



Alexios Mar Eusebius
Metropolitan

MALANKARA ORTHODOX SYRIAN CHURCH

DIOCESE OF SOUTH-WEST AMERICA



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Blessings to our Cor-Episcopoi, Priests, Deacons, parish managing committee and all the faithful, especially the members of the MMVS of our Diocese,

Dearly Beloved,

The Holy Orthodox Church, world-wide observes the *Shoonoyo Nombu* or the Fast of the *Dormition* of the *Theotokos* from August 1-15. St. Mary bore none other than God Himself in her and revealed to the world. Hence we call her as the Second Heaven among a lot of other titles of honor we give the blessed Mother. Our Holy Mother, St. Mary continues to stand as a great intercessor for the Holy Church and its children. May the life of the blessed Virgin be the focal point of our thoughts and meditations during this Holy Fast. May we be given the strength from above to imitate her life as we sojourn through this world.

The Morth Mariam Samajam of our diocese continues to grow as an active ministry that contributes highly to the building up of the family and the church as a whole. The charity outreach programs of our MMVS throughout our diocese, continue to assist a good number of people both in India and in North America. We exhort all parishes to observe Sunday after August 15 th as Morth Mariam Samajam Day. A special prayer should be offered for the leaders of the spiritual organization, its members and all its activities. We urge all the Morth Mariam Samajam members to promote and participate in the special cover collection that should be taken on this day which can be used again for more charitable activities. The annual conference for the MMVS will be held at St. Gregorios Orthodox Church, San Francisco from Sept 30 to Oct 1, 2017. We urge each parish to bring the maximum number of participants to attend and participate in this annual conference.

My dear children, we hope and pray that the observance of this upcoming fast will allow us to put into practice the spiritual discipline of abstinence and be a time for personal transformation through the renewal of our souls and bodies.

May the intercessions of St. Mary and all the holy saints be a stronghold for us all.

Your Shepherd in Christ,

Alexios Mar Eusebius Metropolitan.