



BARNABAS NEWSLETTER

ST. GREGORIOS ORTHODOX CHURCH, CHERRY LANE, FLORAL PARK, NY

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ഡോ. ജോഷ്യാ മാർ നിക്തോമിമോസ് മെത്രാപ്പോലീത്ത നിലയ്ക്കൽ ഭദ്രാസനാധിപൻ

മലങ്കര സഭയിലെ മേർപട്ടക്കാരുമായി അടുത്തു പരിചയപ്പെടുവാൻ ആരംഭിക്കുന്നത് 1928 മുതൽക്കാണ്. 1978-ൽ റാന്നി, ഹോളി ട്രിനിറ്റി ആശ്രമംഗം ആയതോടുകൂടി ആശ്രമസ്ഥാപകൻ അഭി. ഗീവർഗീസ് മാർ ദീയസ്കോറോസ് തിരുമേനിയെയും തിരുമേനിയോടൊപ്പം 1878 മെയ് 15-ന് മേർപട്ടസ്ഥാനം സ്വീകരിച്ച മറ്റു തിരുമേനിമാരെയും പരിചയപ്പെടുവാൻ ആരംഭിച്ചു. ആ അഞ്ചു പേരിൽ ഒരാൾ ആയിരുന്നു അഭിവന്ദ്യ മാത്യൂസ് മാർ ബർണബാസ് തിരുമേനി.

ഉയരവും വണ്ണവും കുറഞ്ഞ ശരീര പ്രകൃതി. നടപ്പിലും സംസാരത്തിലും സാധാരണയിൽ കവിഞ്ഞ വേരത മേർപട്ടക്കാർ കരിച്ചിരുന്ന പേളിസ്റ്ററും മറ്റും ചേർന്ന ചുവന്നതും വിലകൂടിയ തുമായ കൂപ്പായത്തിനു പകരം കോട്ടൺ തരത്തിൽപ്പെടുന്ന വില കുറഞ്ഞ കാവി തുണികൊണ്ടു തുന്നിയ കൂപ്പായം, സ്വർണ്ണ നിറ മുളളതും ഇറക്കം കൂടിയതുമായ കുരിശു മാലയ്ക്കു പകരം ചുവന്ന ചരടിൽ കോർത്ത ചെറിയ തടി കുരിശുമാല. അതിൽ കുരിശിന്റെ

സ്ഥാനം നെഞ്ചോടു ചേർന്നു നിന്നിരുന്നു. കൈയ്യിൽ തടിയിൽ കടഞ്ഞെടുത്ത സതരിബായും. 1982 മുതൽ 1986 വരെ പഴയ സെമിനാരിയിൽ വൈദിക വിദ്യാർത്ഥിയായിരിക്കുമ്പോൾ ആണ്ടിൽ രണ്ടു പ്രാവശ്യം സഭയിലെ എല്ലാ മേർപട്ടക്കാരെയും ഒരുമിച്ചുകാണാൻ ഞങ്ങൾക്ക് ഭാഗ്യം ലഭിച്ചിരുന്നു. പഴയ സെമിനാരിയോടു ചേർന്നുള്ള സോഫിയാ സെന്ററിലെ വൃത്താകൃതിയിലുള്ള ചാപ്പലിൽ വച്ചായിരുന്നു അക്കാലത്ത് ഫ്രീബുവരി മാസത്തിലും ജൂലൈ മാസത്തിലും ഒരാഴ്ച നീണ്ടുനിൽക്കുന്ന പരിശുദ്ധ സുന്നഹദോസ് നടന്നിരുന്നത്. പരിശുദ്ധ ബസേലിയോസ് മാർത്തോമ്മാ മാത്യൂസ് പ്രഥമൻ കാതോലിക്കാ ബാവാ തിരുമേനി ദേവലോകത്തു നിന്നും ദിവസവും എഴുന്നള്ളും. ബാക്കി മെതാപ്പോലീത്താമാർ സോഫിയാ സെന്ററിൽ ഒരു മുറിയിൽ ഒന്നും രണ്ടും പേർ വീതം താമസിക്കുമായിരുന്നു. യാഥപ്രാർത്ഥനകൾക്ക് മുഴുവൻ പിതാക്കന്മാരും സെമിനാരി ചാപ്പലിൽ വന്നു പങ്കെടുക്കുമായിരുന്നു. വടക്കെ അറ്റത്തു നിൽക്കുന്ന സീനിയർ തിരുമേനി മുതൽ തെക്കേ അറ്റത്തു നിൽക്കുന്ന ജൂനിയർ തിരുമേനി വരെയുള്ളവരുടെ നേരെ ധൂപം വീശി ശെമ്മാശന്മാർ ഓരോരുത്തരുടെയും കൈമുത്തുമായിരുന്നു. സന്ധ്യാനമസ്കാരത്തെ തുടർന്ന് അഭി. തിരുമേനിമാർ ഓരോ സന്ധ്യയിലും പ്രസംഗിക്കുമായിരുന്നു. അക്കൂട്ടത്തിൽ അഭി.ബർണബാസ് തിരുമേനിയുടെ പ്രസംഗങ്ങളും കേൾക്കാൻ

ഇടയായിട്ടുണ്ട്. അക്കാലത്ത് അഭി.ബർണബാസ് തിരുമേനി ഇടുക്കി ഭദ്രാസനാധിപൻ എന്നതിനോടൊപ്പം മർത്തമറിയം വനിതാസമാജം പ്രസിഡന്റ്, ബാലികാ സമാജം പ്രസിഡന്റ്, മദ്യവർജ്ജന പ്രസ്ഥാനം പ്രസിഡന്റ്, തുടങ്ങിയ ചുമതലകളും വഹിച്ചിരുന്നത് ഓർക്കുന്നു. (ഒരു കാലഘട്ടത്തിൽ ആൺകുട്ടികൾക്കു മാത്രമായി

ബാലസമാജം എന്ന പേരിലും പെൺകുട്ടികൾക്കു മാത്രമായി ബാലികാ സമാജം എന്ന പേരിലും പ്രസ്ഥാനം നടന്നുപോന്നിരുന്നു. 2007 മുതൽക്കാണ് ആൺകുട്ടികളും പെൺകുട്ടികളും ഒരുമിച്ചുള്ള സംഘടനയായി ബാലസമാജം രൂപം പ്രാപിച്ചത്). 1824 ആഗസ്റ്റ് 9-ന് പെരുമ്പാവൂരിൽ, കല്ലറയ്ക്കൽ കുടുംബത്തിൽ ജനിച്ച അഭിവന്ദ്യ മാത്യൂസ് മാർ

ബർണബാസ് തിരുമേനി 1940-കളിൽ, ഭാരതത്തിനു സ്വാതന്ത്ര്യം ലഭിക്കുന്നതിനു മുമ്പുള്ള കാലഘട്ടത്തിൽ കേരളത്തിനു പുറത്തേക്കു സഞ്ചരിച്ച് അന്നും ഇന്നും പ്രശസ്തമായ ശ്രദാസ് ക്രിസ്ത്യൻ കോളേജിൽ പഠനം നടത്തിയെന്നു പറയുമ്പോൾ അനുബന്ധമായി പല കാര്യങ്ങൾ മനസ്സിലാക്കേണ്ടതുണ്ട്.

ശേഷം പേജ് 6

കുടിയേറ്റക്കാരുടെ ഹൃദയ ഇടയൻ

“His Grace Dr. Joshua Mar Nicodimos Metropolitan is serving as the Diocesan Metropolitan of Nilackal Diocese since it’s inception on August 15, 2010. When he was a Priest, His Grace served in America as the Secretary to Mathews Mar Barnabas Metropolitan, for 11 years (1992-2003) as Rev. Fr. M. Johnson.”

Malankara Orthodox Church and The Election of Catholicos of the East

The history of Malankara Orthodox Church goes back to the beginning of Christianity. The Malankara Church was founded by St. Thomas, one of the twelve apostles of Jesus Christ, who came to India in A.D. 52. The Indian Church entered into a close relationship with the Persian or East Syrian Church thereafter, as early as the 4th Century. From the Persians, the Indians inherited the East Syrian language and liturgies, and gradually came to be known as Syrian Christians. In the sixteenth century, Roman Catholic missionaries came to Kerala. They tried to unite the Syrian Christians to the Roman Catholic Church and this led to a split in the community. Those who accepted Roman Catholicism are the present Syro-Malabar Catholics. Later,



Varghese Pothanicaad the Church developed a relationship with the Antiochene Church, which again caused splits in the community. As a result of this relationship, the Church received West Syrian liturgies and practices. The Church entered into a new phase of its history by the establishment of the Catholicate in 1912. However, at its core, the faith of the Church remains that which was established by the three Ecumenical Councils

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FROM THE VICAR'S DESK



Rev. Fr. Gregory Varghese Glory be to God. It is with great joy that I can contribute a few words to this year's edition of the "Mar Barnabas Newsletter" published mostly by the young people of the St. Gregorios Church. The beginning of the new liturgical year of the Church happens to coincide with the feast day of our patron, St.

Gregorios of Parumala. It is a time for us to reset and remind ourselves of our individual and collective Christian mission. Jesus asks His disciples "Who do you say that I am?" And St. Peter correctly proclaims that Christ is the "Messiah, the Son of the Living God." Jesus proclaims that the Church will be built on the rock-solid faith and proclamation of Peter. The Church is built on faith and not on the merits, and worldly ambitions of human beings. Our parish on Cherry Lane, in spite of our imperfections and spatial limitations, continues to be a pilgrimage center for Christians in the New York area. This is because our parish is built upon the faith of our

people in Jesus Christ. Our church is built on the faith of the Holy Apostles. Our parish is built on the faith of Mar Barnabas, one of the foundational building blocks of our parish. Most importantly, Jesus Christ is the chief cornerstone of our parish. It is my humble prayer that our church continues to transform from a mere building to a spiritual edifice that will transform the lives of those that enter its doors. We look forward to a blessed and prosperous 2023 as we emerge from all the struggles and tribulations of the previous years. May the prayers of our beloved Mar Barnabas be a stronghold for us all!

Best Compliments From

OUR FORMER VICAR AND SENIOR PRIEST OF THE NORTHEAST AMERICAN DIOCESE



Our beloved Achen Very Rev Fr. Dr. P.S. Samuel Chor Episcopos



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FROM THE PRINCIPAL'S DESK



Jijo Koshy

I thank God and am humbled to contribute to this year's newsletter as the new Sunday School Principal. First, I would like to thank our previous Sunday School Principal Dr. Mini George for all of her hardwork and dedication to our Sunday School over the past several years. I feel blessed to have role models like Mini Aunty and previous Principal George M. Geevarghese. I am also blessed to have two Assistant Principals, Ms. Meenu Chacko and Mr. Peter Johnson. Their professionalism and enthusiasm have really helped during this transition. I am also extremely proud and thankful for our dedicated teachers and substitute teachers. I thank God for enabling us this year to have the school year fully in person.

archical classification system that allows us to go from lower order thinking skills to higher order thinking skills. In order to achieve this form of cognition, the revised curriculum first introduces a topic in a lower grade, then develops it in a higher grade and finally allows for mastery in a still higher grade. There are 53 various topics that are covered. These topics are first introduced to the children in grades 1-4, developed in grades 5-8 and then mastered in grades 9-12. Some of the topics covered are the Nicene Creed, Sacramental life in Christ, Feasts and special days of the Church, ethical issues and other topics. In addition to the textbook, there are resources available for the teachers, parents and children on talmido.org. Teachers are allowed to find and/or develop new resources and email to the Curriculum Committee.

harmony. Being around His Grace, one could see a loving smile on his face and feel a divine presence. I had the privilege of staying with Thirumeni on numerous occasions at the Aramana on Commonwealth Blvd, when Thirumeni was by himself. I was lucky to have such a close relationship with Thirumeni that he would send me a birthday letter every year. I still treasure and keep those letters. Here is an excerpt from the letter that I received for my birthday in 2005: "Our Lord said, 'He who sent Me, is with Me. Since I always do the things pleasing to Him, He has not left Me alone.' (St. John 9:29). He did not say that the Father has not left the Son alone, as the Father is good. He said that the Father did not leave the Son alone, as the Son did the things pleasing to the Father. In a similar way, when we do the things pleasing to God, we will have the confidence that GOD will not leave us alone."

Our Sunday School has 65 students studying in Pre-K, KG and 1st thru 12th grades. We have 16 regular teachers and 12 substitute teachers. Many of our teachers have passed the Teacher's Training Certification (TTC) examination and are certified Sunday School teachers. Sunday School is held every Sunday after worship services from 12 noon to 1.30 pm. A general session is conducted for 20-30 minutes where songs, Bible verses and faith-related topics are taught. Our Vicar, Rev. Fr. Gregory Varghese, Dn. Roby Antony, visiting clergy and seminarians have been teaching liturgical classes during our general sessions.

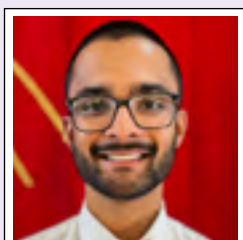
Mathews Mar Barnabas of blessed memory has been a great role model for me and many others. I was blessed to have been around Thirumeni since he became the Diocesan Metropolitan. His Grace came to our Diocese during a turbulent time for the Diocese. Yet, through his prayers and sincerity of heart, Thirumeni was able to tide over the turbulence and bring about peace and

May the memory of our beloved Barnabas Thirumeni be a blessing for us all and especially our Sunday School.

This year is an exciting year for the Sunday School as we have started using a new curriculum developed and introduced by a joint Curriculum Committee of the two Dioceses of our Church in North America, the Northeast American Diocese and the Diocese of South-West America. The new curriculum was developed using Bloom's Taxonomy which is a hier-



FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK



2022 has proven to be an eventful year for the world. This has been so, especially for St. Gregorios Church, Cherry Lane. Under the leadership of our Vicar, Reverend Father Gregory Varghese, and our spiritual organization leaders, our church progressed and picked up right where we left off just before the Pandemic.

This year marks the tenth year of the Dhukrono of our late Barnabas Thirumeni. An integral building block of our church, Thirumeni was no stranger to our parish. I always looked forward to his parish visits, especially as a young altar server back in 2010.

I am proud to present the 2022 Mar Barnabas Newsletter. We were blessed this year to have an article written by H.G. Dr. Joshua Mar Nicodimos Metropolitan about Barnabas Thirumeni. We have a variety of submissions this year discussing important aspects of Holy Qurbana ("The Censer", "God the Holy Spirit"), the life of St. Thomas, biblical passage analysis ("True Victory Comes from God"), and significant events that took place at St. Gregorios Church, Cherry Lane. I hope that you can find at least two to three articles that helped you learn something new or find new insight on our faith.

I want to thank the Editorial Committee for all their help behind the scenes with the pictures, editing and submissions as well. Lastly, I thank God for making the Newsletter a success and a beacon of light for our upcoming generations.

Sincerely,
Peter Johnson, Chief Editor

Historic Visit of Our Bava Thirumeni to the Cherry Lane Church



Our Cherry Lane Church was fortunate to have a visit by the supreme head of our Indian Orthodox Church, His Holiness Moran Mar Baselios Marthoma Mathews III, also known as Bava Thirumeni, on September 24, 2022 when His Holiness celebrated the Holy Liturgy. This visit was historic in that this was as part of his first Apostolic visit to the US, since he was enthroned by the Holy Synod as the Catholicos of the East and the Malankara Metropolitan in October of 2021. His Holiness is the 9th Catholicos of the East and the 22nd Malankara Metropolitan in the lineage of St. Thomas who came to India in 52 AD. It was a great pleasure for all of us to have him in our midst that glorious day!. The church choir, of which I



happen to be a member, had practiced singing for weeks to make sure that our beloved Bava Thirumeni was welcomed into our church the best way possible. One of the songs that we practiced over and over was the song we always sing when we greet a Hierarchy, as a preparation to meet and welcome him. When the day finally came,

to the Altar, the air was filled with awe and the sound of the music from the choir and the rest of the audience.

We were all filled with anticipation as we waited for this day to come. And the day finally arrived. It was very exciting to see and hear the supreme head of the Church in front of our very eyes and ears. His Holiness celebrated the Holy Qurbana with all the Cor Episcopi, priests, deacons, seminarians and altar servers in attendance. There was a new acolyte in attendance - a young boy of the Cherry Lane Church who received the laying on of hands from His Holiness just before the Holy Liturgy started.

During Bava Thirumeni's sermon in the middle of the service, he talked about how our prayers to the saints for intercession should not just be focussed on receiving material blessings but we should try to follow the lives and teachings of the saints in our daily lives. When we do that, material and other blessings will naturally follow. It is important to note that during his visit, we were able to have our beloved Bava Thirumeni bless the foundation stone/corner stone for the new church building that we anticipate starting construction

on, as soon as necessary permits are in place. After the Holy Qurbana, we all got a chance to spend time talking to Thirumeni when we got to know how friendly and loving a person he can be. Overall, His Holiness' visit to our Cherry Lane church was a very blessed one, an event that will be remembered always. We profusely thank His Holiness for his blessed visit and thank God Almighty for making it happen. His Holiness the Catholicos' visit to the Northeast American Diocese, was from September 22, 2022 to October 2, 2022. All the days of the visit were packed with several events and it was heartening to witness His Holiness tirelessly participating in all events with grace and love. St. Vladimir's Theological Seminary was pleased to vest upon him an Honorary Doctor of Divinity degree during his visit there on September 23, 2022. At the convocation ceremony, His Holiness reminded the Seminary community of our calling to "grow in perfection in unconditional love and mutual forgiveness." Besides visiting St. Vladimir's Seminary, His Holiness also visited St. Tikhon's Seminary and St. Tikhon's Monastery in South Canaan, Pennsylvania.

His Grace Mathews Mar Barnabas through His Messages

In his speeches and writings, His Grace Mathews Mar Barnabas of blessed memory has dwelt on certain verses from the Holy Bible so often that they come naturally to him. His most quoted Bible verses that I remember are the ones like, "Be Holy for I am Holy" (1 Peter 1:16), "Be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect" (St. Matthew 5:48), "Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?" (1 Corinthians 3:16), "Whatever you do, do in love" (1 Corinthians 16:14). His sermons were mostly based on simple quotes from the Holy Bible such as the ones mentioned here and relating them to our daily lives. Thus his messages were simple but profound and easily understood by the laity.

Other often repeated words of wisdom that came from his heart were the ones like, "Be constructive," "Never be idle or the devil will use you," and "Be humble and give glory to God for all your achievements." He never failed to attribute his own success and those of others to God's grace in all of his sermons.

The above quoted Bible verses and his own words of wisdom were a reflection of the man that he was. His Grace Mar Barnabas, before his elevation as a Bishop and after, has been a man of meager lifestyle, one who practiced what he taught.

Barnabas Thirumeni was a fountain of grace and his simplicity and holiness attracted many, including youngsters, to him as well to the one he preached and taught about, Jesus our Lord and Master. Today Barnabas Thirumeni is telling us, in spirit, that the main goal of the Christian life is to stay focused on Jesus Christ. We are called to grow in His like-



Anney Johnson

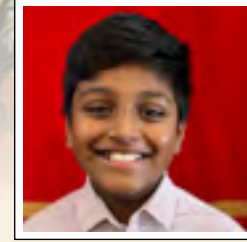
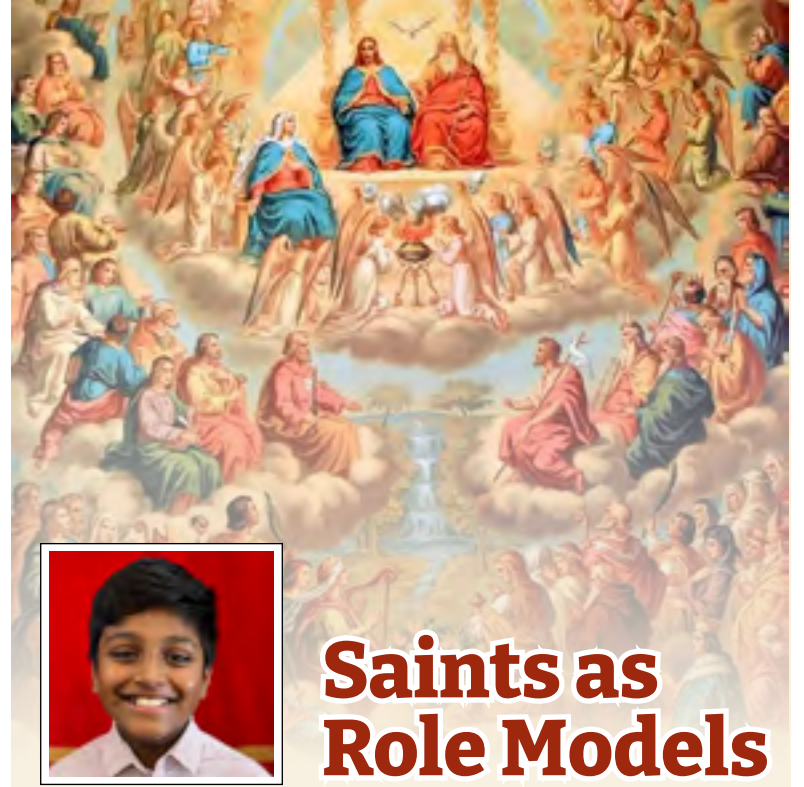
ness and be perfect and holy.

How can we remain focused on Him and grow in His likeness, if our attention is captured by external or toxic feeds on social media and some cable networks? How can we make spiritual progress towards perfection if we are resistant to the call and find pleasure in recreational drugs which stimulate a fantasy and imagination that is at odds with true spiritual conditions? Sobriety of mind is destroyed by engaging in these meaningless activities which may even open the doors of demonic deceptions and possessions. The feelings and fake experiences through addiction to social media or drugs or alcohol or a combination of all three may entangle a person so much that to disengage from them would be almost impossible.

As Baranabas Thirumeni often said "the devil will use you if you are not constructive and engaged in doing good deeds through the holy spirit that is poured into you." He often reminded us that our body is the temple of the holy spirit and as members of the body of Christ, we are called to be holy. He expounded that godly love can lead to perfection. One could never get tired of listening to such pure and simple instructions from Thirumeni as they appeared to come directly from God Himself.

A humble man with a wooden staff, wooden cross and golden tongue, Barnabas Thirumeni is a beacon of light for the Malankara Orthodox Church. Many life threatening and disabling diseases plagued Thirumeni's body but his life of prayer and journey towards holiness and perfection gave him the grace and strength to overcome the physical challenges through spiritual strength. For Thirumeni, living a Christian life was like the involuntary function of breathing. Though it came naturally and automatically to him, it was a result of dedicating his life to God and practicing what he preached in his daily life. His humble and simple solutions helped solve many complex problems and conflicts within the Church.

His life was a sermon that need not be preached or heard but rather understood by observing his lifestyle. He walked the way of the cross and did not get deviated by the wealth and luxury of the American lifestyle. His use of a wooden staff and cross taught the importance of simplicity, humility, love, long suffering and patience. They were not merely symbolic but rather an outward expression of his inner humility and grace. He was a source of encouragement and inspiration to many youths in American society. His gentle love drew them towards the Church and many became priests. His love, patience and tolerance towards the American diaspora can never be forgotten. The best way to guard Barnabas Thirumeni's memory is to take into our hearts his favorite Bible quotes and words of wisdom and follow the example of his way of life towards holiness and perfection. Memory Eternal!



Aiden Joshy

Saints as Role Models

We often hear that we should make saints our role models. The dictionary meaning of a role model is: 'a person looked to by others as an example to be imitated.' We know of several saints including St. Gregorios of Parumala (Parumala Thirumeni) who is the patron saint of our Church and the first one to be declared as a saint by our Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church. To name some other saints in whose names our neighboring parishes have established their Churches, there are St. Thomas, St. Mary, St. George, St. Basil etc. We refer to the disciples of Jesus as saints. The New Testament writers are generally referred to as saints. Some examples of saints from the Holy Bible are St. Matthew, St. Mark, St. Luke, St. John, St. Paul, St. Peter and St. James. Even if someone leads a saintly life while alive, sainthood is attributed only after many years of his/her departure from this world.

Who are saints? One definition of Saint is: "someone who has made creative and abundant use of the grace of God which was given to him/her during his/her earthly life." In other words, saints are those who have tried their utmost, through the grace of God, to imitate Christ through their words and actions and set an example for others to follow. This does not mean that saints were perfect, although some people think they were perfect like Jesus. In fact, we are all called to be saints. We see that St. Paul called the early Christians, saints. Saints like Parumala Thirumeni and Mother Teresa lived their lives in a saintly manner never having any thought of being called saints. They considered living holy lives by service to others as their calling or mission. We can learn from them and imitate their lives. It helps to read their writings and what others have written about them. St. Augustine in his youth was a big sinner but he changed his life for good. Similarly, we learn that St. Paul, who was initially known as Saul had persecuted the Christians but after his encounter with Christ in a vision, he became the greatest Christian missionary, preaching the word of God in Gentile lands.

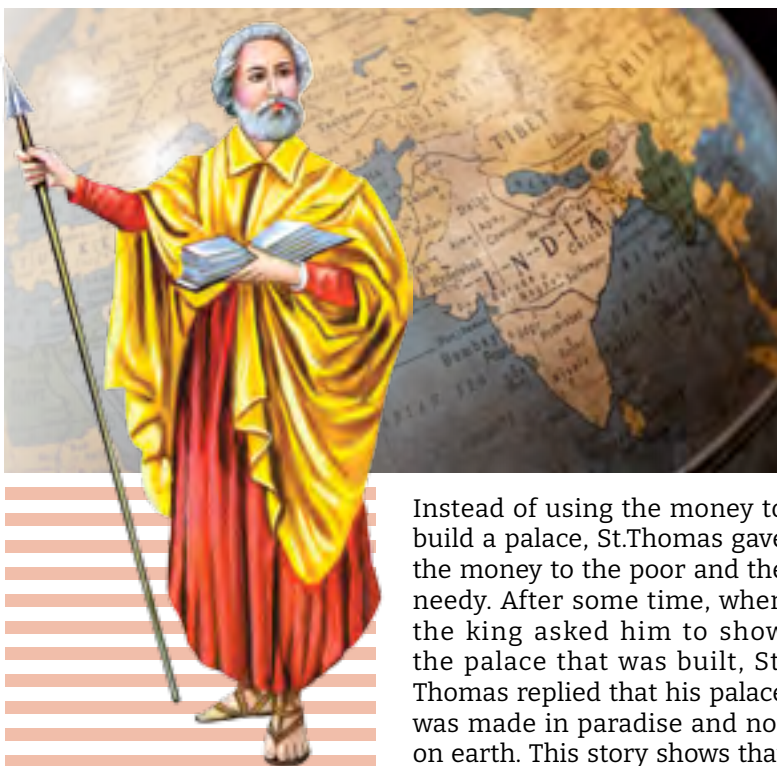
We should understand the idea that becoming a saint is truly attainable. But becoming a saint or being called a saint should not be our goal but rather leading holy lives with the help of the Holy Spirit. Following the two great commandments that Jesus taught - Loving the Lord our God with all our heart and soul and loving our fellow human beings as ourselves - should be our aim. We express our love towards God and man through our words and deeds of kindness, service to the poor and leading a prayerful, sacrificial and sacramental life. We should be forgiving of others. At the same time, we should not be dwelling on our sinful past but rather forge ahead with a new mission and vision. As Christians we should not worry about every single wrong we committed but rather look for reconciliation with our brethren. Everyone, in some shape or form, has done wrong. However, through the death of Christ and our pleading for forgiveness through confession and prayer and reconciliation with others, we are forgiven for our sins. Saints are clear representations of this. Let's take St. Peter's life for example. We see in the Holy Bible Jesus speaks of Peter denying Him three times before the raven crows. Peter says he will never do such a thing. Once the time comes, unknowingly, Peter denies Jesus three times upon which the bird crows. Then he realizes his mistake and out of true remorse, cries tears of repentance and promises himself to never go astray from Jesus like this ever again. Jesus then proceeds to forgive him and reinstates him as an ardent disciple of his. We learn later that he suffered martyrdom in Rome. When his Roman persecutors wanted to crucify him, out of love and respect for his Lord and Master, he asked that he be crucified with his head down and they did so. Like St. Peter, we may commit sins unknowingly, but like him we must repent for our sins that may be committed knowingly and unknowingly. 1 John 1:9 says, "If we confess our sins, He is just and faithful to forgive us of all our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." God delights to forgive the repentant sinner as we see in the father who forgave the prodigal son unconditionally and celebrated his return. God can, and does, forgive us of our sins, if you do confess through personal prayer and following the sacrament of Holy Confession that the Church has instituted. As we saw in

ST. THOMAS THE APOSTLE OF INDIA

We all know that St. Thomas was one of the Apostles of Jesus Christ and the founder of our Church in India. He first came to the western shores of India in 52 AD, preached the gospel of Jesus Christ, performed miracles in His name and converted many to be His followers. It is believed that he built seven Churches in Kerala, India.

It is mentioned in the Holy Bible that St. Thomas was absent the first time Jesus appeared to His disciples after his resurrection. When other disciples told him that Jesus appeared to them, he said that he would not believe it unless he was able to touch Jesus' wounded hands and side. So, Jesus appeared to them again when Thomas was present and showed Thomas his wounded hands and side. Thomas believed and uttered, "My Lord and My God" (St. John 20:28). So St. Thomas is known for declaring Jesus as God Himself.

There is a fascinating story about St. Thomas that I have heard many times. Believing that St. Thomas was an architect, an Indian king gave St. Thomas a large amount of money to make him a beautiful and glorious palace.



Ashley Anish

Instead of using the money to build a palace, St. Thomas gave the money to the poor and the needy. After some time, when the king asked him to show the palace that was built, St. Thomas replied that his palace was made in paradise and not on earth. This story shows that St. Thomas cared for the poor, needy and sick rather than any earthly glory.

St. Thomas was martyred in Mylapore in the present Tamil Nadu state of India. He was praying at the time he was assassinated by a religious fanatic. He was buried in Mylapore and his burial site has become a famous place of pilgrimage.

There was a man named Mark, who had many struggles in his life. He had a low-wage job, found it hard to make his ends meet and struggled to find peace of mind in his life. He left his loved ones and his relationship with others was disappearing. With the problems he faced in his daily life, he found it hard to make an effort to have a good relationship with God also. At a young age, Mark was always taught to pray and how to lead a good Christian life. However, as he grew older, he found himself straying away from God due to the constant earthly problems he dealt with.

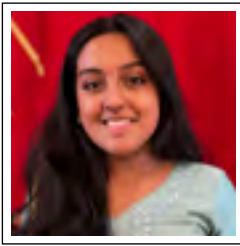
The above Mark is a fictitious name that I used to illustrate a point. Mark is typical of many of us, especially some of the youth growing up in America. Mark was not successful in a worldly sense which apparently contributed to his distancing himself from God. However, there are even people who are successful in a worldly sense, distancing themselves from God. Instead of straying away from God, as children of Christ, we must make every effort to walk with Christ. The life of Jesus Christ on earth remains as a symbol of our life on earth. He faced the same kind of temptations that we routinely face - temptations of easily earning a living, temptations of receiving glory and honor and temptations of easy protection and security. (Here there is reference to the three temptations



Christ as Our Role Model

that Jesus was subjected to by Satan but Jesus won by citing the Word of God).

Jesus Christ, the Son of God, came down from heaven in the form of a human being, lived a human life of service and compassion, while facing a lot of opposition from His own people. Ultimately, He died for us. What is in His life for us? His life serves as an example of how we



Annmaria Joshy

should live our lives on earth. We are not expected too much in our lives, from God, but to live a life according to His life and His word. By following the example Jesus has set for us, we can become faithful Christians.

As we read in the Gospel according to St. John, Jesus said, "I am the Light of the world. He who follows Me will not walk in

the darkness, but will have the light of life." Thus, Jesus Christ is the Light of our lives and a true Christian needs to walk in this heavenly Light. Even when our life gets hard and dark, the true light of Jesus will lead the way for us. If we are willing to stay close to Him, He will come closer and closer to us. Through prayer and meditation, we can even make God our outlet for our emotions and stress relief. Whenever we feel stressed or conflicted, spend a few minutes or seconds in prayer and it can bring us a world of relief. He will help us find a way out of our troubles. In Isaiah 41:10, we read, "So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand." This was God's promise to Israel, if they followed His path. This is true for us, the new Israel as well. God is our strength and upholder, when we feel weak or burdened.

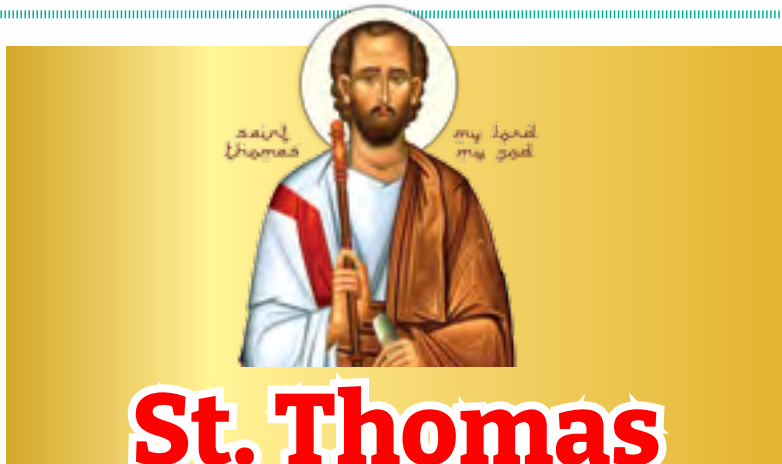
Oftentimes, we forget what God has done for us in our lives. Being humans, we tend to forget the numerous blessings we have been given. Even though Jesus has come to our aid in tough and difficult times, we struggle to thank Him for what He has done for us. Whether or not we are burdened with having done something displeasing to God, we can always have the Jesus Prayer on our lips, "Lord Jesus, have mercy on me, a sinner."

Communication is a key for any relationship that we have. Just as we feel relieved, when we speak to a close relative or friend when we feel burdened or stressed, we should always maintain a relationship with God through prayer. Just knowing that God is always holding out His hand for His children, is a comforting thing in times of stress and distress. We may stray away from God, but He will never stray away from us. In Deuteronomy 31:8, we read, "It is the Lord who goes before you. He will be with you; he will not leave you or forsake you. Do not fear or be dismayed." This is an assurance that Moses gave Joshua, his successor for leading Israel, in the presence of all the people of Israel. This is true for us also in this modern age. Jesus has shown us the way to follow Him in His light through His teachings and life. Remember, looking at His followers including His disciples, Jesus also said, "You are the light of the world" (Matthew 5:14). So just as Jesus did, we, as His followers, have an obligation to show the way for those around us who may need the light of Christ. Let us be an example for those who see us, including our friends and relatives and even strangers. No matter what, our goal should be to lead good Christian lives for our own sakes and for the sake of others, following the Role Model that Jesus has set for us.



Bless Thomas

St. Thomas, otherwise known as the head of our church the Malankara Orthodox Syrian church, was one of Christ's beloved disciples. There is no proof that Thomas was a fisherman, but he was likely born into a poor family in Galilee. He was Jewish, but there is no information on how he got to be a Christian apostle. Nevertheless, we can better understand his personality than some of the other Twelve because of the fourth Gospel. Although Thomas' name appears in Matthew (10:3), Mark (3:18), Luke (6), and Acts of the Apostles (1:13), he plays a particularly notable role in the Gospel of John. Although Thomas is frequently criticized for his lack of faith, he was equally brave and was prepared to stand by Jesus in perilous situations. He also pursued the Truth assiduously. He asked questions like a curious youngster all the time. And his admirable line of words, "My Lord and my God," is the clearest declaration of



St. Thomas

Jesus' divinity in Holy Scripture. St. Thomas was always a loyal follower of his savior. Thomas remarked to his fellow disciples, "Let us also go, that we may perish with him," when Jesus said that He would be going to see the recently deceased Lazarus in Judea, which was a few miles from Jerusalem and dangerously near for someone as unpopular as He (John 11:16). Thomas inspired the other apostles to stick by their Master no matter what when the anxious disciples sought to prevent Jesus from leaving out of fear that He would be stoned. This kind of fearlessness was uncommon among the Apostles before Pentecost. But this attribute of St. Thomas is why he is a pillar of faith for us all. One of the most famous stories of St. Thomas was when he doubted

Christ. The first time Jesus appeared to the disciples after His Resurrection, St. Thomas was not present in the Upper Room. "Unless I see the mark of the nails in His hands and put my finger into the nail markings and put my hand into His side, I will not believe," Thomas said in response to the other's claims (Luke 20:25). Thomas performed his act of faith eight days later. "My Lord and my God!" he said as he bowed before Jesus. Jesus responded, "Because you have seen me, Thomas, you believed. Blessed are those who believe despite not having seen (John 20:25-29). Due to this episode, the term "doubting Thomas" was born. St. Thomas is not only important to us for having all these strong attributes but also because of his missionary works in India which formed our Malankara church. Syro Malabar Christians and many other Syrian Churches of India consider the Apostle Thomas as their founder. St. Thomas, also known as "Mar Thoma," is thought to have arrived at Kodungalloor on the Kerala coast around 52 AD. More than seven communities (churches) were established on the south-western coast of India as a result of the Apostle's 20 years of missionary labor. St. Thomas unfortunately encountered resistance at the end of his missionary work and was killed in 72 AD at Mylapore, close to

Chennai. His martyrdom site has a long tradition of reverence. In accordance with the "Padroado" agreement with the king of Portugal, Pope Paul V established the diocese of Mylapore in 1606 in recognition of this. The body of St. Thomas was buried there, which was the explanation. Pope Pius XII promoted Mylapore Church to a Minor Basilica in 1956. Pope St. John Paul II's visit to the tomb during his apostolic visit in 1986 brought the Thomas tradition to new light. Along with them, there has also always been a "Nazarani" (Christian) presence on the south-western coast of India. Christians in India have created their own rites and traditions over the years, modifying them to fit their unique cultural context. However, some people don't believe the account of St. Thomas landing on the Kerala coast. The words made by Pope (emeritus) Benedict XVI in 2006 that sparked the most debate regarding apparent skepticism were those. He appeared to be denying St. Thomas the title of "Apostle of India" during a speech he gave in St. Peter's Square. Thomas must have preached in Syria, Persia, and eventually North Western India or Pakistan, according to Pope Benedict. Fr. George Nedungattu, a professor at the Oriental Pontifical Institute in Rome, noted that the pope's assumption was likely incorrect because St. Thomas did, in fact, evangelize South India. According to Dr. Pius Malekandathil of the Center for Historical Studies at Jawaharlal University in New Delhi, Thomas may have traveled to India twice, the first time along the Silk Road, arriving in the present-day state of Maharashtra in north-western India. After that, he might have returned to Jerusalem to take part in the Jerusalem Council in 48 AD before sailing to southern India via the then-active monsoonal commerce route. In any case, Thomas is regarded as the

patron saint of India and the one who gave the early Church in India its beginnings. Pope Benedict XVI's remarks led to discussions that led to the reaffirmation of Thomas's status as "the Apostle of India," and the Pontiff afterwards referred to Thomas using that title. Since then, Thomas has also been referred to in this manner in the Ordo used in Australia. The Portuguese were taken aback to see flourishing Christian communities in the south of the Subcontinent when Vasco da Gama's ship arrived in India in 1498. They were even more taken aback by how certain the people believed that St. Thomas had founded their church. They shouldn't have been because the saint's grave was allegedly located there, according to numerous travelers, including Marco Polo. In southern India, St. Thomas preached to Jews and Hindus and won thousands of converts. For the followers of St. Thomas, there is little question that they have carried on an unbroken tradition since the arrival of their saint in 52. We still revere St. Thomas as the head of our church and all our Catholicos to sit on the throne of St. Thomas.

As the followers of St. Thomas, we pray to him to intercede for us to Christ Jesus our Lord, "Lord Jesus, St. Thomas doubted Your resurrection until he touched Your wounds. After Pentecost, You called him to become a missionary in India, but he doubted again and said no. He changed his mind only after being taken into slavery by a merchant who happened to be going to India. Once he was cured of his doubt, You freed him and he began the work You had called him to do. As the patron saint against doubt, I ask him to pray for me when I question the direction in which You are leading me. Forgive me for mistrusting You, Lord, and help me to grow from the experience." "Saint Thomas, pray for me. Amen."

Saints as Role Models

From page 3

the life of St. Peter and according to the Bible verse that was just quoted, we must always seek and receive forgiveness, to truly be Christ-like. Like the Church Fathers did, we can always have the Jesus Prayer on our lips all the time, "Lord Jesus, have mercy on me, a sinner." We learn through the lives of many saints including

St. Peter, that although we may fall at times, we should get up and follow the path of Jesus. The exhortation from Jesus is, "Bey perfect, as your Father in heaven is perfect" (St. Matthew 5:48). But keep in mind that it is God who makes us perfect through Jesus our Lord, once we show a willingness to come to Him and show true remorse and look to better ourselves in the name of Jesus Christ.



Jayden John

What is the Holy Spirit?

It wouldn't surprise me, if some people when they hear the term "Holy Spirit" might think that the Holy Spirit is a phantom or even a magical force that only some lucky few people get in their lives if they are really good. Based on my research for this article, I found out a few things about the Holy Spirit that I was not aware of before. Within the Holy Trinity that consists of God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit, the Holy Spirit may be the one that is most misunderstood! From the Holy Bible, we can understand that the Holy Spirit is the third person of the Holy Trinity. Ephesians 4:30 says, "And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption." This shows that the Holy Spirit is not an "it" or a "thing". So the better question is "Who is the Holy Spirit? The Holy Spirit is God. He is also known as the "comforter". In Christian art, the white dove and burning red flame often symbolizes the Holy Spirit. Of course, these symbolic art depictions of the Holy Spirit have their origins in the Holy Scripture itself. We know that at the time of the baptism of our Lord, the Holy Spirit came down in the form of a dove. Also, we learn from the book of the Acts of the Apostles that on the day of Pentecost, the Holy



God the Holy Spirit

Spirit came down and rested on the disciples' heads in the form of tongues of fire.

Where is the Holy Spirit?

In the olden times, people thought that to see and experience the Holy Spirit, one had to go to the temple. But the Holy Spirit can come down to live amongst the people. In fact, the Holy Spirit actually lives inside and within us. In Psalm 51 that David wrote as a psalm of repentance, he says in verse 11, "Do not cast me from Your presence or take Your Holy Spirit from me." We believe that at the time of our baptism, we receive the gift of the Holy Spirit and become members of the holy Church. So, we don't have to go anywhere

special to find or see him. He is within us and guides us in our day to day life. He walks along our side. Just as we say that God is everywhere, the Holy Spirit is everywhere because the Holy Spirit is God. It is important that we do not grieve the Holy Spirit through our wicked thoughts, words and deeds.

What role does the Holy Spirit play in our life?

The Holy Spirit shines His light on what we read in the Bible, helping us to understand what is happening and what God is trying to tell us through His word. He is within our conscience. The Spirit powers us and guides our daily lives. He helps us to make the right decisions according

to God's will. The Holy Spirit is spoken of as the perfecter of all things. In Chapter 14 of the Gospel according to St. John, we see Jesus comforting his disciples with the promise of the Holy Spirit once He is physically gone from the earth. In verses 16-17, Jesus says, "And I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Counselor to be with you forever - the Spirit of Truth...He lives with you and will be in you. Thus the Holy Spirit has been depicted as the Comforter, the Counselor, the Spirit of Truth etc.

Why is the Holy Spirit important?

In Sunday School we learn that the fruits of God the Holy Spirit are love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self control. Who wouldn't want those gifts in their life? The Holy Spirit is very important in our daily life, because He helps us understand

that we are truly sinners and that we need God's forgiveness. When we are going through difficult times, He teaches us how to pray and navigate through our problems. His goal is to bring us closer to God and lead us through what God has planned for our lives.

Finally, it is important to know that the Nicene Creed that we recite so often gives us a clear picture of Who the Holy Spirit is, where He comes from and what His function has been through history. As the third part of the Nicene Creed, we declare that we believe "in the one Living Holy Spirit, the life-giving Lord of all, Who proceeds from the Father, and who together with the Father and the Son, is worshipped and glorified, Who spoke through the prophets and apostles." The Creed also makes it clear that we believe in One True God manifested in Three Persons.



Liyah John

Missions Trip Reflection (NOLA 2022)

"The socially constructed life-long chase after success, centered around me, myself, and I" ensnares us into a whirlwind of greed, selfish passions, and gripping fear of disappointment. But St. Paul reminds us that "there is great gain in godliness with contentment; for we brought nothing into the world, and we cannot take anything out of the world." But where can we find, or rather, in what can we find contentment?

I graduated last year and immediately started working. It was the "next step" in life and I followed through, yet a nagging feeling of purposeless progress remained in my mind. I was caught between chasing success and seeking purpose. When the Missions conveners visited my church and announced the Missions Trip, I was instantly drawn. Maybe I expected this trip to change my life completely, or maybe, selfishly, I just needed an escape from work, family, and social stress. However questionable my sparked interest was, it took me almost three weeks to fill out the application. I stared at the questions and contemplated my qualifications for this min-



Maryann Johnson

istry. "If this is my purpose, why am I not qualified?" Yet again, I followed through, trusting in the fact that only "good" will result from a good deed.

However, my initial self-interested step into the mission's journey slowly and ironically ebbed into a humbling experience. Every day we drove by the devastating remnants of Hurricane Ida on the way to Mr. Robert's house. Every day I counted my blessings back in New York. Every day I would wake up with renewed spirit, determined to put up as many dry walls as possible. And every day, I would return back to Camp Hope filled with unadulterated contentment.

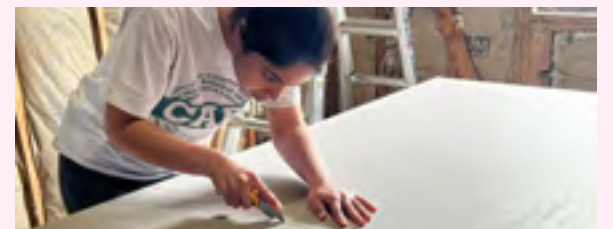
The evening devotionals that would follow our simple day-to-day act of service allowed for deeper self-reflection and spiritual and emotional growth. Royce Shemashen taught us the importance of our talents; "when

goods increase, they increase who eats them; and what gain has their owner but to see them with his eyes?" Our talents are given to us by God to be of help to others, for what is the use of them if only kept for oneself? Among all the other devotionals, this one stayed close to my heart throughout the Missions Trip. It made me realize that a good deed, no matter how outwardly magnanimous, if not done for the sake of Christ, is ultimately

for one's own sake. When done for the sake of Christ, the grace of God dwells in us and we are filled with contentment. That contentment which fills us through the grace of God teaches us to be empathetic leaders. Leaders with hearts to serve, making us good stewards of God.

The NOLA'22 (New Orleans Louisiana) Missions Trip was truly a blessing from God. I loved every experience on this trip and absolutely cherish the friendships

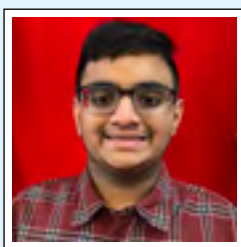
I made along the way. However, as the Missions Trip ended, I was afraid to go back to my normal, fast-paced, "pressure-cooker" life. I was afraid I would forget the fervor of service. So when I was asked if I wanted to be part of the Mission Committee, I agreed without hesitation. I still do not know if I am qualified, but I believe I am called for this ministry and I pray God qualifies me for it.



The Feast Day of Our Patron Saint: St. Geevarghese Mor Gregorios of Parumala

During the feast day, each one of us thought of our patron saint: St. Geevarghese Mor Gregorios of Parumala. Our church is named after him and his feast day is on November 2nd, his death date. During the feast day and procession, we feel God's presence among us and appreciation for St. Gregorios for what he had taught us during his time on earth. Hopefully, you will have a new understanding of him once you finish reading.

St. Gregorios was born on June 15th, 1848 in Mulanthuruthy. His uncle saw the call of God within him and trained him in the syriac language and theological studies. When he was 28, he was ordained as a Metropolitan by His Holiness Moran Mor Ignatius Peter III and entrusted with the Niranam Diocese. Being young compared to the other Thirumenis, he was affectionately called Kochuthirumeni. He was eventually handed leadership of the Parumala Diocese. Thirumeni led a very pious and simple life. His key qualities were dedication and sacrifice. To benefit the community, he started many schools. Frequent



Joshua Jacob

kneeling, praying, and restless church activities made him ill. I had many opportunities to visit the Parumala Church, his final resting place, where you can feel the calmness and experience of the life he lived. Geevarghese Mor Gregorios passed away on November 2nd, 1902. During his life, he showed his love to everyone, regardless of caste, and in particular, helped the poor and outcasts. He was as close to Jesus as anyone could be.

The flags are hoisted one week before the feast day to prepare ourselves mentally and spiritually. The flags symbolize the fact that we are Malankara Orthodox Christians in Amer-

ica. These flags are used in the Rasa, as well as the flag of India, which represents our originality. People of all races and nationalities see us in the Rasa, as they look to our Orthodox faith for inspiration and guidance. People from different churches walk here during Parumala Thirumeni's feast day, because they consider us the Parumala Church in America, as we are blessed to have his kappa. During the feast day and procession, we feel calm and inspired with the songs we sing and from the life of our saint.

May the prayers of St. Gregorios and all the saints be with us.

കുടിയേറ്റക്കാരുടെ പുദയ ഇടയൻ

പേജ് 1 തുടർച്ച

ഇരട്ടപിറന്ന മുത്ത സഹോദരൻ ഉൾപ്പെടെയുള്ള എല്ലാ മുത്ത സഹോദരീ സഹോദരന്മാരെയും മാതാപിതാക്കളെയും വിട്ട് കേരളത്തിനു പുറത്തേക്കു പോകുന്നതിനുള്ള ധൈര്യം, അവിടേക്ക് അയക്കുന്നതിന് മാതാപിതാക്കൾക്കുള്ള സമ്മതവും ദർശനവും കുടുംബത്തിൽ അതിനാവശ്യമായ സാമ്പത്തിക ഭദ്രത. ഇതെല്ലാം ഉണ്ടായിരുന്നതും വൈദിക പാരമ്പര്യമുള്ളതുമായ ഒരു ഉന്നത കുടുംബത്തിലായിരുന്നു അഭിവന്ദ്യ തിരുമേനിയുടെ ജനനം എന്നത് ശ്രദ്ധേയമാണ്. 1982-ൽ പുതുതായി രൂപീകരിച്ച ഇടുക്കി ഭദ്രാസനത്തിന്റെ പ്രഥമ മെത്രാപ്പോലീത്തയായി നിയമിതനായി നിയോഗം ഏറ്റെടുക്കുമ്പോഴും 1992-ൽ അമേരിക്ക ഭദ്രാസനത്തിന്റെ സഹായമെത്രാപ്പോലീത്തയായും തുടർന്ന് മെത്രാപ്പോലീത്തയായും നിയമിതനായി നിയോഗം ഏറ്റെടുത്തപ്പോഴും തിരുമേനിയുടെ ദൈവാശ്രയത്തോടും ദൈവവിശ്വാസത്തോടും കൂടിയുള്ള സാഹസികത ഏറ്റെടുക്കുകയായിരുന്നുവെന്നു വേണം ഇന്ന് വിലയിരുത്താൻ.

ഇടുക്കിയിലെ കുടിയേറ്റക്കാരും തോട്ടം തൊഴിലാളികളും പ്രകൃതിയോടു മല്ലിട്ടും കൃഷിയെ ആശ്രയിച്ചും കഴിഞ്ഞിരുന്ന സാധാരണക്കാരായ മലങ്കര സഭാ മക്കൾക്ക് വേണ്ടി അവരിലൊരാളെപ്പോലെ ആയി തീരുവാനും അവരുടെ ഇടയിൽ ജീവിക്കുവാനും അഭിവന്ദ്യ തിരുമേനിക്കു സാധിച്ചു. കോട്ടയത്തു നിന്നും കുമളിയിലേക്കും മറ്റും സാധാരണക്കാർ സഞ്ചരിച്ചിരുന്ന പൊതു വാഹനങ്ങളിൽ (ബസിലും മറ്റും) സഞ്ചരിക്കുന്നതിന് തിരുമേനിക്കു മടിയില്ലായിരുന്നു. ഭദ്രാസനത്തിലെ ഓരോ ഭവനങ്ങളിലേക്കും ആ നല്ല ഇടയൻ ആടുകൾ തേടിയും പേരുകൊ

ല്ലി വിളിച്ചും കയറി ചെന്നപ്പോൾ യഥാർത്ഥത്തിൽ അവരുടെ ഹൃദയങ്ങളിലേക്കു തന്നെയായിരുന്നു ആ പ്രവേശനം. ദേവാലയങ്ങൾ പലതും അക്കാലത്ത് പുല്ലു മേഞ്ഞതും ചോരുന്നതുമായിരുന്നു. അമേരിക്കയിലെ സഭാമക്കളും ഒരർത്ഥത്തിൽ കുടിയേറ്റക്കാർ തന്നെയുണ്ടല്ലോ. വ്യത്യസ്തമായ ഭാഷക്കാരും രാജ്യക്കാരും സംസ്കാരക്കാരും അധിവസിക്കുന്ന അമേരിക്കയിൽ പ്രധാനമായും 1870 കൾ മുതലാണല്ലോ മലങ്കര സഭാമക്കളുടെ കുടിയേറ്റം ആരംഭിച്ചത്. അതോടുകൂടി വൈദികരായി, ആരാധനകളായി, ദേവാലയമായി, ദൈവാലയങ്ങളായി തുടർന്ന് ഭദ്രാസനമായി ഇപ്പോൾ രണ്ടുഭദ്രാസനങ്ങളും ആയി. മലങ്കര സഭയോടു കൂറും വിശ്വസ്ഥതയും പുലർത്തിയിരുന്ന ഒരുപറ്റം ആദ്യകാല കുടിയേറ്റക്കാരുടെ അമിതമായ ദൈവാശ്രയത്തിന്റെയും ദീർഘവീക്ഷണത്തിന്റെയും സഭാഭക്തിയുടെയും അനന്തര ഫലമാണിത് എന്നു വേണം ഇതിനെ ഇന്നു മനസ്സിലാക്കേണ്ടത്.

കഠിനമായ തണുപ്പും, ഘോരമായ മഞ്ഞു വീഴ്ചയും, കനത്ത കാറ്റും, വെള്ളപ്പൊക്കവും, ഉഗ്രതാപവും, കാട്ടുതീയും എല്ലാം ഉള്ള അമേരിക്കയിൽ എത്തിച്ചേർന്ന ഏതു മനുഷ്യന്റെ ജീവിതവും പ്രകൃതിയോടുള്ള മറ്റൊരു മല്ലിടീൽ തന്നെയുണ്ടെന്നു ഞാൻ വിചാരിക്കുന്നു.

ഇടുക്കിയിലെ കുടിയേറ്റക്കാരുടെ ഇടയനായിരുന്ന ബർണബാസ് തിരുമേനിയുടെ ഇടുക്കിയിൽ നിന്നും അമേരിക്കയിലെ കുടിയേറ്റക്കാരുടെ ഇടയനായി നിയോഗിതനായതിനെ സംശയദൃഷ്ട്യ വീക്ഷിച്ചവരും വിമർശിച്ചവരും ഉണ്ടായിരുന്നു. എന്നാൽ അതു തെറ്റായി പോയിയെന്ന് കാലം തെളിയിച്ചുകൊടുത്തു. ഇടുക്കിയിലെ ഇടയൻ സാധാരണ

ബസിൽ യാത്ര ചെയ്തിരുന്നുവെങ്കിൽ ആ ഭദ്രാസനത്തിന്റെ വലിപ്പം കുറെ കിലോമീറ്ററുകൾ മാത്രമായിരുന്നു. എന്നാൽ വിശാലമായ അവിഭക്ത അമേരിക്ക ഭദ്രാസനത്തിന്റെ നാലതിരുകളിൽ എത്തിച്ചേരാൻ ആഴ്ചതോറും ആയിരക്കണക്കിനു മൈലുകൾ സഞ്ചരിക്കേണ്ടി വന്നപ്പോൾ അമേരിക്കയിലെ സാധാരണവാഹനമാകുന്ന വിമാനത്തിൽ ആ പിതാവ് സാധാരണക്കാരനെപ്പോലെ എക്കോണമി ക്ലാസ്സിൽ മടി കുടാതെ യാത്ര ചെയ്തു എന്നു നാം മനസ്സിലാക്കണം. ഓരോ യാത്രയും ചെന്നെത്തിയിരുന്നത് അതതു സ്ഥലത്തുള്ള ദേവാലയങ്ങളിലേക്കു മാത്രമായിരുന്നില്ല മറിച്ച് ആ ഇടവകയിലെ ഓരോ ഭവനങ്ങളിലേക്കും ആ ഭവനത്തിലെ ഓരോ വ്യക്തിയിലേക്കും അവരുടെ ഹൃദയത്തിലേക്കുമായിരുന്നു. ബാഹ്യമായ ആകർഷണീയത തോന്നാത്തതെന്നു പറയപ്പെട്ടിരുന്ന ആ വലിയ വ്യക്തി സാധാരണത്തിന്റെ പരിണിത ഫലമായിരുന്നു അമേരിക്കയിൽ ജനിച്ചു വളർന്ന അനേകം യുവാക്കന്മാർ പൌരോഹിത്യ ശുശ്രൂഷയിലേക്കും സന്യാസജീവിതത്തിലേക്കും ആകൃഷ്ടരായത്.

നിഷ്ഠയോടുകൂടിയ പ്രാർത്ഥനയും, ആരാധനയും ബർണബാസ് എന്ന പേരിനെ അന്വർത്ഥമാക്കുന്ന പ്രബോധന തല്പരതയും, അതിഥി സൽക്കാരപ്രിയവും, രോഗികളെ സന്ദർശിക്കുന്നതിലെ ഉത്സുകതയും എല്ലാം സഭാശുശ്രൂഷയിൽ ആ പിതാവിൽ നിന്നും മാതൃകയാക്കേണ്ട ശ്രേഷ്ഠഗുണങ്ങളാണ്. നിരന്തരമായ വേദവായനയും മറ്റു ഗ്രന്ഥങ്ങൾ വായിക്കുന്നതും തലമുറകൾക്കുവേണ്ടി പുസ്തകങ്ങൾ രചിക്കുന്നതും അവ വായിക്കുവാൻ മറ്റുള്ളവരെ പ്രേരിപ്പിക്കുന്നതും മാതൃകായോഗ്യമായ മറ്റൊരു

കാര്യമായിരുന്നു. 1979-ൽ ആരംഭിച്ച അമേരിക്ക ഭദ്രാസനത്തിന്റെ പ്രഥമ മെത്രാപ്പോലീത്ത അഭി.ഡോ. തോമസ് മാർ മക്കാരിയോസ് തിരുമേനിയായിരുന്നു. അഭിവന്ദ്യ മക്കാരിയോസ് തിരുമേനി ചുമതലയൊഴിഞ്ഞതിനെ തുടർന്നായിരുന്നല്ലെ അഭി.മാത്യൂസ് മാർ ബർണബാസ് തിരുമേനി നിയമിതനായത്.

1892 ഫെബ്രുവരി മാസത്തിൽ കുടിയ പരിശുദ്ധ എപ്പിസ്കോപ്പൽ സുന്നഹദോസിന്റെ തീരുമാനപ്രകാരം 1992 മാർച്ച് 25-ന് അഭി.ബർണബാസ് തിരുമേനി ന്യൂയോർക്കിൽ എത്തിച്ചേർന്ന തോടുകൂടി ഭദ്രാസനത്തിന്റെ വളർച്ചയുടെയും വികസനത്തിന്റെയും മറ്റൊരു ചരിത്ര കാലഘട്ടം ആരംഭിക്കുകയായിരുന്നു. നല്ല ഇടയൻ ആടുകൾക്കൊപ്പവും ആടുകളുടെ ഇടയിലും താമസിക്കണമെന്ന തിരുമേനിയുടെ ആഗ്രഹവും ആദർശവും സാധിക്കത്തക്ക വിധത്തിൽ 1992 ഒക്ടോബർ മാസത്തിൽ Newyork-ൽ Queens എന്ന സ്ഥലത്ത് 80 - 34 Common wealth Blvd എന്ന കെട്ടിടത്തിന്റെ ഒരു നില പ്രതിമാസം \$1000-ന് ഭദ്രാസന കേന്ദ്രമായി വാടകയ്ക്ക് എടുത്തു താമസം ആരംഭിച്ചു. പിന്നീട് ആ കെട്ടിടം തന്നെ വിലയ്ക്കു വാങ്ങി 2004 വരെ അതിൽ പാർക്കുകയും ചെയ്തു. തുടർന്നാണ് ഇപ്പോൾ ഭദ്രാസന കേന്ദ്രമായിരിക്കുന്ന മട്ടൺഠണിലുള്ള വിശാലമായ കെട്ടിടം വാങ്ങി അതിലേക്ക് ഭദ്രാസന ഓഫീസും താമസവും മാറ്റിയത്.

1892 സെപ്റ്റംബർ 17 മുതൽ 2003

സെപ്റ്റംബർ 30 വരെ അഭിവന്ദ്യ തിരുമേനിയോടൊപ്പം സെക്രട്ടറി യായി അരമനയിൽ താമസിച്ചു പ്രവർത്തിക്കുന്നതിനും ഭദ്രാസനത്തിൽ വിവിധ ഇടവകകളിൽ വികാരിയായി സേവനം അനുഷ്ഠിക്കുന്നതിനും ഭാഗ്യകരമായ അവസരം ലഭിച്ച ഒരാൾ എന്ന നിലയിൽ ഓർമ്മകൾ ധാരാളം പങ്കു വയ്ക്കാനുണ്ടെങ്കിലും അതിലുപരി ആ പിതാവിൽ നിന്നും ലഭിച്ച നിരന്തരമായ പ്രോത്സാഹനത്തിന്റെയും ഹൃദയം നിറഞ്ഞ സ്നേഹത്തിന്റെയും കരുതലിന്റെയും യഥാർത്ഥ ഇടയശുശ്രൂഷയുടെയും പാഠങ്ങളും അനുഭവങ്ങളും ആണ് എന്നും എന്റെ മനസ്സിൽ നിറഞ്ഞുനില്ക്കുന്നത്. ഒരു മേല്പട്ടക്കാരൻ എന്ന നിലയിൽ 2010 മുതലുള്ള എന്റെ സഭാ ശുശ്രൂഷയിലും ആ അനുഭവ പാഠങ്ങൾ എന്നും എനിക്കു മാർഗ്ഗരീപമാണ്. 2021 ഒക്ടോബർ 15 മുതൽ 2022 നവംബർ 2 വരെ അഭിവന്ദ്യ ബർണബാസ് തിരുമേനി പ്രഥമ മെത്രാപ്പോലീത്തയായിരുന്ന ഇടുക്കി ഭദ്രാസനത്തിന്റെ സഹായ മെത്രാപ്പോലീത്തയെന്ന ചുമതല കൂടി നിർവ്വഹിക്കുവാൻ അവസരം ലഭിച്ചതും ജീവിതത്തിലെ മറ്റൊരു മഹാഭാഗ്യമായി കരുതുന്നു. ആർദ്രതയും കാര്യബുദ്ധിയും നിഷ്ഠയും ദയാനുകമ്പയും നിറഞ്ഞ വിശുദ്ധ ജീവിതത്തിന്റെ ഉടമയായിരുന്ന ആ പിതാവിന്റെ 10-0മത് ഓർമ്മപ്പൊന്നാൾ ആചരിക്കുന്ന ഈ സന്ദർഭത്തിൽ ആ പുണ്യാത്മാവിന്റെ സർഗ്ഗീയ മദ്ധ്യസ്ഥതയിൽ അഭയപ്പെട്ടുകൊണ്ട് ഈ അനുസ്മരണതയ്ക്ക് വിരാമം കുറിക്കുന്നു.



TRUE VICTORY COMES FROM GOD

“Victory in battle does not come from the size of the army, but from the might of heaven” (1 Maccabees 3:19)

The above verse is part of Judas Maccabeus' encouraging words to his men when they expressed helplessness, seeing a mighty army coming to fight against them. Judas' men were suffering from lack of food and were few in number. Judas ended his words by saying, "God Himself will crush them from before our face; but as for you, do not fear because of them." As soon as he finished speaking, Judas suddenly rushed against his enemies and they were destroyed, with several hundred getting killed and the rest fleeing. God truly came to their aid in this battle. We can see so many such incidents in the Old Testament, incidents of God Almighty coming to the aid of His people, the Israelites, the most familiar incident

being the defeat of Goliath, a giant of the Philistine army by David who was only a shepherd boy.

1 Mac 3:19 can be interpreted in relation to God's intervention in the revolt of the Maccabees against the hellenization of Jews done by the invading Greeks.

1 Maccabees is a deuterocanonical book of the Bible, which was written by a Jewish (pre-Christian) author, around 100 B.C., after the restoration of an independent Jewish kingdom. It is accepted in the Catholic and Orthodox canons. The book starts with how King Alexander the Great came into power after he killed the Persian king, Darius. Then the book speaks about an evil Greek king named Antiochus Epiphanes IV, and how he conquered other



Mini Thomas

nations and made a kingdom for himself. Antiochus caused Israel to commit a bunch of evil acts and turn against God.

Antiochus entered the Jerusalem temple in arrogance and robbed it of all valuable articles including the golden altar, the lampstand, the golden censers, the gold and silver and everything valuable and committed acts of murder. Then he came back to Jerusalem with a large army, took spoils from the city, tore down houses and the city walls. He slaughtered men and took captive the women and children. Then he built a citadel where he placed lawless Jewish men and hid the spoils they had taken from Jerusalem. He tried to suppress the practice of basic Jewish religious laws, forbade whole burnt offerings, used unlawful Jewish men to sacrifice to idols and profane Sabbath. Circumcision was forbidden and he killed those who didn't obey his orders. These acts of atrocities by Antiochus caused a Jewish revolt. This book covers the whole of

the revolt, from 175 to 134 BC and highlights how the salvation of the Jewish people in this crisis comes from God through the family of Mattathias and his sons.

Mattathias was a Jewish priest who called the people for a holy war against the Greek invaders. After his death, his five sons took up the fight against the invaders and one of his sons, Judas Maccabeus mentioned earlier, succeeded Mattathias as the leader. The Greek had a huge army of soldiers whereas the Jews were few. But in spite of that the Jews were able to win their fight. Although this verse, spoken by Judas, was in reference to one particular battle, it gives overall context to Israel's final victory against their enemies in several battles, culminating in the rebuilding and rededication of the Jerusalem temple. In 165 BC the Temple was freed and reconsecrated, so that the sacrifices of whole burnt offerings and other Jewish practices could begin again. Judas and his followers celebrated the Festival of Rededication of the temple for eight days. Historian Josephus called it the "Festival of Lights" and later it came to be known as the festival of Hanukkah. Today when the Jews celebrate Hanukkah every year, they remember this great event of restoration and rededication of the temple with the eight day lighting of the Hanukkah lamp. According to tradition, the Hasmoneans found only one undefiled container of oil left in the temple and miraculously, it lasted

for eight full days.

There is an important thought in this verse and we can relate it to our life which is like a battle. Every generation has its own struggles. We, as human beings, always face challenges in our day to day life. As parents, we go through difficulties with health and work and in our family, social and spiritual life. Children face challenges in their elementary, middle and high school years, like drug /alcohol abuse, violence, mental health difficulties, influence of social media platforms, peer pressure, uncertainty, stress etc. But we always need to remember that our victory does not depend upon our status in life, our popularity or the people who surround us but upon our reliance on God who is our strength and protection.

We come across phases in life where one thinks "I am alone or I might be attacked, how am I going to face it?" Always remember that there is a supernatural power that governs us and when that divine strength comes in us through prayer and meditation and reliance on the social fabric including our family and trustworthy friends, we become so powerful, self-confident and blessed that we are able to overcome that situation and that will make us grow and prosper in God's love. God's strength will prepare us for that. So, believe in His strength and let us all pray to God to help us grow in His strength.



Jensen Varghese

The Second Coming of Christ is the great expectation of the Church. Followers of Jesus should look for, as Titus 2:13 says, "the blessed hope - the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ." In December of every year, we look forward to and eventually celebrate the Feast of the Nativity of our Lord. This is a celebration of the birth of the Son of God in human form to redeem mankind from their sins through His death on the cross, followed by His resurrection. We celebrate this First Advent ('the coming') of Jesus, with church services. Some of us also celebrate this event with a lot of pomp and show including a lot of feasting and drinking, forgetting the fact that we are actually called to look forward to and prepare ourselves for the Second Advent of Jesus. True, there are references to Jesus' Second Coming in our liturgy, as we say during the celebration of the Holy Eucharist, "We commemorate Your Death, O Lord, and we confess Your Resurrection, and we await Your Second Coming. May Your mercy be upon us all." However, in my opinion, we have diminished our focus on the faith of Jesus' Second Coming. We Christians are meant to live expectantly, preparing ourselves for the Second Coming of Christ. Given its prominence in the Holy Bible and the fact that this is the most that we should look forward to and prepare ourselves for, I wonder why we do not think and

talk about Jesus' Second Coming more! One reason I can think of is that our culture has shaped us to think only about today and the here and now, without thinking about the hereinafter. Another reason could be lack of faith that Jesus would come again. But keep in mind that there are many scriptural references about the return of Jesus. In St. Luke 12:40, Jesus Himself says, "You also must be ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect Him." Again, to quote Jesus' words, "At that time, men will see the Son of Man coming in clouds with great power and glory" (St. Mark 13:26). Emphasizing the need for watchfulness, Jesus also says, "If He comes suddenly, do not let Him find you sleeping. What I say to you, I say to everyone: 'Watch!'" (St. Mark 13:36-37). So, as followers of Jesus, we are called to look forward to the day of Jesus' return with watchfulness and real preparation. Then the question arises, "What will happen when Jesus returns?"

The following are some scriptural references: First, the resurrection of the faithful dead will occur and will receive eternal life. St. Paul writes in I Thess. 4:16, "For the Lord Himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first." Second, the resurrection of the dead is physical in nature as we see in the case of the resurrection of Jesus Himself. The resurrected Jesus had a glorified body. The resurrection of the body is part of our total redemption. St. Paul writes in Romans 8:23, "Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption to sonship, the redemption of our bodies." The Apostle Paul refers to our resurrected bodies as "clothes with our heavenly dwelling" or "an eternal house" not built by human



THE GREAT EXPECTATION

hands. Our resurrected bodies will not be the same ones that we have now, but they will be closely related. The disciples, for example, could recognize Jesus by the scars on His hands and side. The new bodies we attain will be in a glorified state.

Third, the living faithful will be transformed. Believers who are still alive will be changed and transformed, with their mortal bodies becoming incorruptible, like Christ's glorified, resurrected body. They will be transformed into His likeness. Jesus said, "Listen, I tell you a mystery: We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed..." (1 Corinthians 15:51) and Philippians 3:21 says that He "by the power that enables Him to bring everything under His control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like His glorious body."

Fourth, all Creation will be healed and restored. In the Garden of Eden, all things were as God intended and after God created the universe, "God saw everything that He had made, and indeed it was very good" (Genesis 1:31). Man was given the responsibility to be caretakers of God's creation but then sin entered the world. As we see the creation today, animals have been sent into extinction, water and land have been defiled, the earth's ozone layer has been diminished and the air we breathe has been polluted. St. Paul writes in Romans 8:20-21, "For the creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will, but because of Him who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself also will be set free from its slavery to corruption into the freedom of the glory of the

children of God." The world we live in is a far cry from what God created and gave to us. St. Paul looked forward to Jesus' return and the restoration of God's creation, as he writes in Acts 3:21, "He must remain in heaven until the time comes for God to restore everything, as He promised long ago through His holy prophets." This means that on that day of Jesus' return, all creation will be healed and returned to its original state.

Fifth, it will also be a day of judgment for the unbeliever and the unredeemed sinner. Both the just and the unjust will rise again and be judged. The unjust will be sent to Hell, a place of their choosing by the decisions they made and the life they lived. There are many who believe that a loving God could never send His children to Hell and that God will forgive everyone of their sins, regardless of the life they lived. But the fact is that not only has God given us every warning needed to make the right choices in life, but through Jesus' death on the cross, He has provided us with every means to receive forgiveness, new life in Him, and the gift of eternal life. The fact is there's no biblical evidence for believing in the final restoration of the lost or the universal salvation of all people. Perhaps the clearest disproof of this false notion is the fact that the same word 'eternal' is used to describe the fate of both the just and the unjust: "Then they will go away to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life" (Matthew 25:46). So we must apply the same qualification to the destinies of the righteous and the wicked, their fate is eternal. God in His love has done everything

necessary to redeem mankind. His justice requires that He punish the sinful, but His love provides salvation freely for all who accept it. Those in Hell are there because they refused or ignored God's love; they are solely responsible for their condition. The realization of this truth will surely be one of the most painful experiences in Hell.

Sixth, the Kingdom of God will be established, heaven here on earth. Heaven is most simply defined as where God is. It is a place of rest, of the glory of purity, of worship, of fellowship with others, and of being with God. "Look! God's dwelling place is now among the people, and He will dwell with them. They will be His people, and God Himself will be with them and be their God" (Revelation 21:3). Upon His return, Jesus will defeat the last enemy, death. He will transform the world as the Judge. He will subdue all things to Himself. Finally, He will hand the kingdom over to His Father, and God will become all in all (1 Cor. 24, 28).

Our hope for the future is to see with our eyes Jesus Christ, a sight that outstrips our human comprehension, and to experience being in His presence forever, surrounded by His love, power, and holiness. Heaven will be the most dynamic, exhilarating experience conceivable. It will be a time of great praise for, as the words of a classic hymn Amazing Grace say, "When we've been there ten thousand years, bright shining as the sun, we've no less days to sing God's praise than when we'd first begun."

Malankara Orthodox Church and The Election of Catholicos of the East

From page 1 ▶▶

of Nicea (A.D. 325), Constantinople (A.D. 381) and Ephesus (A.D. 431).

The Church is in communion with the other Oriental Orthodox Churches namely, Syriac, Alexandrian, Armenian, Eritrean and Ethiopian Orthodox Churches. The Church is in good ecumenical relationship with the Eastern Orthodox, Roman Catholic and Protestant Churches.

This Church now consists of about 2.5 million members, who are spread all over the world, though the majority reside in the state of Kerala in India. The Supreme Head of the Church and the present Catholicos is His Holiness Baselios Marthoma Mathews III. H.H.'s residence and the Head-quarters of the Church is in Kottayam in the Kerala State. The Church as a whole is divided into 30 ecclesial units called dioceses and each diocese is served by a bishop, administratively and spiritually.

Malankara Orthodox Church is identified for its democratic way of administration and having a written Constitution which is approved and upheld by the Supreme Court of India. The Church Constitution was approved and implemented in 1934, even years before India's independence and the establishment of India's national Constitution.

The Church Constitution upholds the autonomy and autocephaly of the Malankara Orthodox Church. It is Episcopal in its polity and not congregational. At the same time, it upholds democratic principle by safeguarding the rights and privileges of the lay people. The constitution enshrines the fundamental features of the Church, provides direction for its internal administration and preserves its integrity and autonomy. The essential features of the Church are provided in the preamble. The first article emphasizes the bond of relationship between the Church of Syria and Malankara. The second article deals with the foundation of the Malankara Church by St. Thomas and the primacy of the Catholicos. The third article refers to the name of the church, the fourth about the faith, traditions, etc., and the fifth about the canons governing the administration of the Church. The whole constitution conceives the Malankara Church as self-sufficient in all her requirements, be it temporal, ecclesiastical or spiritual in nature and upholds that the Malankara Orthodox church is rightly autocephalous in character.

The officials of the Church starting from parish level committee to the supreme head of the Church - the Catholicos cum Malankara Metropolitan, must be democratically elected by the relevant and authorized body as stipulated in the 1934 Constitution. It is important for each and every faithful of the Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church to know how the hierarchy of the church is laid out, their responsibilities, eligibilities to serve, relationships to each other and how their services are related back to the faithful. Various statutory bodies of the Church administration are listed below:

The Holy Episcopal Synod

The Episcopal Synod with the



Catholicos as its president is the apex body of all bishops. The authority of the synod is final and binding. It has exclusive rights and privileges in the matter of upholding the faith of the church, its discipline and order of Apostolic Succession. In regard temporal matters, the church is guided by the Malankara Syrian Christian Association. The bishops lead the diocese assigned to them by the synod.

Malankara Syrian Christian Association

The constitution has clearly defined the composition and representation of the Association. In article 71: a priest and two laymen elected by each parish general body and the members of the existing managing committee shall be members of the association. This was later amended in time with Supreme Court directive. Now the representation of the lay people is based on the number of parishioners. The Malankara metropolitan is the president and the bishops having administrative charge of Dioceses shall be vice-presidents of the Association. The Association is the body that elects the members of the managing committee, bishops and the Catholicos cum Malankara Metropolitan.

The Managing Committee

The Managing Committee members are elected at the Diocesan level and approved by the Malankara Association. The meeting of the Association members from each diocese, under the chairmanship of the Diocesan Metropolitan, elects an approved proportion of priests and laymen to represent each Diocese. Procedure of this election is similar to that of the Catholicos and other positions in the Church. The term for the Managing Committee shall be five years. Other than the elected members, a proportionate number of members are nominated to the Managing Committee by the Malankara Metropolitan. The members of the Working Committee are also members of the Managing Committee.

The Working Committee

It is a small body of members nominated by the Malankara Metropolitan. This body prepares the agenda for the Managing Committee and helps the Malankara Metropolitan in his administrative functions. The same body is also known as the Advisory Council.

The Diocesan General Body

Every diocese will have a Diocesan Assembly. The Diocesan bishop presides over the meetings. All matters related to the Diocese is discussed and decided in the General body assembly including the budget and accounts.

If necessary, the Malankara Metropolitan can also convene the diocesan General body. The representation of the lay people is based on the number of parishioners. The term of members will be five years.

The Parish Managing Committee

The members of the Parish Managing Committee, excluding the priests, will be elected by the Parish Assembly and their term of office will be one year. Every Parish Managing Committee will have a minimum of 5 and a maximum of 15 members, excluding the priests. The Parish Assembly will decide the required number of members within these limits. In the event of any vacancy arising in the Parish Managing Committee, the remaining members of the committee may fill up such vacancy by co-option from the members of the Parish Assembly.

The Parish General Body

Every parish is within the framework of the Church constitution. It is neither outside the umbrella of the constitution nor an independent entity.

Each Parish has a general body. The membership is confined to all male and female members above the age of 21 and who have made their annual confession and communion, and who are not defaulters in the parish dues for more than six months. All matters related to the parish are discussed and decided by this body. This general body elects the 'church managing committee', 'the secretary, and the 'lay trustee'. The parish managing committee, the trustee and the secretary are elected every year.

Procedure to elect Catholicos and Malankara Metropolitan

As per the Constitution, the Catholicos and Malankara Metropolitan positions are held by the same person and elected by the Malankara Syrian Christian Association (the Association). The incumbent, if alive and able, His Holiness the Catholicos of the Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church calls for the Association meeting with a Notice (Kalpana) sent to each parish with the agenda (election), date, time and venue with relevant instructions on a timely manner required by the Constitution. It is also required that this notice be published on leading public media with a wide circulation. In the absence of the Catholicos, the Senior Metropolitan of the Holy Episcopal Synod will send out the Kalpana. H.H. Catholicos will appoint an electoral officer and an electoral committee. This committee will prepare a procedure subject to the constitution and would send out to the Association members directly. The Incumbent Catholicos or in his absence, the Senior Metropolitan will preside over the Association. The election will be independent and uninterrupted and will be conducted by the Electoral Committee. Each priest and layman member of the Association has one vote and casted by secret ballot. The ballots will be counted and tabulated by the electoral committee. The name of the selected Metropolitan will be handed over to the chair that he will verify it for any error and the result will be announced in public. The selected Metropolitan's name will be submitted to

the Holy Episcopal Synod for its ratification and scheduling for the consecration ceremony. In the meantime, the elected Metropolitan will be installed as the Malankara Metropolitan at the same Association crowning him with his ecclesiastical vestments fits to the tradition.

The democratic and transparent process of recent Association meetings and elections make us exceptional among our sister churches. The recent election of our current Catholicos, His Holiness Moran Mor Basalios Marthoma Mathews III, held on October 14, 2021 at Parumala, has made a history and was praised by the leaders of various churches around the world. The election was conducted 100% on an electronic platform due to the Covid-19 pandemic restrictions. Only the members of Holy Episcopal Synod and Managing Committee members were allowed to attend in person. Fr. Alexander Kurian from Wahington D.C, was appointed as the Chief Returning Officer for conducting the election. This virtual meeting was attended by 3,091 members from 30 dioceses scattered around the world. The Senior Metropolitan of the Church, H.G. Kuriakose Mar Climis presided over the meeting and all other proceedings. There was only one nomination that was from H.G. Mathews Mar Saverios of Kandanad West Diocese and he was elected unanimously as the Catholicos cum Malankara Metropolitan. The Holy Episcopal Synod and Managing committee designated him as the new Malankara Metropolitan and Catholicos of Malankara Church. He was enthroned as the 22nd Malankara Metropolitan during the Malankara Association that took place on October 14, 2021 at St. Peter and St. Paul's Church, Parumala. He was enthroned as Catholicos of the Apostolic Throne of Saint Thomas on October 15, 2021 by the Holy Synod of Malankara Orthodox Church. Mar Savarios became His Holiness Basalios Marthoma Mathews III. The chief celebrant of the enthronement service and Holy Eucharist was Kuriakose Mar Clemis who is the senior Metropolitan of Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church.

His Holiness Baselios Marthoma Mathews III, The Ninth Catholicos of the East cum Malankara Metropolitan

His Holiness Baselios Marthoma Mathews III was enthroned as the Catholicos of the East & Malankara Metropolitan (the Supreme Head of the Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church of India) on Friday, October 15, 2021. His Holiness is the 92nd Primate on the Apostolic Throne of St.

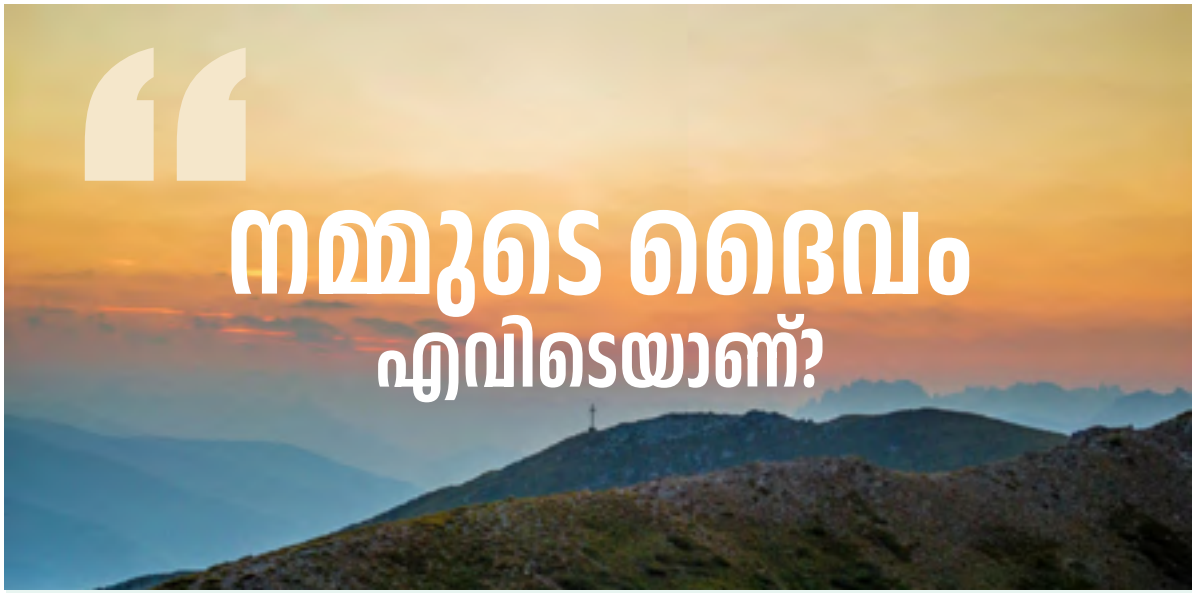
Thomas.

His Holiness was born on February 12, 1949 to Mr. Cherian Anthrayos of Mattathil family, members of St Peters Church, Vazhoor. After his school education, he joined Kerala University and passed his BSc Chemistry. After his BSc, he joined Orthodox Seminary, Kottayam, and had his GST degree. His Holiness took his BD degree from the Serampore University and did his higher studies in Theology at Theological Academy, Leningrad, Russia. Thereupon he joined Oriental Institute, Rome, and took his MTh and PhD from there. His Holiness was ordained a deacon in 1976 and a priest in 1978 by HH Baselios Marthoma Mathews I. His Holiness was escalated to the post of an Episcopa on April 30, 1991 at a function at Parumala, and Metropolitan in 1993. In 1994, he was consecrated as a Metropolitan of the Diocese of Kandanad West. He is a well-known teacher and a faculty member of the Orthodox Seminary, Kottayam since 1984. He has taught Christology in the graduate and post-graduate levels while guiding a number of doctoral theses. As a philanthropist, he works relentlessly to uplift the poor, especially women. He has started many ventures to help give employment opportunities to women from disadvantaged socioeconomic backgrounds. His Holiness also served the Holy Episcopal Synod as its secretary. He has also authored a number of devotional and contemplative books in Malayalam.

Additionally, His Holiness has organized several charitable projects at the diocesan level. Mar Pachomios Charitable Society, formed in the memory of his predecessor Joseph Mar Pachomios, Metropolitan of Kandanad, runs over a dozen charitable projects including; Pratheeksha Bhavan, Prasanthi Bhavan, Prathyasa Bhavan, Pradnam Centre, Pramadam Project, Prasannam Bhavan, Prakasam Institute of Special Education and Prathibha Products.

(The first Apostolic Visit of the new Primate of the Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church to Northeast American Diocese took place from September 22 to October 2, 2022. On September 24, 2022, St. Gregorios Malankara Orthodox Church, Cherry Lane, New Hyde Park, New York was privileged and blessed to have His Holiness celebrate the first Holy Eucharist there for his first visit in the United States since his consecration as Catholicos of the East. His Holiness has also blessed the foundation stone for the new church building the Cherry Lane parish has been planning to rebuild.)





നമ്മുടെ ദൈവം എവിടെയാണ്?

ദൈവവും മനുഷ്യനും തമ്മിലെന്തെങ്കിലും ഇടവേളയുണ്ടെന്ന് ഇന്നത്തെ ചിന്തയും സഞ്ചാരവും എങ്ങനെയാണ്. മനുഷ്യന്റെ ചിന്തകൾ ഇന്ന് എവിടെ എത്തി നിൽക്കുന്നു. മനുഷ്യൻ ഈ ചിന്തയുമായി എവിടെക്കാണ് സഞ്ചരിക്കുന്നത്. ജാതിയുടെ പുറകെയാണോ, മതത്തിന്റെ പുറകെയാണോ?



Premcy John II

ഇന്നത്തെ സമിതിയിൽ കോലാഹലങ്ങൾ സൃഷ്ടിക്കുന്ന രാഷ്ട്രീയത്തിന്റെ പുറകെയാണോ അധോലോകനായകന്മാർ വിളമ്പുന്ന മദ്യത്തിന്റെയും മയക്കുമരുന്നിന്റെയും പുറകെയാണോ അതോ ദൈവത്തിങ്കലേക്കോ?

എങ്ങനെയാക്കയാണെങ്കിലും മനുഷ്യന്റെ ഒളിഞ്ഞുകിടക്കുന്ന പാരമ്പര്യത്തെക്കുറിച്ചു അവന്റെ ജീവിതമാകുന്ന പുസ്തകത്തിന്റെ ഏടുകൾ ഒന്ന് പുറകോട്ട് മറിച്ചുനോക്കിയാൽ, മനുഷ്യോല്പത്തിയെക്കുറിച്ചു എല്ലാ മതങ്ങളും പ്രതിപാദിക്കുന്നു. കഥകളും ഐതീഹ്യങ്ങളും പാരമ്പര്യങ്ങളും എല്ലാം അവയിൽ കെട്ടുപിണഞ്ഞു കിടക്കുന്നു. ദൈവത്തിന്റെ സാദൃശ്യത്തിലും സ്വരൂപത്തിലും മനുഷ്യൻ സൃഷ്ടിക്കപ്പെട്ടു എന്നതാണ് യഹൂദ-ക്രൈസ്തവ പാരമ്പര്യം. ഈ ശാരദമാ യുള്ള മനുഷ്യ ബന്ധത്തെ സ്പഷ്ടമാക്കുന്ന ആശയങ്ങളാണ് അതിലുള്ളത്.

ചിന്തോദ്ധീപകമായ ഒരു ഐതീഹ്യം ഇപ്രകാരമാണ്. പ്രപഞ്ചോത്പത്തിയുടെ പ്രാരംഭത്തിൽ ദൈവങ്ങൾ എല്ലാവരും ഒരു രഹസ്യ സങ്കേതത്തിൽ സമ്മേളിച്ച ചർച്ച നടത്തുകയായിരുന്നു. അപ്പോൾ അതാ മനുഷ്യൻ ചില വാദമുഖങ്ങൾ ഉന്നയിച്ചുകൊണ്ട് അവരുടെ നടപിലകൾ കടന്നുവന്നു. തന്നിലും ദൈവത്വം ഉണ്ടെന്നും ദൈവത്തോട് ബന്ധപ്പെട്ടവനാണെന്നും ദൈവത്തോടൊന്നിച്ചു കഴിയാൻ അവകാശമുണ്ടെന്നുമായിരുന്നു അവകാശവാദം. കൊച്ചുമനുഷ്യന്റെ ഔദ്യത്തിൽ ദൈവങ്ങൾ സതബ്ധരായി. അവർക്കു ഒന്നും പറയാൻ കഴിഞ്ഞില്ല മനുഷ്യൻ ഉന്നയിച്ച അവകാശവാദങ്ങളിൽ സത്യത്തിന്റെ അംശം ഉള്ളതുകൊണ്ട് അത് നിഷേധിക്കുവാൻ അവർക്കു കഴിഞ്ഞില്ല. എന്നാൽ അവരോട് ഒപ്പമുള്ള സ്ഥാനം നൽകുവാൻ അവർ ഒരുക്കമല്ലായിരുന്നു. അതിനാൽ മനുഷ്യന്റെ ദൈവത്വം കൗശലത്തിൽ അവർ അപഹരിച്ചെടുക്കുവാൻ തീരുമാനിച്ചു. അത് കൈവശംവെക്കുവാൻ അവർക്ക് അവകാശം ഇല്ലാതായാൽ പിന്നെയവർ എന്ത് ചെയ്യും. അതേപ്പറ്റി ആലോചിക്കുവാൻ അവർ വീണ്ടും സമ്മേളിച്ചു. അവർ തട്ടിയെടുത്ത ദൈവത്വം എവിടെയെ

ങ്കിലും നിക്ഷേപിക്കണമെന്ന നിർദ്ദേശമുണ്ടായി. പക്ഷെ എവിടെ വെക്കും? ആഴിയുടെ ആഴത്തിൽ എന്ന് ചിന്തിച്ചപ്പോൾ നീർക്കുഴി ഇടാൻ കഴിവുള്ള മനുഷ്യൻ അത് വേഗത്തിൽ കണ്ടെടുക്കും എന്ന അഭിപ്രായം. ഏറ്റവും ഉയരമുള്ള വൃക്ഷത്തിൽ വെച്ചാൽ പറക്കുംതളികയിൽ ചെന്ന് പറന്നെടുക്കുവാൻ ത്രാണിയുണ്ടെന്നു നടിക്കുന്നവനാണ് മനുഷ്യൻ. സ്വർഗ്ഗത്തിൽ ദൈവങ്ങളുടെ ഇടയിൽ മറച്ചുവെക്കാമെന്നു കരുതിയാൽ, സ്വർഗ്ഗത്തിലേക്കുള്ള കിളിവാതിലിന്റെ താക്കോൽ കൂട്ടം കൈവശം വെച്ചിരിക്കുന്ന മനുഷ്യന്റെ അടുത്താണോ ഈ ചിന്ത. നഷ്ടപ്പെട്ട ദൈവത്വം തിരിച്ചുകിട്ടാൻ മനുഷ്യൻ എന്തും ചെയ്യുമെന്നതിന് ഒരു സംശയവുമില്ല. അങ്ങനെ വന്നപ്പോൾ ഒരു സ്ഥലവും പറ്റിയതായി കണ്ടില്ല. അവസാനം ദൈവങ്ങളുടെ മൂപ്പനും ബുദ്ധിമാനുമായ ആൾ പറഞ്ഞു: അത് എന്തെന്തെപ്പിന്നുക. എവിടെ ഒളിച്ചുവെക്കണമെന്ന് എനിക്കറിയാം. അപ്രകാരം അവർ ചെയ്തു. ഒട്ടും താമസിയാതെ അയാൾ കൈച്ചുരുളിൽ ഏറ്റുവാങ്ങി. അല്പസമയത്തിന് ശേഷം മൗനതയിലിരുന്ന മൂപ്പൻ കൈച്ചുരുൾ നിവർത്തിയപ്പോൾ അത് ശൂന്യം. അയാൾ പറഞ്ഞു എല്ലാം ശുഭമായി. അത് ഞാൻ മനുഷ്യന്റെ ഉള്ളിൽ തന്നെ ഒളിച്ചുവെച്ചു. അവിടെ അത് ഉണ്ടായിരിക്കുമെന്ന് മനുഷ്യൻ ഒരിക്കലും കരുതുകയുമില്ല... അങ്ങനെ നമ്മുടെ രഹസ്യം ഭദ്രമായിരിക്കും.

അതിനുശേഷം മനുഷ്യൻ സത്യാനുഷേകനും തീർത്ഥാടകനും ദൈവത്തെ അന്വേഷിക്കുന്നവനും ആയിത്തീർന്നു. വിശാലതയിലും വിദൂരതയിലും വിജനതയിലും കാടുമേടുകളിലും ഗിരിസുരങ്ങളിലും എല്ലാം മനുഷ്യൻ ദൈവത്തെ തേടിപോവുകയാണ്. എന്നാൽ തന്നിൽ തന്നെയുള്ള ദൈവത്തെ അറിയുന്നതുമില്ല.

ദൈവം മനുഷ്യന്റെ ഉള്ളിൽ വ്യാപരിച്ചില്ലായിരുന്നുവെങ്കിൽ ദൈവത്തിനുവേണ്ടിയുള്ള അഭിവാഞ്ജയും അന്വേഷണവും ഉണ്ടാകുമായിരുന്നില്ല. ദൈവമാണ് മനുഷ്യ ഹൃദയങ്ങളെ ദൈവാഭിമുഖമായ അനുഭവത്തിന് പ്രേരിപ്പിക്കുന്നത്. ദൈവം ഇല്ലായിരുന്നുവെങ്കിൽ ഉൽക്കടമായ ഈ അഭിവാഞ്ജ മനുഷ്യന് ഉണ്ടാകുമായിരുന്നില്ല. ദൈവാസ്തിത്വത്തെ ശക്തിയും യുക്തിയും ബുദ്ധിയുംകൊണ്ട്

തെളിയിക്കാമെന്നു ശരിക്കേണ്ടതില്ല. വാദമുഖങ്ങളിൽകൂടിയും സാധ്യമല്ല. കാരണം, മനുഷ്യന്റെ ബുദ്ധിയിലും യുക്തിയിലും ഒതുങ്ങുന്ന ഒരു ദൈവം യഥാർത്ഥ ദൈവമായിരിക്കുകയില്ല. വിശ്വാസത്തിന്റെ മേഖലയിൽ മാത്രമേ ദൈവത്തെ അറിയുവാനും ഉൾക്കൊള്ളുവാനും കഴിയൂ. അതൊരു ധീര സാഹസികതയാണെന്ന് പറയാം.

‘ഹൃദയ നൈർമല്യമുള്ളവർ ധന്യരാണ് അവർ ദൈവത്തെ കാണും.’ ദൈവം സ്നേഹമാണ്, ദൈവത്തിങ്കലേക്കുള്ള മാർഗ്ഗവും സ്നേഹമാണ്. സ്നേഹത്തിൽ കൂടിയാണ് നാം ദൈവത്തെ അറിയുന്നതും പ്രാപിക്കുന്നതും. നിഷ്കളങ്ക സ്നേഹവും ആന്തരികനിർമ്മലതയും പുലർത്തുന്ന ധന്യാത്മാക്കൾ ദൈവചൈതന്യമുൾക്കൊള്ളുന്നവരാണ്. നമ്മുടെ ഉള്ളിലിരിക്കുന്ന ദൈവത്തെ കാണാതെ ഉന്തലും ഉരൂളലും വിറപ്പിക്കലുമായി നടക്കുന്ന കൾട്ടുകളെ നമ്മൾ തന്നെ ചെല്ലും ചിലവു കൊടുത്തു ദൈവമായി കൊണ്ടുനടക്കുന്നു. അല്ലെങ്കിൽ നമ്മുടെ ഉള്ളിന്റെ ഉള്ളിലെ, ദൈവത്തിന്റെ ആലയമായ നമ്മിലേക്കുതന്നെ പ്രതിഷ്ഠിക്കാൻ ശ്രമിക്കുന്നു. പിന്നെയും ദൈവം ആരെന്നറിയാതെ ഇവർ സഞ്ചരിച്ചുകൊണ്ടേയിരിക്കുന്നു.

എന്നാൽ നാം അന്വേഷിക്കുന്ന ദൈവം അങ്ങ് വിദൂരതയിലോ വിജനതയിലോ വിശാലതയിലോ അല്ല, നമ്മുടെ ഉള്ളിൽ നമ്മുടെ ഹൃദയത്തിൽ വസിക്കുന്നവനാണ്. സച്ചിന്തകളെ നമ്മിൽ അങ്കുരിപ്പിക്കുന്നതും സ്രേഷ്ടമാവുകുവേണ്ടി വെമ്പൽ കൊള്ളുവാൻ പ്രേരിപ്പിക്കുന്നതും നമ്മിൽ വസിക്കുന്ന ദൈവമാണ്. ജീവിതമാകുന്ന നമ്മുടെ സഞ്ചാര പാതയിൽ ദൈവത്തിന്റെ പല ഇടപെടലുകളും നമ്മൾ തിരിച്ചറിയുന്നില്ല. നമ്മെ പുൽകുവാനും തിന്മയെ അകറ്റുവാനും നമ്മെ സഹായിക്കുന്നത് ദൈവമാണ് എന്നുള്ള ബോധ്യം ഉണ്ടായാൽ നിർഭയരായി മുന്നേറുവാൻ നമ്മെ പ്രാപ്തരാക്കും.

അപ്പോൾ തോലനായ പൗലോസിന്റെ വാക്കുകൾ ഇവിടെ പ്രസക്തമാണ്. ‘തന്റെ അഭീഷ്ടമനുസരിച്ചു ഇച്ഛിക്കുവാനും പ്രവർത്തിക്കുവാനും നിങ്ങളെ (നമ്മെ) ഉത്തേജിപ്പിക്കുന്നത് ദൈവമാണ്’ അവിടുനാണ് നമ്മുടെ പ്രേരകശക്തി, അവിടുനാണ് നമ്മുടെ ധൈര്യം. നമ്മുടെ ആത്യന്തീക ലക്ഷ്യവും അവിടുന്ന് തന്നെ.

ദൈവം പണിഞ്ഞ മന്ദിരമാണ് നാം ഓരോരുത്തരും. അതേ, We are the Temple of God, Holy Temple.

CHRISTIAN VIEW OF SUBMISSION



Susan Mathew

Submission, by definition, is “the action or fact of accepting or yielding to a superior force or to the will or authority of another person.” Christian submission is not an act of human will. It is divine work. In other words, we can submit to God’s authorities and His will only through the power of the Holy Spirit. It is evident that submission is an important aspect of every Christian’s life. It is a voluntary act, aided by the Holy Spirit, first out of love and respect for God and then out of love and respect for the person(s) we submit to. What does the Bible say about who we should submit to? According to the Holy Bible, we should submit to entities of authority, young people are to submit to their elders, we should submit to one another, and wives are to submit to their own husbands. This brings up a common question, Why should we submit? It’s simply because God commands it as He is the highest authority. Also, submission creates order and discipline, reducing tension in family and society.

Submission to authority figures: In St. Luke 14:27 Jesus said, “If you do not carry your own cross and follow me you cannot be my disciple.” His audience was aware of what it meant to carry one’s own cross. When Roman soldiers led a criminal to his execution site, he was forced to carry his cross on which he would die. This showed submission to the Roman authority. Following Christ means total submission to Him, perhaps even to the point of death. “Let every person be subject to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established” (Romans 13:1). So we must submit to them not only to avoid punishment, but also to keep a clear conscience. Jesus Himself recognized God’s authority and was submissive to Him. If we want to be disciples of Christ, we must submit to Christ’s authority just as He submitted to the Father’s.

Submission of young people to their elders: “Likewise you younger people, submit yourselves to your elders” (1 Peter 5:5) showing reverence to their age and wisdom. This is a carry-over from the commandment given to children in Deuteronomy 5:16, “Honor your father and mother”. Parents are entrusted with the responsibility to raise and train their children and children are

to honor and obey their parents. Submit to one another: Christians are told to submit to one another out of reverence for Christ (Ephesians 5:21). This prevents selfish pride and fits well with the command to consider others better than ourselves. Even when it is one-sided, the expression of submission can be an effective Christian witness. One-sided submission requires tremendous strength and humility, which cannot be done without the power of the Holy Spirit working within us. We may sometimes have to submit to unpleasant circumstances, so that others will see Christ in us.

Submission in Marriage: “Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord” (Ephesians 5:22). Submission in marriage is a sign of strength, not of weakness. It is a form of mutual respect and love. It is not to be forced but offered freely in response to each other’s love. A wife can disagree with her husband and express her opinion and ideas respectfully. In fact, it might sometimes be wrong not to express her opinion. She is ordained by God to be her husband’s partner. Submission is rarely a problem in homes where both partners have strong relationships with Christ and where each is concerned for the happiness of the other. According to the Bible, man is the spiritual head of the family. This involves loving service just as Christ served His disciples. A wise and Christ-honoring husband will not take advantage of his role and a wise and Christ-honoring wife will not undermine her husband. If either partner does not follow this rule, it will cause disunity and friction in marriage.

What happens if we do not practice submission in various walks of life? Cracks form in our Christian foundation weakening our resolve and effectiveness as Christ’s disciples. So, submit to God in everything and allow Him to work in us, through us and around us. Then God will use our lives to reach others.



OUR SUNDAY SCHOOL Anniversary



On this day, our parish's annual Mar Barnabas Newsletter was also released. The chief editor Mr. Peter Johnson and the NewsLetter Committee members worked hard to publish this newsletter by gathering articles and pictures, organizing and editing. Our Sunday School students and other parishioners contributed interesting and informative articles for the newsletter. Everyone involved with its publication needs to be commended. The parish members enjoy reading it every year.

2021, both through Zoom and in-person. We thank Gregory Achen, and the coordinators Ms. Meenu Chacko and Ms. Stalla Saimon for coordinating the program for the day. We thank our wonderful masters of ceremony, Mr. Jeremiah Varghese and Ms. Hanna Abraham for keeping things running smoothly. We thank our guest speaker, Rev. Fr. Brince Mathews, for joining us and delivering a memorable message. We thank the representatives from the various spiritual organizations for their reports. We thank Mini Aunty for all her time and effort in buying and arranging the prizes for the Sunday School students. Last but not least, we thank Mr. Peter Johnson and all the members of the newsletter committee for their time and efforts to publish the newsletter.

All of the Sunday School students would like to express our thanks and appreciation for all those who worked hard to put this day together. First and foremost, we thank God for all the blessings that He has given us. We are thankful that despite the ongoing pandemic, our parish was able to carry forward with our spiritual activities during

Our Church's Sunday School Anniversary for the school year 2020-'21 was held on Sunday, December 11, 2021, after the Holy Qurbana. By the grace of God, we were able to have it in-person whereas the prior year's anniversary had to be held virtually because of the pandemic. As always, it was held as a combined anniversary of Sunday School and other spiritual organizations like MGOCSM, Martha Mariam Vanitha Samajam, FOCUS and GROW.



Miriam Ann Adai

Ms. Meenu Chacko, and Ms. Stalla Saimon were the coordinators for the program. Ms. Hanna Abraham and Mr. Jeremiah Varghese were the MCs. The guest speaker was Rev. Fr. Brince Mathews. Achen gave a very meaningful and thoughtful message particularly focusing on the children. He narrated a story which went like this:

The number 8, in turn, went and hit the number 7, since 8 was bigger and stronger than 7, and so forth. Finally, when the number 1 was hit, instead of hitting the number 0, the number 1 added himself to 0, making him number 10 - more significant than all the other numbers.

One day, the number 9 hit the number 8, since 9 was bigger and stronger than 8.

The moral of the above story is that we should not look down on those who are beneath us. As it is written in St. Matthew 23:12, "For those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted."

During the meeting, the representatives from the various spiritual organizations



- Martha Mariam Vanitha Samajam, MGOCSM, GROW, FOCUS, and Sunday School - read their reports for the year. Then finally, the most awaited part of the program came. Our Sunday School Principal, Dr. Mini George, called the Sunday School students who earned prizes for various events during the school year, including prizes for the Sunday School Exams, Bible Verse Proficiency, Solo Song Competition, Bible Story Telling and Elocution. Gifts were also given to all the Sunday School teachers. The prizes and gifts were given out through the chief guest.



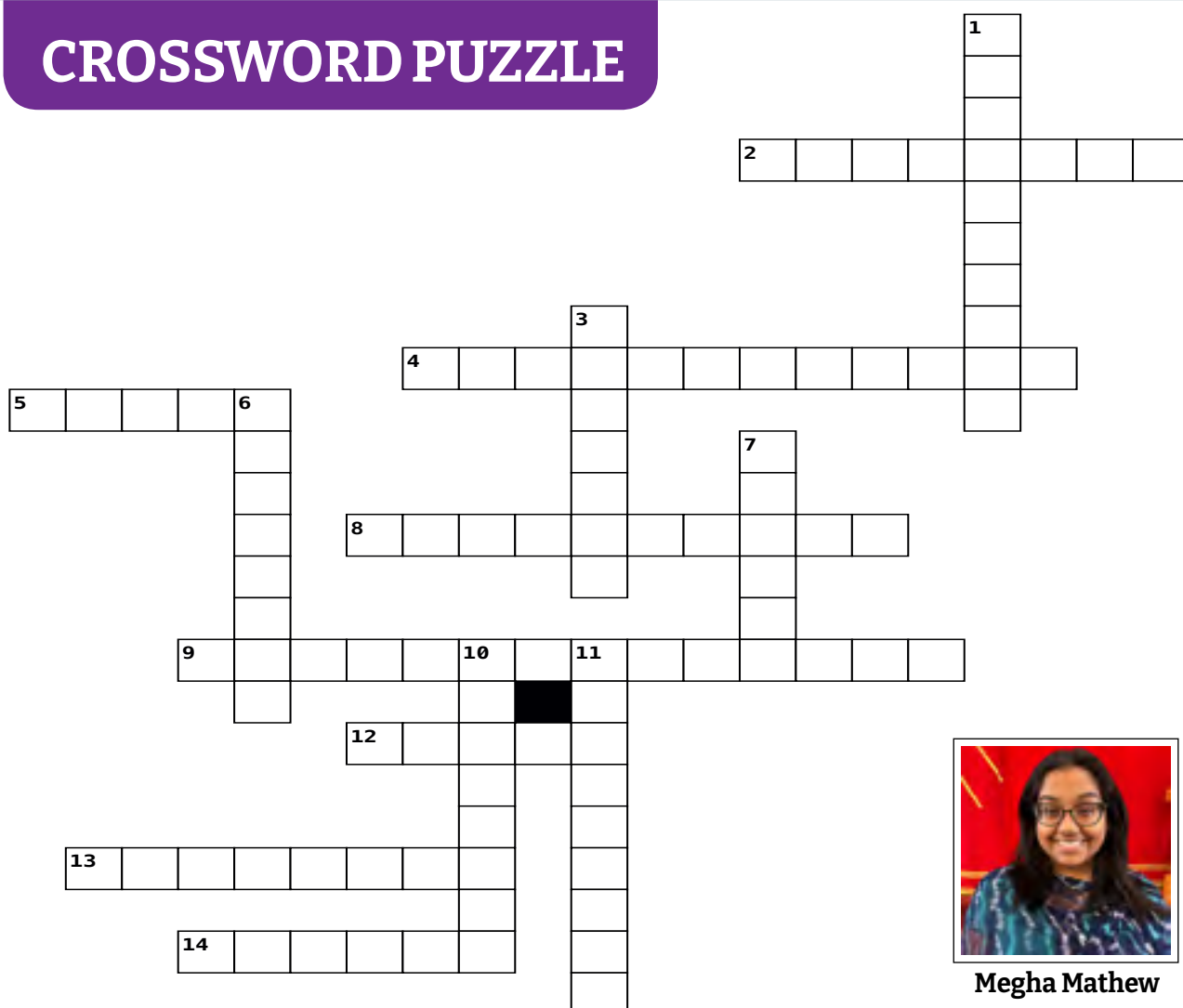
CROSSWORD PUZZLE

Across

2. The 5th ____ is known to remember the departed spiritual fathers and doctors of the Church
4. Season of ____ (Suboro); First season of the Liturgical Calendar
5. Nativity of our Lord
8. The [baptized] devoted themselves to the Apostles' teaching and to ____, to the breaking of bread and to prayer (Acts 2:42)
9. Council of ____; Held in AD 381, defending the equal status of the Holy Spirit
12. Love between Christ for his Church
13. Presentation of our Lord into the Temple
14. Baptism of our Lord

Down

1. "Golden-mouthed" saint
3. Cycle of Prayers
6. Correct glory; Right Worship
7. The "common" prayers of each day
10. 2nd part of Holy Qurbana; "Liturgy of the Eucharist"
11. Mother of our God; St. Mary, the God-bearer



Megha Mathew

THE CENSER

The Censer or “Dhoopakutti” in Malayalam, is a container used to burn and offer incense. I always liked the Censer. When I was a little child, I would use objects and swing them like it was my Censer. My parents bought me a toy Censer and I would pretend I was a priest or an altar server.



Luke Koshy

The Censer has a lower cup, an upper cup, four chains and twelve bells. The lower cup represents the earth and the upper cup heaven. The charcoal in the Censer represents the sinners. So when we burn the charcoal in the censer, it signifies the sinners getting rid of their sins. Of the four chains, the first chain represents God the Father, the second and the third chains represent the human and the Godly nature of the Son and the fourth chain represents the Holy Spirit. Thus the four chains together represent the trinitarian nature of God. The twelve bells represent the twelve apostles of Jesus

Christ. The four chains have 72 links which represent the 72 evangelists that Jesus sent out, as shown in St. Luke, Chapter 10. The fire symbolizes the holy spirit which glows when in contact with the black charcoal. The incense or “kunthirikkam” in Malayalam, shows the grace of the Holy Trinity. When the Priest or Deacon censens the holy things and people in the church, it’s like the people are getting blessed as the prayers said or songs sung at that time are rising up to heaven along with the incensed smoke. We usually make the sign of the Cross as the priest or deacon swings the censer toward our direction.



Use of the Censer is an important part of the Holy Qurbana. During the Holy Qurbana, there

is a Blessing of the Censer, which is done right before the Nicene Creed. The Blessing of the Censer

is a proclamation of our faith in the Holy Trinity. Having the deacon or the altar server hold the censer, the Priest puts incense inside the censer. Then, he lightly pulls with his hand the first chain and while holding that chain, says, “Holy is the holy Father. Then he lightly pulls the second and third chains which represent the perfect divinity and humanity of the second Person of the Trinity and says “Holy is the holy Son.” Holding those chains along with the first one, the Priest then lightly pulls the fourth chain representing the third Person of the Trinity and says “Holy is the living and Holy Spirit.” Holding all the four chains in his hand, the Priest takes the whole censer from the deacon or altar server and censens the altar, the people, the icons of saints and the faithful departed who we believe are gathered in the middle of the Church.

I cannot wait to be an altar server when I will be able to use the Censer. In Psalm 141:2, we read, “Let my prayer be set before You as incense, The lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice.”



Mar Barnabas and Mar Ivanios of blessed memory engaged in intimate conversation.



Vicar Rev. Fr. Gregory Varghese releasing Mar Barnabas Newsletter 2021 to Korah K. Korah, former Managing Committee Member

In Loving Memory of **Mariakutty Koshy**



1st Death Anniversary
Memory Eternal

Sponsors *Best Compliments from*

Jijo Koshy

Anney Johnson

Premcy John II

Anonymous

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George P. Varughese



Rose Varughese

The Holy Sacraments



The seven Holy Sacraments are Holy Baptism, Holy Chrismation, Holy confession, Holy Qurbana, Holy Anointing of the Sick, Holy Priesthood and Holy Matrimony (Wedding). Holy Sacraments are also called Holy Mysteries. Holy Baptism is the first sacrament when the baptized becomes a member of the Church. Since the Church is the body of Christ and Christ is the head of the Church, the baptized is actually entering the kingdom of God. Holy Chris-

mation is a service done immediately following Holy Baptism. This is when a holy oil called holy mooron is spread on the body of the child/adult getting baptized. It is a sign of the Holy Spirit coming upon the person. Holy Qurbana is when we remember and partake of the Holy Body and Blood of Jeaus Christ.

Holy confession is for repentance, admission of guilt, and absolution of sins. Individuals go before a priest who forgives sins, on behalf of Christ who alone can cleanse us of our sins. Holy Anointing of the Sick is a sacrament administered to someone who is sick. It is for physical and spiritual healing and can be re-

peated anytime a person is sick. Holy Matrimony is when a man and woman are joined in marriage and take vows to remain together until death.

Holy Priesthood is reserved for individuals who are committed to serve the Church and the people who make up the Church. The priest serves as a represen-

tative of Christ while pleading to God on people's behalf. Holy Matrimony and Holy Priesthood are optional while all the other sacraments are required of all people.

The Holy Sacraments are very important in the life of a true Christian.



Benet William & Kevin Kurian

OVBS 2022 of the BQL Area

Kevin:

This past summer, I had the wonderful opportunity to participate in our annual Sunday School OVBS. As everyone knows, OVBS stands for Orthodox Vacation Bible School. This OVBS was held at St. Gregorios Orthodox Church, North Valley Stream under the auspices of the eleven Parishes in the BQL Area (Brooklyn-Queens-Long Island Area, also known as Area 2 of the Northeast American Diocese) over 3 days, from June 29 thru July 1. While last year's OVBS was held online because of the COVID 19 pandemic, this year's OVBS was a welcome-change, as it was held in-person. Besides learning from the Holy Bible and about the Church fathers, the sacraments, disciplines and traditions of the Church and learning new songs, we got an opportunity to meet and greet our old friends from other Parishes. Join me as I walk you through my experience at OVBS 2022.

As is normal practice, we kicked off our first day of OVBS by collecting the needed materials for our three day program. This included the song book, the textbook for our grade level, and this year's unique OVBS T-shirt. The first day is always exciting! This is the day I see a lot of friends I made over the years from other churches. Area events such as these are the only times that I really see them. We engaged in many conversations especially during the breakfast time, talking about how excited everyone was to be there since it was one of the first events since the covid pandemic had turned our worlds upside down. While I talked with my friends from other churches,

I spent the majority of my social time with my very own friends of our very own Cherry Lane Church! From the first day we couldn't stop talking about all the things that we had in store for the summer. We would eat lunch together, would sing the 'loudest' songs during the general song sessions, attend individual class sessions together, engage in discussions and answer questions as they came up from the teacher(s).

We began the second day by heading directly to the basement of the Church for our breakfast that consisted mostly of muffins and drinks. Sitting at a table, we mused over what we learned and all the fun we had the previous day. After the general song session, at our individual class, we played some games related to the Holy Bible and the Church. After lunch, before heading to our classes, we explored the church areas that we hadn't seen before and it gave us some food for thought of how our cherry lane church could look like, once the new church building is completed.

The last day was when a lot of things happened. Many things we looked forward to such as the rally, the last day special treats, as well as the final song session were all exciting. Towards the end of the day, it was finally time for the rally. All of us headed out into the blistering heat and sun, ready for some OVBS spirit. With the OVBS Banner in the front and children holding flags and shouting slogans and songs, the rally was really exciting.

This OVBS was undoubtedly one to be remembered. The excitement of seeing everyone after a few pandemic years, engaging in learned and fun discussions with teachers and Achens, and singing our hearts out during song sessions were all moments of pure joy.

Hopefully next year, by the grace of God, I will attend the OVBS as a volunteer along with my age-level friends, and enjoy it from a slightly different angle and perspective. I thank God Almighty for making the in-person OVBS happen this year.

Benet:

It has been over 3 years since I last attended OVBS in person. The 2022 OVBS brought back memories that were once forgotten. I thank God for enabling the youth like me of Cherry lane Church to bond and socialize with the youth of other orthodox parishes in the Area. This event lasted for 3 days consisting of various activities

which, no doubt, have been instrumental in my spiritual growth.

On the first day when I first arrived at the St. Gregorios Church, N. Valley Stream where the event was being held, I underwent a check-in process, and after that there was breakfast. After breakfast, we went to the sanctuary to sing songs and hear a devotional address. While I was participating in singing, I felt the presence of God around me. The devotional address was informative and food for my soul. Afterwards, we dispersed for our individual class sessions. I was blessed with the chance to mingle with people from other

parishes. As the last day came, there was a rally around the church, where we were able to show our love for Christ and the Church through the slogans that we uttered. This was my most favorite part of the OVBS.

The 2022 OVBS will always be something that I will forever cherish in my memory! Attending this event has made a tremendous impact on my life. It pushed me out of my comfort zone and helped me make new friends from other parishes. It has brought me into a closer relationship with God and paved the path for my spiritual growth.



TALMEEDO 2022



In the summer of 2018, the first Talmeedo Men's Retreat was a great success. Young men from all across the Northeast American Diocese convened at the Holy Transfiguration Retreat Center and took part in three days of fellowship, worship, and service. They learned the syriac word "Talmeedo" translated to disciple, and they explored what it truly meant to be a disciple of Jesus Christ. These young men left the retreat transfigured and excited to apply what they had learned to their own lives. They had a newfound passion to serve their churches and communities. Since 2018, the Talmeedo Men's Ministry has quickly grown to be a powerful movement. The ministry has been very active with several events throughout the years. There have been two overnight retreats, a one-day conference, and several other in-person and online events. The fast growth of the ministry stands as a testament to the great strength and immense faith of the young men of our diocese.

This past summer I had the privilege to attend both the Talmeedo one-day conference and the overnight retreat. This was the first year since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic that participants were able to attend in-person.

The Talmeedo one-day conference took place on July 9th, 2022 at St. George Orthodox Church Fairless Hills, Pennsylvania. Many young men took time out of their busy schedules to attend this special event. Our very own Reverend Deacon Roby Antony led the group with a presentation on the topic of "Lust and Love". Along with him, Reverend Father Abu Peter (the vicar of St. George Orthodox Church Fairless Hills), Reverend Deacon Shojil Abraham, and Reverend Deacon Ananias Ananievski assisted with worship and discussion. From our church, myself and Mr. Isaac Rajan BME+ MBA participated in thought-provoking discussions and workshops. We were able



to make friends with the other attendees, and share and hear many different perspectives on the topic of discussion. Together, we all eagerly listened to Roby Semassen's excellent presentation. He expertly shaped the otherwise uncomfortable topic of "Lust and Love" into an educative and interesting discourse. We explored the definition of love, the countless issues of lust, and the proper approach we as Christians must have when facing these issues. When Roby Semassen asked the entire group, "What is love?", Mr. Isaac Rajan quickly answered, "God is love!!". Though this answer may seem simple and obvious, it is the most important statement to always keep in mind—especially in the world today. Most people nowadays, Christian and non-Christian, struggle to differentiate love from lust. It is an on-going battle, and it is imperative to understand God's love for us and, as Christians, to showcase that love in our lives. Shojil Semassen continued the discussion with an equally great workshop on the power of our thoughts. Shojil Semassen highlighted how much power our thoughts really have in our actions and relationships. He encouraged us to hold strong in our faith in God, and to continuously pray to overcome negative thoughts. Also, Rev. Dn. Ananias provided wisdom and guidance throughout all the conversations. I left the conference enlightened and excited for the overnight retreat.

By God's grace, Talmeedo held its 3rd overnight men's retreat at the Holy Transfiguration Retreat Center from August 3rd, 2022 to August 6th, 2022. The theme of this year's retreat was "The Unseen Warfare". The main speaker was Very Reverend Archpriest Andrew Stephen Dammick. Father Dammick is a very respected

and educated individual in the Orthodox community. He is the chief content officer of Ancient Faith Ministries, the former pastor of St. Paul Antiochian Orthodox Church of Emmaus, Pennsylvania, and the author of *Orthodoxy and Heterodoxy* (Ancient Faith Publishing/Congregational Press), *An Introduction to God* (Ancient Faith Publishing), and *Bearing God* (Ancient Faith

M. K. Kuriakose and Rev. Fr. Vijay Thomas provided further insight. Together, all three of them helped all the participants to reaffirm their faith in the One True God. Shojil Semassen and Basali led mini workshops throughout the 3 days which were useful and fun. Furthermore, it was great to socialize with the other guys. We spent time connecting through prayer, recreation, and service



Publishing). His expertise on the "Unseen Warfare" was on full display throughout the retreat. Also in attendance were Reverend Father M. K. Kuriakose, Reverend Father Vijay Thomas, Reverend Deacon Shojil Abraham, and Seminarian Basali Mathew. Along with myself, Mr. Joel Thomas PharmD attended the event representing our parish. We spent the three days with a brotherhood of young men, from both the Northeast and Southwest American Dioceses, listening to Fr. Dammick and understanding what exactly was "the Unseen Warfare". Fr. Dammick passionately spoke about divine beings and presented an in-depth analysis of paganism and the false-gods and demons of the world. He constantly referred to scripture and history to spotlight how humanity has continuously strayed away from the One True God in favor of false deities. He described how entire civilizations fell into sin because of their misplaced faith. Fr. Dammick further explained the position of God The Father and the hierarchy of angels. He illustrated that the Unseen Warfare is a spiritual war against the demons who work against God The Father and aim to push their victims further and further away from God. To be completely honest, the three days were not enough to examine such an extensive and fascinating topic. Fr. Dammick was truly an exceptional keynote speaker. On top of Fr. Dammick's sessions, Rev. Fr.

activities. Our brotherhood ran deep, especially since we did not have access to our cell phones. The three days were incredible, and it concluded with Divine Liturgy for the Feast of the Transfiguration of our Lord.

Without a doubt, the 3rd Talmeedo overnight retreat was an enormous success. All credit and congrats goes to the former spiritual advisor, Reverend Father Daniel Mathai and the guys of the Talmeedo committee who worked hard and tirelessly to plan and coordinate the event. From our church, Mr. Joel Thomas PharmD was an active member in the committee, and he

worked diligently to ensure that the event was a success. Also, credit goes to the other men who have worked on the committees of the past retreats and events. Their combined efforts have established the ministry and laid a strong foundation for the future.

The future of Talmeedo Men's ministry looks brighter and more promising than ever. Our very own Roby Semassen has been appointed as the new spiritual advisor of the ministry. This has added more momentum to the rapid growth of the ministry. Roby Semassen, along with the



Benn Thomas

committee, have envisioned Talmeedo to be a more dynamic and accessible brotherhood. There are going to be monthly events for fellowship, worship, and service all across the diocese. I am looking forward to what Talmeedo has instored for all the young men of our communities.

I strongly recommend the young men of our church to look out for upcoming events as well as consider attending the next overnight retreat. I assure you will not regret joining the Talmeedo brotherhood. For information on future events, follow Talmeedo Men's Ministry on Facebook and Instagram @talmeedo.



FOCUS

Fellowship of Orthodox Christians in the United States

The FOCUS ministry of St. Gregorios Church, Cherry Lane had a productive and eventful 2022. As a result of the members working together and a few leadership changes, we were able to organize charity events, fellowship events and frequent Bible studies. We revamped our leadership to better focus on the pillars of the FOCUS ministry; we divided our leadership into three groups: 1) Community Service Outreach, 2) Fellowship and 3) Bible Studies & Orthodox Education.

In order to better our community and assist those in need, the Outreach Service Committee organized many events, such as the following, throughout the year:

Caring Hands Program

As the pandemic upended life for many people, particularly the elderly, many of them simply did not leave their homes in fear of contracting an illness, especially at the beginning of the year. To meet this challenge presented by the surge of COVID-19 cases, our FOCUS ministry, with cooperation from the Town of Hempstead, hosted the Caring Hands Program every Saturday from February 5th till March 9th, which was a community service and mission initiative to provide help for our elderly and needy neighbors. Our 29 volunteers visited two to three homes on those Saturdays and assisted the elderly with their grocery shopping by shopping for them and delivering their groceries to their homes.

Comfort Bags for Cohen's Children, Super Bowl Squares Event On March 26, 2022, we hosted a charity event whereby 300 comfort bags were made and donated for the young patients of Cohen's Children Medical Center and the Pediatric Department of Stony Brook University Hospital through the Ronald McDonald House. The comfort bags included necessities such as Wet One wipes, snacks, eye masks, lotion, gum, soup, and hot chocolate. To fundraise for the comfort bag items, a Super Bowl Squares event was held in February and we raised \$2000. Three-fourths of the proceeds went towards the comfort bags, while one-fourth went to the winners of the Super Bowl Squares!

Back to School Backpack Drive

In the summer, our ministry hosted a Back to School Backpack Drive through the non-profit organization, Rising Ground. This drive was for low-income families that needed assistance with school supplies for their children attending school this fall. Forty-eight backpacks were made that were filled with school supplies such as pencil boxes, pencils, markers, crayons, pens, notebooks, pencil sharpeners, glue sticks, scissors, and folders.

Fellowship

As for further charity work this year, in December, we are planning to do a Toys for Tots drive through New York Presbyterian Morgan Stanley Children's Hospital whereby we will distribute toys, books, and other gifts to less fortunate children whose parents



Joel Thomas, Meenu Chacko, Peter Johnson

cannot afford to buy them gifts for Christmas.

This year we organized a variety of events to bring more fun to our fellowships. In the beginning of the year, we were still holding virtual events and having only Sunday service in person. We held a zoom fellowship and we had a great turnout. We held small discussions and played a game called



"Code Names". For our summer fellowship, we held a small picnic. We had deli sandwiches, snacks, and a lot of lawn games. We set up corn hole, frisbee and badminton for everyone to take turns and play. This was a great event and we held it at Christopher Morley Park in Roslyn, NY on a Sunday afternoon. For our last fellowship event, we held an end of the year dinner at an Italian eatery in Mineola, NY. It was a great event with a good turnout. Our focus this year, regarding fellowships, was to be consistent with the events regardless of attendance. Our hope is that in 2023, our consistency with the events will encourage more of our FOCUS members to join the fellowship events.

As a group, our vision for Bible



studies this year was centered on understanding the root of our faith. Oftentimes, as young adults, we come to a certain realization in our lives, "What exactly is our faith?" "What is the purpose of these traditions?" Regardless of where it happens, whether it be in front of our friends and colleagues, or during some self-reflection we have all asked these questions. Throughout this year we were able to come together to discuss our faith and more importantly discuss how we take the Word of God from within the four walls of a Church building, to the four corners of the Earth. Ranging from topics such as Sacraments (e.g Holy Baptism) to Feast Days (e.g Pentecost), to even understanding the importance of partaking in a Fast, we have definitely

made strides in learning more about our faith. Our vision for future Bible studies includes understanding our identities in Christ, analysis of the lives of saints, as well as relationships and marriage in the context of the Orthodox Church.

2023

Our Vision for 2023 is to continue with greater vigor what we have been doing in 2022. With the leadership of our Vicar Rev. Fr. Gregory Varghese and our new FOCUS leadership structure, we hope to be able to provide the FOCUS members with more enriching events, educational opportunities and a variety of avenues to help our community, with the ultimate aim of glorification of God's name on earth.



Managing Committee



Martha Mariam Vanitha Samajam

CHURCH PICNIC



Church Choir

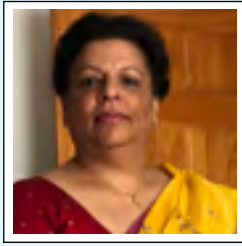


Martha Mariam Vanitha Samajam Hits a Milestone

“Rejoice always, pray constantly, give thanks in all circumstances.” 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

The last two to three years have been very trying and difficult times for the parish and its spiritual organizations, especially due to the pandemic. However, during the pandemic, the Martha Mariam Vanitha Samajam (MMVS) members were able to meet via zoom platform regularly on Saturday evenings from 8 PM to 9 PM until the middle of October 2022. This was a unique opportunity for the Samajam members to study certain books of the Bible on an intensive basis. In 2022, our Bible study was based on the Book of Genesis. Besides Bible study, we had someone singing a devotional song with others singing along or singing to themselves, and someone reading a Psalm or so. There would be intercessory prayers done as well. All these were done under the guidance of our vicar Rev. Fr. Gregory Varghese and/or Rev. Dn. Roby Antony.

By the grace of God Almighty, lately, we have been able to start in-person MMVS gatherings at our parish hall on Sundays after the Holy Qurbana. Earlier in the year, during the Great Lent, a Bible reading chain was created and most of our Samajam members, with some men and children included, participated in it. Every day, the Bible reading started at 5:30 AM and ended at 11:00 PM with a one-hour span of reading for each participant. Amazingly, the entire Bible was read 7 times that it was a great learning experience and blessing for the entire parish community. This project was so well received that there is a general parishwide quest for its continuation during future Lenten times also. It is a true blessing to have such a community and parish to rejoice and worship together, especially in the times of difficulties.



Sheela Jose

The Samajam was also able to support multiple charitable endeavors this year. We hosted a parish lunch drive to collect funds so as to provide assistance for the treatment of seriously ill people in India. Ten of our Samajam members participated in the Bible Quiz competition held at St. Thomas Orthodox Church, Levittown, Long Island on September 17, 2022.

The Northeast American Diocese has marked August as the “MMVS month” and as the American Diocese MMVS reached its 40 years of existence, it decided to celebrate and honor all the women who were in the United States for more than 40 years. On August 14, our parish was able to celebrate the 40th anniversary of MMVS. At this event, 16 women members of our parish who have stood as pillars of our faith for the 40 plus years were honored. Northeast American Diocese also has honored all the MMVS members who completed their 40 plus years in the United States, at the Samajam Annual Conference held at St. Thomas Orthodox Church, Unruh, Philadelphia on October 1, 2022. Many of our Samajam members were able to participate in this Annual Conference where each of the above referenced 16 members of our parish was honored with a plaque and a ‘ponnada’.

Our goal for the upcoming years is to continue to move forward and keep God first as we have for the last 40 years. (MMVS moto: “Pray, Act and Shine”).



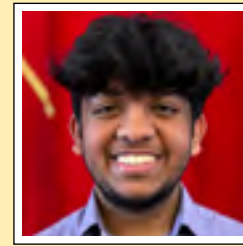
MGOCSM



Mar Gregorios Orthodox Christian Student Movement

A general rule with stock market investments is that you invest when the value of shares is low, so that you will reap the benefits when the shares go up in value. Also, it is important to invest in companies or portfolios whose shares are likely to grow in value. While investing in stocks can be guesswork (sometimes, intelligent guesswork!) investing in human stocks, especially in the growth of young children, into their teenage years and even beyond, can be very rewarding. There is no use praying to have better children or your children do better in school, unless you have made the right investments in terms of molding their character and providing them with adequate guidance and role modeling. Likewise, if children don’t make the right investments in terms of studying hard, simply praying to God for better grades in exams, will be of no use. Thus the question of investments is important in all walks and phases of life, like finding a good job, finding a good life-partner and the like. This is true regarding spiritual growth also. We cannot aspire to grow in God or want to become a priest without having made the right investments as early in life as possible.

We cannot let prayer become a substitute for work. There is a saying, “Heaven helps those who help themselves.” Children and adults need to obey the commandments of God, which involve action and resolve. We can of course



Jensen Varghese

pray to God to have our actions bear fruit. We need to use our intellect and sensibilities that God has given as talents, for our own growth as well as for those around us. Of course, heaven will come to the aid of those who are helpless and needy and this is accomplished through their fellowmen like us through our charitable work. We need to become the hands and feet of our Lord Jesus Christ.

We, as members of MGOCSM (Mar Gregorios Orthodox Student Movement), are to invest in ourselves and in what we are expected to do and then enjoy the fruits of our labor in ourselves and others we try to help. It is important to have youth groups and organizations like MGOCSM, guide the youth because there is never a better time than when one is young. While a small plant can be guided in its growth, it becomes extremely difficult to guide it after it has grown to be a tree. It is absolutely necessary to have the children grow in faith, love, joy, kindness, goodness, peace, patience, gentleness, self-control, and other valued virtues of a good Christian and they themselves will bear those fruits later in life. Life skills and lessons taught and learned at

an early age are beneficial for youth as they continue growing and learning into their middle school and high school years. Eventually, as adults, they will be able to use what they learned – ideas and skills of problem-solving, responsibility, decision-making, and making healthy choices, just to name a few. This is exactly what the MGOCSM is striving for. MGOCSM is meant for the mannerly and conventional upbringing of the youth in the Church. It is meant to guide and bring together the high school and college students on a path to God. From the start to the end of our academic career, many of the youngsters tend to go astray due to the troubles and problems they face in the real world and in school. Many teens and young adults are confronted by stress, anxiety, depression, emptiness, and the like. They need to be reminded over and over, especially when they face such problems that the answer to their problems is God. This spiritual organization helps not only to counter the current issues they face but also prepares and solidifies in them the ideas that they should continue to depend on God even after their troubles have ceased. Therefore, the MGOCSM isn’t just another spiritual organization, it is structured to provide a rocky foundation for the member students to build on, to eventually serve as future leaders of the Church and the society.



Group Song Team 2022

SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASS PICTURES 2022-23



Pre-K Teachers: Alana James, Joanne Johnson



Kindergarten Teacher: Susanna Abraham

SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASS PICTURES 2022-23



Grade 1 Teacher: Hanna Abraham



Grade 7 Teacher: Anney Johnson



Grade 2 Teacher: Shelby Saimon



Grade 8 Teacher: Rohitha Roy



Grade 3 Teacher: Peter Johnson



Grade 9 Teacher: Lisa Rajan



Grade 4 Teacher: Megha Mathew



Grade 10 Teacher: Justin Varghese



Grade 5 Teacher: Mini Thomas



Grade 11 Teacher: Moncy Varghes



Grade 6 Teacher: Maryann Johnson



Grade 12 Teacher: George M Geevarghese