

M. T. JOSEPH

(Missionary)

1910-1995



Life story of M.T. Joseph
Co-founder of
The Hoskote Mission Medical Centre
Bangalore- Karnataka
(Manon House, Maramon, Kerala)

M.T. Joseph
Ousepachen
Manon, Maramon

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Co-founder of the Mar Thoma Mission Field in Hoskote
Bangalore, Karnataka

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Biography of M.T. Joseph

This is the story of how an Anchal Master (Post Master), in the service of the King of Travancore, left his job and home on the calling of His Majesty, The King of kings. A story of how M.T. Joseph along with his wife and child left the comforts of Central Travancore, Kerala, in 1947, to go to an unknown place called Hoskote to spread the Good News. This is a recollection of how this simple couple with their vision and calling became the co-founders of the Hoskote Medical Mission. Today the Hoskote Medical Mission is a beacon of light of the Good News in Karnataka.

Introduction

Hoskote Town which lies about 25 Km North East of Bangalore City on National High Way No.4 (Old Madras Road), is the head quarters of the Hoskote Taluk of Bangalore Rural District in Karnataka.

The Hoskote Town and Taluk of 1947 were quite different from what it is today. Hoskote used to be a small town with around 350 under developed, backward villages surrounding it. Agriculture was the main occupation, but the village people had to depend on scanty rainfall and run off water collected in artificial lakes. As a result, most lands were kept barren year after year; unemployment, malnutrition, epidemics, and famine were common experiences. Poor villagers suffered greatly due to the lack of hospitals or health centers. Only the rich could afford to go to hospitals in Kolar or Bangalore. Most villages resorted to witchcraft and divination for treatment of diseases. Only when this treatment failed, were the sick (almost at the point of death) taken to hospital. The infant mortality rate and maternity deaths were very high.

The literacy level was very low. Most adults didn't know how to read or write. Children were usually sent for cattle grazing. Adults and even children were bonded in labour for life in return for money, borrowed to conduct marriages or celebrate religious festivals. Superstitious practices, caste discrimination, untouchability etc, controlled life in the villages. It was to this environment that God sent His servants as pioneer missionaries of Hoskote Mission in June, 1947.

First Christian Institution at Hoskote

Miss. Bagshaw, an English lady who belonged to the Anglican Church, came to Hoskote long before the Mar Thoma Church even thought of mission work in Hoskote. She bought a piece of land in the town and started an orphanage called "House of Praise". She was a great help and encouragement to the Hoskote Mission work, in its initial days.

A.C. Zachariah's vision and commitment

A.C. Zachariah (Athinilkunnathil, Kuriannoor) was a devoted young Christian who wanted to be a true witness of Christ to the people among whom he lived and worked. He was a teacher at the CMS College High School, Kottayam. Even though he already influenced people towards Christ, he had an inner urge to leave work and launch out into fulltime evangelistic ministry. In 1945, he took a year leave from school and joined the South India Bible Institute at Kolar which trained young men and women for evangelistic work in India. While studying at SIBI, his evangelistic concern focused around Hoskote, partly due to two reasons. Miss. Bagshaw had met Zachariah at a conference and spoke to him about Hoskote and asked him to pray for Hoskote. Further, Zachariah and J. John, another student at SIBI, were assigned to do practical work during weekends at Whitefield from where they would come and visit Miss. Bagshaw at Hoskote. Hence, the idea that God was calling him to Hoskote became clearer. As he shared this with his friends and teaches at SIBI, they encouraged and supported him with their prayers.

Cubbon Park Prayer Fellowship of Bangalore

Meanwhile, God was still working to accomplish His purpose. In the 1940s, under the leadership of Rev. Philip Oommen (later Mar Chrysostom) and Rev. M.G. Chandy (later Alexander Mar Thoma), successive vicars of the Mar Thoma Church in Bangalore, and some of the Bangalore marthomites use to assemble in Cubbon Park for prayer and fellowship. Besides the ones mentioned as leaders, M/s. K.J. Abraham, K.C. Abraham, C.T. Abraham, E.V. Mathew, Miss Mathai and several others participated in the fellowship. As the days passed, there arose a growing conviction that they should open an outreach ministry of the city congregation in one of the rural neighbourhoods of Bangalore. After scouting around the surrounding areas, they felt that Hoskote was the right place where God was directing them.

It so happened that during his studies at SIBI in 1945-46, A.C. Zachariah got an opportunity to attend the Cubbon Park Fellowship and shared with them his thoughts of being a Christian witness at Hoskote.

Zachariah returned to Kerala after a year of studies at SIBI, and shared his ideas of his future work with friends and relatives and they advised him to wait prayerfully until he could find a suitable co-worker. As he couldn't find a partner immediately, he returned to SIBI for a second year of training.

Bishop Abraham Mar Thoma's visit to Bangalore and Hoskote

Towards the end of 1946, Bishop Abraham Mar Thoma, who had great zeal for the evangelization of India, visited the Bangalore Parish and was informed of possibilities of opening work at Hoskote. In the first week of January, 1947, Bishop Abraham was taken to Hoskote by friends in Bangalore. Visiting Miss. Bagshaw at the House of Praise, he gathered more details of the place and its people and was greatly impressed by the way God was opening a way for mission work, claiming the fulfillment of God's promise in Joshua 1:3. He prayed to God for the land they had trodden upon and beseeched Him to give the nation for the church's inheritance.

Birth & Education of M.T. Joseph

M.T. Joseph was born on 21 October, 1910, in Manon House, Nedumprayer, Maramon, one 1 km away from the Maramon Convention site. His parents, Manon Thomachen and Rachel, were villagers of limited education. They were members of the Maramon Mar Thoma Parish. Joseph had 5 brothers and a sister.

After finishing his primary education in Maramon, Joseph joined the St. Thomas School Kozhencherry for high school. M.G. Chandy (later Alexander Mar Thoma) was his class mate.

Joseph as Sunday School Teacher

Mar Thoma Suffragan Metropolitan Joseph Mar Irenaeus was a student of Joseph in the Maramon Sunday School. Tirumeni recalls those days and shares that... "My earliest memories go back to two separate areas of contact. The first one as a quite committed and loving Sunday School Teacher. The stories in the Bible of Old Testament and New Testament were told in a very impressive way, so that the Bible Characters were living reality to the children of different age groups. When he speaks about the story of David and Goliath he impresses the child with courage of the boy as years pass by the story's thrust changes and the same story been told but presented with impressive emphasis. So the application of the story content can never be the same and monotonous. He was committed to the Lord and to the Church that made him to leave a comfortable job which he had at the door step and to go to Hoskote, an unknown land for him and his family".

Joseph in the British Army

After his high school graduation, Joseph got a job in the British Army in Pune. He was a civilian clerk. During the training period, while doing his sentry guard duty with a rifle in his hand, a thought went through his mind, "Here I am serving His majesty the King of England as one of his loyal soldiers. How great it would be to serve the King of kings and

the Lord of lords". So he resigned from the Army and went back to Kerala to find a suitable way to serve the Lord.

Joseph marries Mariamma (Pennamma)

Pennamma was the daughter of Mammen Mammen of Manakkalayil, (Pulikkakuzhiyil branch of the Ezhumali Kudumbam) Kumbanad and Mariamma (D/o Pullad Pazhampallil Padijattunkara Chacko) Mammen was a social worker. He was one of the members of the delegation that met the Diwan of Travancore to get permission for the establishment of the Salem Mar Thoma Church and cemetery in Kumbanad. Both Mr. and Mrs. Mammen were God fearing and dedicated Christians. The training and discipline that Pennamma received from her devoted parents in childhood laid a firm foundation for her future Missionary Work.

Pennamma did her primary education at a local school in Kumbanad after which she attended St. John's School, Eraviperoor, S.V. School, Pullad and Malayalam School, Vennikulam. She did a Teacher's Training Course (TTC) from Peringara School near Tiruvalla. After that, she taught in many schools including Arrangatu School, Pullad, Perumbara School near Charal Mount; Kanjeettukara and Nedumbrayar. She was very active in her home parish activities. She had the privilege to be trained by the CMS Missionary, Miss Kellaway of Vanitha Mandiram. Miss Kellaway was from Australia and served the Vanitha Madiram for nearly twenty years till 1946.

Pennamma was greatly influenced through the life and testimony of Miss Kellaway. She got an earnest desire to go for missionary work in Karnataka. Her parents were very happy with her desire for mission work, but they did not agree to send her unmarried, to an unknown land as it was not the custom among Central Travancore Syrians Christians. Her desire was fulfilled after her marriage to M.T. Joseph, who had the call to go to Karnataka during the Maramon Convention of 1947. Obedience to the heavenly call, made it easy for her to resign from her teacher's job, with a permanent income, and go toward an uncertain future.

Joseph as Anchal Master

Joseph was the Anchal Master in Maramon. Irenaeus Thirumeni who hails from Maramon, remembers his Anchal Master, "My memory goes to the office where he (Joseph) worked at the Maramon Junction. He was the 'Anchal Master' of the village. 'Anchal Master' means 'the present status of Postmaster' and the postal service was limited in Travancore, Cochin State only as Anchal Service. For outside the state the postal department was there and near by there was a post office. When I go over there to buy cards, covers and stamps I saw him as a caring and loving officer. He will count

cards, stamps and covers twice before he hands it over to the client and so also the money he has received and was very diligent to put it in the collection box. In the evening he closes the accounts without fail and goes back home with full satisfaction as he has done the days work”.

Influence of Very Rev P. J. Thomas

Very Rev. P.J. Thomas, Parumoottil, Annaprampal (11 Oct.1904 - 7 Mar.1990) was the Vicar of Maramon Mar Thoma Parish. At this time Joseph was Anchal Master at Maramon. Achen's zeal for missionary work challenged Joseph. They both worked together in all Parish activities. From Maramon, Achen was transferred to Kottayam Jerusalem Mar Thoma Church, and from there he went to Ankola for full time Missionary work. Joseph who was a co-worker of Achen wanted to follow his example in missionary work and prayed to God to open a way for him as well. His prayer was answered when he met A.C. Zachariah.

Mr. & Mrs. M.T. Joseph offer to join the Missionary Team

Early in 1947, Zachariah returned to Kuriannoor, Kerala, praying to God to provide a teammate for the proposed work at Hoskote. God was working, in his own way and time, with M.T. Joseph, Manon House, Maramon preparing him for the work to which he had called him. One day, Zachariah and Joseph met in the Anchal Office in Maramon, not by chance, but by God's plan. Zachariah told Joseph of his plans for the future and also of the problem he was facing finding a co-worker to go with him to Hoskote. Joseph responded immediately by expressing his desire to join the team without any hesitation and without any bargain with God. Both Joseph and his wife resigned their Gov't jobs. Thus the pioneering team for Hoskote Mission was formed.

The Josephs had a daughter, Molly, aged 2. The Zachariah's eldest daughter, Mary, was in middle school, their second daughter, Mercy (9) was in Standard 5 and their youngest daughter, Sally, was in Standard 2. Thus a team of 2 families, four adults and four children (all girls) constituted the pioneering evangelistic team that started the Hoskote work.

Team's Departure to Karnataka

The Mar Thoma Evangelistic Association met the team and was convinced that the team was inspired and moved by God's guidance in the matter. A meeting of the team with the top leaders of the Association was arranged at the St. Thomas M.T. Church Kuriannoor. The then General Secretary of the Association, Very Rev. V.P. Mammen, and others gave to the team necessary instructions, guidelines, exhortations and spent time in prayer with them. Arrangements were made for the team to visit certain Mar Thoma Parishes to

inform people of the new mission field and to enlist their prayer support. Knowing the team was to work along ashram lines, the churches that they visited gave contributions which met the needs for their clothing and journey.

The Bangalore Parish and its Vicar, Rev. M.G. Chandy, were requested by the General Secretary to render all possible help for the starting of the work. A house was rented by the team in the town at a monthly rent of Rs. 6 as the temporary dwelling place of the two families.

Resigning their secure jobs and bidding farewell to their dear ones, especially their parents of old age and turning their backs to everything they considered dear and near hitherto, depended on God and God alone for all their future needs. The two families left Kerala on 26 June, 1947. They were sent with a prayer and blessing of Abraham Mar Thoma Thirumeni. The families reached Hoskote on 27 June, 1947. The two families stayed in a rented house, adjusting to the limited conveniences available and slowly adjusted themselves with their new surroundings.

M.T. Joseph goes for one year training at SIBI

Having felt the need for some formal training, Joseph desired to go to South India Bible Institute, Kolar for a short course as Zachariah had done. The Bible institute with its deep interest in the new mission field, granted admission to Joseph as a special student for one year. This short training greatly helped him get better equipped for the ministry.

First Contacts

As there was no church or worship place the Kerala missionaries would meet at the 'House of Praise' for worship on Sunday along with Miss. Bagshaw and the children of the orphanage. Joseph and family shifted to a different part of the town when another convenient house was obtained for rent. This helped the team get acquainted with many more people. When their children were admitted to local Kannada medium schools more bridges were built between the workers and the local people.

Early days

“Even lions go hungry for lack of food, but those who obey the Lord lack nothing good”

-Psalms 34:10

The early days of Ashram life was real tough. There was no permanent income or salary. They had to live on faith and faith alone. The Lord, who provided Elijah with food through ravens, was faithful to them as well.

Once it so happened that when Alexander Mar Thoma Metropolitan visited the Ashram without notice, there was no rice in the Ashram to prepare for him his favorite 'Kanji and Cheera Thoran'. But at that very time, God sent a believer from a village with rice, which was prepared and served.

Christa Sakshya Sangha and forms of witness

The new missionaries assumed the name Christa Sakshya Sangha and adopted the ashram way of life, sharing responsibilities as well as financial contributions received from friends and well wishers.

In the beginning, their witnessing consisted of distributing gospel tracts and scripture portions, making individual contacts, visiting homes, teaching children stories and hymns and befriending people wherever they met them. In the meanwhile, the study of Kannada was zealously followed and very soon they learned the local language Kannada to read, write and speak. They were to pass the language test in Kannada both reading & writing as prerequisite for the called ministry. As they became more and more proficient in the language they began to reach out to more of the hundreds of surrounding villages, holding open air meetings in villages and markets, conducting Sunday school classes and other meetings for adults, literacy classes for youths, a night school to coach school going children etc.

First Fruits of the Mission

Even though the missionaries earned the love and respect of many people in the town and surrounding villages through their life and testimony, people were very hesitant to join the new faith. The first one who joined the fellowship of the Church through baptism was a young man from Hoskote who received the Christian name Mathai.

Narasimha and his wife, Rethnamma, were residents of the Gonakanahally village. Rethnamma came into contact with the ladies team at Jedigenahally and became a Christian and accepted the Christian name Saramma. Later Narasimha was also baptized and received the name Abraham. Abraham passed away in August, 2006. Saramma still lives in Gonakanahally.

Ordination of A.C. Zachariah

The leaders of the Mar Thoma Church thought it advisable and necessary that an ordained clergy man ought to be in Hoskote Mission for the progress and development of the work. Accordingly A.C. Zachariah was ordained as Deacon on 25th December at M.T. Church, Kuriannoor and as Kassessa on 20th September, 1949 at Bangalore.

Acquiring the Property at Hoskote

The Missionaries as well as the friends of the Mission earnestly prayed to God to provide a base for the Mission in town. God heard their prayers and funds were provided to purchase nine acres of agricultural land at an elevated portion of the town. Thus the land, where the present Headquarters of the Mission is situated, was bought in 1951-52 for a price less than Rs. 5000. The next prayer was the construction of two quarters for the two missionary families. God heard their prayers and made it possible to construct two houses with concrete roofing. Thus the two families shifted their residences from rented houses in the town to their own houses in the Mission Compound.

In 1961, Rev. A.C. Zachariah was transferred to the Bombay parish and Mr. And Mrs. Joseph continued their services with the Hoskote mission and made Hoskote town their permanent home.

Pennamma continued the work at the Mission Hospital till 1984, when she too retired from the mission work. Even after their retirement, Joseph and Pennamma associated themselves with the mission activities giving their valuable counsels and esteemed fellowship to those who followed them in their mission work. Pennamma was called to her heavenly abode in 1986 and according to her desire was buried at Gonakanahally along with her village friends whom she loved and served. Joseph Sir survived her for a few more years and was promoted to glory in February, 1995, at the old age of 85, and was buried with his wife at the Gonakanahally cemetery.

Later the Mar Thoma Evangelistic Association assumed direct management of the Hoskote Mission and renamed it Hoskote Mission and Medical Centre.

The beginning of the Medical Centre

Rev. E.J. George was appointed as the Missionary incharge of the Mission and Dr. (Mrs.) Sophy George as its Medical Superintendent. They arrived at the field in June, 1965. At a function presided over by Most Rev. Juhanon Mar Thoma Metropolitan, the Health Minister of Karnataka inaugurated the Medical Centre on 11th July, 1965.

Growth of the Evangelistic ministry under Rev. George's period

As the Evangelistic Mission assumed the responsibility of the Mission, evangelists were appointed to the field. K.M. Samuel (later Rev. Dr. K.M. Samuel), T.M. Koshy, T.A. Kurian (later Rev. T.A. Kurian), K.V. Mathews and V.J. Joseph were the evangelists who served the Mission during this period. Of course, M.T. Joseph continued as senior member of the evangelistic team until his retirement. The missionaries, evangelists and

the medical personnel worked as one team, without any departmental division both in the hospital and in villages. Evangelists witnessed to and prayed with patients and the medical staff endeavored to exalt Christ in all their services. Often the whole group went to the villages conducting clinics and preaching the gospel. The people around got the impression that the Mission people were interested in the total development of the village folks.

Fearless and fruitful living

“As I was with Moses, I will be with thee.” There were many things that were scary to the people living in and around the Ashram compound. Joseph had a rod (wooden stick) like the rod of Moses, to protect him and others. Danger came in the form of cobras which were fed and nurtured by the locals as deities. The cobras used to roam freely in and around the ashram. At one occasion, it knocked the door and entered the house. Scorpions were also present, lurking in the thick undergrowth and dry leaves. Ghosts were also feared. The local postmortem building outside the ashram was a very scary sight. There was a tamarind tree in which the ghosts supposedly lived. There were also possessed people who would come to the gates of the ashram and shout “Yesu Raja, don’t trouble us”. When the two missionary families moved in to that place; the people knew they served an Almighty God; mighty to save; mighty to keep them safe.

Fond of farming and gardening

The land was equally divided to inspire competition. Fruit and the flower plants would be planted. Flowers such as jasmine and roses were in plenty. The barren land would give a hundred percent yield. As mentioned in the book of Acts 2:44, “And all that believed were together; and had all things common.” Any visitor to the ashram would be given curry leaves, drumsticks, fruits and flowers, all grown in the ashram by Joseph and Zachariah Achen.

Fond of Reading

On their arrival in Hoskote, the Josephs studied Kannada fluently so that they could convey the gospel to all the villagers without the help of translators. Joseph was a very good reader; there were many good books in his collection, in different languages; Malayalam, English, Kannada, Tamil, Hindi and Telugu.

Fond of lyrics and songs

His favorite song was “Yesu en adisthaanam aashayavanilathre. Aashwasaththin poornhatha, Yesuvil kanden njaanum” (Jesus is my foundation, my hope is in Him. In Jesus I have experienced the perfect consolation). The bhajanas held by the village folks, after harvest; were very inspiring and relaxing.

Few Principles

The few principles he taught others in life were to value life and treat human beings with great respect. “Remember labourers are also human beings with thirst and hunger. Thus do not waste food or water, which are precious resources. Do not waste land, time, talent or money; but work hard with both hands and make your living. Not to fear anything or to be ashamed of anything but sin.”

Friendly homes of the Ashram

The ‘House of Praise’, Miss Bagshaw and all her children always opened their doors to the Ashram people. C.T. Abraham’s house in Bangalore was always open for the missionaries. Mrs. C.T. Abraham was the Nursing Superintendent of Bowring Hospital; whether she was present at home or not, special instructions were given to the servants; “anyone coming from Hoskote are to be served lunch with some special dish and treated with extra care.”

C.C. Cherian, K.J. Abraham, K.C. Abraham, C.T. Philips and many friends from Maramon and Kumbanad stayed in Bangalore and always welcomed the missionaries.

Friends of the Ashram

Dr. Miss Thomas (Mazhukkeetethu House, Kurianoor), of Bangalore CSI Hospital, was a great supporter of the Mission. Dr. Thomas was the Josephs’ family doctor. Pennamma Joseph had all three deliveries and hysterectomy in CSI Hospital, Bangalore. Dr. Thomas was a strict person but her love and zeal for the Lord accommodated the needs of the people at the Ashram.

(Late) Most Rev. Alexander Mar Thoma Valiya Metropolitan became Episcopa (Bishop) in 1953. He had served as Vicar of the Mar Thoma Parish Bangalore, and gave his complete support to the work of the mission workers. He happened to be Joseph’s classmate in Kozhencherry School, although Joseph was older by a few years. Dr. Alexander became Diocesan Bishop was the most loved and awaited visitor of the ashram.

Visitors of the Ashram

Hoskote Ashram and Mission was always brimming with visitors. Visitors to the Ashram included staff, families and students from World Gospel Mission, South India Bible Seminary, ETCM Hospital, CMC Vellore, Rev. and Mrs. M.A. Thomas from Ecumenical Centre, Every Home Crusade staff and members, OM staff, members of Jalahalli prayer

group; ITI (Indian Telephone Industries) staff, HAL (Hindustan Aeronautical Limited) staff, and countless number of theological students who came for internship/field work, achens, evangelists, youth and child evangelism workers.

Unshakeable Faith

Joseph showed others how to face life in a more excellent way. When he was faced with hardships of the Ashram life, he would confidently say the commission is from above and no one can thwart the call and purpose of God. He never grumbled, or murmured, he was never greedy, but always cheerful and content!

He was asked to vacate his home and ashram campus, which he had dearly cared for and nurtured; to go away, without even providing him shade to rest his head. When he was asked to retire in 1970 without notice at the age of 60 (at the time, clergy retirement was 65 years), all four of his children were still in school; he had no complaints. The Suvieshesha Sanghom (Evangelistic Association) did not have any pension scheme; as he was one of the very few evangelists of the Church in those days. He was asked to retire to an unknown future, with zero income, no bank balance, and no house. Joseph cheerfully confronted all the odds, rented a house in the town and continued his honorary services to the Sanghom and the Mission Field.

God enabled him to construct a house of his own in 1970 by selling his property in Maramon, Kerala. In June 1971, he moved into his newly constructed house, opposite the present Mission Medical Center which is at the new Tamme Gowda Extension.

Demise of Mrs. Joseph

Mariamamma was a great moral support for her husband in the mission work. She could bring many to Christ through her dedicated life and intense work in the villages and hospital. The zeal and enthusiasm for the work of the Gospel was extra ordinary, which no one could diminish, she never wanted leave or break in service. forced retirement put her spirits down. At the age of seventy-one she was fully fit to continue her active ministry. Mariamma became sick at the age of 73. At 5.30am on 19 June, 1986, she went to be with her lord, in perfect peace and preparation in her home in Hoskote. According to her wish she was buried in the Gonakkanahally village.

Joseph's daily devotional life

Joseph would wake up at 4a.m. for prayers. He would remember all the loved ones by name and intercede for them. By 5:30a.m. water had to be collected and stored in tanks for the day's requirements as the water supply would cease by 7a.m, after which he

would water the plants. He would visit and do honorary services for the Mission like supervision of construction of mission buildings which kept him busy till late evening.

Children of Mr. & Mrs. M.T. Joseph

1. Molamma (Rachel) married P. Frederich
2. Thomas Joseph (Jay) married Nalini
3. Grace married Thampy (John Joseph Nalloor)
4. Late. Kunjumole (Annie) married Aby (K.P. Paulose)

Last Honour

When Joseph heard the call of God to go to Karnataka in the Maramon Convention in 1947, there were not many people willing to go for Gospel work especially outside Travancore. According to worldly standards it was not at all a promising or a challenging field for an educated person. But the day he was called to his eternal home, was a special day for the Mar Thoma Church. On that day the centenary celebrations of the Maramon Convention and dedication of one hundred evangelists were to be held at Maramon Convention Pandal. Canterbury Archbishop, Most. Rev George Carey was the chief guest for the meeting. Joseph was aware of the dedication of hundred evangelists. It was definitely a fulfillment of his heart's desire and prayer. On the morning of 18th February, 1995, at 5:40a.m., he passed away at the Mission Hospital at Hoskote. The very same morning, at the beginning of the centenary meeting of the Maramon Convention, Joseph's Home call was announced by the General Secretary of the Evangelistic Association. Then Most Rev. Alexander Mar Thoma conducted the dedication ceremony of one hundred newly trained evangelists. When God calls 'one' home, He sends 'one hundred' in his place.

“God honours those who honour Him”

Gonakkanahally, final resting place of the Joseph's

It is a common desire of all Christians to be near their dear ones and relatives at the final stage of their life. Syrian Christians consider it a blessing to be buried in their family burial vaults with their loved ones, in their home parishes. But the Josephs never had that desire. They never wished to go back to Maramon, their native place. They wanted to be with the Christian Believers of the Hoskote Mission who were their own. The tombs in the Gonakkanahally village stand as a challenge to other Christian workers.



Main Events connected to the life of M. T. Joseph

- 1895 Mar 9 First Maramon Convention
- 1910 Oct 21 Birth of M. T. Joseph
- 1947 Jan Bishop Abraham Mar Thoma visits Hoskote
- 1947 Jun 27 Beginning of Hoskote Mission, named “Christa Sakshya Sangha”
- 1947-1990 Missionary to Hoskote Mission
- 1952 Construction of two houses for missionaries.
- 1955 First convert- Mathaiappa baptized.
- 1960 Rev. A. C .Zachariah –transferred to Bombay parishes.
- 1965 Restructuring of the Mission
- 1965 July 11 Medical work started - Rev. E .J. George & Dr. Sophy
- 1965 New name assumed “Hoskote Mission & Medical Centre”
- 1969 Formation of Karnataka Navajeevna Samithi
- 1970 Leprosy work started
- 1970 Joseph retires – but continued honorary work till 1990
- 1980 Santhi Mandiram started
- 1984 Mrs. Joseph retires.
- 1986-1994 Rev. K.P. Mathai - Hoskote Missionary
- 1986 June 19 Mrs. Mariamma (Mrs. M. T. Joseph) passes away
- 1991 Evangelists Training Institute started
- 1991 June 3 Zachariah Achen passes away
- 1992 Mrs. A.C. Zachariah (Samma) passes away
- 1995 Feb 18 Centenary celebration of Maramon Convention
- 1995 Feb 18 M. T. Joseph Passes away at Hoskote Mission Hospital
- 1995 Feb 21 Burial at Gonakanahally Village

“The wise leaders will shine with all the brightness of the sky. And those who have taught many people to do what is right will shine like the stars for ever.” Daniel 12:3

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NOTES

Anchal Master: the term used to call a Post Master of Anchal Service. Anchal was the Postal system which prevailed in the Kingdom of Travancore. It was an autonomous system directly under the Maharaja of Travancore which handled all postal services inside the Travancore Kingdom. Outside the Kingdom, the Postal service was handled by the British Government. This service was discontinued after Indian Independence on 1st April 1951. All Anchal masters were absorbed by Indian Postal Service as Post Masters.

Christa Sakshya Sangha: In Kannada, Christa means Christ, Sakshya means witnessing and Sangha means Group or Society. This name was adopted by the Hoskote Ashram in 1947. This was later discontinued when the Ashram was taken over by the Evangelistic Association in 1965.

Gonakanahally: This is a village 12km from Hoskote. This is the village where the first believers (Abraham and Sarah) are living. Now there is a Mar Thoma Church and a full time Evangelist working there. This place has a Christian cemetery where Mr. & Mrs. M.T. Joseph are laid to rest.

Jathra: A gathering of people for various reasons. It is held annually, and reasons could be festivals, cattle fairs, crop fairs and later used to address a gathering of believers and non-believers for fellowship.

Mar Thoma Syrian Church of Malabar: A church founded in Kerala by St. Thomas, one of the apostles of Jesus Christ in 52 A.D. At present they have 1075 parishes, 9 bishops, 762 priests and 900,000 (Approx) members. Head Quarters is in Tiruvalla.

Manon House: Manon is the house name of M.T. Joseph in Maramon which is on the banks of the River Pamba. The world's largest annual Christian gathering, the Maramon convention is held just a kilometer away from this house. Manon House is a branch of the Palakunnathu Family of Maramon.

Karnataka: Karnataka was formerly known as Mysore. On November 1, 1973 the name was changed to Karnataka.

Maramon Convention: A mammoth religious convention of Christians, but attended by people belonging to all communities, is held at Maramon, near Kozhencherry, every year on the vast sandy beds of the River Pamba. The convention takes place in February in an atmosphere of devotion and lasts for a period of seven days. Addressed by speakers of international repute and attended by devotees innumerable, this is the largest Christian convention in the world. The centenary celebration of the convention was held in February 1995.



Mr. M. T. Joseph



The End

Note From Author

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