



The Stream

A monthly publication of the Diocese of South-West America

Diocesan Assembly
2016

April 2016
Vol. 5 Issue 2



DIOCESAN CLERGY CONFERENCE & DIOCESAN ASSEMBLY 2016

April 21 - April 23

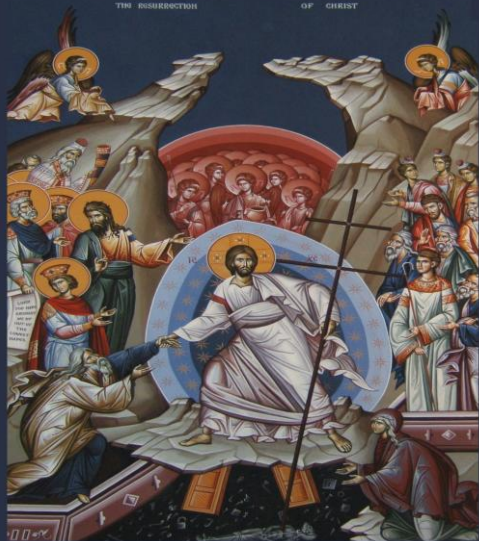
St. Thomas Orthodox Church, Atlanta
5720 Lilburn Stone Mountain Rd
Stone Mountain, Georgia

"O Death, where is your sting? O Hell, where is your victory? Christ is risen, and you are overthrown. Christ is risen, and the demons are fallen. Christ is risen, and the angels rejoice. Christ is risen, and life reigns. Christ is risen, and not one dead remains in the grave. For Christ, being risen from the dead, is become the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep."

from the Paschal
Sermon of St. John
Chrysostom



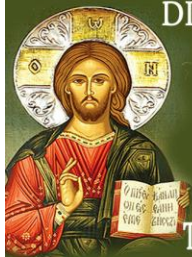
HAPPY EASTER 2016



CHRIST IS RISEN!

DIocese OF SOUTH-WEST AMERICA

FAMILY & YOUTH CONFERENCE 2016



Theme: "THE HOME BUILT UPON THE ROCK"

1 Timothy 1:5

REGIONAL CONFERENCE DATES

Southern- Austin, TX : June 29 - July 2
Northwest -Vancouver, BC : July 7-10
Midwest -Shipshewana, IN : July 20-23



H.G. Alexios Mar Eusebius,
Diocesan Metropolitan



Rev. Fr. P.A. Philip
Keynote Speaker

Our Conference sessions will be led by Our Thirumeni and Clergy in cooperation with our Keynote Speaker for Adult, Young Adult, Youth and Children Sessions. Please Save the Dates!!!

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Do you have articles or news you would like to share in 'The Stream' newsletter? Would you like to share 'The Stream' with -your family and friends. Please e-mail us at thestreamdswa@gmail.com

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First Apostolic Visit of
His Holiness
Moran Mor
Baselios Marthoma
Paulose II
to the
Chicago Area
June 28 -July 4

Metropolitan's Column

Dearly Beloved,

As we complete the 7th anniversary of the inception of our Diocese, it is important that we remind ourselves to look back and reflect upon our past. It is by understanding how we have grown over the last seven years that we can move forward and make improvements to better glorify God and serve the faithful. While the South-West American Diocese is young, we cannot forget the foundation laid by our elders, priests and bishops who immigrated to the US and Canada and established church communities. We are able to stand firm today because of their hard work and now, we are responsible to continue the mission of strengthening the faith passed unto us through the Malankara Orthodox Church amongst not only the faithful, but the world. We must work to spread the beauty of our rich church tradition to this land.

During this season of the Resurrection we must ask ourselves, "What can I do to spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and build up His Church?" First and foremost, we need to listen to Him and heed His call. We must move the focus away from ourselves and remind ourselves to serve God and His will in our lives. When we look to the Scriptures, there are two great examples for us to use as reflection. In the Old Testament, we see Abraham being told by God to leave his father's house to a land God would show him (Genesis 12). In faith, Abraham listened to God and acted accordingly. He left his home and selflessly followed, and he invested in God's call, and he experienced God's grace and blessing. Because of Abraham's faithfulness, all generations after him were blessed by his willingness to listen and worked towards what God asked of him. The second example shifts our focus from serving God but serving others in His love. Not only must we listen for ourselves, but we have a responsibility to provide for each other. This is evident in Christ's restoration of Peter's apostolic ministry (St. John 21:15-19). As Jesus questions Peter's love for Him, and exhorts him to feed His sheep, we see that Jesus is reminding Peter that the responsibility of apostleship, at its core, is to love Christ and to love his fellow brothers and sisters. We are given that same responsibility to provide with the same unconditional love expressed in the Gospel.

This year, we will be having our Seventh Annual Diocesan Assembly in Atlanta, GA and looking back, there are many areas of growth for us to be proud. Glory to God! The Diocese has taken the lead in implementing the Liturgical Resource Development and making English translations of the Sacraments and special feasts of the Church available for the faithful. In addition to catering to the needs of the growing generations raised here in North America, this effort is also a commitment to witness Christ in the communities we live. Our spiritual organizations have significantly increased in their ability to reach all of the parishes, areas and regions of North America. Strong units of MGOCSM, Martha Mariam Samajam, Prayer Fellowship, Divya Bodhanam, and Sunday School have helped many of our faithful grow in their faith and become active in the life of the Church through the many programs initiated by these spiritual organizations. These include programs such as online prayers, bible and faith studies through online and teleconference systems, resource development, and consistent family conferences at area, regional, and diocesan levels.

Furthermore, as a Diocese, we have started the initial investments to develop a Diocesan Center by purchasing a 100 acre property in Beasley, Texas. This will be an all-encompassing spiritual center for us to grow in Christ's love and transmit that love to our fellow brethren. We will do this through the discipline of prayer, a commitment to serve, and providing a spiritual sanctuary to strengthen all who come and partake of the facilities available at the Diocesan Center. We ask everyone to support this effort with their prayers so that our Diocesan Center, "Urshlem", which is named after the 'city of peace' and the place our Lord Resurrected and gave his peace, to become a place that spreads God's peace to all corners of our Diocese.

At the same time, we must look past what we have done and how we can do more to improve these efforts. It is our goal to increase our effectiveness in having an impact on and reaching more of the faithful. Though we have OCYM and FOCUS as spiritual organizations for our young adults and young families, we know there is more that we can do to provide resources and help to enable them to become more active. In addition to strengthening these two movements, we have wanted to provide a strong Department of Pastoral Care and Counseling. It has been an earnest wish since the inception of the Diocese and recently, it has taken new steps for the development of the department and its ministry to serve the faithful. That being said, we cannot do it alone. We need more of our priests, lay leaders and the faithful to respond to our request for feedback and step up to help make these organizations flourish. We, as a Diocese, can do more in serving those in need within the communities we live, which means we have to take up the challenge and tithing our time, talents and resources.

**Your shepherd in Christ,
Alexios Mar Eusebius, Metropolitan**

Inter- Church Relations

The Office of Inter-Church Relations

The Office of Inter-Church Relations is an administrative department of the Diocese of South-West America. This department is dedicated to facilitating the diplomatic coordination of our Diocese along with various religious institutions, with special interest being directed to our sister Orthodox Churches. Through the continued efforts of this department, multiple ecumenical meetings have been successfully coordinated throughout prior years. The most recent event in October 2015 enabled our Metropolitan, His Grace Alexios Mar Eusebius, to establish rapport with the Coptic Orthodox Church through a meeting with His Holiness Pope Tawadros II, Patriarch of Alexandria and all Africa, during His Holiness' apostolic visit to America.

The vision of this department for the 2016 year is to continue its current efforts to build supportive relationships between our diocese and other religious institutions in America in an effort to edify both sides through the practice of fraternal, Christ-like love. In the past, this Office has focused primarily on arranging ecumenical meetings; however, although this is an important aspect of this ministry, it does not cater to the needs of the average layperson in our Diocese. In order to meet this need while also maintaining the existing

foundation of this Office, the ministry plan for the current departmental term will be established upon two specific focus areas: (1) Ecumenical Relations and (2) Educational Resources.

By God's grace, the Office of Inter-Church relations will maintain its responsibilities for the coordination of ecumenical meetings while working to expand its scope to include the education of the clergy and laypeople in building interfaith relationships without compromising one's identity within the Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church. The department seeks to encourage open relations between churches through the delegation of our Metropolitan and the empowerment of our faithful. At the present, the department is developing resources for clergy which addresses interfaith concerns in parish life. Additionally, the department is creating a multimedia series which will focus on edifying the layperson's identity within the Church, equipping them with appropriate tools to share the Orthodox Faith, and encouraging the building of interfaith relationships in a loving and non-judgmental manner.

The Office of Inter-Church Relations is currently functioning under the leadership of Rev. Fr. Christopher Mathew as Director and Ms. Sangeetha Thomas as Secretary. Please continue to keep this department and its ministry in prayer.



Slootho

Tuesday Prayer

Let us come together for fellowship and intercession!

Tele-Prayer Meeting in English

From 9:05 pm to 9:35 pm (CST) every Tuesday.
Soothoro prayer, Devotional message,
Intercessory prayer for the needy & the sick.
Please send prayer requests to: slootho@ds-wa.org
Phone # (218) 632-0187
Access code: 3703#

Glorious Robe of Righteousness

മഹത്വവസ്ത്രം: സുറിയാനി ആരാധനാ പാരമ്പര്യത്തിൽ

മലങ്കരസഭയിൽ ഇന്നുപയോഗിക്കുന്ന ആരാധനാക്രമങ്ങളിൽ സ്ഥിരമായി കണ്ടുവരുന്ന പദപ്രയോഗങ്ങളാണ് മഹത്വവസ്ത്രം, മഹത്വത്തിന്റെ അങ്കി, പ്രകാശവസ്ത്രം, വെള്ളനിലയങ്കി, കല്യാണവസ്ത്രം മുതലായവ. എന്താണ് മഹത്വവസ്ത്രം അതിന്റെ പ്രത്യേകത എന്നിവയെക്കുറിച്ച് ചിന്തിക്കുന്നത്.

ഉല്പത്തിയിൽ മനുഷ്യനെ സൃഷ്ടിച്ചപ്പോൾ ദൈവം അവനെ തന്റെ സ്വന്തം ഛായയിലും സ്വരൂപത്തിലും സൃഷ്ടിച്ചു എന്നു പറയുന്നു (1:27-28). രണ്ടാം അദ്ധ്യായത്തിൽ പുരുഷന്റെ അസ്ഥിയിൽനിന്ന് സ്ത്രീയെ സൃഷ്ടിക്കുകയും അവരിരുവരും നഗ്നരായിരുന്നിട്ടും അവർക്കു നാണം തോന്നിയില്ല (2:25) എന്നും പറയുന്നു. എന്നാൽ മൂന്നാമദ്ധ്യായത്തിൽ പാപം ചെയ്തതിനുശേഷം അവർ നഗ്നരാണ് തിരിച്ചറിഞ്ഞതായും ദൈവം അവർക്കു ഇലകൊണ്ടുള്ള വസ്ത്രം കൊടുക്കുന്നതായും പറയുന്നു (3:21). നീ അവനെ ദൈവത്തെക്കാൾ അല്പം താഴ്ത്തി തേജസ്സും മാനവും അണിയിച്ചിരിക്കുന്നു സങ്കീർത്തനത്തിൽ പറയുന്നു (സങ്കീ 8:5). മനുഷ്യന്റെ പാപത്തിന് മുമ്പ് അവൻ നഗ്നനാണെന്നവനു തോന്നാതിരുന്നതിനു കാരണം അവന് ദൈവം മഹത്വത്തിന്റെ അങ്കി നൽകിയിരുന്നെന്നും എന്നാൽ അവൻ പാപം ചെയ്തതോടുകൂടി ആ അങ്കി നഷ്ടപ്പെട്ടുപോയെന്നും അതുകൊണ്ടാണ് പാപത്തിനുശേഷം അവർക്കു നാണം തോന്നിയതെന്നും സുറിയാനി സഭാപിതാക്കന്മാർ പഠിപ്പിക്കുന്നു. പാപം ചെയ്ത മനുഷ്യനെ ദൈവം പരുദീസായിൽനിന്ന് പുറത്താക്കി അതിന്റെ വാതിലിൽ തിരിയുന്ന വാളുമായി ക്രോബേ മാലാഖായെ കാവൽ നിർത്തുന്നു(ഉല്പ 3:24). പുതിയ നിയമത്തിലേക്ക് വരുമ്പോൾ കല്യാണവസ്ത്രം ധരിക്കാത്ത മനുഷ്യനെ ക്ഷണിച്ചയാൾ വിവാഹവിരുന്നിൽനിന്ന് പുറത്താക്കുന്നതായി കാണുന്നു(മത്ത 22:12). ഇവിടെ മണവാളൻ കർത്താവും വിരുന്നെടുത്ത സ്വർഗ്ഗരാജ്യവും അഥവാ പരുദീസായും വിവാഹവസ്ത്രം ധരിക്കാത്ത മനുഷ്യൻ ആദാമിന്റെ (പാപികളുടെ) പ്രതിനിധിയുമാണ്. അതേ സമയം മഹത്വവസ്ത്രം വിശുദ്ധിയുടെ പ്രതീകവും (ലൂക്കോ 9:29). വിശുദ്ധിയാകുന്ന മഹത്വവസ്ത്രം ലഭിച്ചെങ്കിൽ മാത്രമേ ഒരുവന് സ്വർഗ്ഗരാജ്യത്തിൽ പ്രവേശിക്കുവാൻ സാധിക്കയുള്ളൂ.

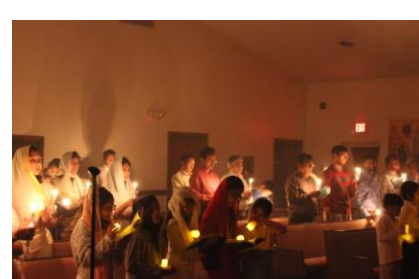
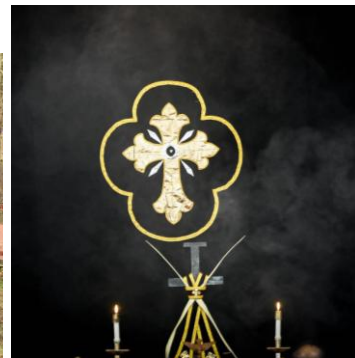
ഈ പശ്ചാത്തലത്തിൽ നിന്നുകൊണ്ടാണ് സുറിയാനി സഭാപിതാക്കന്മാർ മഹത്വവസ്ത്രത്തെ സഭാവിശ്വാസത്തോടും ആത്മീയജീവിതത്തോടും ബന്ധിപ്പിച്ച് ഉദ്ധരിക്കുന്നത്. മനുഷ്യന്റെ ഹീനാവസ്ഥയിൽ മനസലിഞ്ഞ ദൈവം തന്റെ ഏകജാതനെ ഭൂമിയിലേക്കയച്ച് ഈ രക്ഷാവസ്ത്രം തിരികെ കൊടുക്കുന്നു. പ്രധാനമായും ജനനം, മാമോദീസാ, പാതാളപ്രവേശനം എന്നീ മൂന്ന് സന്ദർഭങ്ങളിലായാണ് ഇത് സാധിക്കുന്നത്. ദൈവപുത്രൻ മറിയാമിന്റെ ഗർഭപാത്രത്തിലിറങ്ങി മനുഷ്യന്റെ ശരീരം ധരിക്കുകവഴി മനുഷ്യന് ദൈവത്തിന്റെ വിശുദ്ധിയിൽ പങ്കാളികളാകുവാൻ അവസരം ലഭിക്കുന്നു. മാമോദീസാ സമയത്ത് ജോർദ്ദാനാകുന്ന ഗർഭപാത്രത്തിലേക്കിറങ്ങി മനുഷ്യന്റെ പാപം മുലം മലിനമായിരുന്ന ലോകത്തിലെ സകല ജലത്തേയും ശുദ്ധീകരിക്കുകയും അവിടെ മഹത്വവസ്ത്രം സ്ഥാപിക്കുകയും ചെയ്തു. മാമോദീസാ സ്വീകരിക്കുന്ന ഏവനും ശുദ്ധീകരണം പ്രാപിക്കുകയും യേശുസ്ഥാപിച്ച മഹത്വവസ്ത്രം സ്വീകരിക്കുകയും ചെയ്യും. ആദിമ നൂറ്റാണ്ടുകളിൽ ഉയിർപ്പു ദിവസമായിരുന്നു മാമോദീസാ മുക്കിയിരുന്നത്. തുടർന്നുള്ള ഒരാഴ്ച അവർ വെള്ളവസ്ത്രമാണ് ധരിച്ചിരുന്നത്. ആയതുകൊണ്ട് ആ ദിവസങ്ങളെ ഹേവോറേ (വെള്ള) ദിനങ്ങൾ എന്നാണറിയപ്പെട്ടിരുന്നത്. ഇതിനെ സൂചിപ്പിച്ചുകൊണ്ടാണ് മാമോദീസായ്ക്കുശേഷം വെള്ളവസ്ത്രം ധരിപ്പിക്കുന്നത്. മൂന്നാമത്തേത് ശീയോൾ എന്ന ഗർഭപാത്രമാണ്. യേശു പാതാളത്തിലേക്കിറങ്ങി അവിടെ തടവിലായിരുന്നവരെ തന്റെ പ്രകാശവസ്ത്രം ധരിപ്പിക്കുകയും ചെയ്തു.

യേശുവിന്റെ സ്വർഗ്ഗാരോഹണത്തിനുശേഷം മനുഷ്യർക്ക് രക്ഷനേടുവാനായി മാമോദീസാ നൽകി. മാമോദീസാ മുഴുകുന്ന ഏവർക്കും മഹത്വവസ്ത്രം ലഭിക്കുന്നു. തുടർന്നുവരുന്ന കുറുകൾ അനുതാപത്തിലൂടെയും കുദാശകളിലുള്ള പങ്കാളിത്തത്തിലൂടെയും സൽപ്രവർത്തികളിലൂടെയും കഴുകിക്കളഞ്ഞ് വെണ്മയുള്ളവരായിത്തീരാം. സഭാജീവിതം വാഗ്ദാനം ചെയ്യുന്നത് ഈ വിശുദ്ധിയിലേക്കുള്ള വളർച്ചയാണ്.

ഫാ. വർഗ്ഗീസ് കെ. ജോഷ്യാ

FROM AROUND THE DIOCESE

SCENES FROM HOLY WEEK 2016



Sunday School/MMVS

DIOCESE OF SOUTH-WEST AMERICA SUNDAY SCHOOL ASSOCIATION

MISSION STATEMENT: To encourage and foster an authentic relationship with God, a fiery love for the Holy Church, and a comprehensive ability to defend the Faith through experience, knowledge, discipline and charity.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS (2015-2016)

- Teachers Training Certification Exam – 01.31.2016
- Sunday School Final Exam – May/June 2016
- 12th Grade Diploma Exam – 05.22.2016 OR 06.26.2016
- Teachers Training Certification Exam – 06.26.2016
- OVBS – June/July 2016
- Start of New 2016-2017 Sunday School Year – August/September 2016
- Centralized Written Competition (CWC) – 10.22.2016
- Sunday School Day – 12.04.2016
- Sunday School Midterm Exam – Dec. 2016/Jan. 2017



RECENT UPDATES

- Collaborated with teachers across the diocese to revise curriculum/syllabus and provide a new set of textbooks for the 2015-2016 school year. This was made available as printed books and an electronic version.
- Offered two dates for the Teachers Training Certification exam to accommodate various schedules and increase participation
- Currently finalizing OVBS material in collaboration with the Northeast American Diocese. 2016 theme is taken from Psalm 42:4 (OSB) – “And I will come to the altar of God, to the God who makes glad my youth.” Material expected to be released in May 2016

LONG-TERM GOALS

- Implement quarterly regional events for the Sunday School across the diocese in addition to OVBS to foster relationship among teachers and peers while addressing needs of the young
- Integrate community service projects into the Sunday School year to emphasize the importance of tithing time and resources as a Christian
- Create and release Online Teacher’s Portal to make supplementary teaching resources available for each grade level
- Shift towards an ongoing Online Teacher’s Training program, similar to the model of continuing education, that will provide adequate training for teachers and equip them to better serve the growing needs of our children

Please email us at sundayschool@ds-wa.org with any questions, comments or concerns.

MALANKARA ORTHODOX SYRIAN CHURCH DIOCESE OF SOUTH -WEST AMERICA

Morth Mariam Vanitha Samajam Annual Conference 2016

October 7 - 9 2016

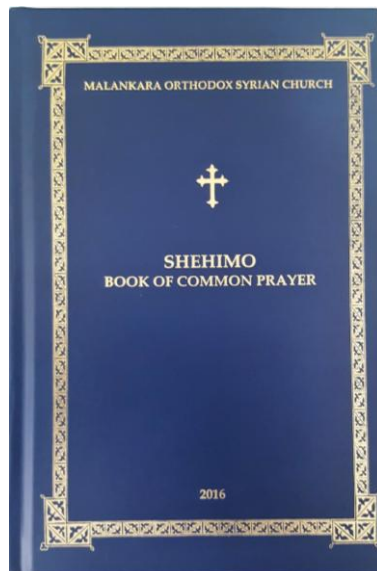
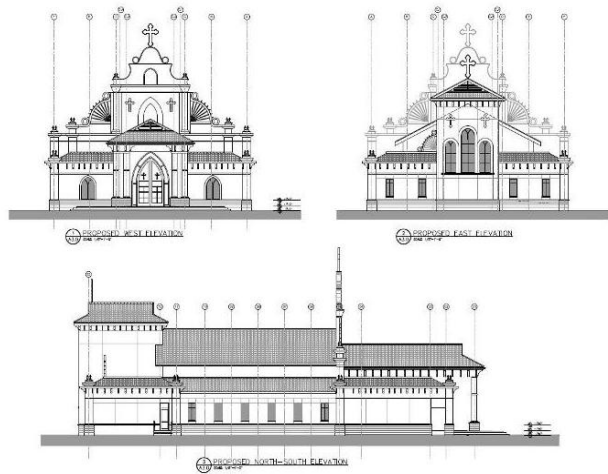
St. Thomas Orthodox Church, Atlanta



“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!

Urshlem Center Chapel Project



The Liturgical Resource Development Team would like to announce that the Shehimo (Book of Common Prayer), which includes the seven hours of prayer for the seven days of the week, has been published. Keep your eyes and ears open to upcoming announcements through the LRD Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/LiturgicalRD/>) and from your parish vicars regarding how to purchase a copy for yourself!

Also, please subscribe to the Liturgical Resource Development channel on [youtube.com](https://www.youtube.com) for all the hours of the Shehimo and other updates!

DIOCESE OF SOUTH-WEST AMERICA
2016 URSHLEM MEN'S SUMMER CAMP
 JULY 10TH - 17TH, 2016



"REVEALING THE PRESENCE OF GOD"

"BE STILL AND KNOW THAT I AM GOD" - PSALM 45:11 (OSB)

SPEAKERS: REV. FR. JAMES CHERIYAN & REV. DN. SAJU VARGHESE
 WHERE: URSHLEM DIOCESAN CENTER, BEASLEY, TX
 WHO: YOUNG MEN ENTERING 11TH GRADE TO COLLEGE UNDERGRADUATES
 REGISTRATION FEE: \$100 (DEADLINE - JUNE 1ST)

IMMERSING THE YOUTH IN THE ORTHODOX LIFESTYLE, PROVIDING GUIDANCE FOR INCOMING COLLEGE STUDENTS AND CAREER COUNSELING

[HTTP://GOO.GL/FORMS/CYOXWNZD4D](http://goo.gl/forms/cyoxwnzd4d)



Diocese of South-West America

2016 Urshlem
 Women's Summer
 Camp



JULY 17th - 24th, 2016

"REVEALING THE PRESENCE OF GOD"

"BE STILL AND KNOW THAT I AM GOD" - PSALM 45:11 (OSB)

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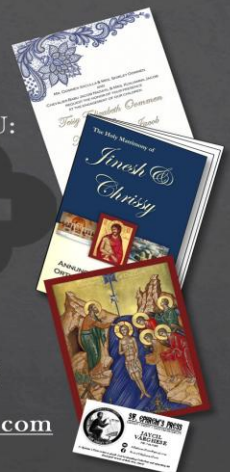
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