



The Stream

A monthly publication of the Diocese of South-West America

MMVS Regional Conference
2016

September 2016
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MALANKARA ORTHODOX SYRIAN CHURCH DIOCESE OF SOUTH -WEST AMERICA



Morth Mariam Vanitha Samajam
Annual Conference 2016
October 7- 9 2016
St. Thomas Orthodox Church, Atlanta



“Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.” Jude 1:21
PLEASE SAVE THE DATE! SEE YOU THERE!



September 23
93rd memorial feast of
Late Lamented
Alvares Mar Julius,
Metropolitan of India,
Goa and Ceylon.



September 28
19th Anniversary of
Late Lamented
Dr. Philipose Mar
Theophilus,
Ambassador of the
Malankara Church,
Principal of Old
Seminary,
Metropolitan of
Angamaly and
Bombay Diocese.



Blessed 70th Birthday Wishes
Beloved Bava Thirumeni



Blessed 52nd Birthday Wishes
Beloved Eusebius Thirumeni

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Metropolitan's Column

Dearly Beloved,

The 7th Annual Clergy Conference and Diocesan Assembly were held at St. Thomas Orthodox Church, Atlanta from April 21st – 23rd. We take this time to appreciate all of the clergy and diocesan assembly members who made the meetings a great success. We recognize the devotion and commitment of our clergy and faithful to leading our Church continually in North America. Our sincere thanks belong to the host parish, vicar, and all its members, because of their hard work and dedication in making the Clergy Conference and Diocesan Assembly a grand success.

Fruitful discussions on different matters of the Church were conducted in both meetings and important decisions were taken pertaining to the growth of our Diocese. Of all the matters discussed, two vital decisions were made regarding the formation of a Department of Mission for the Diocese and the construction of the proposed chapel at the Diocesan Center.

When we consider the mission of the Church in North America, we have to focus on three major realities. The first and foremost is to take care of the spiritual needs of the Syrian Orthodox community migrating from India. Out of the fifty states in the United States of America, one-third of them do not have a Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church. It is also a fact that many of cities where our people live do not have an accessible Orthodox church. Thus, the mission of the Church includes keeping all the faithful in spiritual care by providing accessible church facilities. The second reality we recognize is the new generation born and brought up in North America who do not speak Malayalam and live in the Western cultural background. The Church has to address their needs and keep them in the rich heritage of Orthodoxy. It is a challenge here in America that the Pentecostal groups and 'new generation' churches attract this group of people with their pleasing prosperity gospel. The third reality should be considered of utmost importance. The Malankara Orthodox Church in North America has a mission to evangelize this nation with the Orthodox faith. America is a land of great potential and opportunity to spread the Orthodox understanding of the Gospel and provide the richness of Orthodox liturgy to the natives of this land. This century is considered as an era of Orthodoxy because the uniqueness of Orthodox life, liturgy, observances, architecture, and art are not shallow practices. The educated mass has an attraction to it. Thus, it is the responsibility of the Church to give this great faith to those who draw near to it. We have to start mission churches and other spiritual centers to accommodate and teach the interested individuals about our traditions.

The call for mission in North America drives the need of our own Orthodox spiritual centers for the faithful and those desiring to learn Orthodoxy. In this regard, the diocesan center is considered as the first of its kind. Among the many projects in the diocesan center we believe that the Diocesan Chapel be the first to come. The chapel construction project steadily progresses and the preliminary works are scheduled to begin on October 15th, 2016 beginning with the ground-breaking ceremony. The chapel is the foremost and primary venue for the Diocese as we develop a spiritual center in North America. For many months, we were debating on a name for the Diocesan chapel, and after prayerful devotion, our idea is to dedicate the Diocesan Center chapel in the name of all the apostles. Hence, we are thinking to give the name as 'Holy Apostles Chapel' and we can celebrate its feast day on June 30th. We would like to hear your suggestions and inputs regarding the construction and beautification of this holy place. Let it be an Orthodox landmark in North America to portray the heritage of this Ancient Church.

Your shepherd in Christ,

Alexios Mar Eusebius, Metropolitan

H.H Moran Mar Baselios Marthoma Paulose II celebrates 70th Birthday



The Supreme Head of the Malankara (Indian) Orthodox Church His Holiness was born on 30th August 1946 at Pazhanji, Kerala, India and was named Paul, after his Grandfather. Paul attended church services regularly and became an altar boy at his young age. He was an active member of MGOCSM (Mar Gregorios Orthodox Christian Student Movement) in his church. He completed theological studies in GST (Graduation in Sacred Theology) from Orthodox Theological Seminary, Kottayam and BD (Bachelor of Divinity) from Serampoor University. Paul was ordained as Sub-Deacon in 1972 at Parumala Seminary and next year he became full Deacon at Koratty Seheyon Seminary.

On 21st June 1973, Dn. Paul was ordained as a Priest. In 1984 he was elected by the Malankara Association as a candidate to be the Bishop and became Remban. On 15th May 1985 Ramban Paul was ordained as a Bishop with title Paulose Mar Milithios at the age of 38 at Mavelikara, Puthiyacavu St. Mary's Church by His Holiness Baselios Marthoma Mathews I. He is the first Metropolitan after Parumala Thirumeni and Puthenkavil Geevarghese Mar Philexinos to be ordained as Bishop below the age of 40. The newly ordained Bishop Mar Milithios was appointed as the Metropolitan of the Diocese of Kunnankulam. The Holy Episcopal synod and the Managing committee nominated him as the successor to the Catholicos of the East and Malankara Metropolitan on 27th Sep 2006.

Paulose Mar Milithios was enthroned as the 91st Catholicos of the East and Malankara Metropolitan at the solemn ceremony at St. Paul's and St. Peter's church, Parumala on 1st November 2010. His Holiness is the Eight Catholicos of the East since the re-establishment of the Catholicate in India in 1912 and the 21st Malankara Metropolitan.

Malankara Syrian Christian Association

The procedure for the **2017 Malankara Syrian Christian Association** has started. The Association, being the largest Church Parliament meeting in the world will be held on **March 1st, 2017** at **MD Seminary Campus Kottayam, Kerala**. The Managing Committee, along with the Priest Trustee and the Lay Trustee will be elected for a term of five years.

The newly elected Managing Committee will meet again to elect the Association Secretary. The Malankara metropolitan is the president and the bishops having administrative charge of Diocese serve as vice-presidents of the association. The last meeting of Malankara Syrian Christian Association was held at the Catholicate College ground, Pathanamthitta on March 7th, 2012 to elect a new clergy trustee, lay trustee and 129 members (43 priests and 86 laymen) to its managing committee.

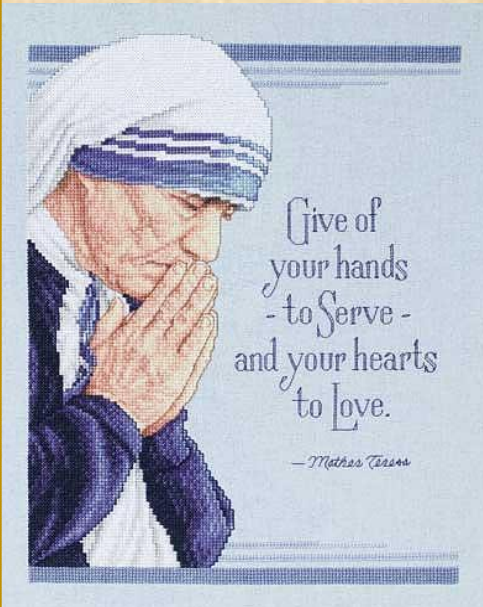
Thanksgiving Lunch at St. Thomas Mission, Houston

St. Thomas Mission of St. Thomas Cathedral, Houston, TX under the guidance of Diocesan Metropolitan H.G. Alexios Mar Eusebius and under the leadership of Vicar Very Rev. Gheevarghese Aroopala Corepiscopa is arranging a Thanksgiving Day lunch on November 24th, 2016. This is an effort to reach-out, in the love of our Lord Jesus Christ, to the needy and less fortunate in local communities. Our Diocesan Metropolitan H. G. Alexios Mar Eusebius, Hon. Mayor Leonard Scarcella from the City of Stafford and Hon. Mayor Pro-Tem, Ken Mathew, member of St. Thomas Cathedral also will participate in this event.

Mother Teresa

The Good Samaritan - Saint Teresa of Kolkata

- Ashwati Kuruvilla



In the year 1975, Mother Teresa made it to the cover of Time Magazine for an article that acknowledged her as one of the world's "Living Saints". Pope Francis declared Sainthood for Mother on 4th September 2016, 19 years after her death.

In her acceptance speech, of the Nobel Peace Prize in 1979, Mother said that she feels 'most unworthy' to receive the award. Adding that she is grateful and happy to receive it, in the name of the hungry, of the naked, of the homeless, of the cripple, of the blind, of the lepers, of all those people who feel unwanted, unloved, uncared... In the name of the people who have become a burden to society and are shunned.

Mother earned accolades and recognition over a lifetime spent working with the poor, the sick, the orphans, the lepers – the throwaway of the society. She understood that the hungry are not only hungry for bread. But hungry for love. The naked are not only naked for a piece of cloth. But naked of human dignity. The homeless are not homeless for a room to live. But homeless for having no place in anyone's heart, for being forgotten.

'Love one another' is at the heart of the teachings of Jesus. How do we love? By giving. First in our homes, to our next door neighbors, in our communities. In all places, wherever, we are placed by God. Help one person at a time and start with those nearest to you. It's not enough to say, "I love you, God." How can you love the God you don't see, when you can't love the person in front of you? Maybe there is someone in your family who is long forgotten and unloved and uncared. Look around... There are many children, many men, many women who have not got what you have.

Love the poor. Never turn your back to the poor, for in doing so, you are turning your back to Christ who has made himself the hungry one, the naked one, the homeless one so that you and I have an opportunity to love Him. Mother Teresa's gift to the world was "to make everybody aware of their own responsibility" and to inspire people with the knowledge that "each one of us can make a difference". Mother Teresa was very aware of her need for mercy before God. A powerful reminder to all of us that, before God, we all stand in need of mercy. In this, we are all poor.

Blessed are the pure of heart, for they shall see God. Her life's message is to 'Be the face of Jesus', to 'See the face of Jesus' in the world. If you judge people, you have no time to love them. If you can't feed a hundred people, then feed just one. By blood, she was Albanian. By law, Indian. By faith, Catholic. By heart, she belonged to Christ.

Prayer in Action is love. Love in action is service.

Around the World

Parumala Cancer Centre to be Blessed by H.H. Baselios Marthoma Paulose II on November 22nd 2016



The most prestigious Parumala Cancer Centre of the Malankara Orthodox Church situated in the beautiful and serene locales of Parumala village, Kadapara Panchayat, of Pathanamthitta District, in Kerala will be blessed by H.H. Baselios Marthoma Paulose II, in the presence of Patriarch His Holiness Abune Mathias I of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church. The Indian President, Shri Pranab Mukherjee is also expected to be present for the inaugural function. The new cancer center will have over 500 beds, the most sophisticated machines, efficient administrative staff/systems, and the most talented doctors/technicians available. This will be the largest International Cancer Care Center in South India. Since most the cancer cases occur due to lifestyle activities, the cancer care center has started many community outreach and education programs. They have also started conducting cancer detection camps all over Kerala to diagnose the problem at its earliest stage possible. This increases survival rates and reduces the costs that the patients will have to incur.

Maiden Visit of H.H. Catholicose to Western Canada



The children of the Malankara Orthodox Church, in the Western Region of Canada, were blessed with the first ever visit by the Supreme Head of their Mother Church. H.H. Moran Mar Baselios Marthoma Paulose II, the Catholicose of the East visited our Parishes in Calgary and Edmonton, in the Province of Alberta from September 1st - 4th, 2016.

His Holiness, accompanied by his personal secretary, Fr. Jis Johnson, arrived at Calgary International Airport at 9:20 pm on Thursday, September 1st. The Diocesan Metropolitan, H.G. Alexios Mar Eusebius and the Vicar of St. Mary's Church Calgary, Fr. Binny Kuruvilla, along with a few of the visiting priests, the Managing Committee Members of the Calgary church and Mr. Prasad Panda MLA, representing the Government of

Alberta, received Bava Thirumeni at the Airport.

On Friday, September 2nd His Holiness visited the property purchased for building the Church in Calgary, offered prayers and planted a tree. At 6:00 pm the church members and invited guests received Bava Thirumeni and the Diocesan Metropolitan, who arrived at the current church facility, accompanied by a large motorcade escorted by the Calgary city police. His Holiness led the evening prayer followed by a public meeting attended by several invited priests. Saturday morning, His Holiness celebrated the Holy Qurbana assisted by H.G. Alexios Mar Eusebius, H.G. Aboona Michael, Arch Bishop of Ethiopian Orthodox Church, several priests and the faithful from Calgary, Edmonton attended the Holy Qurbana, followed by the Onam Sadhya.

In the afternoon on Saturday, September 3rd His Holiness and the Diocesan Metropolitan travelled by road to Edmonton, the Capital City of Alberta, accompanied by several priests and the faithful in various vehicles. To receive His Holiness, a large crowd of the faithful and the clergy gathered at the inter-section, a block away from St. Gregorios Malankara Orthodox Church, which is the first Malayalee church in Canada. Upon arrival, the Vicar Fr. Shabu Varughese received His Holiness by adorning the Holy Father with a garland, followed by a grand procession to the church. At 5:30 pm His Holiness offered intercession prayers followed by a public meeting to welcome the Supreme Head of the ancient Apostolic Church of India. Most Rev. Aboun Abraham, Bishop of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church, Most Rev. Richard Smith, the Arch Bishop of the Roman Catholic Arch Diocese of Edmonton, Most Rev. Gregory Bittman, Asst. Bishop, Roman Catholic Arch Diocese, a

large number of priests and faithful, from various parishes of the Malankara Orthodox, the Jacobite Syriac Orthodox, the Knanaya Syrian Orthodox, the Coptic Orthodox, the Russian Orthodox, the Ukrainian Orthodox, the Orthodox Church of America, The Ukrainian Catholic, the Roman Catholic, the Malankara Catholic, the Malankara Marthoma churches and people from various other denominations attended the public reception and the Apostolic Blessings (Slyheeka Vazhvu). All the attended clergy and the faithful received gifts and mementos from His Holiness. On Sunday morning, His Holiness officiated the Holy Eucharist assisted by H.G. Alexios Mar Eusebius and several priests. In the afternoon, after the Onam Sadhya, Bava Thirumeni visited the portion of the Cemetery owned by St. Gregorios Orthodox Church at Westlawn Memorial Gardens and offered prayers for the faithful departed.

Foundation stone laid for the new church building of St Gregorios Orthodox Church, Dallas



Foundation Stone laying ceremony for the new church building of the St Gregorios Orthodox Church, Dallas was solemnized by Diocesan Metropolitan His Grace Alexios Mar Eusebius on Saturday, August 27th, 2016.

Along with the Vicar Rev. Fr. C G Thomas and Parishioners, local area priests and faithful members attended the blessed occasion. Currently, different committees are actively working to raise the funds and to come up with the proper design of the new designated church.

MGOCSM of SW Diocese forms own constitution



The MGOCSM of South West Diocese of America creates history by creating its own constitution for the smooth administrative running at parish, regional and diocesan levels. The Director, Rev. Fr. James Cheriyan, the General Secretary, Ms. Lijin Raju along with the Council Representatives presented the draft to His Grace Alexios Mar Eusebius at the Dallas General Assembly 2016. The new constitution is based on the existing MGOCSM constitution, in order to accommodate the hierarchal changes and to clarify the authority and responsibility of each positions within MGOCSM. This new draft was unanimously passed at the General Assembly held during the Dallas Leadership Camp 2016. The Diocesan Metropolitan appreciated the entire MGOCSM Council for this effort. This objective of revamping the constitution is to help smoothness in administration and enhance the quality of the existence of this spiritual organization. The new MGOCSM constitution can be viewed or downloaded from the diocese website.

MMVS Regional Conferences

MMVS Regional Conference, Oklahoma



MMVS Regional Conference was held at Oklahoma St. Thomas Orthodox Church on June 18th, 2016. The main speaker was Rev Fr. John Kunnathusseril from St. Thomas Orthodox Church Dallas.

MMVS Regional Conference, San Francisco



The West Region MMVS conference was held on September 10th, 2016 at St Gregorios Church, San Francisco. H.G Alexios Mar Eusebius was the chief guest. Rev. Fr. Thomas Mathai, Rev. Fr. Mathai Alakot, Dn. Saju Varghese and the Diocesan MMVS secretary Mrs. Santhamma Mathew were also present. Five churches from the West Region participated in the conference and more than 100 MMVS members were present. The conference started at 8:30 AM and ended by 3:30 PM. Talent competitions were conducted and in regional quiz competition the winner was St. Thomas Church, Los Angeles. During his speech, Thirumeni mentioned the story of Abigail (1 Samuel, Ch. 25) and advised that every woman of the Orthodox church should be wise like Abigail and strive to attain her virtues in order to maintain a loving and peaceful relationship within the family and community. 52nd birthday of Thirumeni was also celebrated.

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Diocese

Aramana Chapel construction contract signed



A construction contract agreement between the Diocese of South-West America of the Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church and M/S Josh Construction LLC, Dallas was signed on Tuesday, September 22nd, 2016 at the Urshlem Diocesan Center, Beasley, Texas. Diocesan Metropolitan His Grace Alexios Mar Eusebius signed the contractual agreement to build a 9000 sq. ft., 300 seating capacity Chapel and handed over the documents to Josh Construction LLC for project execution. Rev. Fr. Issac Prakash, Rev Fr. Philipos Sakharia and Mr. Johnny Mepratheril were present during the occasion.

Ground Breaking Ceremony

The ground breaking of the newly proposed Aramana chapel will be held on Saturday, October 15th, 2016 at Beasley, Texas after celebrating holy Qurbana in the morning.

MGOCSM Urshlem Summer Camp – 2016



The most awaited 2016 Urshlem Men's Summer Camp (July 10th-16th) as well as Urshlem Women's Summer Camp (July 17th - 20th) took place at the Diocesan Center of the South-West Diocese of America in Houston, Texas. The theme for this year was "Revealing the Presence of God" which was inspired by the verse taken from Psalm 45:11, which says, "Be still and know that I am God". Classes as well as workshops were taken by eminent speakers on the theme. The camp followed the structure of the liturgical hours of prayer with sessions and workshops that elaborated on the theme as well as helped the participants to orient themselves for the challenges during their new life in college.