

1. National Council of Churches in India Centenary Celebrations: This is the Centenary year of National Council of Churches in India and our Tamilnad Christian Council celebrated through four different programmes:

a. Release of Commemorative Stamp. –To Honor the National Council of Churches on its Centenary year, a Commemorative Stamp was released on the 25th of April 2014 at the CSI Synod Centre, Chennai. Dr. Ms. V.



Dr. Ms. V. Esther Kathiroti, the General Secretary, TNCC welcomed the Chief Guest, the Officers of TNCC and all the dignitaries and well-wishers attended the programme. The Rev. Dr. Sadananda, Gen. Secretary, CSI Synod delivered the Lord's Message. Shri. Merlin Alexander, the Post Master General, Chennai City Region, released the NCCI Centenary stamps. The Rt. Rev. Dr. V. Devasahayam, Bishop, CSI Madras Diocese & President TNCC and the Rt. Rev. R.D. Vijayakumar, Bishop, Arcot Lutheran Church & Vice President TNCC received the first Stamps.



Mrs. Susan Jacob from Christian Conference of Asia, Hongkong, The Directors, General Secretaries from various Institutions and organizations and well wishers, graced the occasion. Mr. B. Sunder Kumar, the Treasurer, TNCC proposed the Vote of Thanks. The Rt. Rev. V. Devasahayam offered the closing prayer and pronounced the benediction.

b. Pre-Planning-Organising Committee meetings for NCCI Centenary Celebration at Madurai: –



Nearly 10 planning meetings were conducted at Madurai under the leadership of the Rt. Rev. M. Joseph, Bishop, CSI Madurai-Ramnad Diocese and President, TNCC. Church leaders from different denominations



including Catholic and Pentecostal Churches, Principals of Colleges were involved in the Planning Meetings. Rev. Christopher Rajkumar from NCCI also attended many meetings.

At this juncture, I would like to recognize the special efforts of Manuel Jeyaraj of the CSI Madurai



would like to recognize the Rev. Dr. G.K. Chellappa, Mr. and Mr. S. Augustine Ponraj of Ramnad Diocese.

c. The National Council of Churches in India –Centenary Celebration Tamilnadu Region was held at Madurai on 20th and 21st September 2014.

The Celebration had three events such as a Day Ecumenical Seminar, a Public Meeting and the observation of the International Prayer Day for Peace.

The Ecumenical Seminar: The Seminar was held at De-Noblie Center at Madurai and it started at 09:00a.m. and closed at 04:00.m.



The Seminar was inaugurated by the Rt. Rev. Dr. M Jospheh, CSI Bishop in Madurai. Bishop Joseph recited the prayer of Jesus *'that they all may be one'* and called every Christian to join in



Christ and Jesus wished for. He called all to join the envisioning mission of Jesus. Fr. Arul welcomed the participants. Over 700 Clergies, Church Leaders, Nuns, Full Time Mission Workers, Theological Educators and Students, Lay Leaders, Women and Youth participated from 16 districts of Tamilnadu including, Chennai, Thiruvannamalai, Vellore, Madurai, Dindigul, Theni, Trichy, Tanjavur, Salem, Coimbatore, Ramnad, Virudhunagar, Sivaganga, Tirunelveli, Thoothukudi and Kanyakumari.

The theme for the Seminar was *'Christian Contribution towards Societal Transformation'*.

Rev. Dr. Arthur Jeyakumar gave a brief introduction on the history of the NCCI and its mission and ministries from the grass-roots ecumenism perspective.



Rev. Dr. Roger Gaikwad, the General Secretary of the NCCI was the key note speaker. He noted that, the Mission of God is supposed to be transforming the entire society politically and socially and just not mere personally and individually.

There were three major presentations from Catholic, Reformed and Pentecostal backgrounds by Fr. Dr. Jeevaraj, Rev. Dr. M. Ganavaram and Rev. Paul Radhakrishnan respectively. All the presentations were citing stories and incidents

how the yester generations Christianity transformed our societies through their mission as a commitment to the Gospel of risen Christ. These presentations illuminated and inspired the participants to look at the mission differently and beyond church and to the society at large.

Rt. Rev. Dr. Taranath S Sagar, the President - NCCI in his presidential address said, in today's Indian context, the Grass-roots ecumenism is inevitable both theologically and politically. Therefore we all need to be united always for the sake of Christ and the Gospel. Rev. Christopher Rajkumar, Executive Secretary - NCCI and Rev. Asir Ebenezer, CSI-Synod have jointly facilitated a session on '*Need for Grassroots Ecumenism Today*'.

Fr. Dr. Joseph Selvaraj, Vicar General of Madurai Arch Diocese and Dr. Esther Kathirola were the other speakers.

Public Meetings:

This is the first time in the history of the NCCI Centenary Celebrations the Pentecostals and Front Line Church Leaders share dais with the Catholics and NCCI Members Churches said, Bishop Dr. Taranath S. Sagar.

Over 10000 Christians Gathered in Madurai to thank God for the NCCI and to Pray for all the NCCI Members Churches, Organizations, CBCI, EFI and All



the Christian Churches and Christians in India.

The public meeting was held at the Church of South India grounds in K Pudur Madurai. Most Rev. Dr. Antony Popusamy, Arch Bishop, Madurai Arch Diocese presided over the public meeting and shared the love and greetings from the Catholic Fraternity. Bishop Antony also suggested to continue this fellowship even after the celebration and this fellowship should live forever he said.

Pastor Dr. J J Y Arul, the Vice-president of the National Pentecostal Synod represented all the Front Line Churches and greeted the gathering with the plea suggesting the NCCI to consider to include all the Christian to be part of the NCCI Family irrespective of their theology and traditions and NCCI should become the face of the Indian Christians.



Bishop Taranath S Sagar, President, NCCI described how the 2.5 Christians in India serve the rest 97.5 percent. Further he said, the Christian community called to serve the larger society by the united and



common service, witness and fellowship to transform the societies though our ministries. It is not how big our churches are in containing several thousand people but how our hearts in Christ are accepting others are important.

Rev. Dr. Roger Gaikwad, Gen, Secretary NCCI, Dr. Mar Atsongchanger offered greetings. Rev. Paul Radhakrishnan,

President - IMA, Rev. Dr. Aruldoss Gnanamuthu, Founder Director, Lamb's Institute of Mission and Evangelism, Pastors. Jeyaraj, Daniel, Jacob, Zachariah Fr. Arul, Fr. Pannerselvam, Rev. Sr. Amala Rani, Rev. Dr. M. Gnanavaram were honored. Eva. Alan Paul delivered the Lord's Message on the occasion.



Bishop Dr. Joseph (CSI) expressed his desire and suggested to continue this fellowship annually to celebrate the unity of Churches and Christians. And he called all the Church leaders to be part of this fellowship.



The CSI Diocese of Madurai Ramnad, The Catholic Arch Diocese, the Pentecostal Pastors Fellowships joining all the Churches and Christian Institutions along with Tamilnad Christian Council organized this mega event.

Rev. Christopher Rajkumar mooted the public meeting resolutions including demanding the States to ensure the freedom to preach our faith, demand to abolish state discrimination against the converted Dalits in ensuring the SC status, removing



the restriction over constructions of our worshiping places, affirm the rights and dignity of the minorities and to control the right wing fundamental forces who promote hate campaigns against each other faiths and communities, these demands which were unanimously resolved and the TNCC and the TNBC have jointly forwarded the same to the State and Central Governments.

Dr. Esther Kathirola welcomed the gathering and Rev. Dr. G K Chellappa proposed the vote of thanks. Bishop Dr. Antony Popusamy offered a closing prayer and the benediction. Among all the NCCI Regional Centenary Celebrations the Tamilnadu Region has got a real taste and rich experience of Grass-roots Ecumenism.