

THE STREAM NEWSLETTER

An Online Publication of the Diocese of South-West America
Sunday School Edition

*Today, our Lord told His disciples, "Grieve not, for I shall rise!
I will resurrect from death that you should live!"*

Sapro of Wednesday, Holy Week

EXPLORE

This Issue

Thirumeni's Message

Page 03

The Director's Cut

Page 04

Meet Renju

Page 05

CWC Submissions

Pages 06-10

Easter Crossword

Page 11

Children's Work

Pages 12 -15

Lenten Projects

Pages 16 - 19

Lenten Bingo

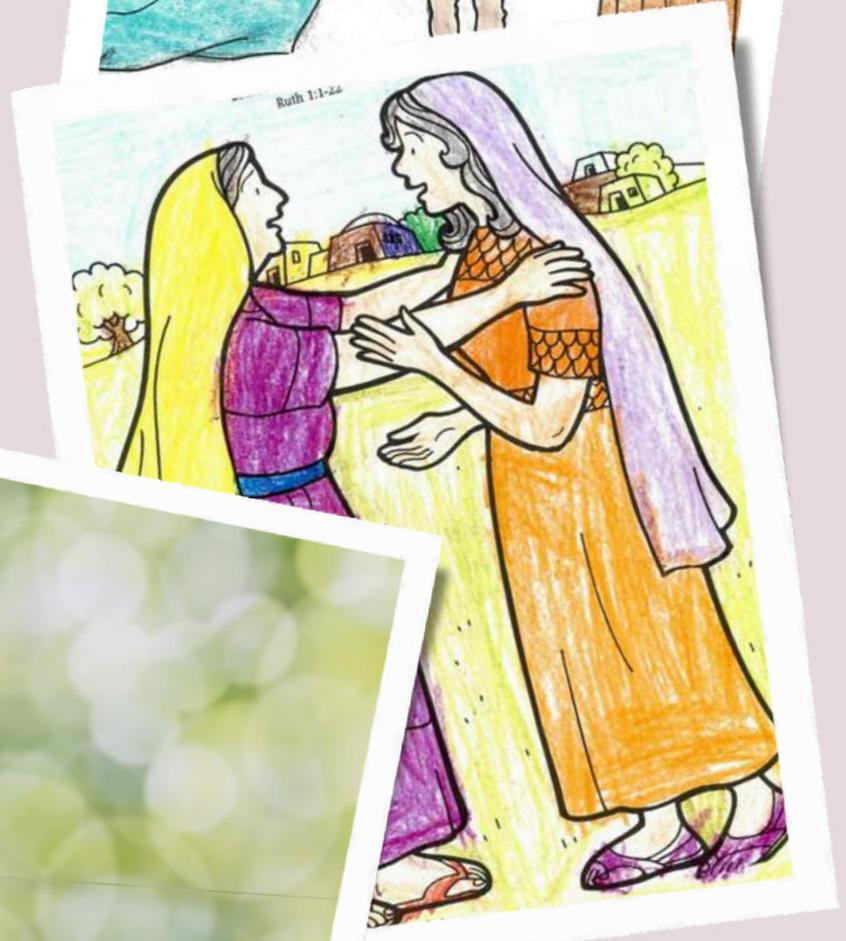
Page 20

Curriculum Corner

Page 21

Upcoming Events

Page 22





His Grace
Dr. Thomas Mar Ivanios

Holy Week is a special occasion for everyone to contemplate the Passion, Death, and Resurrection of Jesus Christ. During the time between His Death and Resurrection, the Lord preached the Gospel of salvation to the dead. This is the great mystery we talk about during this time as Christians. Let us pay profound attention to Passover.

By washing the feet of the 12 Disciples, the Creator cosmically washed the very feet of Adam, which had 'walked into sin' in the beginning. This washing was likewise a cleansing for all of humanity. Once the feet that trod into sin were washed, Christ established the Holy Qurbana so that the cleansed Adam can walk into salvation.

Jesus poured a little water into a bowl. The one who draws boundaries for oceans deals with a bit of water in a bowl. The eternal fire, who kindles the fire of life in every human being, is kneeling to wash the feet of frail and perishable human beings. The fiery Angels tremble in front of Him, but He hid His fire in front of the decayable. He lowered His head to demonstrate His humility. We shall not forget that Jesus also washed even the feet of Judas, and He didn't show any discrimination for His mercies. What a great model of humility for every one of us to emulate from.

He renewed the old Passover feast, which He started in Egypt, into the new Passover feast. A small space in St. Mark's palace became where perpetual human salvation gets architected and inaugurated. The bread made from a handful of flour unveils the continuity of the bread that came from Heaven. The Passover lamb gives way to the lamb of God. Not only that, the bread became the flesh of the lamb of God. The blood of the lamb of the old Passover, which was poured out thus far, is now becoming the drink of eternal life.

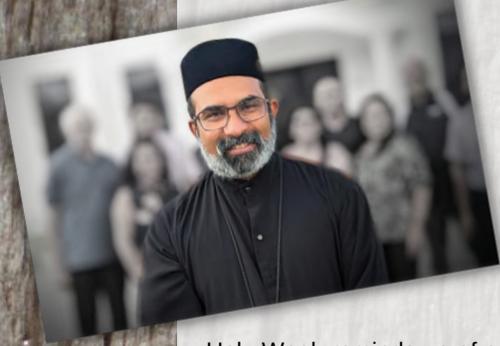
Holy Resurrection, the Feast of Heavenly Mystery

What did pass over in the renewed Passover?

The Passover is a great mystery. A mystery is something we know and understand within ourselves, although we can't speak it out. Humans can only understand a mystery in spirit, but no proper set of words exists to explain it. We are all asked to realize something that is unfathomable. Therefore, we use the tool of faith to understand a mystery. We must ask ourselves the question: Is the mystery of Passover true for me?

Faith is never a giant leap. Rather, it is a series of small baby leaps. For instance, the 12 Apostles didn't understand the gravity and depth of everything happening before them throughout their three years with Jesus Christ. St. Peter saw Christ transfigured on Mount Tabor, but he didn't grasp the enormity of the event immediately. Similar were the experiences of Andrew, John, Thomas, or Philip, for instance, when they witnessed the raising of Lazarus or the Death and Resurrection of their Master. Slowly the confirmation of faith started happening as a revelation in their lives. Inception and growth of faith are similar in our lives too. God is leading us through each day, and comparable miracles happen daily. The depth of faith helps us to see the significance of those baby events in our lives over the period of time. Whenever we attend Holy Qurbana, we see the new Passover actualize in front of us in this growth of faith. The Christ who washed the feet of the 12 is washing the feet of our hearts and spirits. Do we believe in this? Do we see this happening in our lives? Yes, it is the self-same Christ who is giving Himself to us as the bread becoming the flesh of Christ today and the wine becoming the blood of Christ today. This is the mystery that we understand by faith. Do you see those simple small events in your lives? Do what light, not the easiest, is. It is equally simple and hard to be believing. "Assuredly, I say to you, unless you are converted and become as little children, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven. Therefore, whoever humbles himself as this little child is the greatest in the kingdom of Heaven" (St. Matthew 18:3-4). When we become like little children and become part of that simple and hard process of believing, the Passover, Death, and Resurrection also start making meaning in our lives.

May the Holy Resurrection, the festival of festivals, enhance the faith in each one of us! May we feel the absolute mystery of Christ during the ultimate revelation of this Heavenly Mystery in our body, soul, mind, and spirit! Amen!



THE *Director's Cut*

*Isaac Carrying the Wood. Christ Carrying the Wood.
Leads Us to Resurrection*

Holy Week reminds us of several images from the Old Testament, which get fulfilled in the New Testament. One such exciting image is the comparison between Isaac, Son of the Patriarch Abraham, and Jesus. Everything Isaac was to fulfill, Jesus accomplished about one thousand five hundred years later.

Isaac was born to Abraham and Sarah in their old age. Naturally, Sarah couldn't conceive a child. Yet, God blessed her to give birth to a boy-child, the only promised son for Abraham. Christ's birth is prefigured here. While Christ was born to a virgin, Isaac was born to a woman well past the age to conceive and deliver a child. In both cases, a child's birth was beyond the human lineage's natural rules. Sarah was highly fond of Isaac and would not part herself from her small child for even a moment. Now, God asks Abraham to offer his son to Him as a whole burnt offering on a mountain of God's choice in the land of Moriah. The Qolos after the promiyon of Tuesday morning prayers during the Holy Week vividly speak of this event. Sarah asked Abraham to explain the purpose of their pilgrimage for the whole burnt offering. Thus, Abraham explains to her the mystery between His Lord, the child, and himself. He exhorts Sarah to remain calm and pray for him. Sarah wishes her husband, "Go in peace, and may the Lord accept your offering." We read this entire story in Genesis 22. This qolo tells us that Sarah had an idea of what was happening with Isaac. This approach, therefore, leads us to compare Sarah with Mary, the Mother of God. Mary also knew what was happening with her Son. She remains calm and prays for the mystery her Son was accomplishing for humanity.

Abraham placed the wood for the whole burnt offering on the shoulders of Isaac. Isaac carried the wood on his shoulders to climb onto the mountain top of Moriah (Genesis 22:2). Similarly, Jesus carried the wood on His shoulders to the mountain top of Golgotha (St. Matthew 27:33, Mark 15:22, Luke 23:33, and John 19:17). The distance between the place where Isaac was to be offered and Christ was crucified is not that far on the map.

Moriah is identified, where the threshing floor of Ornan, the Jebusite, was situated. David bought this threshing floor from Ornan for 50 silver shekels after the plague of killing over 70,000 men was contained. (II Samuel/II Kingdoms 24:18ff). {I Chronicles 21:21 ff. narrates the same story. The price of the land is different, though, namely, six hundred shekels of gold.} King Solomon built the first Temple of Jerusalem on the same threshing floor, which his father bought from the Jebusite. One of the Hoothomos, is clearly referring to this event. In short, the place selected for the offering of Isaac, David's offering for the atonement of his people after the plague, and the location of the construction of the Temple of Jerusalem, were all the same.

The qolos after the promiyon for the third qauma of night vigil on Tuesday during the Holy Week speak that Isaac was willing to die to accomplish the will of the Creator. This willingness demonstrated the mystery of the readiness of the Son of God to die for our salvation. According the fathers, the Angel speaking with Abraham to offer his son, was the Son of God. The fathers continued that the Angel that stopped Abraham from offering his son was also the Son of God. This event prefigured the sacrifice of the Son of God. A ram caught in a thicket by its horns prevented the offering of Isaac. Nobody planted this thicket and the ram did not yet exist. This thicket and the ram stood for the mystery of the sacrifice of the Son of God. The Father Almighty allows the sacrifice of His Son on the Golgotha by sparing Isaac. Thus, Isaac is the prefiguring person for Christ and Adam. The qolos of Great Friday say that Adam was buried right under the place, where Christ was crucified and the blood and water from His side fell directly into Adam's mouth. Isaac was spared only because, his blood would not have atoned Adam.

Adam was saved and given Salvation through the festival of Resurrection. This festival is, therefore, the festival of victory over death through the faith of Abraham. It is the festival of endurance by the faith of Isaac. It is the festival of hope for humanity from the resurrection of the Son of God, who became human. Abraham surviving the test of faith over the three days of travel from his tent to Mount Moriah, Isaac surviving the test of faith over the three days of sojourn from his father's tent to Mount Moriah. This experience of Abraham and Isaac empowers us to endure the test of faith over our lifetime. Abraham believed, which was reckoned as righteousness for him (Genesis 15:6, Romans 4:1-22, Galatians 3:6-9, Hebrews 11:8-10, Hebrews 11:17-19). Thus, Abraham became the father of all faithful. Through the festival of Resurrection, we also become the children of Abraham in faith, and salvation gets assured for us. Isaac carried the wood on his shoulders and Christ carried the wood on His shoulders, and we get the assurance of salvation. Happy Qyamtha!

Meet Renju

It is with great joy and excitement that I introduce myself as the new Sunday School West Region Coordinator for our Diocese. Our West Region comprises Sunday schools in Seattle, San Diego, Los Angeles, Las Vegas, San Francisco, Phoenix, Sacramento and San Fernando Valley.

I'm an active member of St. Gregorios Parish in San Francisco with several years of experience in teaching Sunday School children and other administrative roles. I currently teach Grade 10 in my home parish and also serve in the DS-WA Grade 12 and TTC team.

As we come together to learn more about our faith and grow in our relationship with God, I am honored to have the opportunity to serve you. As a coordinator, my goal is to create a welcoming and engaging environment where everyone feels comfortable sharing their thoughts and asking questions. I believe that we can all learn from each other and that our diversity of perspectives can enrich our discussions to bridge the gap between the diocese and parishes in the region.

I am committed to helping each and every one of you grow in your faith journey, whether you are just starting out or have been a part of Sunday School for years. In addition to communicating diocese initiatives, we will also engage in various activities and community outreach projects that will allow us to put our faith into action and make a positive impact for the children.

I welcome your ideas, feedback, and suggestions, and look forward to working alongside you all in our shared pursuit of spiritual growth and fulfillment. May God bless us and guide us as we embark on this journey together.



Make Your Ways Known to Me

Anna Maria

St. Paul's
Orlando, FL

“Make known Your ways to me, O Lord, and teach me Your paths” Psalms 24:4

I am lost, O Lord
I am lost without You
So confused, without any idea of what to do
I cannot find you, God
And I cannot see, O Lord
Make known your ways to me

Your ways are what I need
Help me find your way
Lead me out of this confining maze
Lead me to your truth
Guide me out of this wrath, O Lord
Teach me your path
Make known your ways to me

Teach me to love
Teach me to care
Teach me to give and to share, O Lord
Make known your ways to me

Thank you Lord!
Thank you for all that you provide!
For you have shown and taught me to be like you
By making known your ways to me!





Right Companions

Angela Sanju Alex
St. Mary's
Atlanta, GA



Do you think friends can be judged by external characteristics? Proverb 18:24 says, "One who has unreliable friends, soon comes to ruin. But there is one who sticks closer than a brother." The story of Abigail can prove this. The last traces of summer had just disappeared, and Abigail was starting her first day of seventh grade at Coves Middle. She had come early so she could get a head start on her day. She looked at the other kids, and they looked at her. Speaking of her, she was very nervous, for she had come from the outskirts of Afton County. And to add, her parents were orthodox in tradition and usually kept to themselves. As did the other people in the area. Suddenly the bell rang and the hallway piled with kids, filling the space with words. Carried along with the rush, Abigail ran to her locker and got her books, shut it, and ran to her class.

When she got there, there weren't many people. So she quietly walked over to an empty desk and sat down. Suddenly a girl named Leslie tapped Abigail on the shoulder. Abigail jumped and turned around. Leslie started to introduce herself. Abigail, in return, introduced herself. Soon there were footsteps in the hallway, and the kids came in. Leslie quickly handed Abigail a piece of paper with her phone number on it and said, "Just call me if you need any help with studying." But she was actually thinking, "I hope she's not good at math like me. It will give me a chance to show the school how good I am." Then the teacher came in and started talking. After 30 minutes, the class was over, and everyone rushed out of the classroom. Abigail stopped, but did not see Leslie, so she left.

Soon it was time for lunch and Abigail headed to the cafeteria. She quickly got her lunch and sat down at an empty table. She had just started to eat, when a group of girls sat down at the same table. Abigail groaned and tried not to make eye contact. Suddenly, a girl named Maria said pointing at Abigail's rosary said, "You are a Christian? Me too! I go to Church with my parents very often, because I know God loves me!" In reply Abigail said, "Um, yeah. I go to church every Sunday too." Maria frowned and mumbled something about going to church every Saturday. "Well bye! I've gotta leave now," she said and flipped her hair and left. Abigail continued to eat her lunch. Suddenly, a girl walked in. The crowd near the door parted, allowing her to walk through. Abigail heard someone say, "The bossy girl Hannah has come, we better move or she's gonna start showing off her bracelets!" Abigail realized that she must be mean and left.

As the days passed Abigail realized that all the people, she knew were in the same class during sixth period. One day, when Abigail was working on her chemistry project, her elbow hit one of the chemicals, making a huge mess. Abigail became worried and asked Leslie if she would help, but she said no. She then asked Maria, but she also said no. But no one realized that Hannah was also listening. Abigail somberly walked to her desk, and Hannah followed. Hannah offered to help, and Abigail accepted. They both became best friends, and everyone learned to accept Hannah. Abigail learned a lesson, "Never judge someone by other's opinion."



Jayden Varughese

St. Mary's
Atlanta, GA

The Lord is my light and my savior; whom shall, I fear?

Psalms 26:1

The Lord is with me

Who shall I fear?

He loves me, helps me,

He is always by me!

The Lord is my light and my savior; whom shall, I fear?

His grace is ever shining

As He guides our path;

To Him we are little foals,

So, he spares us from His wrath.

The Lord is my light and my savior; whom shall, I fear?

Our Lord is our savior,

He helps us every day.

His patience never wears out,

So, he lets us play!

The Lord is my light and my savior; whom shall, I fear?

He is blissful and kind,

And wants us to have a positive mind.

He Loves us with all this heart

So, this makes us smart.

The Lord is my light and my savior; whom shall, I fear?

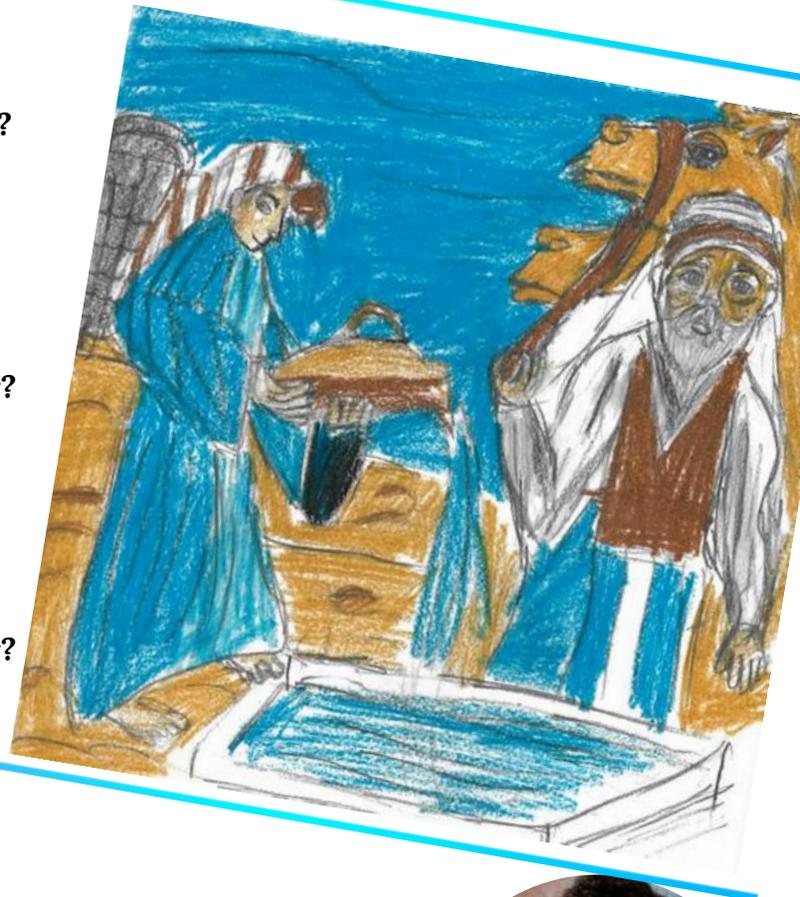
He destroys our fears to make us bold,

This succors us when we're old!

Our prayers and blessings make us strong,

And guide us when we go wrong.

The Lord is my light and my savior; whom shall, I fear?



Samuel Alexander

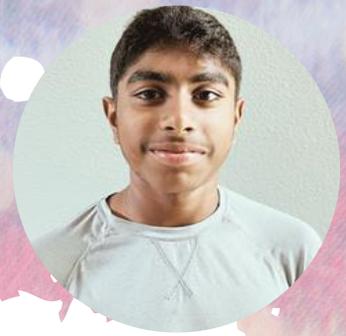
St. Mary's
Atlanta, GA



Illuminate Us, Oh Lord

Paul Roy

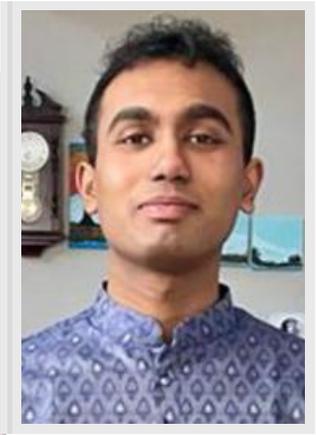
St. Paul's
Orlando, FL



St. John Chrysostom is one of the great church fathers who lived in Constantinople during the 3rd century. Due to his holiness and beautiful but always practical teaching, St. John Chrysostom is referred as a doctor (teacher) of the church by Orthodox Christians. As St. John Chrysostom says, "There is nothing more worthwhile than to pray to God and to converse with Him". As our bodily eyes are illuminated by seeing the light, so in contemplating God, our soul is brightened by him. For him, prayer is a total submission to God the creator. According to Psalms 9:9 "The Lord is the refuge for the oppressed, a stronghold in times of trouble when we pray". God is our refuge and strength, always ready to help in times of trouble.

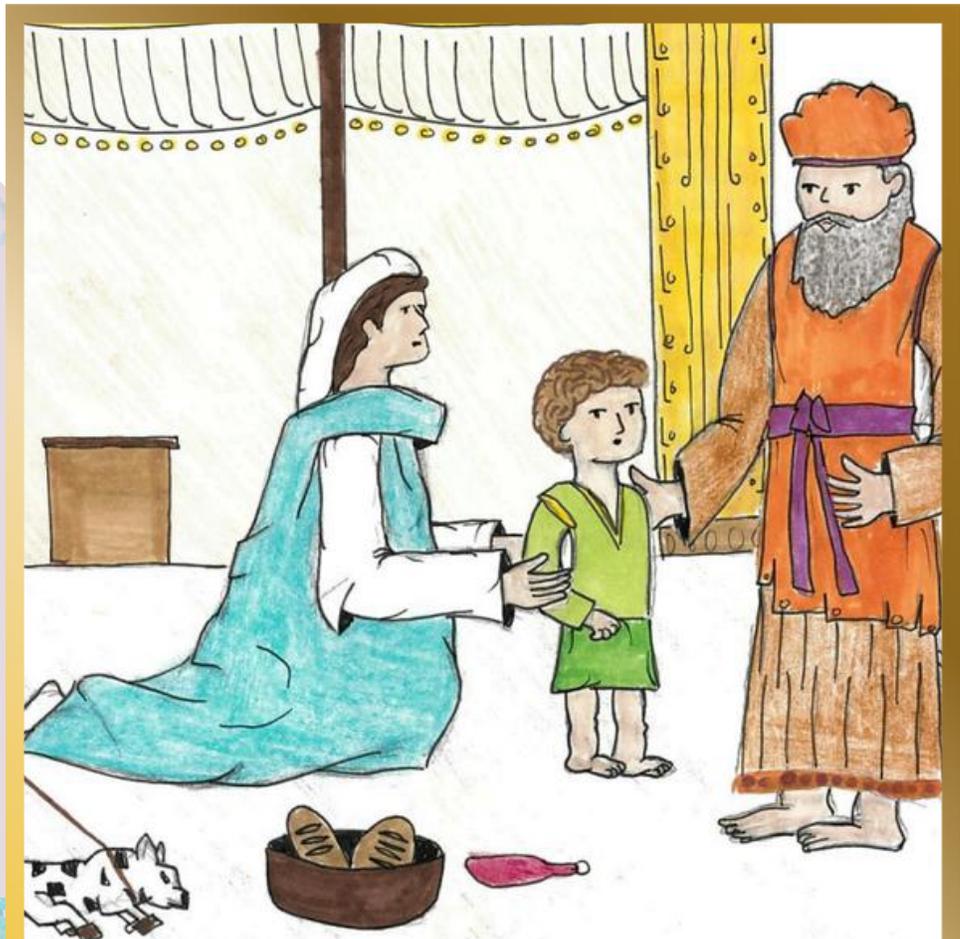
Continuous prayer from the heart and soul. Today, most of us Christians just pray as a routine yet we don't truly understand prayer. Prayer means talking to God and giving your heart out to God in times of trouble. We must sit down, pray, and talk to Jesus like as if we talk to our friend whether it is about a blessing, confession, or about the loss of a loved one. The point is to give yourself to God with all your heart and soul.

Prayer for correcting paths: The light of God is our path and I think most of the Christians have not figured this out. The light shows us the path that we must follow, but we must not take it for granted. The Bible shows how we should pray and follow the path. Praying is not just with words; it is with your own spiritual body. Calming down and listening to God help connect us with His Spirit. And yes, the Holy spirit relates to prayer, because the more faithfully you pray to God, the more you are aware that the Holy Spirit protects us from earthy things and helps us look toward heavenly things. So, to conclude I would like to say is, prayer is a major part of getting into the kingdom of God and drawing yourself closer to God.



Rahul Chacko Cherian

St. Mary's
Atlanta, GA



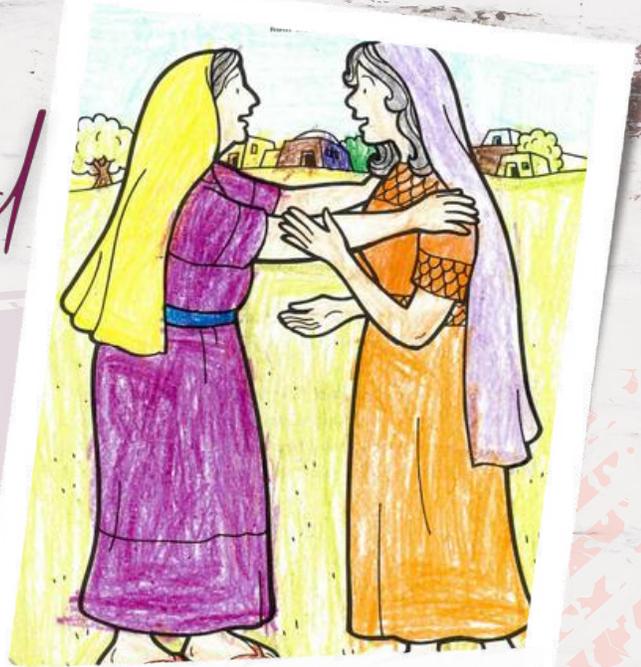
EXPLORE

The World



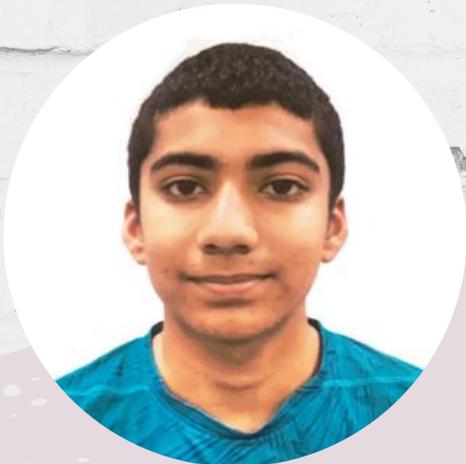
Eva Mathai

St. Mary's
Atlanta, GA



Layla Williams

St. Thomas
Hollywood, FL

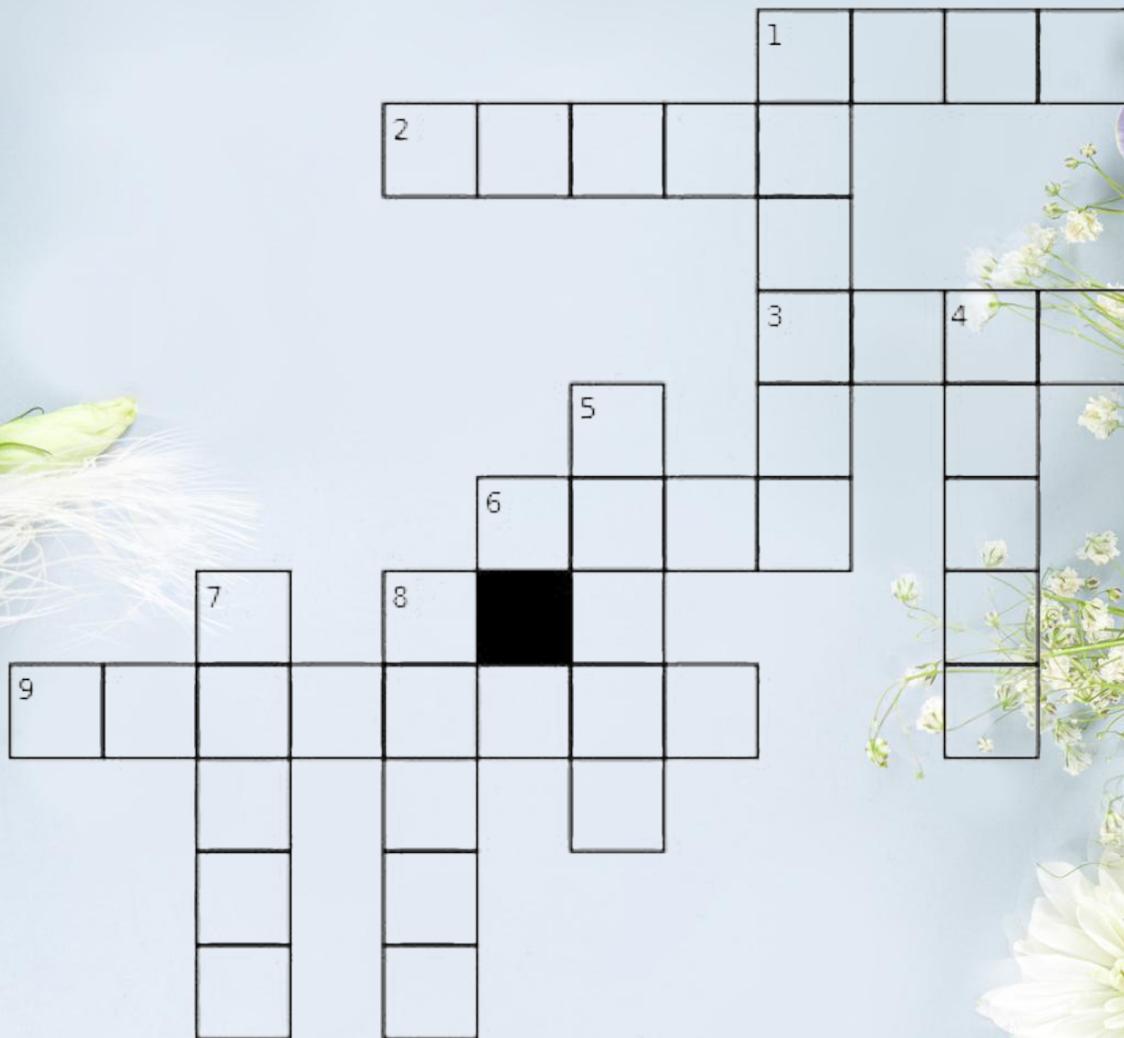


Paul Leon Varughese

St. Paul's
Orlando, FL



Easter Crossword



Down:

1. The Apostle who doubted Jesus' resurrection and touched Jesus' wound.
4. "He is not here, He is _____" St. Luke 24:6.
5. What was left behind at the tomb.
7. Jesus was crucified on this.
8. The Apostle who cut a soldier's ear when Jesus was arrested.

Across:

1. Jesus was placed in this after his crucifixion.
2. Who betrayed Jesus.
3. Who looked into the tomb to find Jesus.
6. Jesus died on the cross for this.
9. Who did Mary first think Jesus was near the tomb when looking for him



The Miracle of the Canaanite Woman

Felisa Sanjay

St. Gregorios
Tampa, FL

Sunday

March 19, 2023 is Knanitho Sunday. This Sunday depicts the Gentile or the Canaanite woman and her steady faith in God. The Gentiles were a group of pagan people who worshiped false gods. The Gentiles were also immersed in deep conflict with the Jews.

The story of the Canaanite woman begins in Matthew 15:21-28, in the region of Tyre and Sidon, where Jesus was at the time. The Canaanite woman came crying out loud to Jesus saying, "Have mercy on me, Oh Lord, Son of David! My daughter is severely demon possessed." If we take a closer look at what she said in the beginning, to have mercy on her, shows how much love she has for her daughter. She takes her daughter's suffering and well-being as her own.

We come to realize that Jesus doesn't answer the Gentile at first. There are many reasons as to why Jesus didn't answer her. Jesus is a Jew who brought His ministry first to the Jews. Jesus is also trying to reveal this woman's faith and love toward God.

The disciples ask Jesus to send her away, which is seen as an attempt by the disciples to persuade Jesus to heal this woman's daughter so that she will go away. Jesus replied to his disciples in verse 24 saying, "I was not sent except to the lost sheep of the House of Israel." This is another way Jesus is refusing to heal the woman's daughter. Again the woman cried out saying to Jesus, "Lord, help me."

The next few verses become very important as the Gentile woman's love and faith in God are proclaimed. When she cried out, He replied to this in a sort of eccentric manner. He says, "it is not good to take the children's bread and throw it to the little dogs. When we break this down we realize that Jesus is making a comparison to the Jews and Gentiles. The children are the Jews and the little dogs are Gentiles. The Gentile replies to Jesus saying, "Yes, Lord, yet even the little dogs eat the crumbs which fall from their master's table." With this statement, a serious proclamation is revealed. Even as Jesus compared her to a dog, the woman didn't go away; she was never cowardly or fearful but felt even more compelled to ask for Christ's healing.

Another thing to recount is that Christ didn't just reveal this woman's faith and love towards God but he also revealed her humility. Christ told the Canaanite, "it is not good to take the children's bread and throw it to the little dogs." and the woman agreed. She accepted the fact that she is below the Jews (God's chosen ones) yet she still yearns for a share in the Grace of God.

Jesus now has sensed this woman's true faith and love towards God saying, "Woman, great is your faith. Let it be to you as you desire." In that moment, Jesus healed this woman's daughter. With the interaction between Jesus and the Canaanite woman, we can take many lessons. Throughout the entire passage the woman's faith was steady. She didn't give up on asking Jesus to heal her daughter. She kept on begging and answering Christ. This shows us that no matter how many times you pray, God may not answer you the first time but He will eventually give an answer. You can always remember the Canaanite woman who had deep rooted faith in God.

This encounter can also be compared to another event in the Bible where the Gentiles enter into the Church after Pentecost. Instead of dogs, they were now the children who were invited to eat the Bread of Life. During this Lenten season let fasting in prayer be a daily occurrence in your life. Allow your faith in God to be restored and strengthened.





Ben John

St. Paul's

Orthodox Church of Greater
Orlando, Florida



CWC Prize Distribution

with

Very Rev. Sakariah Ramban

Pictured left to right:

**Aaron Cheruvathoor, Rachel Sharad, Nathan Robson
and Anna Robson**

St. Mary's

San Antonio, TX

My Vision of the Church

There is often a sense of surprise when I tell people that I am Christian. After I am asked what denomination I am from, it fills me with pride when I state that I am a member of the Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church. It gives me immense joy to stand here today and deliver this short speech about my vision for our church in 15 years. Two important principles that form the foundation of our church are unity and faith in God which is what I will be focusing on today.

What is unity? Especially at our church? Unity is when all members of a church can put aside petty differences, and come together, in fellowship to worship, and praise God. This is precisely what I envision our church to be 15 years from now. To achieve this goal, I think we should take a page out of the books of our ancestors. A splendid example would be the sheer will and unity displayed by the St. Thomas Christians who protested Portuguese domination of the church at the Koonan Kurooshu Satyam in Mattanchery. The key takeaway is that we need a more unified church, comparable to the St. Thomas Christians, that stands firm no matter what obstacle may come our way.

Faith seems simple, doesn't it? We trust God to guide us in our day-to-day lives. We express our faith by participating in Holy Qurbana and other Church activities, but it can be improved as most things in this world. However, this is not something that can be done overnight. The most crucial requirement for deeper faith is for everyone to develop a connection with God, I hope that 15 years from now, my generation can reach that connection via increased participation in Holy Qurbana, lent, Sunday school, and volunteer work, which enables them to place full faith in God and let him take the reins. This also ties back in with the unity aspect that I mentioned earlier, when all the members of the church place full faith in God, unity, will undoubtedly follow.

I would like to conclude my words by stating that "every single one of us, is extremely blessed to have been born a member of the Malankara Orthodox Church, we need to learn to express our gratitude for that blessing in a better fashion, and I hope that we are able to do exactly that, 15 years from now."

**Delivered during H.H Moran Mar Baselios Marthoma
Mathew III's visit to
St. Mary's Orthodox Church in Tampa**



Kindness

**Chris Sadeep, Paul Varughese,
Abraham Parackel, David Samuel**

St. Paul's Orthodox Church of Greater Orlando
Florida

What is kindness?

Truth is, there is more to kindness than being nice and doing right to others. In fact, there may not be a single word that can describe the true meaning of kindness.

Kindness is usually defined as being friendly, generous, and considerate. Other synonyms of kindness are goodwill, warmth, tenderness, and selflessness. Yet none of those terms can truly convey the significance and complexity of the word.

What does the bible say about kindness?

The Bible talks about kindness in the book of Ephesians saying, "...Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you...." (4:32). This verse is said by Paul as he was preaching the Word to his fellow prison mates. According to his testament, kindness is said to be one of the biggest riches that you can achieve in the afterlife. So, if you show kindness to others they will do the same for you when you are in need.

Ways you can show kindness to the world

Although there are ways to offer your time with others, we are going to list a few of these as an example.

1) **Helping Someone-** There are several easy ways to help others. Some of them are sending a motivational text to a friend, or family member or holding the door open for a stranger.

2) **Be there to listen** - Being a good listener is undervalued. A lot of the time, we listen only to respond. Being there to listen intently to a friend or family member can relieve stress, pressure, and anxiety. Remember that being a good listener requires you to give your full attention. Listening and paying attention to others when they speak is a sign of respect and a skill that will lead to deeper and better relationships.

3) **Stay connected** - There is no excuse for not checking in and connecting with family and friends when we have access to an immediate communication. A simple check-in text or call lets others know you are thinking of them. Staying connected with others can increase your confidence and improve your connections with others.

4) **Say "Thank You" and "I'm Sorry"** - A genuine "Thank You" and "I'm Sorry" carries a lot of meaning. Gratitude and apologies show that we are accountable for our actions and respect the other person involved. When using words like these to apologize to someone, you are showing them that you see them for who they are.

5) **Be kind to yourself** - Don't forget that self-compassion is just as important and essential as showing kindness to those around you. If you are unable to accept self-compassion and find value in yourself, it will be harder to spread kindness. It means putting a stop to self-pity and engaging in positive self-talk.

Role of the Family in Spiritual Growth

Group Presentation

by

Daniel Mathew Samuel, Rachel Marie George, Keziah Sadeep, Rainu Robin

St Paul's Orthodox Church of Greater Orlando,
Florida

Families play an important role in social development because they are the basic and essential building blocks of societies. Let us examine how the family is significant in our life.

1. Love and forgiveness- We learn to love and forgive each other initially through our family. In 1 Corinthians 13:13, Paul writes, "So now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; but the greatest of these is love." We learn from our family how to love each other, care for each other, and forgive each other. Later this benefits society in such a way that family gives an environment to learn how to care for and love others who need help and our support. This will motivate us to engage in many charity works to show our love toward the people who deserve our love and care.

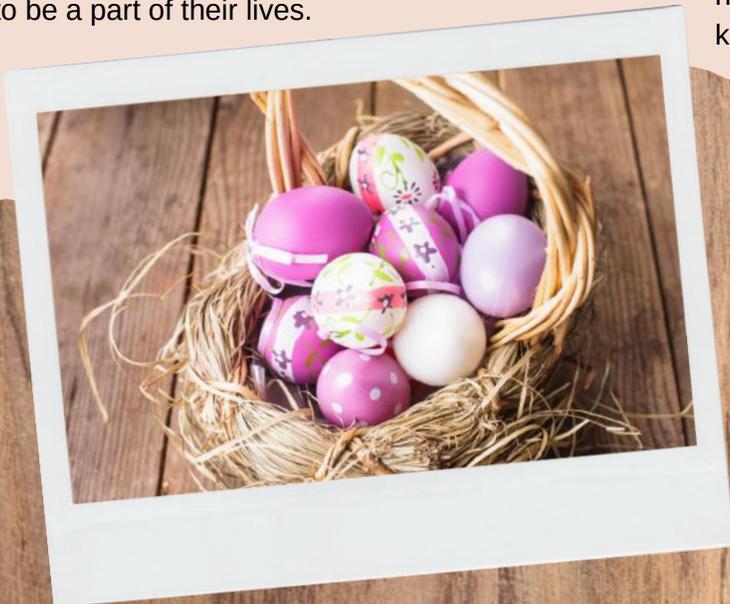
2. Prayer and Faith- When you pray together in your family, it enhances bonding and faith among your family members. Praying in the family teaches us to offer moral and spiritual support for other people in society when they need it in the future. According to Deuteronomy 6:6-7, we must keep God's words on our hearts and share them with our children. They will seek God more frequently as they gain faith through prayer. Children will learn that God wants to be a part of their lives.



DANIEL MATHEW SAMUEL, RAINU ROBIN, KEZIAH SADEEP,
RACHEL MARIE GEORGE

3. Respect and kindness- Learning how to show respect and kindness starts with our own family. Family members need to learn how to show respect and kindness to each other; it will eventually help them deliver the same to others in society. In St. Matthew 7:12, it is written that "So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets."

4. Repentance and Compassion- We need to show compassion in our lives, which is learned by first showing compassion to our family members. Repenting to each other in our family teaches us how to repent to other members of society. St. Paul reminds us through Colossians 3:12 that "Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience."



Giving Alms

St. Gregorios Malankara Orthodox Church, Minnesota
Sunday School

Feed My Starving Children

Chanhassen, Minnesota

Sunday School kids, teachers and parents volunteered in packing and shipping dried veggies, vitamins and minerals for the malnourished children around the world.



"The bread you do not use is the bread of the hungry. The garment hanging in your wardrobe is the garment of the person who is naked. The shoes you do not wear are the shoes of the one who is barefoot. The money you keep locked away is the money of the poor. The acts of charity you do not perform are the injustices you commit."

(St. Basil the Great)

Acts of Virtue

The children of St. Thomas Orthodox Church, Seattle participated in a Lenten Charity event called Letters Against Isolation. The mission of this organization is: To fight senior loneliness one letter at a time. Through handwritten messages of love, hope, and joy, our volunteer community brings seniors connection and improves their mental and physical health.

To learn more about the organization, please visit:
<https://www.lettersagainstisolation.com/>





The NUHRO ministry under Sunday school is led by high school children with guidance from the leadership team. This ministry is oriented towards the children from KG through Grade 8. A workshop was held on March 18, 2023 on peer pressure and confession.

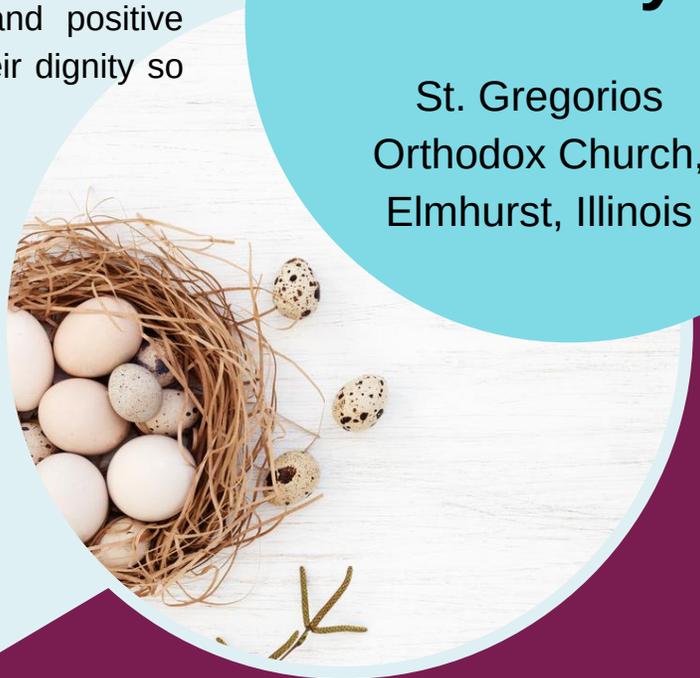
We also did a service project creating 100 Easter Baskets for homeless kids and foster kids. This service project is done in partnership with **"Fill a heart 4 Kids"** which is a charity that gives local Chicagoland unaccompanied homeless youth and foster children educational support, critical necessities and positive experiences to help their hearts heal and restore their dignity so they can achieve brighter futures.

With the help of MGOCSM and the parish we were able to sponsor additional Dignity Baskets as well. The baskets include toiletries since many homeless youth do not have access to these basic necessities. Due to the overwhelming response from the congregation, this service project has now become a parish project embracing all sections of the parish. About 40 children, along with parents and teachers, participated on the first day of the service project on Saturday, March 18, 2023.



NUHRO Ministry

St. Gregorios
Orthodox Church,
Elmhurst, Illinois



FR. JACOB MATHEW VISITS

Northwest Region

MARCH 26, 2023



Edmonton Teacher's Retreat



Sunday school children & teachers with
Fr. Binny M. Kuruvilla, Vice Director, Western Region
Fr. Jacob Mathew, Director of DS-WA Sunday School
Della Gejo, Northwest Regional Coordinator



Calgary Teacher's Meeting

with
Fr. Jacob Mathew
and
Fr. George A. Varughese

Kindness BINGO

Connect 5 boxes horizontally or vertically.

Leave a note for someone	Pick up trash you see on the ground	Buy Flowers for someone or draw a bouquet of flowers	Leave a tip	Water plants
Learn a prayer	Smile in the morning as you wake up	Be kind to a stranger	Draw a picture for someone	Read the Bible for 15 mins
Bake cookies for someone	Help make dinner	Help take the trash outside	Receive Holy Qurbana	Make a bird feeder
Feed the birds	Make your bed	Donate old clothes	Collect \$1 to donate	Give someone a 8-sec hug
Hold the door for someone	Make someone laugh	Write a Gratitude list	Don't complain all day	Say "i love you" to your mom
Say "I love you" to your dad	Play with your sibling	Donate some food	Write a Good Luck note to someone	Say Thanks to someone
Pray in the morning	Go to church	Visit a friend	Help an elder	Recycle
Make an Easter card for someone	Donate old toys	Read the Bible for 15 mins	Talk about a Bible story	Make a card for your teacher
Learn about someone	Pray in the evening	Share something	Learn a prayer	Turn off digital device

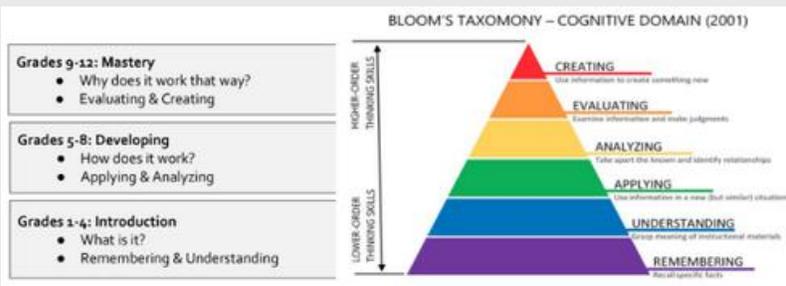
Lenten Activity Online Sunday School, DS - WA

At the Online Sunday School, for the Great Lent, we provided the children to complete the Kindness Bingo. The children were asked to connect five consecutive boxes in any direction to create a Bingo. The Bingo sheet was created to be fulfilled every day until the Feast of Resurrection. We chose this activity because we wanted to encourage children to show empathy and kindness toward others.

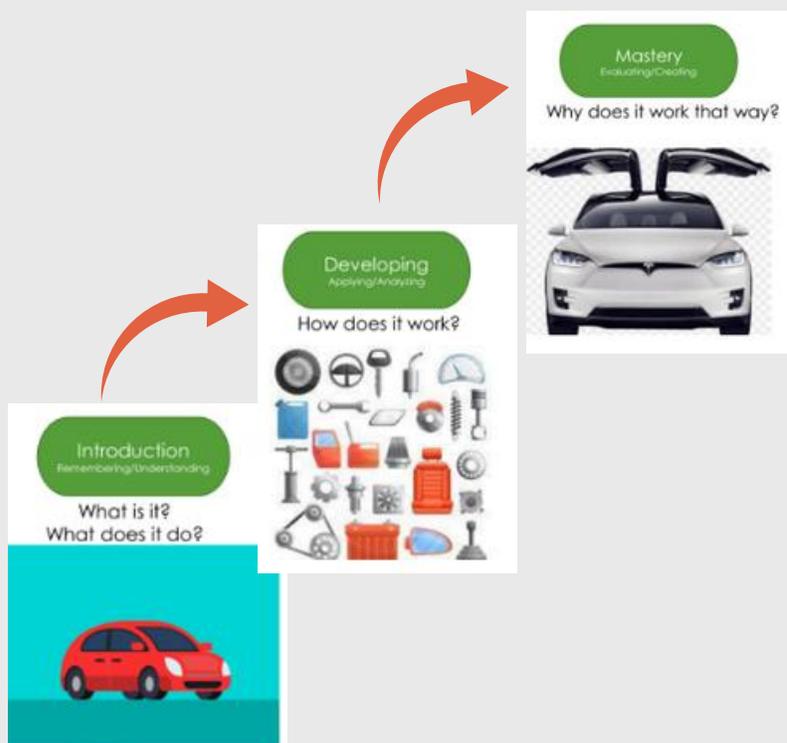
Curriculum Corner

Bloom's Taxonomy

Bloom's Taxonomy is a well known framework used by generations of teachers at every level. This framework consisting of six major categories (Knowledge, Comprehension, Application, Analysis, Synthesis, and Evaluation) has been adopted for use in the revised curriculum of the American Dioceses of the Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church.



An analogy to help understand Bloom's is to think about how a child learns about an automobile. Learning begins with "introduction" and in the case of an automobile it may begin with the visual (e.g., seeing a car on the road) or from storybooks. Parents and teachers explain a car at the very basic "what is it?" and "what does it do?" which is sufficient at that age level. The key skills and abilities taught in this example focus on remembering and understanding so the child recognizes a car and the basic function (e.g., to drive from one place to another).



As the child grows and has foundational awareness of a car, they are ready for a "developing" phase where they are ready to learn more about how the car works. This could be learning about the engine, the tires, and other parts that work together to make a car. The child's knowledge could also develop by comparing to other vehicles and understanding differences between a truck and a car. These skills of applying and analyzing build on the foundation from the introductory level and advance the child's overall knowledge.

All of this leads to the ultimate goal which is critical thinking at the mastery phase. Continuing the automobile analogy, the child at this level is able to grasp higher order thinking skills and evaluate, compare, and contrast. They are able to create new ideas based on the knowledge that is imparted - for example, understanding the differences between gasoline and electric vehicles and the economic and environmental factors that are leading to seeing more hybrid and all-electric cars on the road. Understanding the "why?" is a concept that comes from a solid understanding of "what?" and the "how?" and a child that accomplishes this level is truly prepared to even create new ideas.

In the new curriculum, Grades 1 to 4 are the "introductory" phases where a number of topics are shared with the child for the first time, not with the intention of deep knowledge, but rather focused on remembering and understanding. These topics are brought back to the students in Grades 5 to 8 during the "developing" phase where content is assumed to already have been introduced, so the focus is on a deeper level of applying and analyzing.

Which brings us to the high-school grades of 9 to 12 where the goal is critical thinking and "mastery" of the topics. The curriculum is designed to challenge the children to think more deeply about the Faith and prepare themselves for the modern-day world where they will face new challenges and questions that we as teachers did not have to face. Our goal in the curriculum is always to focus on Christ and reveal His Love and teachings through the life of the Church in a more engaging way. This is done by breaking down the overall curriculum into key topics and teaching the children critical learning outcomes in this structured approach (introductory, developing, and mastery).

For more information on Bloom's:

TTC Training 2022 Bloom's Taxonomy -
<https://youtu.be/Zsi6g7JhZ8E>

Talmido Resources on Bloom's:
https://talmido.org/index.php?title=Bloom%27s_Taxonomy

Upcoming Events

Sunday School

2023 Diploma Exams

April
29 **12th Grade Teachers & Children**
Zoom orientation for diploma exam

May
15 **12th Grade Diploma Exam Registration**
Deadline to register for the exam

June
10 **Zoom Orientation**
For senior grade, teachers, and parents for 12th grade diploma exam

June
19 **Exams Emailed Out**
Exams will be emailed to 12th grade children

July
17 **Exams Due**
Exams to be submitted by email