

# THE DIOCESE OF NORTH AMERICA & EUROPE

## The Mar Thoma Church

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**Greetings to the Graduates!**

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**Dear Beloved in Christ,**

In the name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, I extend my warm greeting all those who are graduating in 2020 and congratulate you for successfully completing your courses.

Graduation ceremonies this year are quite different from traditional ones due to dark cloud of the COVID-19 pandemic that has subdued the world. The silver lining amidst this unprecedented situation is that schools and colleges have adapted and devised new ways for holding virtual graduation ceremonies.

Some of you may be graduating from high school and planning to go to different universities, some that are away from home. For such individuals, this is the crucial time in your life to plan and select your career. The college experience will surely be a new journey, away from the familiar safe haven at home, into new surroundings. You may have dreams about the future and some anxieties too.

Others may be completing their studies in universities and waiting for appropriate job placements or higher studies. Such individuals are likely to be entering a new phase in life, and may have to face newer challenges and obstacles. Your future will depend on the choices you make.

Whether you are graduating from a high school or a university, I urge you to firmly believe in our God who holds the future. Do the best and opt the right path. It will lead to success. It is essential to submit yourself to the Lord, who is the guide and the giver of wisdom and knowledge.

You will all now have freedom, which most of you have been longing for. Freedom can either make you or break you. The knowledge you gain is meant to set you free and make you wise. But there will be pressures to misuse freedom and thereby become addicted to evil thoughts and bad habits. The misuse of the internet and other media will cause to pollute your mind. Hence, use your freedom wisely. Remember that our body is the temple of God. Remember that Time is precious. Plan and prepare yourself to face the joyous and sorrowful realities of the world. Hold on to faith and keep connected with all those who inspire you. Participate in corporate worship. Spend some time each day to meditate on the word of God. Remember that God is there as your guide, protector and strength. "Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding" (Proverbs 3:4).

The words of Nelson Mandela remind us, "Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world." You are destined to live in the Light and to show His light to others. Instead of cursing the darkness, you can become a candle to remove darkness. I also congratulate your parents and teachers for their timely help and guidance. I hope you will respect and honor them at all times.

I wish each Graduate a bright and fruitful future. May God bless you all!

**With prayers,**

**Rt. Rev. Dr. Isaac Mar Philoxenos**  
Diocesan Bishop

