

Episcopal visit to Jacksonville Congregation

Our beloved Thirumeni Rt. Rev. Dr. Geevarghese Mar Theodosius visited Jacksonville Marthoma Congregation on November 20 & 21, 2009. Thirumeni was accompanied by Rev. Jose Abraham Vicar of the congregation. Upon arrival at Jacksonville International Airport Thirumeni was welcomed by executive committee members.

On November 20 evening. Thirumeni met with various members of the congregation at secretary's house and shared his vision and learned more about the history and day to day activities of the Congregation. Though the Jacksonville Congregation is small in size (15 families), we own a Church, fellowship hall and 1.5 acres of land. Thirumeni appreciated the efforts and leadership of all the members and offered his prayer and support.

On Saturday, November 21, Thirumeni led the Holy Qurbana along with Vicar Rev. Jose Abraham at Jacksonville Marthoma Congregation sanctuary. Over 75 members and guests including orthodox, Catholic and CSI families from Jacksonville and Gainesville attended the Service. In his encouraging speech, Thirumeni talked about the Glory of Virgin Mary and need for us to follow her "Trust" in God. In addition, he challenged the members to support the needy fellow citizens by providing permanent support and not occasional charity support.

After the Holy Communion the congregation took time to express their appreciation to the Thirumeni for his services and visit by expressing welcome by the Vicar, speeches by Alex Varghese (secretary), Mrs. Annamma Mathew (Sevika Sangham), Mr. Wilson Uzhathil (Orthodox Church) and songs by children which was greatly appreciated by the Thirumeni.

Thirumeni also spent time with the Executive Committee members and discussed future plans. His Lordship encouraged the Executive Committee to increase the membership to change the Congregations status to Church. He also suggested starting youth ministry at the University of Florida, Gainesville.

Afterwards, everyone gathered at the fellowship hall for lunch. Thirumeni spent time conversing with everyone and blessed all of us with his presence and prayers.

In Christ

Alex Varghese
Secretary