



[Glory of Bharath](#) » Bharath Darshan

Dear Sai Brothers and Sisters,

Let us join the brothers and sisters at Malayattoor Church, Kerala in celebrating the Advent of Christ.

Malayattoor Church



Malayattoor is a village in the North Eastern corner of Ernakulam District in the state of Kerala in South India. The name 'Malayattoor' is an amalgamation of three small words. Mala (Mountain) Arr (River) Oore (Place). This is to say, Malayattoor is a meeting place of mountain, river, and land.

Kurisumudy

Kurisumudy is a mountain at Malayattoor, 1269 'Ft. above sea level. Kurisumudy has its fame as a place visited by St. Thomas, one of the Apostles of Jesus Christ. Jesus gave a mandate to his Apostles to go out to the whole world and to proclaim the Good News. Taking upon himself this commandment, Thomas set out to India and landed at Kodungalloor in AD 52. He spent 20 years in India travelled through different parts of this great country of spirituality. He founded seven communities of believers which were Kodungalloor, Palayoor, Kottakavu, Kokkamangalam, Chayal, Kollam, and Niranam.

St. Thomas and Malayattoor

Upon his visit to India St. Thomas visited Kurisumudy too. His missionary expeditions took him far and wide and while travelling through the famous caravan route from Kodungalloor to Madras St. Thomas came to Malayattoor. A hostile reception was in store and his life was in danger. He was forced to flee to the top of the mountain and he spent days together in prayer. According to the 'Ramban Paattu', St. Thomas went up the mountain to converse with the Lord. In deep anguish and agony, St. Thomas prayed to the Lord and he made a sign of the cross on the rock. The Mother of Our Lord, Blessed Mary, appeared to console and strengthens him. He descended from the top hill. His zeal for the Lord took him to Mylapoor in Chennai and later died a martyr's death in AD 72. The locals began a practice of lighting an oil lamp and whenever the lamp gave in for the wind, a herd of goats came down wailing and people used to climb the mountain and light the lamp again. Pilgrims, who climb the mountain, even today carry with them seas mum seeds to feed the goats, even though goats are a rare sight.

St. Thomas and Thamizakam

The place of St. Thomas in the life of Tamil believers is something not to be overlooked. Anyone would be moved at the sight of an ardent but the simple faith of a Tamil pilgrim, a usual seen on the mountain. "Muthappan" the name by which devotees invoke St. Thomas on the mountain, may have come from Tamizakam. A good number of pilgrims that visit Kurisumudy and seek Muthappan's blessings is from Tamilnadu. The vital role played by the caravan rout that existed between Kodungalloor and Madras from time in memorial has certainly contributed to this spiritual and cultural bond that exists between Kerala and Tamilnadu.

Marthoma Mandapam

This is the most attractive building carved in accordance with the blending of Indian archaeological traditions. It is in this Mandapam the precious relic of St. Thomas is preserved for the pilgrims to offer their prayers. It is built at the highest point of the mount. The statue of St. Thomas is placed in point above 20 steps, symbolically representing the twenty years of St. Thomas's missionary works in South India.



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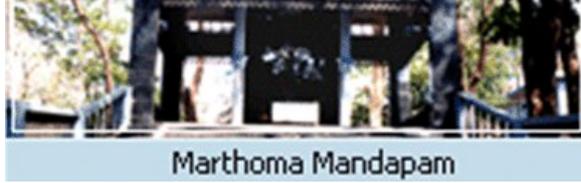
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Marthoma Mandapam

Sannidhi

This is a chapel, which serves as a place of worship on the hill top. It provides enough space for meditation, prayers and Holy Eucharist. This is the place where the holy Eucharist is celebrated. Thousands of people can participate in the Eucharist.

The Ancient Chapel

This is the most ancient chapel at Kurisuinudi. Until 1968 Kurisumudi had been a thick forest. Those days wild animals used to move around there freely. It is believed that tuskers attacked this ancient chapel but could not cause a major damage. The marks of elephant attack on the back wall of the chapel are visible. Recently a new facade was built for the chapel and the part that elephant struck is glassed in.

The Miraculous Water Spring on the Mountain

There is a well near the ancient chapel at the top of the mount. This well is at the spot where St. Thomas is believed to have quenched his thirst; it is again believed that St. Thomas struck on this rock when he was thirsty and instantly fresh water gushed out. Thousands of believers have been miraculously healed by using this water.

The Golden Cross



It is believed that St. Thomas on his visit to Kurisumudi knelt on the rock and signed a cross with his finger on the ground. He prayed there for a long time. Later a golden cross appeared on this spot and the people belonging to the hill tribes were said to have been attracted by the splendor of the cross. To satisfy their curiosity they struck the spot with their weapons. To their surprise they saw blood oozing out of the cross. They were amazed by this miraculous occurrence. They reported the incident, to the people living at the foot of the mountain. They ran to the spot. Thus began the historic pilgrimage to Kurisumudi. This is the tradition behind the Golden Cross.



Pilgrimage to Kurisumudi

Our sojourn continues next month...Till then Sai Ram

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