

CHURCH HISTORY FOR THE MONTH OF MARCH

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March, 1925: Establishment of the Malayalam wing of the Christian Literature Society. The Malayalam Language wing of the Christian Literature Society (CLS) was established in March, 1925. Rev. V. P. Mammen, Mr. K. K. Kuruvilla and Mr. T. K. Kuruvilla were Mar Thoma Church members who co-operated with the Anglican Church leaders for the establishment of the Malayalam wing.

March, 1817: The Great Bible Translator, Benjamin Baily, reaches Kottayam. Rev. Thomas Norton, the first missionary of the Church Missionary Society reached Kottayam on 19 June, 1816. The second Missionary, Benjamin Baily and his wife Elizabeth, reached Kottayam on March, 1817. Benjamin Baily translated and printed the New Testament in Malayalam in 1829, and the full Bible was translated and printed in 1841-42. He returned to England on 20 March, 1850 after 33 years of mission work in Kerala.

1 March, 1854: Pioneer missionary Hudson Taylor lands in Shanghai, China. Hudson Taylor founded the China Inland Mission in 1865, and popularized the idea that missionaries should live and dress like the people they seek to evangelize.

2 March, 1984: Death of Rev. P. T. Thomas, Elanthur (b.27 Sep.1914). After his training in the M. T. Seminary in Kottayam, Rev. P. T. Thomas became a deacon on 18 Apr 1942 and priest on 14 Nov.1942. He served 27 parishes including Thevalakkara, Pathanamthitta and Pulinthitta.

2 March, 1791: Founder of Methodism, John Wesley dies in London. Thanks to his organizational genius, we know exactly how many followers he had when he died: 71,668 British members, 294 preachers, 43,265 American members with 198 preachers and 19 missionaries. Today the Methodists number about 30 million worldwide.

3 March, 1263: French cardinal, Hugh of St. Cher, dies. He reputedly compiled the first Bible concordance and was the first person to divide the Old and New Testaments into chapters.

3 March, 1547: At the Seventh Session of the Council of Trent, the Roman Catholic Church defines its theology of the sacraments. Arguing that seven sacraments are necessary for salvation; Baptism, Confirmation, the Eucharist, Penance, Extreme Unction, Orders, and Matrimony; the council rejected the teaching of most Protestants that only two were required: Baptism and the Lord's Supper.

3 March, 1960: Rev. M. C. Thomas (b.9 Oct.1888) Malayil, Ettichuvadu, Ranny passes away. Rev. M. C. Thomas led the establishment of Ebenezer High School, Ranny and was

its manager for years. In addition to his spiritual work, he took a keen interest in the construction of public roads and the establishment of a post office in Ranny. Achen passed away on 03 March, 1960.

3 March, 1962: Rev. K. M. Thomas, Ayroor (b.16 Aug.1904) passes away. After passing the senior Cambridge examination he worked in Malaysia for a few years and then joined the Bishop's college in Calcutta for theological training. He became a deacon in 1947 and priest in 1948. For a few years he taught at the M. T. High School, Ayroor.

4 March, 1866: Alexander Campbell, (b.12 Sept.1788) founder of the Disciples of Christ and the Church of Christ, dies. He sought desperately to get back to a "simple evangelical Christianity" founded on the Bible alone.

4 March, 1961: K. C. Zachariah Kasseesa, Kuzhiyamvettathu, Punthala (b.1877) passes away. After his education in the Cambridge Nicholson Institute in Kottayam, he became a deacon in 1895 and afterwards priest. He served many parishes including Ranny, Mannamaruthy, Kayamkulam and Niranam.

5 March, 1797: The three-masted ship Duff arrives in Tahiti's Matavai Bay, completing a 207-day voyage from London. The ship, commanded by Captain John Wilson, had aboard 37 artisans and pastors of the London Missionary Society (L.M.S.) and their families who were to be resettled in the South Pacific on the islands of Tahiti, Tonga and the Marquesas.

March 6, 1475: Italian artist Michelangelo di Lodovico Buonarroti Simoni (d.18 Feb.1564) famous for his paintings (the Sistine Chapel), sculpture ("David"), and architecture (the rebuilding of St. Peter's Cathedral), is born in Caprese, commonly known as Michelangelo, was an Italian Renaissance painter, sculptor, architect, poet and engineer.

6 March, 1984: Lutheran pastor Martin Niemoller (b.14 Jan.1892), a founder of Germany's confessing Church and a prisoner for his opposition to the Nazis, dies. Because of his advocacy for complete neutrality between East and West Germany (which was perceived as compromise with communism), he spent his later years in obscurity.

7 March, 1990: Very Rev. P. J. Thomas passes away. Rev. Thomas was a deep scholar and gifted linguist, besides being an ardent evangelist. He passed his B. D. degree examination from United Theological College, Bangalore with distinction and joined the ministry of the Church. The call came to him to take up the mission work in Ankola when he was Vicar of the Kottayam Jerusalem Mar Thoma Parish. He readily accepted the challenge and went to Ankola with his family and established the Ashram there with two young graduates as fellow workers, Mr. Philip Oommen (now Philipose Mar Chrysostom Valiya Metropolitan) and Mr. John Thomas (late Rev. P. John Thomas). Rev. P. J. Thomas

was designated Vicar General in 1976 after he came back to Kerala. He passed away on March 7, 1990.

7 March, 1817: Hindus burn the Christian Church in Tiruvalla. During the early years of the nineteenth century Travancore, Christians had to face many difficulties from high class Hindus. After receiving permission from the Travancore Government, the Christians in Tiruvalla constructed a new church, which the Hindus did not like. So on Tuesday, 7 March 1817 (Kumbham 26, 990 ME) they gathered together and severely beat up Christians who came out of the Church after Holy Communion. They even burned the church to ashes. Col. Munro who was the British resident of the time gave strict instructions to the Divan of Travancore to take appropriate action immediately. Culprits were booked and were fined 7000 Panam (Currency of that time) to be paid to the Christians to build a new church and another 60,000 Panam was paid from the Government Treasury to the Metropolitan of the time as compensation.

7 March, 1530: Pope Clement VII rejects Henry VIII's request to divorce Catherine of Aragon. Henry eventually responded by declaring himself supreme head of England's church.

7 March, 1997: Rev. John Varghese of Sihora Ashram (b.5 July 1915) passes away. Rev John Varghese B.A., B.D. was a member of the Valettu Thoppil Family of Puthencavu, near Chengannur. After his education in the Trivandrum Maharajas College, he became a teacher in Perumbavoor Ashram School and later through the influence of Rev. Dr. C. E. Abraham, became one of the co-founders of the Sihora Ashram in Madhya Pradesh, in 1942.

8 March, 1698: British missionary Thomas Bray and four laymen founded the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge (S.P.C.K.) "to advance the honor of God and the good of mankind by promoting Christian knowledge both at home and in the other parts of the world by the best methods that should offer". S.P.C.K. started its work in India in 1711 and is now one of the leading Christian publishing Houses in India.

8 March, 1835: Freedom for slaves. CMS missionaries, Benjamin Bailey and Joseph Peet, freed to all slaves in the Munro Island on 8th March, 1835. Slavery was abolished from Travancore in 1855. (**Munro** Thuruth (Thuruth = Malayalam for Island) is a cluster of eight tiny islands in Kollam District, Kerala State. Named after the British resident in the Colonial India, Colonel John Munro who was also the Divan (Prime Minister) of the Princely States of Travancore- Cochin during 1812-1814 A.D. Surrounded by Ashtamudi Lake and Kallada River, this piece of land measures 13.4 sq.km)

8 March, 1920: Birth of Rev. P. K. Koshy, Elanthur (d.31 Dec.2006) 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 etc.). 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 a lover of lost souls. His greatest attribute was his ability to inspire and teach others.

9 March, 1952: Very. Rev. V. P. Mammen (b.11 Jun 1876) passes away. He was one of the first four graduates who accepted ordination together in the Mar Thoma Church. The others were Rev. V. T. Chacko, Rev. K. E. Oommen and Rev. George John. They could have secured very lucrative secular posts in the state government service, but opted to serve the Church. Rev. Mammen spent his life and resources building up the Sunday School Samajam and made it one of the best Christian education organizations in the whole of India. He was also the Secretary General of All India Sunday School Association for few years.

9 March, 1895: Beginning of the Maramon Convention. The first Maramon Convention was held from Friday 9th March to Sunday 18th March, 1895 (10 days) under the leadership of Most. Rev. Titus I Mar Thoma Metropolitan. M/s. David and Wordsworth from Ceylon (Sri Lanka) were the speakers. Deacon Kakkasseri Varghese of Kunnamkulam translated the messages from English to Malayalam.

9 March, 320 (traditional date): Roman soldiers leave Christian soldiers naked on the ice of a frozen pond in Sebaste, Armenia. They placed baths of hot water around them to tempt them to renounce their faith. When one did so, a pagan guard inspired by the fortitude of the remaining Christians; converted and joined the freezing Christians. They were all killed and made famous by Basil of Caesarea and Gregory of Nyssa.

9 March, 395: (traditional date): Gregory of Nyssa, Cappadocian father and bishop, dies. An outstanding thinker, theologian, orator, and ascetical author, he was very influential in developing the theology of the Trinity.

9 March, 1936: C. V. Kunjiraman (1871-1949) speaks at the Maramon Convention. Most of the Maramon convention speakers are Christian leaders. Non Christian leaders also are allowed to speak occasionally to express their views. On 9 Mar.1936 Mr. C. V. Kunjiraman, one of the prominent Ezhava (SNDP) leaders was given the privilege to speak at the convention. Religious harmony always existed in Kerala.

10 March, 1748: John Newton (24 Jul 1725- 21 Dec 1807) the captain of a slave ship, converts to Christianity during a huge storm at sea. He had been reading Thomas Kempis's *The Imitation of Christ*, and was struck by a line about the "uncertain continuance of life." He eventually became an Anglican clergyman, the author of the famous hymn "Amazing Grace," and a zealous abolitionist.

10 March, 1898: George Muller dies at the age of 93. George Muller (b. 27 Sep, 1805) was an ordinary man. His father was a tax collector. He was a man of faith and his life continues to be an inspiration and witness to all who commit their lives to God. By faith

and prayer he opened many orphanages in England and could support and take care of more than 18,000 orphan children during his lifetime. His work still continues through George Muller Foundation.

11 March, 1948: Beginning of the Mission Hospital in Kattanam. The inauguration of the St. Thomas Mission Hospital in Kattanam was held on 11 March, 1948, in a building in a 4 acre plot donated by Dr. C. G. Kurian, Chagethrariyil. This is the largest hospital (200 beds) of the Mar Thoma Church.

11 March, 1909: Birth of Rev. C. M. Thomas, Chalumatt Tiruvalla (d.11 May 1990). After passing his B.A., L.T., examination he started his career as a teacher and taught in Ayroor, Bombay and Trichur. He became a deacon on 22 Feb 1947 and priest on 5 Jul 1947. He served 17 parishes including Coimbatoor and Madras and also served as secretary to the Metropolitans Juhanon Mar Thoma and Alexander Mar Thoma.

11 March, 2004: Death of Rev. M. P. Mathew, Kaviyoor, (Sihora) (b.26 Jun 1916). After his primary education in Kaviyoor he went to Trivandrum for high school. When he was in Std. 4, he had the privilege to hear Muthampakkal Sadhu Kochoonju Upadeshi's messages and dedicated his life to God. After his schooling, he joined the South India Plantations office in Trivandrum as an accountant. He took initiative to form the Mar Thoma parishes in South Travancore. Through the influence of Rev. Dr. C. E. Abraham, he decided to form the Sihora Ashram, Madhya Pradesh along with Rev. K. T. Thomas and Rev. John Varghese. He left his job in Trivandrum and went to Sihora. After that he joined the Serampore Theological College in 1949. He became a deacon on 1st May, 1953, and priest on 25th May, 1953. Due to his hard work, many parishes were formed in North India.

11 March, 1812: Fire engulfs missionary William Carey's print shop in Serampore, India, destroying his massive polyglot dictionary, two grammar books, sets of type for 14 eastern languages, and whole versions of the Bible. Undaunted, Carey said, "The loss is heavy, but as traveling a road the second time is usually done with greater ease and certainty than the first time, so I trust the work will lose nothing of real value . . . We are cast down but not in despair." News of the fire also catapulted Carey to fame, bringing in abundant funds and volunteer labor.

11 March, 1958: Death of Rev. K. V. Mathew, Pennukkara (b.4 Sep 1918) K. M. Varghese and Aleyamma were his parents. He became a deacon on 22 Aug.1946. Rev. Varghese K Mathew is his son.

12 March, 417: Pope Innocent I dies. His claims for the Roman see's supremacy went farther than any of his predecessors, as he asserted Rome's reach extended to the whole church.

12 March, 515 BC: Construction is completed on the Second Temple in Jerusalem. The First Temple was built by King Solomon in seven years during the 10th century BC. It was the center of ancient Judaism and has remained a focal point for Jewish services over the millennia. The Temple replaced the Tabernacle of Moses and the Tabernacles at Shiloh, Nov, and Givon as the central focus of Jewish faith. This First Temple was destroyed by the Babylonians in 586 BC, and was rebuilt seventy years later by Cyrus the Great in 516 BC. Centuries later, it was renovated by Herod in about 20 BC, and this Second Temple was subsequently destroyed by the Romans in 70 AD. All of the outer walls still stand, although the Temple itself has long since been destroyed. And for many years it was believed that the western wall of the complex was the only wall standing.

13 March, 1815: Presbyterian medical missionary James Hepburn is born in Milton, Pennsylvania. In the course of his missions work, he compiled the first Japanese-English dictionary and supervised the first complete translation of the Bible into Japanese.

13 March, 1942: Valiya Yacob Kathanar (b.25 Jul.1851), Cheriyaamadathil, Vazhoor dies. Yacob Kathanar became a deacon at the age of 13 and established more than 20 parishes in and around Kottayam. He was an able social reformer and helped in the establishment of many English schools in our church.

13 March, 1883: Birth of V. I. Philipose Kathanar, Vadakkanazhikathu, Kundara (d.9 Jan.1966). V. I. Philipose Kathanar became a deacon on 15 April 1897 and priest on 10 Mar.1904. He was an expert in the Syriac language and taught many members of our clergy including our Metropolitan Bishop Chrysostom. He worked hard to propagate the Gospel in Tamil Nadu. Rev. Dr. V. P. Thomas is his son.

13 March, 1967: Death of Rev.V.M. Abraham, Valiyakalayil, Kuriannoor (b.23 Jun.1908) Rev. V. M. Abraham became a deacon on 13 Mar.1949 and priest in 1950. He served parishes in Pazhanji, Thumpamon, Thurithikkadu, Kavungumprayer, Perumpetty, Kuriannoor, Pullad, Othara, Enathu and Vadsserikkara.

14 March, 1872: Journalist Henry Stanley and explorer-missionary David Livingstone part company, having spent the last five months in Africa together. Stanley returned to England to write his bestseller, *How I Found Livingstone*. Livingstone, in the meantime, got lost again in a swamp literally up to his neck. Within a year and a half, he died in a mud hut, kneeling beside his cot in prayer.

15 March, 1517: Needing money to rebuild St. Peter's basilica, Pope Leo X announces a special sale of indulgences. A Dominican named Johann Tetzel led the way in promoting the sale in Germany and erroneously declared that indulgences would cover future sins (Leo's forgave all past sins). The teaching angered monk Martin Luther, who soon posted his 95 Thesis in response.

16 March, 1992: South African President F. W. De Klerk makes a final plea to the whites to end apartheid. Apartheid was the racial segregation policy of the government of South Africa from 1948 to 1994. Under the apartheid system, non-whites – classified as Bantu (black), coloured (mixed), or Indian – did not share full rights of citizenship with the white minority. For example, black people could not vote in parliamentary elections, and until 1990 many public facilities and institutions were restricted to the use of one race only.

17 March, 1997: Death of Rev. Dr. K. C. Mathew, Anicadu (b.30 Dec.1915). After passing his B. A, L.T. examinations from India, he went to USA for higher studies and passed M.A., B.D. and T. H.D. Before his ordination he worked with Methodist High School in Kolar and with Theological seminary in Youth Mal for a few years. He became a deacon on 24 Oct. 1970 and priest on 7 May 1971. He taught at the theological seminary in Kottayam for 10 years.

18 March, 1861: London's Metropolitan Tabernacle, the sanctuary of English Baptist preacher Charles Haddon Spurgeon, opens. Spurgeon had insisted that the enormous building employ Greek architecture because the New Testament was written in Greek, a decision that influenced church architecture throughout the world.

18 March, 1985: Death of Rev. Dr. C. E. Abraham, Cheruthottathil, Kozhencherry (b.7 Jan.1898). Rev. Dr. C. E. Abraham was a member of the Cheruthottathill family in Kozhencherry. He was ordained as deacon in 1920 and priest in 1930. He was Professor/Principal of the Serampore Theological College from 1925-1959. In addition to that he was the General Secretary of the Mar Thoma Yuvajana Sakhyam and Evangelistic Association. Rev. Abraham also served as a visiting professor for many foreign universities around the world. He wrote many books including “Church History” and “Builders of Indian Churches”. He was the editor of the First Mar Thoma Church Directory. Rev. Abraham will be remembered as one of the most learned and farsighted priests of the Mar Thoma Church.

19 March, 1813: Birth of David Livingstone (d.1 May 1873). David Livingstone was born in Blantyre, Scotland on March 19, 1813. The son of poor pious parents he was the first white man to cross Africa with the Gospel of Christ. His accomplishments were incalculable: traveler, zoologist, philanthropist, linguist, author, geographer, mercantile director, physician, theologian, explorer, astronomer, missionary, teacher, evangelist and emancipator.

19 March, 2002: Death of Rev. J. John, Mannamchalil, Thevalakkara (b.15 May 1919). He became a deacon on 12 Jul 1948 and priest on 12 Feb 1949. He served 32 parishes including Chengannur and Thevalakkara. Rev. Reji John is his son.

19 March, 1925: Birth of Rev. C. A. Mathew, Cherukara, Theodical, Pathanamthitta. Rev. C. A. Mathew became a deacon on 10 April 1954 and priest on 20 December 1954. For a

few years he taught at the Mar Thoma Theological Seminary in Kottayam. He served many parishes in and around Ayroor and served as the Traveling Secretary of the Mar Thoma Evangelistic Association and the Secretary of the Carmel Agathimandiram in Ayroor. Achen passed away on 8 Nov. 2007 at Boston in USA.

20 March, 1852: Abolitionist Harriet Beecher Stowe, daughter of the famous Congregational minister Lyman Beecher, publishes *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (which had been serialized in an antislavery newspaper). The book sold one million copies and was so influential in arousing antislavery sentiment that Abraham Lincoln is reputed to have said upon meeting Stowe in 1863: "So you're the little woman who wrote the book that made this Great War!"

20 March, 1926: Birth of Rev. P. C. Joseph, Pulinhitta, Elanthur (d.20 March 2002) Rev. P. C. Joseph became a deacon on 6 Sep 1951 and priest on 23 Feb 1952. He served many parishes including Aluva, Poona, Kirkkee, Ipoh, Penang and Madras. From 1984-1987 he was the Sabha Secretary.

20 March, 1963: Death of P. M. Geevarughese Kasseesa, Kottarakkara (Odanavattathachen) (b.1884). Geevarughese Kasseesa became a deacon in 1898 and priest in 1901. He served the parishes in Pattamala, Villur, Chengamanadu, Odanavattom and Andoor.

21 March, 1927: Birth of Rev. T. I. Joseph, Therakathu, Thittamel, Chengannur (d.18 Nov.2004). After passing his B.A., B.D., examinations he became a deacon on 16 Jul.1954 and priest on 28 Oct.1954. He took the initiative to establish the Mar Thoma Parishes in Texas.

21 March, 1957: Death of C. K. Varghese Kasseesa, Cherukara, Ayroor (b.31 Jul 1890). C. K. Varghese Kasseesa became a deacon on 19 Aug.1926 and priest on 12 Feb. 1927. He married Sosamma, daughter of Thumpamon Chruthuthiyil Kandamma (Kandamma was the first General Secretary of the Sevika Sanghom). He taught at the English School in Nedumprayar (Maramon) and worked with the Scripture Union for 10 years. Very Rev. C. G. Alexander is his son.

21 March, 1747: Slave trading sea captain John Newton dramatically converts to Christianity during a violent storm. He is best known for penning the hymn "Amazing Grace".

21 March, 1978: Rev. P. C. Cherian passes away (b.18 Jan 1907). After passing his B.A., L.T., examinations he served St. Thomas School in Keezhillam as a teacher and headmaster. He became a deacon on 15 Apr.1938. He was the vicar of Keezhillam and Thodupuzha parishes. His brother P. C. George was the founder of the Manganam Agathimandiram.

21 March, 2000: Rev. T. A. Thomas, Thazhathillathu Mullasseril, Vadasserikkara passes away (b.21 Jun 1909). He became a deacon on 21 May 1940 and priest on 14 Nov.1940. He took the initiative to establishment the Kaichira, Kappakadu, Ayroor Carmel, Malyalappuzha and Karimkutty Mar Thoma parishes.

22 March, 337: Constantine, the first Christian emperor of Rome, dies at the age of 47. As emperor, he issued an edict officially tolerating Christianity, though he did little to stave off paganism. He also summoned the Council of Nicea to settle the Arian dispute over the nature of Christ.

22 March, 1884: Birth of Kottoorethu K. J. C. Abraham Kasseesa (d.27 Dec.1957). He was ordained in 1914, and was the vicar of the parishes in and around Chengannur. He had the courage to object educational reforms of Divan of Travancore, C. P. Ramaswamy Iyer, which restricted religious freedom of Christians.

22 March, 1951: Death of K. M. Philipose Kasseesa, Kolekulangara (b.27 Jul.1886) He became a deacon on 1905 and priest on 1907. He served many parishes including Pallikkal, Kattanam, Kappil, Chunakkara and Kurathiyadu.

23 March, 1966: The Archbishop of Canterbury meets with Pope Paul VI at the Vatican, the first such meeting between Anglican and Catholic leaders since Henry VIII broke with Rome more than 400 years earlier.

23 March, 1902: Birth of Rev. N. M.Philipose, Nedyikalayil, Naranganam, Kozhencherry (d.10 Apr.1982). After his education in Madurai American College, and Kottayam seminary he became a deacon on 24 Nov 1927 and priest on 24 Nov. 1928. He served 19 Parishes including Kuriannoor, Kottayam and Ayroor.

24 March, 1928: Birth of Rev. Dr. K. P. Mathai. Rev. Mathai was a member of the Karimpanammannil Family of Anicadu, near Tiruvalla. For 32 years he was a teacher in the South Indian Biblical Seminary at Bangarapet, Karnataka. He was ordained in 1987 and till his retirement worked with the Hoskote Medical Mission Centre. He passed away on 20 August 2001.

24 March, 1820: Birth of Hymn writer Fanny Crosby. Frances Jane Crosby commonly known as Fanny Crosby, was an American lyricist best known for her Protestant Christian hymns. She was one of the most prolific hymnists in history, writing over 8,000 despite becoming blind after birth, also known for her preaching and speaking, during her lifetime Fanny Crosby was one of the best known women in the States. To this day, the vast majority of American hymnals contain her work. Some of her best known songs include "Blessed Assurance" "Jesus Is Tenderly Calling You Home" "Praise Him, Praise Him" and "To God be the Glory". Since some publishers were hesitant to have so many hymns by one person in their hymnals, Crosby used nearly 100 different pseudonyms during her career.

25 March, 1625: England's King James I dies. In 1604, at the Hampton Court Conference, James had authorized the translation project that produced the 1611 King James (Authorized) Version of the Bible.

25 March, 1902: Birth of Rev. Abraham Mathew, Valakom (d.25 Aug.1960). After his education in the Madurai College, he became a deacon on 24 Nov.1927 and priest on 28 Sept.1928. Mukkola Mission field was established by his ardent efforts. He led the reconstruction of the Takke Angadi Pally in Kunnankulam.

25 March, 1908: (11 Meenam 1083 M.E) God saves Titus I Mar Thoma. Headquarters of the Mar Thoma Church was shifted from Maramon to Tiruvalla in 1908. At that time there was no Aramana (Bishop's House) in Tiruvalla and the Bishop Titus I stayed in a thatched building near the present SCS School. In the early hours of 11 Meenam 1083 M.E, this building was set fire by enemies of the Church. The Bishop, who was asleep in the building, was saved by children and the boarding master, who stayed in the nearby S. C. S. School.

26 March, 1899: Birth of K. M. Mathai Kasseesa, Kuttamathayyathu, Pattazhi (d.9 Jul.1959). After graduating from the Seminary in Kottayam, he became priest in 1927. He was one of the few Mar Thoma Priests who showed keen interest in agriculture. He was the owner of a big agriculture farm in Thalavoor.

26 March, 1915: Birth of Rev. A. I. Jacob, Mallappally (d.12 Sept.1994). He became priest after completing his L.Th. studies in the Theological Seminary in Kottayam. He served 33 parishes including Karuvatta, Kadammanitta and Anicadu.

March 27, 1667: English poet John Milton (9 Dec.1608–8 Nov.1674) publishes *Paradise Lost*, an epic of humankind's creation and fall.

28 March, 1888: Birth of Vicar General, Very Rev. V. T. Chacko (d.17 Aug.1954). A member of the Vadakkethu family of Kuriannoor, he was a very able administrator. While he was the Vicar of the Trichur Parish, he conducted the Sabha Mandalam (which usually meets at Tiruvalla) in Trichur. He was one of the Division Secretaries and Sabha Secretary of our Church.

28 March, 1984: Rev. K. M. Jacob Kottara, Pooyappally (June 1881) passes away. Rev. K.M. Jacob, of Cherukarakunnil family of Kottara Bethel Mar Thoma Church, was born in June, 1881. He became a deacon of the church in 1897, and priest on 8 October, 1903. He was the first convener of the Kottarakkara Mar Thoma Convention and was one of the founding members of the Jubilee Mandiram in Kottarakkara. For certain parishes he was the Vicar for more than 40 years. Achen was called to his eternal home on 28 March, 1984. Achen served the Church for more than 86 years and his name is in the Guinness book of world record under the entry – 'longest religious service.'

28 March, 1928: Birth of Rev. C. C. Joseph, Thadiyoor (d.14 Sept.2006). Rev. C. C. Joseph became a deacon on 23 Aug 1952 and priest on 20 Dec 1952. He served more than 20 parishes including Pathanapuram Immanuel, Pollachi, Kuriannoor Salem, etc.

29 March, 1788: Death of Charles Wesley (b.18 Dec.1707). Charles Wesley was a leader of the Methodist movement and the younger brother of John Wesley. Despite their closeness, Charles and his brother did not always agree on questions relating to their beliefs. In particular, Charles was strongly opposed to the idea of a breach with the Church of England into which they had been ordained. Charles Wesley is chiefly remembered for the many hymns he wrote. In the course of his career, Charles Wesley published the words of over five and a half thousand hymns, writing the words for a further two thousand, many of which are still popular.

30 March, 1996: Miss. Mariam Samuel passes away. From 1946-1967, Miss Samuel was the Mar Thoma Sevika Sanghom Asst Secretary, Sevika Sanghom School Manager and the Principal of the Vanitha Mandiram. She was called home on 30th March, 1996.

31 March, 1920: Birth of Rev. C. M. Abraham, Chakkalayil, Thalavady (d.30 Nov 1995). Rev. C. M. Abraham became a deacon on 29 Aug 1950 and priest on 14 Apr.1951. He served 39 parishes including Channapettah, Karunagapally, Ranny and Kottayam. Rev. Alexander Abraham is his son.

31 March, 1996: Rev. A. C. Mathew, Tiruvalla, passes away (b.25 Feb 1913) He became a deacon on 14 Nov.1939 and priest on 6 Jun.1940. He served 17 parishes including Ernakulam and Tiruvalla. For a few years he was the North Travancore Missionary of the Evangelistic Association and The Chaplain of the Nicholson Girls High School. Achen wrote two books on Baptism (Christian Baptism & Child Baptism) which are very popular among Syrian Christians.

31 March, 1917: Birth of Mrs. Mariamma (Pennamma) Joseph (d.19 June 1986), Co-founder of the Hoskote Mission. Mariamma was the daughter of Mammen Mammen and Mariamma of Manalukalayil, Kumbanad. She did her Teacher's Training Course (TTC) from Peringara School near Tiruvalla, after which she taught in many schools including Arrangatu School, Pullad, Perumbara School near Charal Mount; Kanjeettukara, Nedumbrayar. She had the privilege to attend the classes conducted by CMS Missionary, Miss Kellaway (Australia) of Vanitha Mandiram. Pennamma was greatly influenced through the life and testimony of this missionary. She had an earnest desire to go for mission work in Karnataka but her parents did not allow it. However, after her marriage with Mr. M.T. Joseph, her desire was fulfilled as he got the call to go to Karnataka for mission work during one of the Maramon Conventions. Because she was obedient to this heavenly call, she resigned from her teacher's job, of a permanent income, to an uncertain future.

