Varghese Kasseesa, Chunakkara (b.15 Sep 1886). Became deacon on 1Jan 1905 and priest on 12 Mar 1906. Served more than 25 parishes

including Mavelikkara, Kumbanad and Trichur. Rev. George Varghese, former Clergy trustee, is his son.

**13 December, 37:** A.D: Nero, the Roman emperor who was the scourge of early Christians, is born. After his suicide in A.D. 68, many believed he would return, and "false Neros" appeared throughout the eastern provinces.

**13 December, 1835:** Phillips Brooks, Episcopal prelate and author of "O Little Town of Bethlehem," is born in Boston. Rector Phillips Brooks (1835-1903) of Philadelphia, wrote the words to O Little Town of Bethlehem in 1868, following a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. He was inspired by the view of Bethlehem from the hills of Palestine especially at night time hence the lyrics of O Little Town of Bethlehem. His church organist Lewis Redner (1831-1908) wrote the melody to O Little Town of Bethlehem for the Sunday school children's choir.

**14 December, 1997:** Dr. Miss. Annamma Mathew of Ankola Ashram passes away. Annamma was born (28 December, 1922) as the fifth child of Kuriannoor Athinilkunnathil Cheriya Mathai and Kumbanad Puzhikkalayil Aleyamma. She had her school education in Kumbanad, Eraviperoor and Kottayam. She was a nursery school teacher in S.C. Seminary School in Tiruvalla, from 1942-1945. After that she joined the South India Bible Institute in Kolar (Karnataka) for her theological training. In 1948, she became a member of our Christa Mitra Ashram in Ankola. She got her medical degree (LSMF) from the Ludhiana Medical College (1951-56) and served our Ashram Hospital till her death. Annamma was a permanent member of the Ashram. She served as a teacher, doctor, social worker, Acharya of the Ashram and mother to the orphans and destitute. She had a deep commitment to the Lord and dedicated her life for the service of humanity. Her selfless, sacrificial and dedicated life is a challenge and inspiration to all. She was called home at 9.15am on Sunday, 14 December, 1997, and was buried in St. Paul's Mar Thoma Church Cemetery, Ankola. Her funeral was the first of its kind in the history of Ankola. People from all walks of life gathered for her funeral procession as a sign of their love and respect. She was the "Mother Teresa" of Ankola. During her 41 years of Medical Service, she never accepted any salary. Her brother, Late Rev. A.C. Zachariah, was one of the co-founders of the Hoskote Mission. Her sister, Miss. Aleyamma Mathew, is a member of the Ankola Ashram.

**14 December, 1909:** Birth of Rev. K. C. Thomas, Kalloopara (d.7 Aug 2000). Achen's father Karimpil Cheriyaachen was one of the famous evangelists of the Mar Thoma Church. He became deacon on 28 April 1945 and priest on 1 September 1945. Rev. Mahesh Thomas Cherian is his son.

**15 December, 1896:** Birth of Rev. K.J. Thomas (Sr) Kalathrayil, Maramon (d.26 Jun 1965). He started his career with the CSSM (Children's Special Service Mission) work in Travancore. He became deacon on 13 Sep 1930 and priest on 1931. He served parishes in Mavelikkara, Pullad, Mundakayam, Mallapally, Maramon and Kumbanad. With the permission of the Metropolitan, in 1947 and 1965 he translated Mar Thoma Liturgy (Jacob's liturgy) into English.

**16 December, 1714:** Revivalist and evangelist George Whitefield, the best-known figure of the American Great Awakening, is born in Gloucester, England. George Whitefield was born, the youngest of seven children, on December 16, 1714, in Gloucester, England. He was born in the Bell Inn where his father, Thomas, was a wine merchant and innkeeper. His father died when George was two, and his widowed mother, Elizabeth (born in 1680), struggled to provide for her family. At about age 15, George persuaded his mother to let him leave school and work in the inn, because he thought he would never make much use of his education. However, at night George sat up late, becoming a diligent student of the Bible. Whitefield was an astounding preacher from the beginning, and within a year it was said that "his voice startled England like a trumpet blast." In his preaching ministry he crossed the Atlantic thirteen times and became known as the 'apostle of the British empire.'

**17 December, 1912:** Yale-educated Chicago native Bill Borden, heir to a fortune in real estate and milk production, boards a ship to China via Egypt. Converted to Christ as a young man, Borden had given his inheritance and his life to the cause of world evangelism. Only a month after arriving in Egypt, he contracted spinal meningitis and died. However, publication of his story prompted many young people to enter the mission field.

**17 December, 1917:** Bolsheviks confiscate all property of the Russian Orthodox Church and abolish religious instruction in the schools. Within two decades, at least 45,000 priests were reportedly martyred in the country.

**18 December, 1707:** Charles Wesley, who founded Methodism with his brother John, is born in England. A celebrated and prolific hymn writer, his "Hark the Herald Angels Sing" and "Lo, He Comes" are widely sung this time of year.

**18 December, 2006:** Rev. Dr. K. K. George passes away (b. 2 Jun 1916). He became deacon on 14 Nov. 1939 and priest on 14 Nov. 1942. Achen was the General Secretary of Mar Thoma Sunday School Samajam from 1952 to 1982. From 1946 to 1982 he was one of the official translators of the Maramon Convention. He was the secretary/Chairman of many committees and associations of Mar Thoma Church. For a few years he was the principal of the Mar Thoma College in Tiruvalla.

**19 December, 1734:** Count Nicolaus von Zinzendorf, founder of the modern Moravian church and a pioneer in ecumenism and missions, is recognized as a minister by the theology faculty of Tubingen, Germany.

**19 December, 1987:** Ordination of Rev. Dr. K.P. Mathai, (B.A. Hons., B.D. Asbury Seminary USA, M. Th. Asbury Seminary USA, Ph.D. Drew University, USA), Karimpanammannil Anicadu near Tiruvalla. He was the principal of the Bangarapet South Indian Biblical Seminary at the time of his ordination. He was ordained as deacon at the age of 59 on 19<sup>th</sup> December 1987. He became a priest on 8 January 1988. He was born in 24<sup>th</sup> March 1928 and passed away on 20<sup>th</sup> August 2001. He was a missionary in

Hoskote Mission Field for many years. He spent his final years teaching at the Abraham Mar Thoma Memorial Bible Institute, Kompady, Tiruvalla.

**20 December, 1962:** Rev. T. L. Varghese, Kundara passes away (b.10 Jan 1905). He was the vicar of Mar Thoma Parishes in Mylam, Adoor, Kalayapuram, Thalavoor, Pattamala, Kaithacode, Mukhathala, Perayam and Ashtamudi. He was the secretary of Titus II Mar Thoma Metropolitan and Yohannan Mar Timotheos Episcopa (Juhanon Mar Thoma).

**21 December, 1807:** Anglican clergyman and hymn writer John Newton (b. July 24, 1725) and author of "Amazing Grace," dies. "Amazing Grace" is a well-known Christian hymn. The words were written late in 1772 by Englishman John Newton. They first appeared in print in Newton's Olney Hymns (1779), which he worked on with William Cowper.

**21 December, 1961:** Death of Rev. M. O. Koshy, Mulamannil, Karakkal (b.17 Feb 1897). He became deacon on 31 Mar. 1918 and priest on 25 Dec. 1919. For few years he taught in Neerettupuram School. He was a man of prayer with healing power.

**21 December, 1970:** Death of Rev. V. M. Koruth, Keezhvaipur (b.12 Nov.1918). After passing M.A., B.D., examinations he became a deacon on 26 May 1945 and priest on 22 Jun 1946. He served parishes in Munnar, Kottayam, Anaprampal, Singapore and Tiruvalla. For a few years he was the Traveling secretary / Central Travancore Missionary of the Evangelistic Association.

**21 December:** St. Thomas Day - Sabha Dinam. We believe that St. Thomas one of the disciples of Jesus Christ is the founder of our Church. According to tradition he reached the Malabar Coast at Cranganor (Kodungalloor) in 52 A.D. Kerala Christians observe St. Thomas Day on 21 December every year. Special thanks giving and remembrance services are held on this day in most of the churches. In the Mar Thoma Church we observe it as Sabha Dinam.

**22 December, 1899:** Evangelist Dwight L. Moody, the chief spokesman for the revivalist wing of American evangelicalism, dies. Dwight Lyman Moody (b. February 5, 1837), also known as D.L. Moody, was an American evangelist and publisher who founded the Moody Church, Northfield School and Mount Hermon School in Massachusetts (now the Northfield Mount Hermon School), the Moody Bible Institute and Moody Publishers.

**22 December, 1917:** Francesca Xavier Cabrini, founder of the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart, dies in Chicago's Columbus Hospital. Frances Cabrini was born in Sant'Angelo Lodigiano in the province of Lombardy, northern Italy, two months prematurely, on July 15, 1850. Her father, Agostino, was a farmer and her mother, Stella, stayed at home with the children. Frances was the tenth of eleven brothers and sisters, only four of whom survived beyond adolescence. Small and weak as a child, these characteristics influenced her entire life. At the age of 27, in 1877, when she and her companions made their profession of religious vows, Frances added Xavier to her name, in tribute to the Jesuit, Francis Xavier, who evangelized the Orient.

**23 December, 2006:** Death of Rev. N. C. Varghese, Aarattupuzha (b.19 Oct 1932) He became deacon on 20 Jun 1963 and priest on 2 Aug 1963 and served more than 35 parishes. He was a teacher in A.M.M. Bible Institute in Tiruvalla for few years.

**24 December, 1491:** Spanish ascetic and theologian Ignatius Loyola, founder of the Jesuits, is born in Guipuzcoa, Spain. Ignatius of Loyola, was the principal founder and first Superior General of the Society of Jesus, a religious order of the Catholic Church professing direct service to the Pope in terms of mission. Members of the order are called Jesuits. The compiler of the Spiritual Exercises and a gifted spiritual director, Ignatius has been described by Pope Benedict XVI as being above all a man of God, who gave the first place of his life to God and a man of profound prayer. He was very active in fighting the Protestant Reformation and promoting the subsequent Counter-Reformation. He was beatified and then canonized to receive the title of Saint on March 12, 1622. His feast day is July 31, celebrated annually. He is the patron saint of Guipúzcoa as well as of the Society of Jesus.

**24 December, 1818:** Franz Gruber composes "Silent Night" in the St. Nicholas Church of Oberndorf, Austria. Franz Xaver Gruber (November 25, 1787–June 7, 1863) was an Austrian primary school teacher and church organist in the village of Arnsdorf. At the same time he was organist and choirmaster at St. Nicholas Church in the neighboring village of Oberndorf and then in later years moved on to Hallein, Salzburg. Together with Josef Mohr (original German lyrics), a Catholic priest, Gruber composed the Christmas carol "Silent Night, Holy Night". On December 24, 1818, Mohr, an assistant pastor at St. Nicholas, showed Gruber a six-stanza poem he had written in 1816. He asked Gruber to write a melody and guitar arrangement for the poem. At Christmas Mass, while Mohr played his guitar, the two men sang "Stille Nacht" for the first time. The St. Nicholas choir repeated the last two lines of each verse.

**25 December, 1927:** Birth of Rev M. M. Thomas Rev. M. M. Thomas a member of the Mundaparampil family of Poovathoor near Chengannur became a deacon of our church on Dec 14, 1957 and priest on Feb 12, 1958. He was the General Secretary of the Mar Thoma Yuvajana Sakhyam and it was during his term the Adoor Youth Centre was constructed. He was the first missionary of our church to the Andaman Islands. He was the vicar of the Dubai Mar Thoma Parish from May 1972 to May 1975. He was called to his eternal home while attending the New Year service at the Kuttapuzha (Tiruvalla) Mar Thoma Church on Jan 1, 1985.

**25 December, 1911:** Birth of T. P. Mathew Kasseesa, Ayroor (d.19 July 1945). After passing B.A., B. D., and L. T degrees he became priest in 1942. His wife Sosamma was the daughter of the famous evangelist Karimpil Cheriyaachen. He taught in the Ashram High school, Perumbavoor; M. T. Seinary School, Kottayam; Theological Seminary in Kottayam, and Union Biblical Seminary in Kannanmula, Trivandrum.

**25 December, 1905:** Formation of the National Missionary Society of India. On Christmas Day 1905, a meeting of the church leaders held in the historic library of

William Carey at Serampore decided to form a National Missionary Society. The following principles were adopted on that day **1.** The work of evangelization shall be done by Indians **2.** That its expenses should be met by Indian money. **3.** They must choose mission fields in areas where Western Missions were not working **4.** The society should not form a church or denomination but entrust the converts they gather to the care of the churches in that area.

**26 December, 1065:** The first building of Westminster Abbey is dedicated, though legend holds that the abbey was founded as early as 616. The Collegiate Church of St Peter at Westminster, which is almost always referred to by its original name of Westminster Abbey, is a large, mainly Gothic church, (it served as a cathedral from 1546 - 1556), in Westminster, London, just to the west of the Palace of Westminster. It is the traditional place of coronation and burial site for English monarchs.

**27 December, 1922:** Birth of Rev. T.M. Cherian, Ayroor (d.25 Jun 1955). After his theological training from the Leonard Theological College in Jabalpur, he became deacon on 23 Jun 1951 and later priest. He served parishes in Munnar, Vadsserikkara and Trichur.

**27 December 1957:** Death of K.J.C. Abraham Kasseesa, Kottooreth (b.22 Mar 1884). Ordained in 1914, he was the vicar of the parishes in and around Chengannur. He had the courage to object to educational reforms of Divan of Travancore, C. P. Ramaswamy Iyer, which restricted the religious freedom of Christians.

**27 December, 1999:** Death of Rev. K. N. George, Mulakkuzha (b.20 Oct.1913). He was ordained deacon on 21 May, 1940, and priest on 14 November, 1940. He served as the vicar of 37 parishes. For five years he served as the correspondent (Administrator) of the Schools managed by our Sunday School Samajam. When the Christian College in Chengannur was established in 1964, he was the fund raising project convener. Later, he was a member and treasurer of the College Governing Committee and in 1965; he visited many parishes in various parts of India to raise funds for the Christian College. Achen was the committee member of the Evangelistic Association and the Yuvajana Sakhyam. For a few years he was the Vice President of the Yuvajana Sakhyam. He gave leadership for the establishment of the Peringala Mission field. He was also the Manager of the Mar Thoma Schools in Venmony and Edayaranmula. He was the founding President of the Bible Society Branch in Chengannur. Bishop Rt. Rev. Thomas Mar Timotheos and Rev. Ninan George are his sons.

**28 December, 1922:** Birth of Dr. Miss. Annamma Mathew. Born as the fifth child of Kuriannoor Athinilkunnathil Cheriya Mathai and Kumbanad Puzhikkalayil Aleyamma, Annamma had her school education in Kumbanad, Eraviperoor and Kottayam. She was a nursery school teacher in our S. C. Seminary School in Tiruvalla, from 1942-1945. After that she joined in the South India Bible Institute in Kolar for her theological education. In 1948, she became a member of our Christa Mitra Ashram in Ankola. She took her medical degree (LSMF) from the Ludhiana Medical College (1951-56) and till her death (14 Dec, 1997) she served our Ashram Hospital.

**28 December, 1733:** Ordination of the first Indian Pastor for the Church in India. In 1728 the Danish missionaries wrote to the King of Denmark for the permission to ordain Mr. Arumugam as the first Indian priest of the Church in India. Arumugam was ordained with the new name "Aaron" in a service conducted in the Lutheran Church pattern in the Tamil language in the city of Tranquebar in Tamil Nadu. Aaron passed away on 25 June, 1745, at the age of 47.

**28 December, 1966:** Death of Rev. A. M. George, Aviottu, Kottarakkara (b.1889) After his theological training in the CNI in Kottayam he became priest and served the Mar Thoma parishes in Chathannur, Trichur, Kottayam, Punalur and Elanthur. He taught in M. T. Seminary School in Kottayam and the Mar Thoma Schools in Vazhoor and Chathannur. He was also a scout master. He spent part of his salary for the education of poor children. He was a celibate priest.

**29 December, 1917:** Consecration of Dr. Abraham Mar Thoma Metropolitan. Rev. M N. Abraham of Marettu, Kalloopara was consecrated as the bishop of Mar Thoma Church on 29 Th December 1917. Till 1943 he was the Suffragan Metropolitan and from 1943 to 1947 he was the Metropolitan. He was a fervent evangelist; his chief contribution lay in the promotion of evangelistic work and the encouragement of lay leadership in the church. He was a staunch nationalist who stood for the democratic rights of the people. He resisted the undemocratic and dictatorial actions of Dewan Sir. C P Ramaswamy Iyer of Travancore.

**30 December, 1915:** Birth of Rev. Dr. K. C. Mathew, Anicadu (d.17 Mar 1997). After passing B.A., L.T. examinations in India, he went to USA for higher studies and passed his M.A., B.D. and T. H.D. A few years before his ordination, he worked with a Methodist High School in Kolar and with Theological seminary in Yavatmal, Maharashtra. He became deacon on 24 Oct. 1970 and priest on 7 May 1971. For 10 years he taught in the Mar Theological Seminary in Kottayam.

**31 December, 1600:** Formation of East India Company. On 31 December 1600 Queen Elizabeth gave permission to the East India Company to have trade relationship with India. In 1813 this authority was renewed by the British Parliament and official permission was given to Missionary Societies to do mission work in India

**31 December, 1384:** John Wycliffe passes away. John Wycliffe lived almost 200 years before the Reformation, but his beliefs and teachings closely match those of Luther, Calvin and other Reformers. As a man ahead of his time, historians have called Wycliffe the "Morning star of the Reformation". Born in the 1300s, Wycliffe criticized abuses and false teachings in the Church. In 1382, he translated an English Bible - the first European translation done in over 1,000 years.

**31 December, 1911:** Birth of Rev. Abraham John, Thottunkal, Varickadu (29 Aug 1979). After obtaining B.A., B.D., S.T.M., and M.A degrees he worked with the American School in Sholapur and served as the Unit secretary of the Western India SCM. Became

priest on 19 January 1950. He was the secretary of Bishop Abraham Mar Thoma for few years. He has written many books and articles. He was also the General Secretary of the Yuvajana Sakhyam, Vice- Principal of the AMM Bible Institute, and the General Secretary of the Voluntary Evangelist Association.

**31 December, 2006:** Death of Rev. P. K. Koshy, Elanthur (b.8 Mar 1920). Achen was an expert in naturopathy and has written several books on the subject. He was also the leader for many Children's Camps, Conferences and VBS in India and abroad (Mar Thoma Boy's camp, Mar Thoma Girl's Camp, Mar Thoma Student's Conference). The name of Rev. P. K. Koshy conjures up different pictures to different people. He was faithful, fervent, diligent, possessing great faith and vision and lover of the lost souls. His greatest attribute was his ability to inspire & teach others.

