

Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church

(Catholicate of the East)

Diocese of South-West America

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Alexios Mar Eusebius
Metropolitan



September 22, 2011

DSWA/C/09/2011

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

Dearly Beloved,

The theological training program for the laity in our church known as **Divyabhodanam** was founded in 1984 by His Holiness Baselios Marthoma Mathews I (of Blessed Memory) by the initiative of His Grace Dr. Paulose Mar Gregorios Metropolitan (of Blessed Memory). The primary aim of the program was to educate laity in basic Orthodox Christian faith and practices and to encourage Christian leaders to work in the spiritual organizations of the Church at parish and diocesan levels. Today, the need for this program is even greater as we need to prepare our laity to face the new challenges, ideologies, and problems of the time, and to respond with a Christian mind filled with deep faith and complete trust in God. The richness of our theology, tradition and the basics of Biblical education are very well incorporated in this program.

The strength of many of our sister Orthodox Churches and their witness is they have a lot of training programs to instruct people in the faith, especially using modern media tools as a guide for presentations. Thus, it is our desire to organize **Divyabhodaam** throughout our Diocese. The Church already has a structure in place for the program. Many of the books and materials are available in our Church bookstores and can be ordered and shipped to our parishes. Degrees and diploma certificates will be awarded to those who successfully complete the course.

In order to help organize and further develop this program, we hereby appoint **Rev. Fr. Dr. Jacob Mathew (Orlando)** as the Director of Divyabhodanam of our Diocese. Although many of our parishes already have an established unit, we encourage all parishes that have not yet started to do so at the earliest and to be in contact with the Director for any of your needs. We encourage our aghens to take an initiative in helping to establish this program in every parish and using our resources to educate our laity in the faith and practices of our Church.

May the blessings of God Almighty be showered upon us all.

Your Shepherd in Christ,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Alexios Mar Eusebius" with a small cross above the 'i' in "Eusebius".

Alexios Mar Eusebius, Metropolitan