



# MALKTO D' SHAINO

QUEEN OF PEACE

Volume 5: Issue 1

February 2017

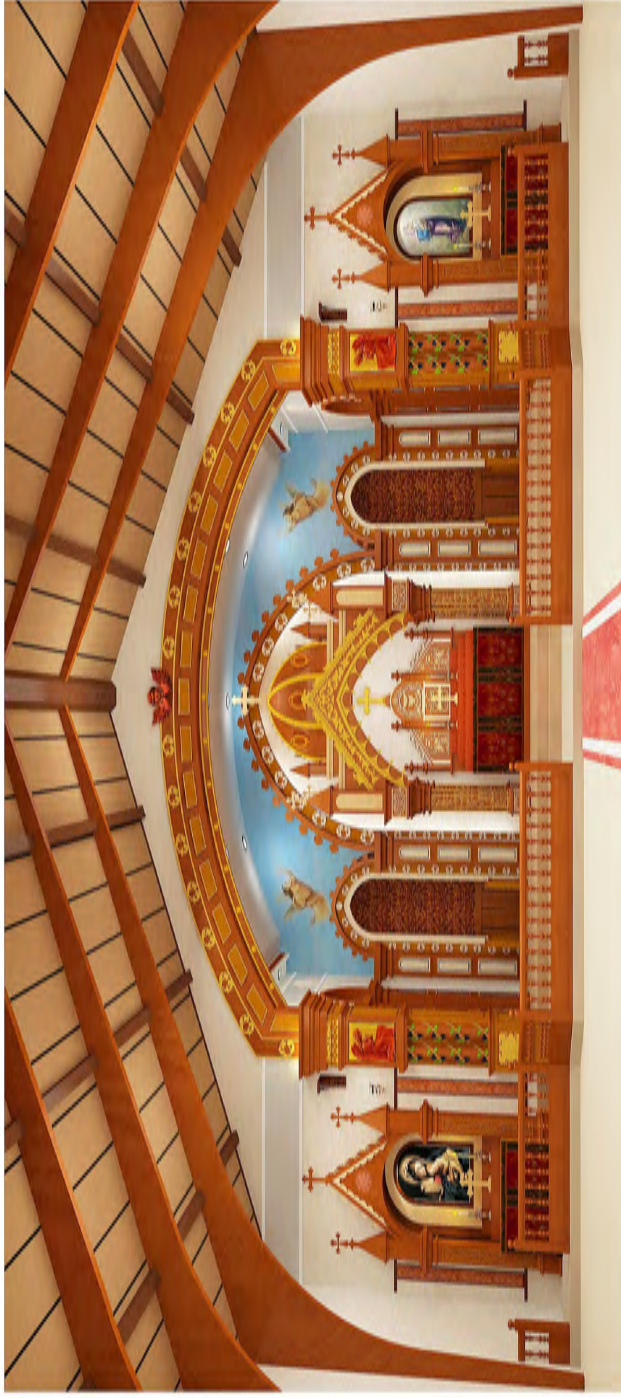
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Official bulletin of the Eparchy

The Syro-Malankara Catholic Eparchy in the USA and Canada

March 25 @ 3 PM







# QUEEN OF PEACE

## OFFICIAL BULLETIN OF THE EPARCHY

Vol. 5

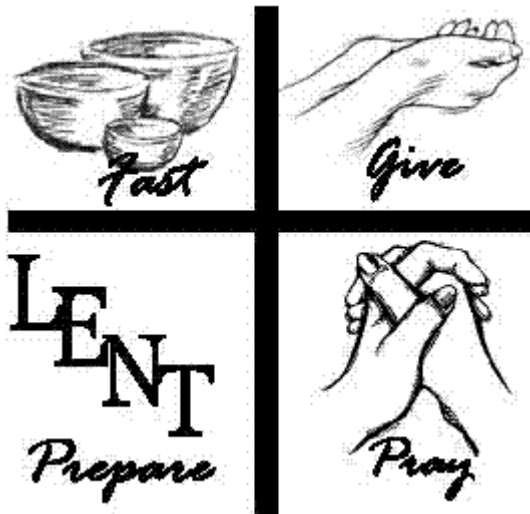
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No.1



St. Mary, Queen of Peace  
Syro-Malankara Catholic  
Eparchy in USA and Canada  
[www.syromalankarausa.org](http://www.syromalankarausa.org)

# Have A Blessed Lent



**“Yet even now,” says the Lord, “return to me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning; and rend your hearts and not your garments.” Return to the Lord, your God, for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love, and repents of evil. (Joel 2: 12-13 RSV)**

## OFFICE OF THE BISHOP



### Circular from the Bishop

By the Grace of God and by the approval of Holy See and of the Holy Episcopal Synod of the Syro-Malankara Catholic Church, Thomas Mar Eusebius, Bishop of the St. Mary, Queen of Peace Syro-Malankara Catholic Eparchy in the USA and Canada extends cordial greetings to all the priests, religious and faithful of the Eparchy.

**Prot. No. EPL 1/2017**

Praise be to the Most Holy Trinity.

Dear Reverend Fathers, Sisters and Lay faithful,

Ever since our Church in North America attained a canonical status, namely in 2010 as an Exarchate, we have been striving to grow more coherently as an ecclesial family and to deepen our spiritual roots. Along with the attempts to enhance our collective spiritual life, we were also required to fulfill the essential infrastructural requirements to function effectively as a Church. Consequently, one of our first priorities in this respect was to have a Cathedral of our own. In God's marvelous providence, with the wholehearted support of our Faithful and by the generosity of the Catholic Diocese of Rockville Center, especially of His Excellency Bishop William Murphy, we were able to procure a Cathedral for our Eparchy in Elmont, New York, and the legal formalities of the same were completed in July

2016. I take this opportunity to express my sincere gratitude to all our Faithful, in a very special way the members of our Cathedral parish, the Reverend Sisters and Fathers and all those who supported this project through their valuable prayers and generous contributions.

The Cathedral that we came to possess is a beautiful church, with a spacious parking lot and with the most ideal location. This church was constructed according to the Latin Catholic tradition. But as we know, a Malankara Catholic church has to reflect at least the basic aspects of the Syro-Malankara Catholic tradition, spirituality and the architectural style, especially when it is the Cathedral church of an Eparchy. Consequently, it was decided to undertake a remodeling of the sanctuary of the church on a very modest budget. I am happy to inform you that the renovation work is now nearing its completion. We have scheduled the rededication of the renovated sanctuary at 3.00 pm. on Saturday, March 25, 2017, on the great Feast of Annunciation. His Beatitude Moran Mor Baselios Cardinal Cleemis, the Major Archbishop-Catholicos of our Church has kindly agreed to preside over the ceremony. Many of our friend Cardinals and bishops in and around New York and also from India will bless us with their presence during the ceremony. I extend a very personal invitation to all our Faithful, Reverend Sisters and Fathers to participate in this importance celebration of our Church. For us it is a time to thank the Lord for His marvelous gifts and to celebrate our family fellowship as a Church. **The program on March 25 is as follows:**

**1.30 pm. - Celebration of the Holy Qurbono** (in the church basement; for those who have no other chance of fulfilling the holy day obligation that day)

**3.00 pm. - Rededication of the Cathedral Sanctuary**

**4.00 pm. – Reception at the school auditorium**

On March 26, at 10.00 am. solemn celebration of the Holy Qurbono will be held on the newly consecrated altar with His

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Beatitude the Major Archbishop and other bishops and priests presiding. Those of you for whom it is convenient to participate in this Holy Qurbano are also cordially invited to the same.

Soon we start an important season of our liturgical, spiritual life, namely, the season of the Great Lent. Of all the seasons of our liturgical year, this is perhaps the most consequential as far as our personal and ecclesial faith life is concerned. This is primarily a time for renewal in our faith life, mainly through a genuine experience of conversion. This conversion consists in turning away from our habituated sinful tendencies and acts and in returning to God's forgiving love that surpasses all our shortcomings and failures. As per our tradition, this is to be achieved mainly by adopting a very specific life style – a Lenten life style – that is focused on intense prayer, serious acts of renunciation such as fasting and abstinence and genuine acts of charity. During these fifty days, let us make a very earnest effort to spend more time in quality prayer, to consciously embrace sacrifices in life and to love our brothers and sisters more seriously and to be of help to those who are in need of us. I wish all of you a very blessed Lenten experience so that we may all be able to celebrate the great Feast of Easter as truly renewed persons.

I wish to conclude by expressing my sincere gratitude to all of you for your consistent support and prayers for the promotion of all the good things that our individual parishes and our Eparchy as a whole are undertaking. May God continue to bless all of you, your families and your parish communities and may St. Mary, Queen of Peace, the Patroness of our Eparchy be our support in our spiritual journey.

Yours lovingly in our Lord,



+ Thomas Mar Eusebius

February 15, 2017

Eparchial Chancery, 1500 De Paul Street, Elmont, NY 11003

## EPARCHY NEWS

### Washington DC Mission raised to parish

The St. Mary's Syro-Malankara Catholic Mission in Washington DC was raised as a Parish in the St. Mary, Queen of Peace, Syro-Malankara Catholic Eparchy in the USA and Canada on September 11, 2016 on the occasion of the celebration of the Feast of the Nativity of St. Mary. On September 11, at 11.00 am, His Excellency the Most Rev. Thomas Mar Eusebius celebrated the first day Holy Mass for the community and during the Holy Mass, he read out the decree, establishing the parish.



The decree was later received together by the representatives of the parish, namely, by Reverend Fr. Mathai Mannoor-vadakkethil, the Pastor, Mrs. Anita Thomas, the Secretary and Mr. Binu Varghese, the treasurer. During the Holy Mass, His Excellency thanked all the lay leaders of the community and the priests who served here, for their contributions to the growth of the community. The Syro-Malankara Catholic Mission in Washington was started in 1985 by His Grace the Most Rev. Benedict Mar Gregorios. Rev. Fr. John Kalloor (presently His Excellency the Most Rev. Yoohanon Mar Chrysostom) was



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the first priest in-charge of the Mission. He was followed by Rev. Fr. Thomas Poovannal, Rev. Fr. Geevarghese Charuvilayil and Rev. Fr. Jacob Chirayath. Rev. Fr. Mathai was appointed in charge of this community in 2011.

## Golden Jubilee Celebration

The Golden Jubilee celebration of Rt. Rev. Geevarghese Manickarottu Corepiscopo was celebrated on December 3rd, 2016 at the Syro-Malankara Catholic Cathedral. The thanksgiving Qurbano was celebrated by Manickarottu Corepiscopo, and the homily was given by the Eparchial Bishop Most Rev. Dr. Thomas Mar Eusebius. The Vicar General, Msgr. Peter Kochery and the Pastoral Council secretary Mr. John P. Varghese offered felicitations on behalf of the entire St. Mary's Queen of Peace Syro-Malankara Catholic Eparchy in the United States & Canada.




## YOUTH APOSTOLATE

### MCYM+East Regional Activities

#### Support The Troops

Since July 2016, the MCYM+East Regional Board has implemented and carried out the “Support the Troops” care package initiative. In January 2017, local MCYM units were asked to get together and prepare care packages for the military troops who are currently serving our country overseas. So far, two par-



ishes have successfully collected the items and assembled care packages to be shipped to the Support Our Troops organization in Tampa, FL – Yonkers and Philadelphia.

### **MCYM Weekend Getaway**

The board is currently trying to plan an MCYM Weekend Getaway (dates and venue TBD), which would be a relaxed camping retreat weekend. This event would primarily be focused towards gathering our youth members who are aged 21-35, but would be opened to youth members aged 18-20.

## **FAMILY APOSTOLATE**

### **Pre-Cana (Marriage Preparation) Course**

The Eparchial Family Apostolate marriage preparation course will be held on February 18&19, 2017 at St. Mary's Abbey retreat Center 230 Mendham Road Morristown, New Jersey .

The Course will begin on Saturday at 8 am. with breakfast and end on Sunday at 3 pm. For online registration, please go to our Eparchial website. Registration fees will be \$250. (Includes: food, accommodation and tuition.)

## **PARISH NEWS**

### **The Cathedral Parish**

#### **New Service Schedule**

The Cathedral Parish's new service schedule effective from January 8, 2017 is as follows; The Catechism on Sundays starts at 8:30 am. The Holy Qurbono starts at 10:00 am. The Holy Qurbono on 1<sup>st</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Sundays of the month will be in Malayalam and 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday will be in English. The Holy Qurbono on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday start at 07.30 am. First Friday and Second Friday of the month Holy Qurbono starts at 6:00 pm and Saturday Mass starts at 8:00 am. Second Friday Holy Qurbono will be followed by Holy Adoration.

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## MCYM Activities

Our MCYM members actively participated in the charity food drive event called **Malangivin'It** and gained first place in the Eparchy. They also did *Fall Fest event for our Sunday school*. Over 50 participants from our parish were in the sixth MCYM National Youth Conference held at Philadelphia.

MCYM held a Thanksgiving Potluck dinner on November 26th. They had many games and fellowship activities, along with delicious food. The presence of the Eparchial Bishop Most Rev. Dr. Thomas Mar Eusebius was a great blessing.



Other activities included Fall Fest for Sunday School which was held on October 29, 2016.

## Mothers Forum Activities

Mothers Forum conducts *Legion of Mary* prayers every Sunday at 8:30 am. and initiates Holy Rosary on every Wednesday and Friday at 6:00 pm.

A confession preparation class was conducted by Vicar Rev. Fr. Noby Ayyaneth and Rev. Sr. Arpitha on October 15, 2016 for all mothers. Our mothers work hard in arranging the fund raising lunch on Sundays to contribute to the expense of the altar renovation of the church.

## Associate Rector

Rev. Fr. Jerry Mathew was appointed as the Associate Rector of St. Vincent De Paul Malankara Catholic Cathedral Parish by His Excellency Most Rev. Dr. Thomas Mar Eusebius. He took charge on August 21.

## Parish Picnic

The parish picnic for this year was held on Saturday, August 20<sup>th</sup> at Belmont Lake State Park, Long Island. Various sports and games were also conducted during this event for all ages. Homemade dishes were also a specialty at the picnic. The prizes for the sports and game competitions were distributed.

## Parish Feast

The Feast of our parish began on September 4<sup>th</sup> with the Holy Qurbono and flag hoisting by His Excellency Most Rev. Dr. Thomas Mar Eusebius. Four children received the first holy Communion from His Excellency Thomas Mar Eusebius. Holy Qurbono and intercessory prayers were held during the Perunnal week. His Excellency Most Rev. Dr. Samuel Mar Irenios celebrated the Holy Qurbono on September 8<sup>th</sup> and the perunnal procession and cultural program were held September 10<sup>th</sup>. Msgr. Peter Kochery was the main celebrant of the Perunnal Qurbono held on September 11. The parish feast was ended by lowering the flag followed by agape.





## Adopt An Angel

The Sunday School children held a charitable activity where they donated Christmas gifts for those children less fortunate.



## Christmas Celebrations & Caroling

Christmas caroling was held on December 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup>, and 17<sup>th</sup>. His Excellency Most Rev. Dr. Thomas Mar Eusebius was the main celebrant of this year's Christmas service held on Christmas Eve.

## Welcoming The Year 2017

Holy Adoration and Holy Qurbano were held on the New Year's Eve and Holy Qurbano was also celebrated on the New Year's Day. As a tradition, first fruit offering was collected from parishioners during the Holy Qurbano.

## Chicago

### Parish Feast and the Nativity of Mother Mary

The feast of the Nativity of Mother Mary and the parish feast were celebrated from August 28-September 11, 2016. The celebrations began on Sunday, August 28 with Holy Mass followed by kodiettu (flag hoisting). In the evening from Tuesday, September 1-September 7, we prayed the rosary, celebrated Holy Mass and had intercessory prayer. On Thursday, September 8, we celebrated the Nativity of Mother Mary by praying the rosary, evening prayer, Holy Mass, followed by Agape. On Satur-

day, September 10, Moonninmel Qurbono on three Altars in English was celebrated by Very. Rev. Msgr. Joseph Sundaram, Rev. Fr. Babu Madathilparampil, and Rev. Fr. Jerry Mathew, followed by procession of the faithful around the Church with chendamelam, agape and Malankara night with variety entertainments. On Sunday, September 11, we had Concelebrated Holy Mass in Malayalam with Very Rev. Msgr. Joseph Sundaram as the main celebrant. Sunday school anniversary and prize distributions were also conducted soon after the Holy Mass. The parish feast was ended by lowering the flag followed by Agape.

### **Pastoral Visit Of The Most Rev. Dr. Thomas Mar Eusebius**

The Most Rev. Dr. Thomas Mar Eusebius made a 3 days pastoral visit to our parish on October 14, 15 and 16. His Excellency visited parishioner's houses, conducted family prayer meeting, MCYM meeting and prayed for all the ailing people in our community. Special general body meeting was held and discussed the ecclesial growth of our Parish.

### **Christmas Celebrations**

We celebrated Christmas on December 24th evening with Christmas services and Holy Mass followed by Christmas dinner and variety entertainments. We had four days of Christmas carol rounds and visited all the parishioners' houses. It was a pleasant experience for all the carol singers who went together in a rented school bus. A Christmas gift was given to each family during the carol rounds.

### **Midwest Regional Family Conference**

The Midwest Regional Family conference is scheduled to be held in Chicago from June 23-25, 2017 at Ramada plaza. This will be a great opportunity for Toronto, Calgary, Edmonton, Detroit and Chicago parishioners to gather, learn and pray together. Eminent speakers like Rev. Fr. Joseph Puthenpurackal, H.E Most Rev. Dr. Thomas Mar Eusebius will be present. Separate and simultaneous sessions for Adults, Youth and Children are arranged.

## Pilgrimage to the Holy Lands

Chicago Parish conducted a Pilgrimage tour to Israel, Palestine, Jordan and Egypt for 13 days in November 2016. About 32 people attended the tour. That was really a spiritually enriching, a very memorable and enjoyable experience for all the attendees.



## Dallas

### Graduation Day

Graduation Day was celebrated on August 7, 2016 to recognize the parishioners who graduated from high school, college, and professional programs. This event was coordinated by Mr. Philip Chacko, and the following 15 graduates were awarded plaques:

*Graduates:* Aleena Thomas, Akhil Abraham, Allen John, Anisha John, Aaron Mathai, Bismi Kurien, Jason Mathew, Josh Mathew, Jessy Regi, Shalet Regi, Justin Cherian, Mereena Chacko, Merin Prince, Michael Varghese, and Rio Aloshyas.

### Onam

We celebrated Onam this year on September 18, 2016 in a traditional Kerala way by wearing the traditional clothing and serving onam sadya. Following Holy Mass, the parish could enjoy a magic show by Master Mathew Padavil and Sofia Padavil. We thank Mr. Samuel Mathai for coordinating our Onam celebrations this year.

## **Church Retreat and Perunnal**

We celebrated our Church feast from September 1 to 11, 2016. As part of the commencement of the Church feast, the flag was hoisted on August 28, 2016. We had Holy Mass and intercessory prayers to St. Mary every day. The Sunday School Anniversary was celebrated on Sunday, September 4, 2016 during perunnal with a unique program put on by our Sunday School students and teachers. We had a procession (*Rasa*) on September 8, 2016. His Excellency Samuel Mar Irenios conducted a retreat on September 9 and 10. The feast was concluded with Holy Mass on September 11, 2016 offered by His Excellency Samuel Mar Irenios.

## **Song Book Released**

After Mass on September 11, 2016, His Excellency Samuel Mar Irenios also released a song book by giving the first copy to the choir coordinator, Mr. Sajan Cherian.

## **KECF Convention and Christmas Carol**

The Kerala Ecumenical Christian Fellowship's (KECF) 19<sup>th</sup> United Gospel Convention was held on August 5 to 7, 2016, and the annual KECF Christmas Carol took place on December 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2016. Many of our parish members actively took part in both these events.

## **Annual Picnic**

The annual picnic was held at our church on October 27, 2016. There were games for almost all age groups, and as usual, food was cooked and served throughout the day. The bounce house and tents that were provided for the children to play made the picnic more enjoyable.

## **Church Jubilee Celebrations**

The family conference and the conclusion ceremony for the Silver Jubilee of St. Mary's Malankara Catholic Church of Dallas were held from November 18 to 20, 2016. Former DGP of Kerala, Mr. Jacob Punnoose, and Rev. Fr. Abraham Orapankal conducted classes. Separate sessions were held for both the youth and the adults. The class for the youth was conducted by Mrs. Suzette Chairez, and a cultural program by mimicry artist,



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Sabu Thiruvilla, was held in the hall on the evening of November 19, 2016.

The conclusion ceremony for the yearlong Silver Jubilee was held on November 20, 2016. The Eparchial bishop His Excellency Thomas Mar Eusebius presided over the valedictory function and the Former DGP of Kerala, Mr. Jacob Punnoose was the chief guest in the ceremony. The Silver Jubilee Souvenir was released by His Excellency Thomas Mar Eusebius by giving the first copy to Mr. Jacob Punnoose. We were delighted that, Mr. Mathai Yohannan, our fellow parishioner, also released his book, *Spiritual Vitamins*, in the same ceremony. Our Vicar, Rev. Fr. Joseph Nedumankuzhiyil delivered the Welcome Speech, and Mr. Varghese Mathew delivered the Felicitation Speech. The Jubilee Celebrations were concluded with the celebration of the Holy Mass by His Excellency Most Rev.Dr.Thomas Mar Eusebius.

### **Thanksgiving Celebrations**

Thanksgiving Mass was held on Thursday, November 24, 2016. The service was followed by a Thanksgiving meal provided by Mr. Roy Varghese. The event was coordinated by Mrs. Jaya Francis.

### **Christmas Celebration**

Coordinated by MCA, we visited the homes of all our church members for our annual Christmas caroling. The Christmas Mass was held on the evening of December 24, 2016. After the Mass, dinner was provided, and a Christmas cultural program was held in the hall as a continuation of the celebration of the birth of our Savior.

### **Detroit**

#### **MCYM**

MCYM celebrated Youth day on 30<sup>th</sup> October 2016 with various programs. The highlight of the day was a food drive organized and conducted by our youth to benefit our church building fund. The food drive was a huge success and our youth collected a sum of \$1333.00.

## Picnic

Annual picnic was conducted on Saturday, August 13<sup>th</sup> 2016 at the Metro Park, Harrison Township.

## Onam

Onam celebrations were marked by a marvelous ‘athapukalam’ and ‘onappattu’ performed by our members followed by a sumptuous ‘ona sadya’.



## New Altar Servers

Abin Biju and Christo Pothan were blessed by Rev. Fr. Jerry Mathew to be our new altar servers.

## Christmas

Christmas liturgy was celebrated on December 24<sup>th</sup> at 8 pm. Our Parish participated and presented a program at the Detroit Ecumenical Christmas celebrations.

## Annual General Body

The annual General body was held on January 29th 2017. Office bearers for the year 2017 were elected in the General Body held on November 27<sup>th</sup> 2016.

## Houston

### Onam

Onam was celebrated on September 18 Sunday after the Mass.

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Our MCYM and Sunday School students performed variety of programs and traditional Onam Sadya was served to all.

### **Golden Jubilee Celebration of Mannikarott Corepiscopo**

The Golden Jubilee celebration of Rt. Rev. Geevarghese Mannickarottu Corepiscopo was celebrated on 4th February 2017. The parish community received him and extended warm jubilee wishes and prayers.

### **Visit From The Byzantine Church**

Rev. Fr. Elias Luis Rafaj and Rev. Fr. Charlie, two Byzantine catholic priests and a small group of members visited in our church on November 2016. They came to participate in the liturgy of the Syro Malankara Catholic Church.



## **Los Angeles**

### **The Year of the Divine Mercy Celebration**

As the year 2016 was commemorated as the Jubilee Year of Mercy, in its observance, a pilgrimage was organized to the Cathedral of Our Lady of the Angels on 13 November 2016. Along with people of St. Patrick's Church, our members visited the Holy Door after Holy Qurbana. It was a wonderfully enriching experience to be part of the celebration of Mercy and to obtain indulgence. In addition, the Divine Mercy Chaplet was recited Sunday after Mass.

## Onam celebration

On Sunday, September 18th, we celebrated our culture and heritage by participating in the Onam festivities. Our parishioners whole heartedly took part in the celebration which took place after the Holy Eucharist. We had the traditional “pookkalam” and a delightful “Onasadya”. The ambience, traditional Kerala dresses and the sadya brought back fond memories of past Onam celebrations in God’s own country.



## Monthly Family Unit Prayer

The family unit prayer meetings in our parish were held on a Saturday every month at the homes of the parish members by turns. We met together for evening prayer, Bible reading, and discussion on Bible related themes. Coming together in this manner has been valuable in the spiritual journey of the parish and for fostering unity among the members.





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## **Mass in San Diego**

Every alternate month, on a Saturday, the Holy Mass is celebrated for our community in San Diego. Their participation and cooperation are remarkable.

## **Christmas Gathering**

We had a special Christmas Program with the members of our San Diego mission a week before Christmas. Members from San Diego mission and their friends, and a few families from other denominations participated in the program. We had Holy Qurbana followed by different activities such as games, caroling and Christmas dinner. Some of the Los Angeles families also participated in this event. It was a great opportunity for our people from both the communities to interact, to strengthen the bond between them and to share the joy of Christmas.

## **Picnic**

Our parish had its annual picnic on June 25th at the historical Irvine Regional Park, City of Orange. It was a fun filled day for all to unwind, relax and enjoy good company, good food and games.

## **Feeding the hungry by sharing food**

Our parish has also been actively involved in charitable activities like the food drive. The parishioners donated canned and dry food and organized the collection and delivery of these to local food drives for the homeless and hungry.

## **New Jersey**

### **2017 Parish Council Members**

The Parish conducted election of 2017 Parish Council members and the results are as follows:

Mr. Sunny Thomas – Parish Council Secretary / Sunday School Principal

Mr. Geevarughese Mathew – Parish Council Treasurer

Mr. Philip John – Malankara Catholic Association President

Mrs. Rency Philip – Mothers Forum President

Mr. Dollin Karakattu – MCYM President

Mr. Ansel Vijayan – Parish Council Member

Mrs. Anisha Varughese – Parish Council Member / Sunday

School Vice Principal  
Mr. Rens George – Parish Council Member  
Mr. Pinju Pappan – Parish Council Member  
Mr. Deepak G. Thomas – Parish Council Member  
Mr. Thomas Karakattu – Internal Auditor  
Mr. Jacob Punnoose – Pastoral Council Representative  
Mr. John P. Varghese – Pastoral Council Representative



### **New Place for Worship & Assembly**

St. Thomas Syro-Malankara Catholic Parish of New Jersey changed the venue for worship on Sunday, August 7, 2016. The current location is Sts. Peter and Paul Byzantine Catholic Church, 11 Delaware Street, Elizabeth, NJ 07206. His Excellency Most Rev. Dr. Thomas Mar Eusebius was the Chief Celebrant and Pastor, Rt. Rev. Msgr. Peter Kochery concelebrated during the Holy Qurbano. Following the solemn service His Excellency and the Pastor felicitated Rt. Rev. Msgr. James Hayer, Vicar General of Byzantine Eparchy of Passaic, New Jersey and current Administrator of the Sts. Peter and Paul Church. The Parish extends our heartfelt gratitude to our Eparchial Bishop for his tireless work to find a new suitable location for Malankara Catholic worship. See additional photos of the new Church at: <https://stthomascatholic.church/gallery/>



### **Parish Family Night and Sunday School Awards**

The Parish conducted its annual Family Night on Saturday, October 15, 2016 at St. Mary RC Church auditorium. The Parish Event Coordinator Mr. Shainu Varghese executed a marvelous program filled with melodious singing, amazing dance routines and laughable moments. Nearly every family attended and/or participated in the entertainment and dinner programs. During the intermission the Pastor Msgr. Peter Kochery, current Principal Mr. Sunny Thomas, Vice Principal Mrs. Anisha Varughese and the Parish formally recognized and thanked Dr. Thresia Thomas for her past five (5) years of meritorious service as the Sunday School Principal. Also, as part of the award programs the Parish recognized three (3) students (and their respective teachers) who received distinction for Eparchy-wide Sunday School Exams – Johann Thomas Varghese, Shifa Thomas and Aleena Abraham. The Parish is extremely proud and thankful to its Sunday School Administration and Teachers for their exemplary leadership and continued service to the Church.

### **Parish Welcomes Rev. Sr. Jocelyn Edathil**

The parish community officially welcomed Rev. Sr. Jocelyn Edathil, sister of Rev. Fr. Michael Edathil, to its fold on Thanksgiving Day, November 27, 2016. The Pastor announced the wonderful news to the community Sr. Jocelyn graciously volunteered to be mentors for the children, youth and mothers

of the Parish. The Parish is extremely thankful Rev. Sr. Benedicta for allowing Sr. Jocelyn to travel all the way from Philadelphia, PA to Elizabeth, NJ to perform the ministerial duties, such mothers prayer group, teaching songs to children, etc.0

### **Sunday Holy Bible Readings on Parish Website**

The Parish added to its website the upcoming Sunday Holy Bible readings at the request of the parish families. Parents requested to add this service feature to the widely-used website to better prepare children who do not understand Malayalam dialect. You may find the readings posted on the dedicated page - <https://stthomascatholic.church/sunday-readings/>

## **Philadelphia**

### **St. Jude Syro-Malankara Parish, Philadelphia, PA**

#### **Home Parish Welcomed Sister Jocelyn SIC**

St Jude Church, Philadelphia, home parish of Sister Jocelyn SIC held a reception on Sunday August 14, 2016 for the newly professed Sister. Following Holy Mass, various speakers, including youth, adults, and ecumenical representatives shared their appreciation for our new Sister who took vow as a religious sister in the congregation of the Sisters of the Imitation of Christ, on Aug 6<sup>th</sup>, 2016 at our cathedral in NY. Lunch was also served. We are extremely glad that she is the first woman religious ever professed in the Syro-Malankara Catholic Eparchy in USA and Canada.

### **Eight-day Fast**

*Ettu Nombu* was celebrated in our parish from Sept 1-8 and we had Holy Mass and Novena every day. Each day, a member from our parish had the opportunity to share his/her personal reflection about Mother Mary, and her influence in their personal and family life. *Nercha* was provided all days of novena.

### **Onam**

Onam was celebrated at our Parish on Sept 11 with all the traditional festivities. Special Onam Sadya was served to all members. Our members dressed in traditional Kerala dress and decorated the church hall with flowers and sang traditional Onam songs to bring back the memories of Kerala.



## Commemorations

Reunion Day and memorial of Mar Gregorios of happy memory were celebrated on September 25 and October 16 respectively under the leadership of MCA. Meetings were conducted after the Holy Mass. Representatives of Sunday School, MCYM and MCA spoke at both events.

## Altar Servers' Training

We had a special one-day meeting for our Altar Servers on Oct 15<sup>th</sup> to further train them on their responsibilities of altar serving. The one-day retreat/training was led by our Vicar Fr. Saji, Sister Benedicta, Sister Jocelyn and our liturgy coordinators Mr. Sam Philip and Mr. Alex John. Training included instruction and practical training. We have around 20 Altar Servers and 5 adults who rotate in groups of 5 every Sunday to give an equal opportunity to all.



## Sunday School Anniversary

On December 31 our Sunday School celebrated its anniversary with various programs. After Thanksgiving Holy Mass all 64 students under the guidance of their 15 teachers, performed various talent programs. Students who attained highest scores in the parish and eparchial levels received prizes during the celebrations. A pot luck meal was served at the end. A team of

teachers and MCYM volunteers coordinated the programs under the leadership of the principal Mr. Alex John. Fr. Saji expressed his appreciation to teachers and students for their dedication and commitments. The children are enthusiastic in celebrating All Saints Day, Annual Christmas Toy Drive, and the Annual Christmas programs.



### **Sacerdotal Jubilee begins**

2017 marks the 25<sup>th</sup> ordination anniversary of our pastor Fr. Saji Mukkoot. The sacerdotal jubilee which started on December 22, 2016 was officially inaugurated at our parish on January 1, 2017 with New Year Holy Mass. Fr. Jacob John reminded it as the parishioners' privilege to celebrate the pastor's jubilee. After cake cutting Fr. Saji thanked the parishioners for their support and prayers. A parish level celebration is scheduled for August 19, 2017.

### **Oath of Parish Council 2017**

The newly elected parish council members took charge on January 22<sup>nd</sup> by taking the Oath of Office by reciting the pledge before our Vicar Fr. Saji Mukkoot. The 2017 parish council elected on Nov 6 includes Biju Kuruvilla (Secretary), Mathew Thomas (Treasurer) Anie Jacob, Cyril Jose, Sajeev Sankarathil, Sam Philip, Philip (Biju) John, Joseph Geevarghese and Raju P George. The Pastoral Council members serving the 3<sup>rd</sup> year are

Shine D Thomas, Alex John & Shaji Simon. MCA President Shine Thomas, Mothers Forum President Sara Paul, MCYM President Feba Chacko and Sunday School Principal Mr. Alex John are the other committee members.

## San Jose



The feast of St. Jude's was celebrated on June 19th with a beautiful Qurbana in English by Rev. Fr. Biju Daniel Varghese at the St. Mary of the Immaculate Conception Church. St. Jude Malankara Mission's first Vacation Bible School and church picnic were held on August 27-28, 2016. Sunday school teachers organized the VBS program and the children had a wonderful experience. The following day after the Holy Qurbana, the community gathered at a nearby park for barbecue lunch and games. On October 1<sup>st</sup>, our community celebrated Onam with a grand Ona Sandya and entertainments by our ladies and children. We invited the staff of St. Mary church and priests from other churches to celebrate with us. Under the guidance of our music group and Rev. Fr. Biju Daniel Varghese, we visited all members' homes on December 3<sup>rd</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> for caroling and to spread the joy of Christmas. Christmas was celebrated with a vigil service followed by dinner and Unnikuri exchange.

## Rockland

### Rockland Parish Feast

St. Peter's Syro-Malankara Catholic Church in Rockland, NY has continued to grow in faith and communal love through celebration of the Holy Q'urbano, Catechism, Novenas, and Prayer. The Church celebrated Perunnal on June 26th and Bishop Most Rev. Dr. Thomas Mar Eusebius was the chief celebrant of Holy Mass. Vicar Rev. Fr. Augustine Mangalath, Jubilarian Rev. Fr. George Oonnoonny, Rev. Fr. Thadeus Aravindath, Bro. Jobin Thomas and reverend Sisters were present. We had a great cultural program by the Sunday school kids and Youth, which was followed by dinner.

### Samson Show at Lancaster

Mr. Jose Philip organized the Lancaster Bible show trip on July 20th to witness the Samson Show. A Bus chartered and more than 50 members of church and friends joined for the event including Vicar and reverend Sisters.

### Parish Picnic

The Church picnic was held on August 28th, 2016 Sunday after the Morning Holy Mass at Rockland state park. Homemade food items and snacks were brought for the breakfast and for lunch we had barbeque. Sports activities were conducted for all age groups and everyone enjoyed the picnic.



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### **Apple picking**

The parish organized Apple pick on September 18<sup>th</sup>, 2016 Sunday after the Morning Holy Mass at Lawrence Orchard in Newburgh. The orchard had nice panoramic views, with different types of apple, grapes, peaches, other fruits and vegetables. Everyone had a great time.

### **Christmas Celebration & Caroling**

As in the past years we joyously and expectantly visited the homes of all families this year ringing in the joy of our Lord's Birth in the carol service during this season of Christmas. The Parish community, from infants to elders actively participated in the carol. The Christmas service and Mass were celebrated with great devotion on the Christmas eve.



### **Parish Election**

The Parish election was held on November 20<sup>th</sup>, 2016 and we are excited for the dynamic group of individuals elected to the 2017 Council.

### **Malayalam Class**

Furthermore, few of our church members with the leadership of Mrs. Liby Mathew took the initiative to start the Malayalam class on December 4<sup>th</sup> 2016. Almost all our Sunday school stu-



dents are participating in the class and it is held on Sundays before the Mass.

## **Toronto**

### **First Friday Service**

From October onwards, First Friday prayer is conducted with Holy Qurbono and Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. It is a great opportunity for persons and families to spend some time before the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist.

### **Ettu Nombu, Retreat & Palli Perunnal**

We concluded the Ettu Nombu with Nercha Vilambu and organized a retreat led by Rev. Fr. Abraham Lukose. Perunnal was celebrated with Holy Qurbono, solemn procession and Final Blessing followed by Nercha Vilambu. That evening we enjoyed an Onam Sadhya.

### **Parish Night**

In connection with the Parish Feast, we conducted a parish night on August 27<sup>th</sup>, 2016. We staged 32 well-organized programs. Special thanks to His Excellency Bishop Vincent Mar Paulose who attended the entire program.

### **Parish pilgrimage**

We visited St. Joseph's Oratory, Notre Dame Basilica, and Mary Queen of the World Cathedral in Montreal. As an added blessing, we got an opportunity to celebrate Holy Mass on the main Altar of the St. Joseph's Oratory.

### **Newborns**

Our community is blessed with three wonderful newborn babies, Jayden Rajesh Paul, Anthony Jojo Varghese, Isaiah Alphonse Prakash. We congratulate their parents.

### **Baptisms**

Louis Jacob Thomas, son of Thomas Jacob and Sini Abraham, was baptised in November.

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## **First Communion**

Two of our children, namely: Nimisha Thankam Biji and Joel Thomas Abraham received the first Holy Communion this year from our Metropolitan Archbishop of Thiruvalla, His Excellency Most. Rev. Thomas Mar Koorilos. Cathy Tiju Kochery, Josh Jacob and Joseph Teny also received the first Holy Communion from their local parishes in Kerala.

## **Weddings**

The wedding of Tom Mathew and Alicia Ali was solemnized in October. We wish all blessings.

## **Sunday School**

Our children won 4 Eparchial Catechism Awards. Special congratulations to these children and their teachers for their hard work and commitment.

## **MCYM**

- The MCYM created T-Shirts which were personalized.
  - Our Youth went to the Good Sheppard Homeless Shelter as a volunteering initiative
  - The Youth held an outing with Fr. Gigi Philip & Fr. Abraham Lukose at Professors Lake.
  - MCYM Day was celebrated on Sunday, October 9<sup>th</sup>, 2016. After the mass a skit and dances were performed.
  - For Christmas Night the youth performed a skit along with numerous dances as well as Christmas Carols.
- The Youth also held a National Toy Drive as well as a National Food Drive.

## **Ecumenical Christian Fellowship**

Our parish actively participated in all the programs arranged by Kerala Ecumenical Christian Fellowship. For Ecumenical Christmas Carol Service, our youth performed a musical skit, which highly impressed the audience.

## **Parish Picnic**

The parish picnic was a fun filled day with sports and game

competitions. Our special thanks to His Excellency Most Rev. Jacob Mar Barnabas who was so kind to be with us at the picnic spot and spent his valuable time with the children and parents.

### **Christmas Programs**

House-to-House Caroling was a wonderful experience. At Christmas night, a variety of Christmas programs was conducted and Sunday school Catechism Awards were distributed.

### **New Year Vigil**

New Year's Holy Qurbano was on December 31<sup>st</sup> at 9:00 pm, followed by Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament until midnight.

## **Washington**

### **Parish Feast & Parish Elevation**

The Feast of St. Mary's Syro Malankara Catholic Church, Greater Washington was celebrated on September 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup>. We had evening prayers and procession on the 10<sup>th</sup>. Our Bishop, H.E Dr. Thomas Mar Eusebius celebrated the Holy Mass for us and on this occasion our mission was elevated to a Parish. A decree to this effect was received by the First Pastor Fr. Mathai, First Treasurer, Mr. Binu Varghese and First Secretary, Mrs. Anita Thomas. During this visit the Bishop also met with each of our Apostolates namely, MCYM, MCCL, Jesus Kids, Sunday School teachers and students, MCA, Mothers Forum and Committee Members. Mother Superiors from Punjab and Marthandam and DM sisters from Los Angeles were also present during this auspicious occasion.

### **New Parish Council**

The new Parish Council members for 2017 for the Syro Malankara Catholic Parish of Greater Washington are following:

Secretary:	Mrs. Anita Thomas
Treasurer:	Mr. Binu Varghese
Elected Member:	Mrs. Jooli Kalampanayil
MCA President:	Mr. Rajeev Sankarathil

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Mothers Forum President:	Mrs. Daisy Varghese
MCYM President:	Ms. Jeena Devasia
Sunday School Principal:	Mrs. Treesa Daniel

### **Catechism**

Sunday School anniversary and Bible Kalolsavam were held for the Sunday School students. All students participated in various events. Prizes were distributed to all the academic and Kalolsavam winners.

### **Christmas**

Caroling for Maryland and Virginia took place on the second and third Saturdays of December. There was a very good turnout of participants despite inclement weather. Ecumenical Council of Kerala Christians (ECKC) had organized various events by different churches from Maryland. Our Church was represented by our choir group who sang a Christmas song at the event.

### **Yonkers**

#### **New Committee**

On December 4<sup>th</sup> a General Body was held to elect new members to the Parish committee. The new committee is as follows:

Thomas Mathai – Secretary

Thomas John – Treasurer

Bryant Gheevarghese

George Kurian

Annamma Thomas

Antony Thomas

Siby Oommen

Simon John

Susan Mathew (MCYM President)

Jessy Jacob (Mothers Forum)

John Thomas (MCA)

Joseph Jacob (Sunday School)

Philip Mathai (Pastoral Council Member)

Philip John (Nominated pastoral Council Member)

Father Sunny Mathew the Pastor has returned to India for a short period. Until his return, Father Jerry Mathew has been appointed as the Acting Pastor of our parish.

### **Annual Picnic**

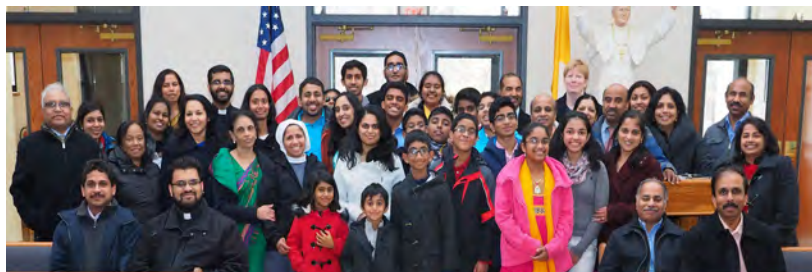
A community picnic was held on August 28<sup>th</sup> 2016 organized by Trinity community. This event which brought the neighborhood together was attended by many from our parish and was a time of sharing and joy.

### **Wedding Anniversary**

The 70<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary of Simon Oommen (Sr) and Anamma Oommen was celebrated on November 12<sup>th</sup> 2016 with a special Holy Qurbana.

### **Door of Mercy pilgrimage**

On November 20, as part of the Jubilee year of Mercy, a pilgrimage was held for the parish, which was coordinated by Mrs. Ann Varghese and led by Fr. Jerry Mathew to the Door of Mercy at Our Marian Shrine in Stony Point, NY. It was attended by 42 people from the parish.



### **Sendoff for Alexander & Rosamma Mammen**

On December 4, we held a send off meeting for Alexander and Rosamma Mammen, our long time parishioners and benefactors. During the meeting, they were awarded a memento and a gift in appreciation of their efforts for our parish.

### **Christmas Celebration**

Since this was our first Christmas in our very own church, we held a special Christmas Service and Mass at Midnight, which



was celebrated by Most Rev. Dr. Thomas Mar Eusebius Thirumeni, Fr Noby Ayyaneth, and Fr. Jerry Mathew. Christmas caroling was conducted all through the month of December. It was coordinated by George Kurian, Simon John and Philip Mathai and were attended by adults, youth, and children alike. Thank you to all who organized and participated in caroling this year. Special word of thanks to John Thomas, Joji Mathew, Shaji Joseph, Marilyn Alexander, and Joseph Jacob for their leadership.



## MCYM

The MCYM conference, which was held at the Holy Family University, Philadelphia from July 28-31, was attended by our youth and were the basketball champions of the conference. After the Good Friday Service, the MCYM members gathered at Saji and Gigi Abraham's house to watch the Passion of the Christ and to reflect on the Lenten season. During the M.G. Sreekumar fundraising program the youth actively participated at the food stall and sold food for over \$1900.00. The youth also had multiple small gathering sessions, such as BBQ behind the rectory or luncheon at any of the local restaurants; these gatherings have strengthened the bond of the church family environment. MCYM Day was celebrated on October 2<sup>nd</sup>, and following the MCYM Day mass, we had adoration. After the MCYM day celebrations we held our yearly Kappa and Fish curry sale, which bought in a profit of about \$300. During the thanksgiving food drive, we collected over 2000 cans. Our youth were extremely committed in making this event success-

ful. On November 5<sup>th</sup>, we participated with the Habitat for Humanity in painting a local gym so we can improve the playing condition for local community children. The MCYM thanksgiving potluck dinner was held at the rectory on November 25<sup>th</sup>, which was attended by several youth. We also held a Secret Santa and we exchanged gifts during the Christmas season.

Our Sunday school children participated in the MalanGivin' It Food Drive and supported the MCYM initiative.

### **Newborns**

Noah Jose – s/o Reji Jose and Devu Jose was born on 9/15/16.

### **Baptism**

Rohan Thomas – s/o Censy Thomas & Libi Thomas – 7/23/16 .

Norah Raju - d/o Robin Raju and Gigi Raju – 10/10/16.

### **Marriages**

Ashley Cherian and Justin Philippose - 07/30/16.

Jibin John and Shilpa Shaji - 09/25/16.

Thomas Joy Mathew (Vijay) and Jennifer Moots - 10/22/16.

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## Hearty congratulations to Most Rev. Dr. John O Barres.



The St. Mary, Queen of Peace Syro-Malankara Catholic Eparchy in the USA & Canada extends hearty congratulations and prayerful best wishes to His Excellency Most Rev. Dr. John O. Barres, who has been installed as the fifth bishop of the Diocese of Rockville Center. Bishop Barres, who was formerly the bishop of the Diocese of Allentown in Pennsylvania, was appointed bishop of Rockville Center on December 9, 2016 by His Holiness Pope Francis. Bishop Barres was installed as the bishop of Rockville Center on January 31, 2017. The St. Mary, Queen of Peace Syro-Malankara Catholic Eparchy has the best of relations with the Diocese of Rockville Center and we remain deeply indebted to His Excellency Most Rev. William Murphy, the outgoing bishop, for all the friendship and support extended to us. While praying God's continued blessings on Bishop Murphy, we extend our heartiest congratulations and prayerful wishes to Bishop Barres and to the Diocese of Rockville Center.

## Heartfelt Gratitude & Prayers



**St. Mary, Queen of Peace Syro-Malankara Catholic Eparchy expresses heartfelt gratitude to His Excellency the Most Rev. William Murphy, who retired from the office of the Bishop of Rockville Center on December 9, 2016. His Excellency is a great supporter and good friend of our Eparchy. May the Lord strengthen him with good health and blessings in his continued service to the Church and to the larger human society.**