



# The Stream

A monthly publication of the Diocese of South-West America

December 2013

Vol. 2 Issue 8

## December 2013 Edition



### 'URSHLEM' INDIAN ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN CENTER CONSECRATED ON SATURDAY NOVEMBER 30, 2013

By the Grace of the Almighty God, the Diocese of South -West America scripted a mile stone, in golden ink, in the history of the Malankara Orthodox Church in North America on Saturday November 30<sup>th</sup>, 2013. The Diocesan Metropolitan, H.G. Alexios Mar Eusebius conducted the house blessing service of the newly acquired diocesan center, assisted by a large group of Clergies from across the diocese. Along with the Diocesan Council members, over 700 people and clergies from Houston area, Dallas area, San Antonio, Austin, Lufkin, other cities in Texas, Florida, Phoenix, Chicago, Canada and other areas of the diocese attended and participated in the historic event.

---See Page 2 for Complete Report



A  
Blessed,  
and  
Happy  
New  
Year



#### Correction from last issue:

*In the article entitled 'Looking Back at Edmonton: MMVS Conference 2013' the author of the article was mistakenly cited as Annie George. In fact the author of the article was Annie Abraham of St. Mary's, Calgary. We apologize for this mistake.*

#### What's News this Month

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## Diocesan Center



In July this year, the Diocese acquired the 7200 Sq. ft. large house, which is going to be the Diocesan office and the official residence of the Metropolitan, along with a smaller house, a 2600 sq. ft. barn and a caretaker suite, situated in 100 acres of land in Beasley, approximately 25 miles outside of Houston. It is the vision and dream of the Diocese to convert this property to a comprehensive Spiritual Center, which includes a chapel, an Indian orthodox museum, a large conference center with camping and recreation facility, an Indian orthodox study center and Seminary, a Monastery, a Convent, a counseling center, an orthodox residential village for the elderly and possibly an orthodox cemetery in the close vicinity.

As the initial step towards fulfilling this dream, the Diocesan Council decided to complete the necessary maintenance of the main building, convert the barn to a multipurpose hall along with guest rooms on the upper floor, renovate the older house to be used as a guest house and renovate the caretaker suite above the barn. The construction of a Chapel and Orthodox museum is planned to be completed by May 2015. We are very happy that we were able to complete the essential maintenance of the main building and the partial conversion of the barn to a hall, including a temporary altar, along with the general cleanup of the property within the short period of time.

### The Ceremony

The house blessing ceremony started with the morning prayer at 8:00 am on Saturday, November 30<sup>th</sup> followed by the Holy Qurbana celebrated by the Diocesan Metropolitan. After the Holy Qurbana and a short meeting, the Sunday school children from the local area parishes gave a grant reception to the Diocesan Metropolitan who proceeded from the hall to the new diocesan center, as a procession, accompanied by the Clergies and the Council Members. Upon arrival at the center, the Metropolitan unveiled the name slab installed at the main entrance of the Diocesan Center and officially declared the name of the Indian Orthodox Christian Center as **"Urshlem"**. The service of the house blessing is held inside the new center led by the Metropolitan

The various media representatives, to report and telecast the event, and police officers from the office of the Sheriff of the County of Fort Bend, to keep law and order, were also presented throughout the function. The ceremony is concluded with the benediction by H.G. Alexios Mar Eusebius followed by the delicious lunch served to all the participants provided by the members of the Houston area MMVS.

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*Report Prepared by: George Geevarughese, Diocesan Council Member, Edmonton, Canada*  
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**Sooboro**  
Wednesday Prayer

Let us unite to pray for others!

**Tele-Prayer Meeting in Malayalam**  
 From 10:20am to 11:30am (CST) every Wednesday.  
 Bible reading, hymns, devotional message,  
 intercessory prayer for the needy & the sick.  
 Please send prayer requests to: [sooboro@ds-wa.org](mailto:sooboro@ds-wa.org)  
 Phone #: (218) 632-0187  
 Access code: 3703#





**Metropolitan's Column***Metropolitan's Column*

Dearly Beloved,

As we begin a New Year, it is important to take a few moments to reflect on the past year and the many things that took place, both the good and bad. When we look around us in the world today, we are saddened by the number of Christians being persecuted around the world, most especially in places like Syria, Egypt and Ethiopia. The world is being struck by terror and violence each day and love seems to be fading among people. In addition to this, the past year has met with many tragedies that took place in the Philippines, around the world and even in our own country. We especially take this opportunity to remember those who have passed before us in the year 2013 and pray to the Lord Almighty to have mercy upon their souls.

Despite all of this and more, there are also numerous blessings that we must take into account and be thankful for. In the year 2013, we have been blessed by the births of many newborn children. In addition, when each of us takes a moment to reflect and count our blessings, we will see that they are indeed in abundance. When we consider the diocese and our journey over the past few years, there is much to be thankful for, especially the acquiring of a large piece of land that, God-willing, will serve as a comprehensive diocesan center. The year 2013 will be forever remembered in the history of the diocese, but the challenge of building on this foundation still remains before us, and we need your prayerful and financial support to build upon this dream and make it a complete reality.

We can often compare our journey in this world to the forty year journey of the Israelites through the wilderness. The journey had its own challenges, but they were given constant divine protection and care. Despite the fear of the army of Pharaoh, lack of food, shortage of water, disasters, war with enemies, internal conflicts within the tribes and the challenge of having to cross the Red Sea, their needs were always met while guided by the servant Moses and other righteous leaders. Entering into a new year can be compared to the crossing of the Red Sea. We may feel like our challenges, worries and fears are drowning us, but as we enter into 2014, we must overcome our fears and call upon God to guide and lead us into the New Year. Remember, the same God who guided the Israelites in their journey through the wilderness and led them into the Promise Land is still alive and within us.

May we place our trust in Him, and may He protect and provide for us as He always has done. We wish you and your loved ones a blessed New Year!

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

## MMVS Corner

### **MMVS Annual Exam**

Writing an exam, at the best of times, is a challenge. Approximately 130 MMVS members from 26 parishes across the Diocese of South-West America took up the challenge and participated in the exam on Nov 16, 2013. The written exam involved the study of the Book of Hebrews, segments of the Basic Doctrines of the Church aka Mathopadesha Sarangal (Ch 11 to 22), a Prayer, a Hymn along with general questions from the Bible, and history / current affairs of the Church. To prepare the members, Rev. Fr. P C George from the parish of Vancouver conducted regular classes all through the earlier part of 2013 via teleconference.

### **MMVS Houston Area**

The MMVS of the Houston Area did a commendable job by providing food for all the delegates from different parts of the Diocese who gathered for the Blessing of the New Aramana at Houston. They were able to cater for over 700 people.

### **MMVS Election**

Area MMVS Secretaries were elected. Two more will be elected in December. The following secretaries were elected.

- Mrs. Ann Varghese, St. Mary's Valiapally, Farmer's Branch, TX
- Mini Markose, St Gregorios Orthodox Church, Houston, TX
- Aleyamma Punnose, St. Gregorios Cathedral Church, Bellwood, IL
- Rachel Sam, St. Mary's Church, San Fernando Valley, Los Angeles.

## From Around the Diocese

### **Annual Orthodox Flag Football Tournament**

The MGOCSM of the Dallas/OK area hosted their 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Orthodox Flag Football Tournament on Saturday, November 30<sup>th</sup>, 2013 at Bruton Soccer Fields in Mesquite, TX. Teams from the Dallas area churches participated in this tournament. The teams from St. Mary's Church of India, Carrollton won the A & B League championships. James Jacob and Joel Thomas won the MVP trophies for the A & B League teams, respectively. Special thanks to the Dallas/OK Area Youth Minister Rev. Fr. Mat Alexander, the conveners for this tournament, Cybil Rajan and Meekha Varghese, and the rest of the Area committee for handling all the preparations, and to the participating teams for making this year's tournament a blessed success! Glory to God!





## From Around the Diocese

**MGOC SM DEVOTIONALS** - <http://www.mgocsmamerica.com/devotionals>

*MGOC SM North America releases weekly devotionals based on the Gospel readings for each week. These devotionals are written by the leaders of the Church - both clergy and lay leaders. This is a great way to revamp your week with self-reflection and in the word. Please subscribe and spread the word in your areas as well!*

### **All Saints Day** - Sharon John, St. Gregorios Orthodox Church, Houston

The MGOC SM unit of St. Gregorios Orthodox Church hosted their annual All Saint's Day on November 9<sup>th</sup>. The event honored the lives of all saints and martyrs of the church and educated children of their importance to our faith. Instead of dressing up for Halloween, the kids were encouraged to dress up as a saint and come to Church with a brief summary describing who they were dressed up as. The event began with a prayer from Rev. Fr. P.M. Cheriyan and was followed by several activities that were both entertaining and symbolic of our faith. One example was a game where the children had to wrap themselves in toilet paper and run to a representative who played the role of Jesus. Not only did the children have a great time playing around, they learned that it is harder to go to Jesus when we are wrapped by the bonds of sin, represented by the toilet paper. After the games and activities, the children were given a short message by one of the FOCUS members, Siby Thomas. Through this valuable message, the children were able to understand why our church discourages us from participating in Halloween and the history behind this American holiday. Prior to the event, every Sunday School class above 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade were asked to prepare a skit on an assigned saint. The purpose of the skit was to inform the children of saints who may not be familiar to them that have great roles in church history. After the short speech, each class presented their skits in entertaining and informative ways. Afterwards, each child was then asked to stand up and talk about the saint they dressed up as. Everyone had learned at least one thing new about a saint by the end of the day. The event concluded with evening prayer led by Rev. Fr. P.M Cheriyan and dinner. Many of the children were inspired by the lives and deeds of the saints.



# 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](mailto:slootho@ds-wa.org)

Phone # (218) 632-0187

Access code: 3703#

# കുരിശിന്റെ അർത്ഥവും പ്രാധാന്യവും

## ഫാദർ ജേക്കബ് ജോൺ

(മാവേലിക്കര ഭദ്രാസന സെക്രട്ടറി)

“എനിക്കോ നമ്മുടെ കർത്താവിന്റെ കുരിശിൽ അല്ലാതെ പ്രശംസിക്കുവാൻ ഇട വരരുത്.” (ഗലാത്യർ 6:14).

യേശുക്രിസ്തു ലോകരക്ഷാർത്ഥം ബലിയായിത്തീർന്നത് കുരിശിലാണ്. ഒരു കാലത്ത് നിഷിദ്ധമെന്നും അശുദ്ധമെന്നും നിന്ദ്യമെന്നും കരുതിയിരുന്ന കുരിശ് വന്ധ്യമായിത്തീർന്നത് യേശു തമ്പുരാൻ തന്റെ രക്തം കുരിശിന്മേൽ ചൊരിഞ്ഞ് അതിനെ രക്ഷയുടെ ആയുധമായി ഉപയോഗിച്ചപ്പോഴാണ്. കർത്താവിനെ സ്നേഹിക്കുന്നവൻ തന്റെ കുരിശിനേയും സ്നേഹിക്കും. വി. മത്തായിയുടെ സുവിശേഷം 10:38-ൽ “എന്റെ കുരിശെടുത്ത് എന്നെ അനുഗമിക്കാത്തവൻ എന്നെ യോഗ്യനല്ല” എന്നും വി. ലൂക്കോസിന്റെ സുവിശേഷം 9:23-ൽ “എന്നെ അനുഗമിക്കുവാൻ ഒരുത്തൻ ഇച്ഛിച്ചാൽ അവൻ തന്നെത്തൻ നിഷേധിച്ച് നാശത്തോറും തന്റെ കുരിശെടുത്തുകൊണ്ട് എന്നെ അനുഗമിക്കട്ടെ” എന്നും കൽപ്പിച്ചിരിക്കുന്നു.

ഒരുവൻ ക്രിസ്ത്യാനിയാണെങ്കിൽ, കുരിശു വരിക്കണം, കുരിശു വരക്കണം, കുരിശു ധരിക്കണം. കുരിശ് എന്നതിന്റെ ഇംഗ്ലീഷ് പദമായ “ക്രോസ്”-ന്റെ ഓരോ അക്ഷരവും കുരിശിന്റെ ആഴവും അർത്ഥവും വ്യക്തമാക്കുന്നതാണ്.

- C = Crucified Christ 1 Cor. 1:23, Gal. 3:1
- R = Reconciliation & Redemption Eph 2:15
- O = Obedience Philippians 2:8
- S = Sacrifice Philippians 2:7
- S = Salvation 1Cor. 1:18

കുരിശിക്കപ്പെട്ട യേശുവിനെയും, കുരിശിലെ അനുരന്ജനവും വീണ്ടെടുപ്പും, അനുസരണവും ബലിയും, യാഗവും മോക്ഷവുമാണ് കുരിശ് ലോകത്തോട് സംസാരിക്കുന്നത്. കുരിശ് നാം കാണുമ്പോൾ കുരിശിൽ മരിച്ച യേശുവിനെ നാം ഓർക്കുന്നു. ഇതു മനുഷ്യ വർഗത്തിന്റെ വിടുതൽ, പാപത്തിൽ നിന്നുള്ള മോചനം, സാത്താന്റെ മേലുള്ള വിജയം, ക്രിസ്തു കാട്ടിയ ക്ഷമ, ത്യാഗ മനോഭാവം, മനുഷ്യരോടുള്ള സ്നേഹം അദിതായവ ഓർക്കുവാനും ധ്യാനിക്കുവാനും നമ്മെ പ്രാർത്ഥരാക്കുന്നു.

കുരിശിനെ ബഹുമാനിക്കുന്നതും ഉപയോഗിക്കുന്നതും വണങ്ങുന്നതും വിഗ്രഹാരാധനയായി ചിലർ ദുർവ്യാഖ്യാനം ചെയ്യുന്നുണ്ട്. വിശുദ്ധ വേദപുസ്തകത്തെ നാം വണങ്ങുമ്പോൾ അതിൽ ഉൾക്കൊള്ളുന്ന കടലാസ്സിനെപ്പോലെ നാം വണങ്ങുന്നത്. പിന്നെയോ ക്രിസ്തുവിന്റെ രക്ഷാകരമായ ജീവനുള്ള വചനങ്ങളെയാണ്. അതുപോലെ കുരിശിനെ വണങ്ങുമ്പോൾ അത് എന്തു വസ്തു കൊണ്ട് ഉണ്ടാക്കിയിരിക്കുന്നു എന്ന വസ്തുവിനെയല്ല, മറിച്ച് ക്രൂശിൽ മരിച്ച മനുഷ്യ വർഗത്തിനു പാപമോചനവും നിത്യജീവനും ഒരുക്കിത്തന്ന ക്രിസ്തുവിനെയാണ് നാം നമസ്കരിക്കുന്നത്. ഫിലിപ്പർ 3:18-19 വാക്യങ്ങളിൽ ദുർവ്യാഖ്യാനക്കാരുടെ ലക്ഷ്യം വ്യക്തമാക്കിയിരിക്കുന്നു. “ഞാൻ പലപ്പോഴും നിങ്ങളോടു പറഞ്ഞതുപോലെ അനേകർ ക്രിസ്തുവിന്റെ കുരിശിനു ശത്രുക്കളായി നടക്കുമെന്ന് ഞാൻ ഇപ്പോൾ കരഞ്ഞുകൊണ്ട് നിങ്ങളോടു പറയുന്നു. അവരുടെ ദൈവം വയറ്, അവരുടെ അവസാനം നാശം. ലജ്ജ ആയതിൽ അവർക്കു മാനം തോന്നുന്നു.”

വിശുദ്ധ വേദപുസ്തക അടിസ്ഥാനത്തിൽ വിശുദ്ധ കുരിശ് എന്താക്കുന്നു?

1. കുരിശ് ക്രിസ്ത്യാനിയുടെ അടയാളമാണ് - വി. ലൂക്കോസ് 9:23.
2. ക്രിസ്ത്യാനി കുരിശെടുത്ത് അനുഗമിക്കുന്നവൻ - വി. മത്തായി 10:38.
3. കുരിശ് ക്രിസ്ത്യാനിയുടെ പ്രശംസയാണ് - ഗലാത്യർ 6:14.
4. കുരിശ് ശക്തിനേയ ആയുധമാണ് - 1 കോരിന്ത്യർ 1: 17-20.
5. കർത്താവിന്റെ ബലിപീഠമാണ് കുരിശ് -
6. ഏദൻ തോട്ടത്തിലെ ജീവവൃക്ഷമാണ് കുരിശ് - ഉൽപ്പത്തി 3:3.
7. കർത്താവിന്റെ പ്രസംഗ പീഠമാണ് കുരിശ് (pulpit) -
8. കർത്തൃസിംഹാസനമാണ് കുരിശ് -
9. കർത്താവിന്റെ ധ്യാനപീഠമാണ് കുരിശ് -
10. ഇസഹാക്ക് ചുമന്നു മല കയറിയ ബലി വിറകാണ് കുരിശ് -
11. അഗ്നിസർപ്പ ദംശനമേറ്റവർക്കു സൗഖ്യം നൽകിയ പിച്ചള സർപ്പത്തിന്റെ പ്രതിരൂപമാണ് കുരിശ് - സംഖ്യ 21:6-8.

കുരിശിന്റെയും കുരിശു വരയുടെയും സാരാംശമായി സഭ പഠിപ്പിക്കുന്നത്, മനുഷ്യവർഗ്ഗത്തിന്റെ രക്ഷയ്ക്കുവേണ്ടി നമ്മുടെ കർത്താവ് സ്വർഗ്ഗത്തിൽനിന്നു ഭൂമിയിലേക്ക് ഇറങ്ങി എന്നതിനാൽ നെറ്റിയിൽ നിന്നു നെഞ്ചിലേക്കും, ഇടത്തേതിന്റെ (പാപത്തിന്റെ) മക്കളായ നമ്മെ വലത്തേതിന്റെ (ദൈവത്തിന്റെ) മക്കളായി തീർന്നിരിക്കുന്നു എന്നതിനാൽ ഇടത്തെ തോളിൽ നിന്നും വലത്തേ തോളിലേക്കും നാം കുരിശു വരക്കുന്നു. കുരിശിന്റെ നെടുകെയുള്ള ദണ്ഡ് ദൈവത്തേയും മനുഷ്യനേയും തമ്മിൽ ബന്ധിപ്പിക്കുന്നതിനെയും, കുറുകെയുള്ള ദണ്ഡ് മനുഷ്യനും മനുഷ്യനും തമ്മിലുള്ള ബന്ധത്തേയും സൂചിപ്പിക്കുന്നു. ഇംഗ്ലീഷിൽ ‘ഐ’ (ഞാൻ) എന്ന അക്ഷരത്തിനു കുറുകെ വരച്ചുകൊണ്ട് അതിനെ വെട്ടിക്കളയുന്നതു പോലെയുള്ള അടയാളമാണ് കുരിശ് എന്നതിനാൽ ഒരു വ്യക്തിക്ക് തന്റെ സ്വാർത്ഥതയും ഞാൻ എന്ന ചിന്തയും (അഹങ്കാരം) ക്രൂശിക്കാതെ ഇരിക്കാൻ കഴിയുകയില്ല. പരാജിതനും ദുഃഖിതനുമായ കുസ്തതിനോസ് ചക്രവർത്തിക്കു പ്രഭാപുരമായ കുരിശിന്റെ അടയാളം ആകാശത്തിൽ പ്രത്യക്ഷപ്പെട്ട്, “ഇതിനാൽ നീ ജയിക്കും” എന്ന അശരിരി കേട്ടതുപോലെ കുരിശ് മൂലം വിജയവും ശക്തിയും സഹായവും ലഭിക്കുവാൻ ഇടയാക്കട്ടെ.



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**St. Gregorios Malankara Orthodox Church, Garland, Texas**  
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The history of St. Gregorios Malankara Orthodox Church begins with the early formation of parishes in the Southern Region of the United States in the late 1970s. In 1983, a group of dedicated families from St. Mary's Orthodox Church decided for the spiritual growth of the faith in the Dallas area, to establish a new parish in honor of the Great Holy Father of our Church, Malankara Sabha Parishudhan, St. Gregorios of Parumala. This new parish would become the second Malankara Orthodox Church in the Dallas, Texas area. The first Holy Qurbana was conducted on January 30<sup>th</sup> 1983 by one of the stalwart priest of the American Diocese – Rev. Fr. Koshy P John. From 1983, members of the parish conducted Holy Qurbana at various locations in the Dallas area until the construction of a permanent parish building and accompanying hall in 1990. In 1984, a plot of land was purchased in Grand Prairie, Texas with the intention of constructing a building to support the needs of the growing congregation. The Late, Lamented, HG Mathews Mar Coorilos, Metropolitan of the Bombay Diocese, who would become the future Catholicos, H.H. Baselios Mar Thoma Mathews II, the 89<sup>th</sup> Successor to the Throne of St. Thomas, along with the first Diocesan Metropolitan of the American Diocese, Late Lamented H.G. Dr. Thomas Mar Makarios laid the foundation stone for the church in November, 1986. The Grand Prairie property was later sold due to the greater concentration of the members of our community who settled in the Eastern Dallas Metroplex area. During these years, even without a permanent building to call home, under the leadership of the vicar, Rev. Fr. Koshy P John, the young congregation flourished. All sacramental services, feast days, and Sunday School classes were conducted with unwavering dedication and service by our members. Many visiting priests and deacons provided support to our parish during these years.

Through many tumultuous years, the new church building was successfully built by the Grace of God Almighty and through the intercession of St. Mary and our Patron Saint, Mar Gregorios of Parumala. The church was constructed in September 1990 and became the first ever newly constructed church building in the Dallas area, and one of the first in the entire American Diocese. This was possible through the dedication of the Vicar, Rev. Fr. Koshy P. John and a group of twenty-four members. The Late, Lamented, H.G. Dr. Stephanos Mar Theodosius, Metropolitan of the Calcutta Diocese performed the temporary dedication and Patron's Day Celebration on November 11<sup>th</sup> 1990. In 1992, the Diocese of America Metropolitan, Late Lamented H.G. Mathews Mar Barnabas formally consecrated the church.

The church was built through the generous contribution of the founding members who we continue to honor even to this day, and by the financial support from our community in and outside the Dallas area. The parish is deeply obligated to Rev. Fr. Koshy P John for his invaluable services for the congregation. Rev. Fr. Joseph Kalapurayil became the vicar in 1991. Achen was instrumental in establishing the worship infrastructure and the foundation of our day to day operations, until his return to India in 1997. Rev. Fr. Raju Daniel became the vicar in 1997 and strengthened the spiritual growth of our members; he served the parish until June 1<sup>st</sup> 2012. Rev. Fr. CG Thomas is our current vicar and he continues to carry the legacy set forth by his predecessors to lead our parish in all respects.

In 1997, the parish saw the need to construct an auditorium adjacent to the church sanctuary, since there was not a dedicated facility within our community to host the many spiritual, cultural, and personal functions. The general body decided to purchase the additional 6.5 acres of land next to the parish building for this construction project. H.G. Mathews Mar Barnabas laid the foundation stone for the auditorium in September 1997. The auditorium was completed in June 1999. Late Lamented, H.H. Baselios Mar Thomas Mathews II and H.G. Mathews Mar Barnabas dedicated the auditorium on October 16<sup>th</sup> 1999. The auditorium



was named, Mar Gregorios Memorial (MGM) Auditorium. This project was successfully completed due to the mercy of Almighty God, and the prayers of intercession of St. Gregorios of Parumala, along with the hard work of Rev. Fr. Raju Daniel, and our members. The MGM Auditorium was the venue for the 2006 Southern Region Family & Youth Conference, as well as the Diocese of Southwest America Diocesan Assembly in 2012, and also hosts the annual Kerala Ecumenical Fellowship Committee (KECF) Christmas program along with numerous other events. In 1997 St. Gregorios Orthodox Church celebrated its Silver Jubilee with the presence of H.G. Paulose Mar Milithios (current Catholicos Baselios Mar Thomas Paulose II), H.G. Mathews Mar Barnabas, and H.G. Zachariah Mar Nicholovos, and H.G. Yoohanon Mar Milithios along with the vicars and well-wishers from our sister parishes.

Today, St. Gregorios Orthodox Church takes great pride in being a member of the Diocese of Southwest America, under the leadership of our Metropolitan, H.G. Alexios Mar Eusebius. The activities of the parish in the lives of its members, with sister churches, the ecumenical community, and the surrounding community is innumerable. The activities of the parish include a vibrant and ever-flourishing Sunday School program which was long established during the earliest days of the founding of the parish. Sunday school is conducted on Sundays before Holy Qurbana from 8:30am to 9:30am; this schedule allows maximum participation from our youth in the morning workshop preceding the Holy Qurbana. The Sunday School program is led by our dynamic young principal, Mr. Jim Abraham and a team of dedicated teachers and volunteers. The Sunday School program conducts interactive programs throughout the year as well the annual Orthodox Vacation Bible School (OVBS) during the Summer. Other activities include the following: **MGOCSM** (Frequent Bible Studies, Retreats, Charitable giving, and Volunteer programs), **OCYM** (Conducts the annual Family Night program as well as leads Christmas Caroling activities and numerous other events including volunteer work), and **MMVS** (Charity mission sponsorship, frequent Bible Studies, Annual Competitions, and supporting the underprivileged students in India along with providing marriage assistance). Among all aspects of the parish, St. Gregorios Orthodox Church takes great pride in the worship experience that enables Orthodox Christians to commune with the One Triune God through their prayer life. The parish observes Holy Qurbana on all Moronaya Perunnals (Festivals of Our Lord). Daily evening prayers are conducted in the parish during the Three-Day and the Great Lent. During the Great Lent when our children are celebrating Spring Break, our parish observes the Noon Prayers with the traditional fifty prostrations and chanting of Kureliason. During the Passion Week of our Lord and Savior, all seven prayers of the canonical hours are strictly observed without fail within the church. St. Gregorios Orthodox Church is one of the first parishes in North America to conduct the Service of Vade Dalmeeno (Based on the Parable of the Ten Virgins) during Monday of the Passion Week, as conducted in 2012 by H.G. Dr. Joshua Mar Nicodimos, Metropolitan of Nilackal and Assistant Metropolitan of Mavelikara Diocese. Our youth members, with great discipline practice the ancient art of the seven tones of our worship services and partake without fail in advanced Orthodox studies. All of these services together bring unity of purpose and worship among all our faithful.