

# ST. THOMAS INDIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

1009 UNRUH AVE, PHILADELPHIA, PA 19111

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## MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

MAY 2023

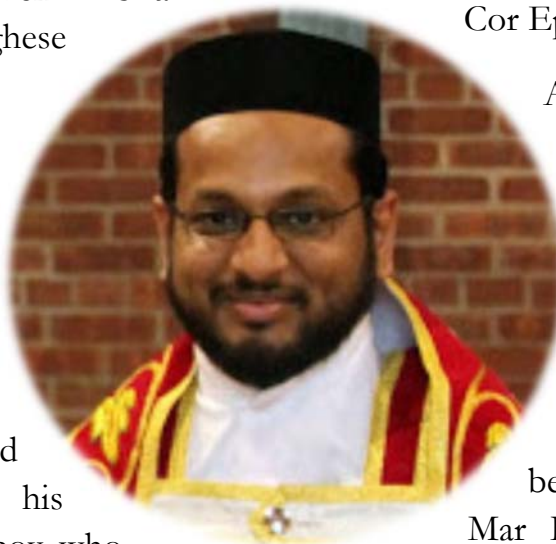
VOLUME XXVII ISSUE 5

### Assistant Vicar's Message

#### Bio of St. Gregorios of Parumala

St Gregorios of Parumala (1848-1902) is a saint we all revere greatly. Therefore, it is important for us to know some basic details of the life of Parumala Thirumeni. As a bishop, his name was Geevarghese Mar Gregorios.

Parumala Thirumeni was born in to Chathurithil Family Near Mulanthuruthy on June 15, 1848. He was named Geevarghese after St. George. Young Geevarghese's mother died when he was 2. During his childhood, he was a young boy who spent time in prayer and silence. After primary education he studied under his uncle (father's brother) Rev. Fr. Geevarghese. After Rev. Fr. Geevarghese's death, young Geevarghese continued theological education under Rev. Mathen Malpan of Konat at Pampakuda.



At the age of 10 he was ordained deacon (Korooyo) by Mathews Mar Athanasius Palakunnathu at Karingachia. Geevarghese Semassan also spent time with Yuyakim Mar Koorilose, delegate of Antiochian Patriarch. Dn. Geevarghese was an earnest student who tried to learn from Mar Koorilose and from Syriac writings. He was particularly motivated by the life of St. Anthony, the Egyptian monk, who is known as the father of monasticism. He was soon ordained as a deacon, Priest, and Cor Episcopa.

At that time, the legitimate Malankara Metropolitan was H.G. Joseph Mar Dionysius V (Pulikottil). Mar Dionysius was attempting to stop the spread of the Protestant teaching of Reformers (those who would become Mar Thoma Church).

Mar Dionysius wanted a place in Southern Kerala as a strong place of Orthodox teaching. Mar Dionysius elevated Fr Geevarghese as Remban and sent him to Parumala. Fr Geevarghese made Parumala into a place of prayer and a seminary for students from the South.

Soon Patriarch Peter IV arrived to resist the Reformers. Geevarghese Remban became a favorite disciple of the Patriarch. In 1876 the Patriarch convened the Synod at Mulanthuruthy. The Patriarch consecrated Geevarghese Remban as metropolitan with the name Geevarghese Mar Gregorios on December 10, 1876, at St. Thomas Church, North Paravur.

Mar Gregorios was given charge of Niranam Diocese. Soon the Saintly Shepherd would receive charge of Kollam and Thumpamon Diocese. Some landmarks in Thirumeni's episcopate include participating in the consecration of Fr. Alvarez as Mar Julius for Bombay, Mangalapuram Diocese, and Fr. Rene Vilate as bishop for America in

Colombo, Sri Lanka in 1889. Parumala Church was consecrated in 1895 and dedicated to the names of St. Peter and St. Paul. Soon Mar Gregorios set out on pilgrimage to Jerusalem that same year. Thirumeni founded schools, advocated evangelization among people who were considered as lower castes (Pulayas and Parayas), and promoted English education.

Thirumeni fell ill in August 1902 and entered Eternal Rest on November 2, 1902, and was formally declared a saint in 1947.

Parumala Thirumeni's most famous disciples are St. Dionysius of Vattaseril, H.H. Baselios Geevarghese II, Konat Mathen Malpan and H.G. Alexios Mar Theodosios.

Lovingly, Fr. Sujit Thomas, Asst. Vicar

### COVID-19 and Support System

#### **Financial Assistance to Members**

If any of our members need any assistance with food, medicine, transportation, shopping, or any other needs due to the COVID-19 pandemic, they may contact our Achens or the Secretary. They will coordinate help. Our MC members, along with other volunteers will be available to provide any possible help.

***We are all in this together.***

#### **Contact:**

- Rev. Fr. M. K. Kuriakose: 201.681.1078
- Rev. Fr. Sujit Thomas: 516.754.0743
- Steven Kurian: 267.450.6815



## Parish Highlights from April

### Qyomtho/Easter Sunday – April 9<sup>th</sup>



Our parish celebrated the Feast of the Resurrection with the Traditional Easter Services followed by celebration of the Holy Qurbana. Our priests, Rev. Fr. M.K. Kuriakose, Rev. Fr. Sujit Thomas, and Rev. Fr. Tojo Baby co-celebrated the Festal Services together. The Liturgical Services were followed by a delicious lunch provided by our Food Committee and the children participated in the Annual Easter Egg Hunt led by our MGOCSM members.



### Sunday School Assigned Competitions

On April 30<sup>th</sup>, our Sunday School students participated in the Diocesan Assigned Competitions for Drawing and Essay writing. General training sessions were held on April 16<sup>th</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> to instruct the students on the rules and the competitions were held the following Sunday. The 1<sup>st</sup> tier winners are listed in the Sunday School section on page 11. Congratulations to all the participants for their efforts!

### Church Curtain Upgrades

Per the General Body Meeting held on March 26, 2023, the project to refurbish and replace the existing curtains in the Hall and Chapel is approved. Materials are now on order with the supplier and the installation is planned for Summer 2023.

# May Events and General Announcements

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## Church Reminders

**Charity:** Please continue to bring in donations for the Parish Housing Charity. This Charity intends to build 5 homes in India for those less fortunate. Please also consider supporting our General Charity Initiatives as well.

**Dip Jar:** Those who are interested in submitting their offertory or any other small

donation may do so in the Church dip jar located by the Meditation Room.

**Lost and Found:** Many small items such as jewelry and watches have been submitted to the office “Lost and Found”. Please see the Secretary if you believe you may be missing one of these items.

## Spiritual Organization Updates

**OCYM, MMVS, and Men’s Forum Meetings** will be held weekly after Refreshments.

**OCYM Bake Sale:** The OCYM conducted their annual bake sale on Sunday, May 7<sup>th</sup>, serving appam and egg curry, raising money to support their ministries for the coming year.



**CAYA Monthly Meeting:** May 13<sup>th</sup>, 3pm virtually; Zoom link to be communicated via Sunday School teachers.

**MGOCSM Monthly Meeting:** May 13<sup>th</sup>, 5pm at our Church.

**Karuna Blood Drive:** May 21<sup>st</sup>; Karuna will be hosting our regular Blood Drive. Those who are interested in donating blood may sign up with one of the supporting Karuna members or through the following link:

<https://redcrossblood.app.link/blooddrive/19111>



## Diocesan Events

### Northeast American Diocese MMVS Annual Retreat (May 18-20)

Join us in prayer during the days of awaiting the Holy Spirit to descend upon us.

**Date:** May 18-20, 2023 at Holy Transfiguration Retreat Center

**Theme:** "If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit" (Galatians 5:25)

**Keynote Speaker:** Mrs. Ceena Mathew

**Spiritual Leaders:**

- ❖ H G Zachariah Mor Nicholovos  
Metropolitan
- ❖ Rev Fr Shibu V Mathai (HTRC  
Director & Vicar, SGMOC Bensalem)
- ❖ Rev Fr Tojo Baby, Philadelphia.

### Northeast American Diocese G.R.O.W Annual One-Day Women's Conference (June 17)

June 17, 2023 from 9am - 3:30pm at Sts. Basilios-Gregorios Orthodox Church, North Plainfield, NJ 07060.

The conference is open to all women ages 13 and up (high school, college, post grad, working professionals, married, and mothers). Registration fee for the conference is \$15 (paid online).

### MGOCSM Sabro High School Camp (July 19-22)

The MGOCSM of the NE American Diocese presents this year's Sabro High School Camp: "The Mirror of Erised".

**Date:** July 19-22, 2023

**Venue:** Holy Transfiguration Retreat Center (Dalton, PA)

Early bird registration ends on May 30<sup>th</sup>.

See **attached** flyer for more details.

### MGOCSM College Summer Summit (August 15-18)

Theme: "Love is the passport with which man passes through all the heavenly doors without obstacles." (St. John Chrysostom)

**Main Speaker:** Rev. Fr. Immanuel (Amal) Punnoose

**Dates:** 8/15 (Tuesday) to 8/18 (Friday)

**Venue:** Holy Transfiguration Retreat Center (Dalton, PA)

**Registration** (April 17<sup>th</sup> - July 23<sup>rd</sup>) - \$200 US (\$200CA)

**"Late" Registration** (July 24<sup>th</sup> - August 1<sup>st</sup>) - \$250

DEADLINE FOR ANYONE WHO NEEDS TRANSPORTATION WILL BE JULY 1<sup>st</sup>

Registration will close after August 1, 2023

For more information, please contact:

Convenor - Joshua Santosh: (516) 698-9343  
 Assistant Convenor - Jonathan Mathai: (516)  
 636-9292

Parish Committee Members:

- Rachel David: (610) 755-2668
- Neha Joseph: (215) 820-7574
- Jaime George: (484) 364-7450

See **attached** flyer for more details.

## Fasts & Feasts

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<u>Date</u>	<u>Event</u>
	No events noted.

## Diocesan Calendar

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<u>Date</u>	<u>Event</u>
May 18-20	MMVS Annual Retreat at Holy Transfiguration Retreat Center
May 20	MMVS Delegates meeting
June 17	Diocesan Assembly
TBD	GROW One Day Conference
July 12-15	Family & Youth Conference
July 19-22	MGOCSM Sabro High School Camp
July 26-29	Talmeedo Men's Retreat
August 15-18	MGOCSM College Camp at Holy Transfiguration Retreat Center
September 27-28	Clergy Conference
October 14	MMVS Annual One-Day Conference
November 25	MGOCSM One-Day Conference

## Member Announcements

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### Memorials

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- ❖ **Mrs. Kunjumol Cherian (89)** – Mother of Mr. Rajan Padiyara (#134) passed away on April 3<sup>rd</sup>. Funeral was held on Monday, April 10<sup>th</sup> at Chengannur Old Syrian Church.
  
- ❖ **Mr. Alex Philips (73)** – Brother of Chandni George (#253) passed away on April 7<sup>th</sup>. Funeral was held April 10<sup>th</sup>.

*On behalf of the parish, we express our deepest condolences to the bereaving families. Let us pray for the departed souls and for the bereaving families. May our heavenly Father grant peace and comfort that surpasses human wisdom and understanding.*

#### Memorial Prayer List

As you know, members can submit names of departed loves ones that needs to be included on the Memorial Prayer List. You probably have given the names of your departed ones in the past. However, please note that our church doesn't have a system to save such names with dates or automatically track and decide on which Sunday the name should be included on the prayer list. You need to enter the name on the Memorial Prayer list kept in the church office. Note: We do have a master list of departed faithful that we keep for remembering them on the Sunday of the departed faithful, which is a week before the Holy Lent begins. This list has names only no dates.

#### Life Events Announcements

Do you have a special day that you would like to announce, like a milestone wedding anniversary (25<sup>th</sup>, 50<sup>th</sup> etc.) or a birthday (50<sup>th</sup>, 60<sup>th</sup>, 70<sup>th</sup>, 80<sup>th</sup> etc.)? If you would like to, please inform the Secretary in advance. Please remember that even though our parish database includes birthday and wedding day, it doesn't include the year of birth or marriage. Unless you notify the Secretary or Clergy, they wouldn't know milestone events.

## MAY WEDDING ANNIVERSARIES

Mr. & Mrs. Sujith Mathew Thomas	May 3	Mr. & Mrs. Varghese Varghese	May 16
Mr. & Mrs. George T Charia	May 4	Mr. & Mrs. Geo Vaidian	May 23
Mr. & Mrs. John Thomas	May 4	Mr. & Mrs. Wilson Panicker	May 24
Mr. & Mrs. Joel G Panicker	May 4	Mr. & Mrs. Saji Abraham	May 25
Mr. & Mrs. George Varughese	May 4	Mr. & Mrs. Joseph M C.	May 26
Mr. & Mrs. Rev. Fr M K Kuriakose	May 5	Mr. & Mrs. Varghese Philip	May 26
Mr. & Mrs. Daniel P. George	May 8	Mr. & Mrs. Joel George Varghese	May 26
Mr. & Mrs. Dony Davy	May 12	Mr. & Mrs. Jobin Varghese	May 27
Mr. & Mrs. Kunjappy Koshy	May 14	Mr. & Mrs. Saji V Mathew	May 27
Mr. & Mrs. Oommen Mathai	May 14	Mr. & Mrs. Thomas Skariah	May 28
Mr. & Mrs. Mathew Jacob	May 15		





## MAY BIRTHDAYS

Mini Renji	May 1	Jaison Thomas	May 9	Prenin P. George	May 16
Karina Vattasseril	May 2	Sibi Varghese	May 9	Rekha M Philip	May 16
Aneeta Sara Sam	May 3	Joel Chacko	May 10	Jibu Vergis	May 17
Joyes M George	May 3	Marykutty George	May 10	Aleyamma Daniel	May 17
Mathukutty M. George	May 3	Renji Varghese	May 10	Thomas Skariah	May 18
Sharath M Ninan	May 3	Rajan Koshy	May 10	Gregory George Abraham	May 18
Priya Asish	May 3	Gigi Thomas	May 10	Tinju S Jose	May 18
Angel A Ninan	May 3	John Abraham	May 10	Reni Philip	May 19
Mammen Varghese	May 3	Ancy Jins	May 10	T C Varghese	May 20
Zachariah Thomas	May 4	Riohn V John	May 10	Reena Mathai	May 20
Anija Lukose	May 4	Nirmala Thomas	May 11	Abraham Koodathinalil Varughese	May 20
Anu Susan Joseph	May 4	Mathew Koshy	May 11	John P Mathai	May 20
Annamma Jacob	May 4	Jose V Abraham	May 12	Liziamma Geevarghese	May 20
Anila Jose	May 5	Thankamma John	May 12	Sunil George	May 20
Rachel Curian Koshy	May 5	Diya Daji	May 12	Ann Yohan George	May 21
Geo Vaidian	May 5	Anil George Panicker	May 12	Sosamma Benny	May 21
Gabriella Reynold	May 5	Ashna Babu	May 12	Annamma Mathew	May 21
Mathew V Thomas	May 5	Chandini P. George	May 12	Laly James	May 22
Thomas Vaidyan Mathew	May 5	Annamma Mathew	May 12	Jayce J Philip	May 22
Joel John Varghese	May 6	Usha Jacob	May 13	Daisymol Babu	May 22
Liz Pothen	May 6	Shane Varughese Thomas	May 13	Molly Mathai	May 22
Anoop T George	May 6	David Philip	May 13	Sathees Easow	May 22
Jicy Panicker	May 7	Saji George	May 14	Shawn Jacob	May 23
Ashley E Philip	May 7	Dhanya Anto Panicker	May 14	Anish Thomas	May 23
Jasmin Ann Philip	May 8	Christy Joy	May 15	Philip Mathai	May 23
Jessy R Padiyara	May 8	Kristin Ann Julice	May 15	Renjusha Rajan	May 23
Jane Sara Oommen	May 8	Jordan Mathew Philip	May 15	Suja Thomas	May 23
Mini Jose	May 8	Mary Joseph	May 15	Mary Rajan	May 24
Jino Jacob	May 9	Lincy Ann Philip	May 16	Ninan Chacko	May 24

Linda Varghese	May 24	Paul John	May 27	Sheena Vaidian	May 30
<b>Rev Fr Kunjukunju John</b>	May 24	Anna Varghese	May 27	George G Mampallil	May 30
Bindhu Alex	May 25	Joshua Ajo Raju	May 27	Rachel Varghese	May 30
Philip Varghese	May 25	Mariamamma Geevarghese	May 27	Isac P. George	May 30
Manju Shibu	May 25	Micah V Panicker	May 27	Biji Joseph	May 30
Susamma Thomas	May 25	Robin Philip	May 27	Thomas Vakkayil	May 30
Daniel Varghese	May 25	Babu M Kunjandy	May 28	Alan T Ninan	May 30
Anto G Panicker	May 25	Chacko P Chacko	May 28	Mariamamma Skaria	May 30
Anu Thomas	May 25	George Thadathil	May 28	Annamma Vaidian	May 30
Varughese Pulickal Chacko	May 25	Valsamma M Cheriyan	May 28	Ponnamma Baby	May 30
Shibu Varghese	May 25	Varghese Philip	May 28	Kunjumole Thankachan	May 30
Annamma Thomson	May 25	Sanju Varghese John	May 28	Ajan Achamma Thomas	May 30
Rinu John	May 25	Saji Varghese	May 28	Nathan Philip	May 30
Joji Thomas	May 25	Boby George	May 28	Aiden George	May 30
Saramma Thankachan	May 25	Smitha Robin	May 28	Aleyamma Thomas	May 30
Sobha P. Biju	May 25			Sijo P Mathai	May 31
Job John	May 25			Liza Oommen	May 31
Moncy Philip	May 25			Bini Thankachan	May 31
Jiju George	May 26			George Kuttiyil Thomas	May 31
Lizy Sam Kurisinmoottil	May 26	Samuel George	May 30	Suja Koshy	May 31
Jobin Jacob	May 26	Jessy Saji	May 30	Shibu M Baby	May 31
Jeena Elsa Abraham	May 26	Varughese John	May 30	Reny Varughese	May 31
Nisha Alexander	May 26	Susan Joe	May 30		
		Ponnachen Geevarghese	May 30		



# Sunday School News

Submitted by Binny Cherian, Principal  
(Tel.: 914.708.7981, Email: [cbinny@gmail.com](mailto:cbinny@gmail.com))

Sunday School Classes will be held weekly beginning at 12 noon with General Session.

## 2023 ASSIGNED COMPETITION WINNERS LIST

### DRAWING

#### GROUP 1 - GRADES:

##### NURSERY & KG

Tier 1	
1	Abel Anooj

#### GROUP 2 - GRADES: 1 & 2

Tier 1	
1	Madeline John
2	Abbey Mathew
3	Alexandra Geevarghese
4	Samuel Joseph

#### GROUP 3 - GRADES: 3 & 4

Tier 1	
1	Noah Alex
2	Zarah Kurian
3	Isaiah Anish
4	Eliza Panicker

#### GROUP 4 - GRADES: 5 & 6

Tier 1	
1	Liya Alex
2	Haya Mathew
3	Joshua Raju

#### GROUP 5 - GRADES: 7 & 8

Tier 1	
1	Hannah M. Varghese
2	Tania Jossy

#### GROUP 6 - GRADES: 9 & 10

Tier 1	
1	Samantha Philip
2	Ditty Mariam Saji
3	Marygrace Pothen

#### GROUP 7 - GRADES: 11 & 12

Tier 1	
1	Aleena Robin
2	Joshua Mathew

### ESSAY

#### GROUP 4 - GRADES: 5 & 6

Tier 1	
1	Reuben Varghese
2	Jacob Varghese

#### GROUP 5 - GRADES: 7 & 8

Tier 1	
1	Olivia Alex
2	Emily Varghese
3	Johanna Mukadiyil

#### GROUP 6 - GRADES: 9 & 10

Tier 1	
1	Treena Jossy

## One Year Bible Reading Schedule - May

Date	I	II	III
May 1	Deut. 18	Ecc. 10	Acts 9
May 2	Deut. 19	Ecc. 11	Acts 10
May 3	Deut. 20	Ecc. 12	Acts 11-12
May 4	Deut. 21	Song of Sol. 1	Acts 13
May 5	Deut. 22	Song of Sol. 2	Acts 14-15
May 6	Deut. 23	Song of Sol. 3	Acts 16-17
May 7	Deut. 24	Song of Sol. 4	Acts 18-19
May 8	Deut. 25	Song of Sol. 5	Acts 20
May 9	Deut. 26	Song of Sol. 6	Acts 21-22
May 10	Deut. 27	Song of Sol. 7	Acts 23-24
May 11	Deut. 28	Song of Sol. 8	Acts 25-26
May 12	Deut. 29	Isaiah 1	Acts 27
May 13	Deut. 30	Isaiah 2	Acts 28
May 14	Deut. 31	Isaiah 3-4	Col. 1
May 15	Deut. 32	Isaiah 5	Col. 2
May 16	Deut. 33-34	Isaiah 6	Col. 3-4
May 17	Joshua 1	Isaiah 7	1 Thess. 1-2
May 18	Joshua 2	Isaiah 8	1 Thess. 3-4
May 19	Joshua 3-4	Isaiah 9	1 Thess. 5
May 20	Joshua 5-6	Isaiah 10	2 Thess. 1-2
May 21	Joshua 7	Isaiah 11	2 Thess. 3
May 22	Joshua 8	Isaiah 12	1 Timothy 1-3
May 23	Joshua 9	Isaiah 13	1 Timothy 4-5
May 24	Joshua 10	Isaiah 14	1 Timothy 6
May 25	Joshua 11	Isaiah 15	2 Timothy 1
May 26	Joshua 12	Isaiah 16	2 Timothy 2
May 27	Joshua 13	Isaiah 17-18	2 Timothy 3-4
May 28	Joshua 14	Isaiah 19	Titus 1-3
May 29	Joshua 15	Isaiah 20-21	Phil. 1
May 30	Joshua 16	Isaiah 22	Hebrews 1-2
May 31	Joshua 17	Isaiah 23	Hebrews 3-5

**Please remember to pray for the Sunday school Children and Staff in your daily prayer.**





THE MGOCSM OF THE NORTHEAST AMERICAN DIOCESE PRESENTS...

# The Mirror of Erised

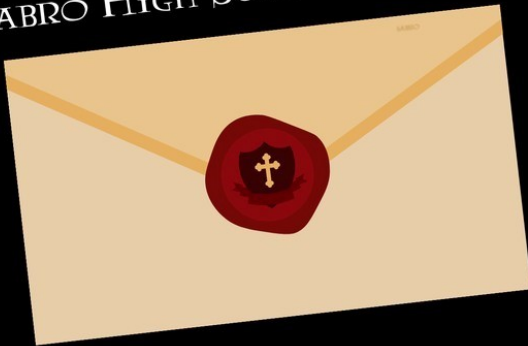
HE SAID TO THEM, "BUT WHO DO YOU SAY THAT I AM?"  
SIMON PETER REPLIED, "YOU ARE THE CHRIST, THE SON OF THE LIVING GOD."  
MATTHEW 16:15-16



MAIN SPEAKER

## Steven Christoforou

YOUR PRESENCE IS REQUESTED AT  
SABRO HIGH SCHOOL CAMP



Early Bird Registration (May 4th – May 30th): \$175  
Regular Registration (May 31st – July 1st): \$200  
Late Registration (July 2nd – July 8th): \$225

[TINYURL.COM/SABRO2023](https://tinyurl.com/sabro2023)

JULY 19 – 22, 2023

AT THE HOLY TRANSFIGURATION RETREAT CENTER



THE MGOCSM OF THE NORTHEAST AMERICAN DIOCESE

*PRESENTS*



MGOCSM OF THE NORTHEAST AMERICAN DIOCESE

**SUMMER SUMMIT**

HOLY TRANSFIGURATION RETREAT CENTER

# Love is the Passport

"Love is the passport with which man passes through all the heavenly doors without obstacles."

- St. John Chrysostom

**EARLY REGISTRATION NOW OPEN!**

<https://tinyurl.com/w9n73w6k>

   @MGOCSMNE

