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Metropolitan

MALANKARA ORTHODOX SYRIAN CHURCH

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Blessings to our Cor-Episcopoi, Priests, Deacons, Parish Managing Committee members and all the faithful of our Diocese.

Dearly beloved,

As we enter into the very important liturgical period of the Great Lent, which culminates with the Feast of the Resurrection of our Lord, let us use the weeks in front of us as an opportunity for self-evaluation and to return to God. Jesus Christ, before his public ministry, observed 40 days fast in the Judean wilderness and succeeded in the examinations of Satan. When we look back at the fall of humanity in Genesis 3, we see that humanity, when tempted by Satan, was attracted to the external beauty of the world and thus fell into sin. He found the fruit good for food, a delight to the eyes and that it would make one wise. Jesus Christ, after 40 days fasting, when Satan came to Him tempting Him with food, to attain the things which delighted His eyes, and to use the wisdom He had, He triumphed over Satan and said that humans do not live by the pleasures of the world, that we have to conquer all these temptations and delight in the Word of God and in the power of the Almighty.

My dear children, consider this 2013 Lent as an important time of prayer and fasting. We have to conquer the pleasures of this world and yearn for the values of proper Christian life. We must persevere and stay strong that we may not become slaves to food, feelings, temptations and distractions of the evil one.

As you all know, Holy Confession is an important sacrament of the Church. Since we live in the material world, knowingly and unknowingly we commit sin and move away from the presence of God. What God expects from all of us is a true repentance, just like we see in Luke 15 where the prodigal son returns to his father's house with real repentance and penitence, confessing his sins, raising his voice saying, "Father, I have sinned against you and heaven".

Entering into the great feast of Passover, just as how Jesus washed the feet of His disciples, let Jesus wash away our sins by our tears and make us worthy to receive the holy Passover Lamb. May this Lent be an occasion to have real repentance and confession. May the prayers of the Fathers and Doctors of the Church, departed clergy and all the faithful departed be with us through this spiritual journey of this Great Lent.

Your Shepherd in Christ,

Alexios Mar Eusebius
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