

CHURCH HISTORY FOR THE MONTH OF NOVEMBER

Published by: Thomas John Philip Nalloor

First Sunday of November – World Sunday School Day. Robert Raikes (1735-1811), an English Publisher started the first Sunday School in the city of Gloucester in England in 1780. During the early days, reading, arithmetic and Bible were taught in the Sunday School. In 1809, a meeting of the Church representatives of Malankara Churches held at Kandanadu Church, near Ernakulam decided to make facilities to teach the children about the religion, prayers and sacraments. India Sunday School Union was founded in 1876. Mar Thoma Sunday School Samajam was established on 25 February 1905, in the Maramon Convention. First Sunday of the Month of November is celebrated as world Sunday School day through out the world.

November – Church Calendar Starts. According to tradition, in Malankara Syrian Churches “Church Calendar” starts from the first Sunday of November every year. In exceptional cases if Sunday falls on 30 or 31 October it starts from that day. The first Sunday of the month of November is called “Koothos Eetho” which means the day for the purification of the church. The second Sunday is called “whoothos eetho” which means the day for revival or dedication of the church.

1 November, 451: The Council of Chalcedon (in modern Turkey) adjourns. The fourth and largest of all the ancient councils, attended by 500-600 bishops, it repudiated the Eutychian heresy (that Christ has one nature, not two) and drew up a Christological statement of faith now known as the Definition of Chalcedon.

1 November, 1512: After four years of work, Michelangelo Buonarroti unveils his 5,800-square-foot painting on the ceiling of the Vatican's Sistine Chapel.

2 November, 1533: Harried by Catholic authorities, John Calvin (Reformation leader) flees Paris by lowering himself out a window with a bed sheet rope and disguising himself as a farmer, complete with a hoe over his shoulder. He spent three years as a fugitive before settling in Geneva

2 November, 1942: The first workers of Sihora Ashram start from Kottarakkara. On the morning of 2 November 1942 a huge crowd under the leadership of the Bishop Juhanon Mar Timotheos gathered under a tree on the eastern side of the Kottarakkara railway station and gave a sensational send off to Rev. K. T. Thomas (Karimparampil. Anaprampal), Mr. John Varughese (Valethu Thoppil, Puthencauv), and Mr. M. P. Mathew (Mavelil, Kaviyoor), the founder members of the Christa Panthi Ashram. After visiting various north Indian cities, finally they reached in Sihora on 13 September 1943 and started the Ashram. Our bishop The Late Rt. Rev .Easow Mar Timotheos was a member of this ashram for 22 years.

2 November, 1831: Baptism of Chandhu Menon. Mr. Chandhu Menon (1778-1837) is the man credited with helping the translation work of the Bible from English to Malayalam. Chandhu Menon was born in Chunagad (a known Hindu family) in the Ottapalam village of British Malabar. The Bible translation transformed his life and he accepted Jesus as his personal Saviour. On 2 November, 1831, he was baptized in the Anglican Church in Calicut and was given the name Joseph Fenn. Later members of his family were also baptized. Chandhu Menon had to resign from his government job as Travancore Rules dictated "non Hindus were not allowed to hold the post of Tehasildar." However he joined the British Government Service and worked as 'Salt Peshkar in Ponnani'; Record Keeper in Calicut; and District Munsif in Cochin. He passed away in 1837 at the age of 57 and was buried in the St. Francis Anglican Church in Cochin. The Church in Kerala is indebted to this great man who aided in the translation of the Bible into Malayalam.

3 November, 1880: Birth of Abraham Mar Thoma (03/11/1880-01/09/1947). Abraham Mar Thoma was known all over India for his burning passion for Evangelism, for his zeal for spreading the gospel through the length and breadth of India. He was the first Bishop of the Mar Thoma Church with a University Degree. He received Theological training in Canada. It was during his time the Mar Thoma Church became well known in the western world. He was our Metropolitan from 1944 to 1947. He passed away on Sep 1, 1947.

3 November, 1534: English Monarch becomes the Head of Anglican Church. On 3 Nov 1534 the British Parliament passed the Supremacy Act, officially making England Protestant and putting the English Monarch at the Head of the nation's church.

4 November, 1958: Angelo Roncalli becomes Pope John XXIII. Though his papacy was expected to be uneventful, his convening of the Second Vatican Council and his changing of the church's attitudes toward non-Catholics were milestones for Roman Catholics.

4 November, 1646: The Massachusetts Bay Colony makes it a capital offense to deny that the Bible is the Word of God.

4 November, 1740: English clergyman Augustus Montague Toplady, author of the hymn "Rock of Ages," is born. No other English hymn can be named that has laid so firm and broad a grasp upon the English speaking world as "Rock of Ages". (Hymn No 149 (140) – *Pilharnnoru paarraye* – in our Book)

7 November 1918: Birth of Billy Graham. World famous missionary preacher Billy Graham was born on 07 Nov 1918 in Charlotte, North Carolina, USA. Through his powerful messages he attracts millions all around the world.

8 November, 1674: Death of John Milton. English Poet John Milton known as the author of *Paradise Lost* (1667), *Paradise Regained* (1671) and many other works, died at the age of 65, on 8 November 1674.

9 November, 1964: Mrs. Kandamma Varghese (of Mar Thoma Sevika Sanghom) passes away. Mar Thoma Sevika Sanghom owes much to the self sacrificing work of Mrs. Kandamma Varghese who worked untiringly as the Organizing Secretary for over 20 years traveling far and wide, organizing branches in the parishes, doing evangelistic work among Christians and non-Christians, and building up the work in parishes.

10 November, 1908: Ten years after Samuel Hill and John Nicholson met in Boscobel, Wisconsin, to begin what would become Gideons International; the organization places its first Bible in a room at the Superior Hotel in Iron Mountains, Montana.

10 November, 1483: Birth of Martin Luther. The famous reformation leader Martin Luther was born in Eisleben in Germany on 10 Nov.1483

11 November, 1793: William Carey arrives in Calcutta. William Carey arrived in Calcutta on November 11, 1793, and never returned to his homeland England. He translated, with the help of Pundits, the entire Bible in Bengali, Oriya, Hindi, Marathi, and Sanskrit. Partial translations were made in Punjabi, Pashto, Kashmiri, Telugu, and Konkani. He also translated smaller portions of the Bible in twenty-three other languages and dialects.

12 November, 1660: John Bunyan is arrested for unlicensed preaching and sentenced to prison. While incarcerated, he penned *Pilgrim's Progress* and *Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners*, the greatest Puritan spiritual autobiography.

13 November, 354: Birth of St. Augustine. St. Augustine was born on 13 November 354, in Tagaste, Numidia, in Roman North Africa of a mixed marriage. His father, Patricius, was an ill-tempered pagan, sometimes prone to drunkenness, but who nevertheless cared for his wife and family. His mother, Monica was a Christian, born into and brought up in a Christian home. She stands out as a great Christian matriarch and her devotion, attachment and prayers for her wayward son are unquestioned. St Augustine died on 28 August 430

15 November, 1630: German mathematician and astronomer Johann Kepler, famous for his laws of planetary motion, dies at 58. As a Christian, he believed the universe to be an expression of God's being rather than God's creation.

15 November, 1731: Birth of William Cowper (1731-1800) author of the Hymn 'There is a fountain filled with blood' ('Immanuel than chankathil..' No 147 (138)

in our Book).The words of this hymn are immortal and will be sung as long as there are sinners upon this earth.

15 November, 1885: (29 Thulam 1061 M.E) Verdict of Travancore High Court against Mar Thoma Church. The final verdict from the Royal Court of Appeal was declared on 12 July 1889.Due to this Court judgment Mar Thoma Church lost almost all their Churches except Maramon and Kozhencherry (got by court decision) and Kottarakkara Church without contest. Five Churches were to be used by the two parties on alternate Sundays.

16 November, 1855: Scottish missionary-explorer David Livingstone first sees and names Victoria Falls (in modern Zimbabwe) during his first missionary journey though Africa.

17 November, 3 B.C.: According to early church Father Clement of Alexandria (c.155-c.220), Jesus was born on this date.

20 November, 1904: Death of Stephanos Kathanar - Author of Shayana Namaskaram.Stephanos Kathanar (born on 14 June 1852) a member of Kallarakkal Peedikayil family of Thazahkkara, Mavelikkara, became a deacon at the age of 8. He was an expert teacher of the Syrian Language. In 1897 he established Thazhakkara Mar Thoma Church and started a library for the parish. Achen is the author of The Shayana Namaskaram- (prayer song usually sung with the evening family prayer or public worship) "njangalkullha karthave..." which is still used by many Kerala Christians. Achen's grandson Dr. Samuel Mathai was the Vice-Chancellor of the Kerala University. He was called to his eternal home on 20 Nov 1904.

21 November, 1881: Birth of Very Rev K E Oommen – (21/11/1881 to 23 May 1984).Very Rev K. E. Oommen was one of the first four graduates who accepted ordination together in the Mar Thoma Church. He was one of the Divisional Secretaries of our church till 1939. With his evangelical zeal and wise counsel he gave great support to Abraham Mar Thoma and later Metropolitans. He had a long and fruitful life. He died in 1984 at the age of 103. Our Metropolitan Most Rev Philipose Mar Chrysostom is his son.

22 November, 1873: The French ship Ville du Havre sinks in the north Atlantic, killing all four daughters of Chicago lawyer Horatio G. Spafford. His wife survived, and Spafford immediately booked passage to join her in England. While passing over the spot where his daughters died, he began writing what would become the famous hymn "It is Well with My Soul." (No 901 in Sacred Songs and Solos- Ira D Sankey)

23 November, 101 (traditional date): Clement of Rome dies. According to spurious legend, he was tied to an anchor and thrown into the sea. Considered "the first apostolic father," his letter to the church of Corinth was regarded as Scripture by many Christians in the third and fourth centuries.

23 November, 1654: French scientist and mathematician Blaise Pascal experiences a mystical vision and converts to Christianity. The creator of the first wristwatch, the first bus route, the first workable calculating machine, and other inventions then turned his life to theology.

27 November, 1970: On a trip to the Philippines, Pope Paul VI is attacked by a dagger-wielding Bolivian painter disguised as a priest. Though the Vatican announced the pontiff was unhurt, he suffered a chest wound in the assault.

29 November, 1898: Christian writer and scholar C.S. Lewis, one of modern Christianity's best-loved writers, is born in Belfast, Ireland.

29 November, 1970: Formation of Church of North India (CNI). The inaugural meeting of the CNI was held in the Anglican Cathedral of Nagpur. Our metropolitan (Dr. Yuhanon Mar Thoma) attended this meeting. We got full communion relationship with this church from 1972 onwards.

30 November, 1979: John Paul II attends an Eastern Orthodox service, the first pope in 1,000 years to do so.

30 November, 1945 (1121 Virchikam 15): Sadhu Kochukunju Upadesi passes away. Sadhu Kochukunju Upadesi (Mr. Moothampakkal Itty Varghese, Moothampakkal, Edayarnmula near Chengannur) was a unique personality in our Church History. For almost forty years he preached the Bible in simple language all over South India. He practiced the life of a Sadhu. He wrote more than 200 hymns many of that are printed in our worship books. Thousands were turned to God by hearing his messages. He was the first General Secretary of the 'Mar Thoma Voluntary Evangelists' association, which was founded in 1924, and he continued in that post till 1945. He was called to eternal rest on 15 Virchikam 1121 at the age of 62. And was buried in the St. Thomas Mar Thoma Church, Lakha, Edayaranmula.

