



## MALANKARA ORTHODOX SYRIAN CHURCH DIOCESE OF SOUTH-WEST AMERICA

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Blessings to the beloved Vicars of the Parishes, Priests of the locality, Cor-Episcopoi, Rambans, Deacons, and faithful of all parishes in the Diocese of South-West America!

**Dearly beloved in Christ,**

With profound thanksgiving and humility in the service of our Lord Jesus Christ and his Holy Church, this year we shall celebrate **Sunday, June 16 2024 as our Diocesan Day**. This day is important as it begins the Apostle's Fast. From June 16 to June 29, we shall remember the unwavering faith and dedication of the Apostles in their missionary zeal, liturgical worship, and spiritual discipline that helps us to journey together to the Kingdom of Heaven. St. Peter in his second epistle reminds us that "The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish but that all should reach repentance" (2 Peter 3:9). God Jesus Christ is our only savior. He comforts all those who take refuge in Him. That is why, in this world of pleasure, we must, like the Apostles, make Christ our priority. Give space and time to Christ, talk to him, invite him to our life, and he will remain steadfast with us even in times of perils and distress. The words from St. Paul echo this thought, "Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be in life or death" (Philippians 1:20).

As we celebrate the Diocesan Day, we offer our praises and acknowledge the blessings showered upon us by God Almighty since the inception of the diocese in April 2009. Over the years we remember today all the chief shepherds, from Metropolitans, **His Grace Dr. Thomas Mar Makarios** and **His Grace Mathews Mar Barnabas** of blessed memories, and along with them, **H.G. Zachariah Mar Nicholovos** and greatly appreciate and acknowledge the able leadership of **His Grace Alexios Mar Eusebius**, the first Metropolitan of our Diocese, and **His Grace Dr. Zacharias Mar Aprem**. Together with them, we rejoice in the continued growth and achievements made within our diocese over the past years by the dedicated clergy, the spiritual organization leaders, Diocesan council members, the association and assembly members, and lay people. We take this opportunity to appreciate the zeal and commitment of all our clergy and faithful who have been continually laboring and supporting the diocese through your prayerful and financial support. We also remember the departed clergy and lay members who gave their time and service to the diocese's growth. Today as we celebrate the Holy Qurbana, we shall imbibe within us the spirit of unity and thanksgiving while offering prayers for all the members, the living and the departed, as well as the old and young who toiled for this diocese.

As we continue our spiritual journey as a diocese, let us continue to put our trust in God, and support the initiatives and works of the spiritual organizations of our diocese. Within the Church, we shall



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uphold everyone with brotherly love and compassion, forgiving each other as Christ showed his love upon us, we who are worthless and sinners. Let us put away enmity and strife and make our Church a holy place of prayer. God dwells in the holy places. If we would like the heavenly blessings to be poured upon us, the place we offer worship must be holy. For a place to be holy, love and compassion must grow. Let us all come together with one mind and one heart when we come to offer worship and praise in the house of God, the Church.

We also, with boundless gratitude, thank you for all your financial support to the diocese through your donations and charity, especially the **Diocesan Day collection** sent from each parish. For better ease, donations can now be sent through our Zelle ID [dswa.catholicate.zelle@gmail.com](mailto:dswa.catholicate.zelle@gmail.com) for Catholicate and Diocesan Day, and regular donations to charity and diocesan projects [donatetodswa.zelle@gmail.com](mailto:donatetodswa.zelle@gmail.com). For effective disbursement to the various projects and spiritual organizations of the diocese, a kind reminder that the Catholicate and Diocesan Day collections are to be sent quarterly or half yearly. Once again, we commend you for your love and care for the Diocese which is very praise-worthy. We shall remember to utilize the hard-earned money for the upliftment of the poor and oppressed and judiciously use it for the progress of our diocese.

Finally, we seek your most valuable prayers for wisdom, guidance, and strength from our Lord so that we may fulfill the responsibilities entrusted to us. We shall also pray for your family, your children, your friends and relatives, and all your loving departed ones. We also extend our greetings to all the fathers on the Father's Day. May God protect and strengthen you.

May the love of God the Father, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the fellowship and communion of the Holy Spirit be with us forever and ever.

Urshlem Aramana, Beasley  
June 12, 2024

Metropolitan Dr. Thomas Mar Ivanios