

ST. THOMAS INDIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

1009 UNRUH AVE, PHILADELPHIA, PA 19111

Phone: (215) 342 1500 Fax: (215) 342 2700 www.stthomasphiladelphia.org

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

JUNE 2023

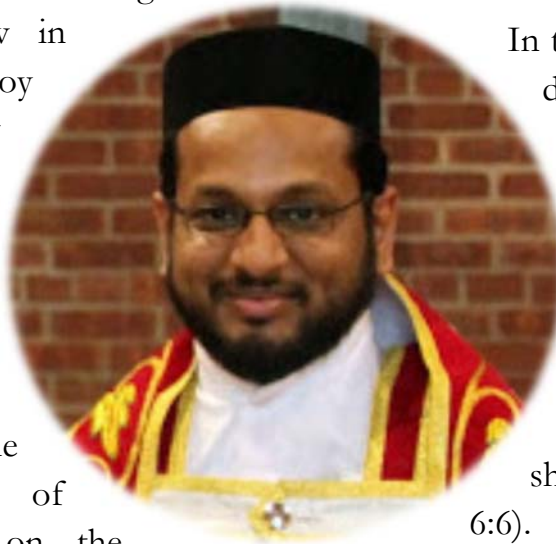
VOLUME XXVII ISSUE 6

Assistant Vicar's Message

Heart, Hands, Head: God-Human Relationship's 3 Nodes

What is a human being? This is a fundamental question that humans of every generation have asked. Scripture's fundamental answer is that the human being is created in the image of God in order to grow in likeness and to enjoy communion with God. How exactly does a human being relate to God? The book of Deuteronomy might offer us some assistance.

Deuteronomy is one of the most important books in the Holy Bible. The book of Deuteronomy is centered on the obedience to the law as the basis for the covenant relationship between God and His Chosen Nation. The book of Deuteronomy consists of three speeches of Moses before the entry of the Israelites into the promised land.



The first speech reviews the forty-year wilderness period; the second speech is a plea to strict obedience to the God who redeemed them from Egypt; the third speech is an assurance that even in disobedience Israel can repent and return to God. Deuteronomy 6:1-9 is part of the second speech. Deuteronomy 6:1-9 includes the famous part of Bible known as the "Shema". The word Shema is Hebrew for "listen". This prayer serves as a creed for Jewish people. Even today religious Jews repeat this prayer daily.

In the second speech, Moses gives detailed instructions of how a human being needs to relate to God. There seems to be three nodes or points in the human being to commune with God. (1) Heart: Moses says, "These words, which I am commanding you today, shall be on your heart" (Deut 6:6). (2) Hands: "You shall bind them as a sign on your hand" (Deut 6:8). (3) Head: "And they shall be as frontals on your forehead" (Deut 6:8). The frontals between the forehead refer to the human mind or head.

These three nodes correspond to our emotional, cognitive, and practical self respectively. The heart is the seat of the emotions. Our relationship with God needs to be affective. We must love God from the depth of our being. This node is also related to the desire that we have for God. Hands corresponds to our actions and practices. This works at two levels. All of our actions are supposed to be driven by our love for God. On the other hand, we are also supposed to practice spiritual exercises to connect with God. Prayer, Scripture reading, receiving Holy Qurbana, silence, confession, fasting, etc. are spiritual practices for communion with God. Head, the third node corresponds to the cognitive or intellectual center of our self. Knowing God involves knowing more about

who God is and also the faith that He wants us to have.

It is important for all three nodes to be balanced in the life of a human being. If one of the nodes is out of balance, that leads to an improper relationship towards God. If we only have an emotional attachment to God, then we lack depth and true life. If we are only doing righteous actions and spiritual practices without devotion and intellectual reasoning, then our faith is mere ritual and will become stale. If we are only relating to God only with our intellect, then we lack piety and true devotion as well as a life of practice. Let us try to have a balanced relationship to God.

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 May

General Body Meeting – May 21st

The Parish General Body met on May 21st after Holy Qurbana. The final accounts and Annual Report for the year 2022 were approved. A General Body meeting to review the Half Yearly accounts for 2023 will be scheduled this Summer.

May 7th – OCYM Bake Sale

Our OCYM raised money for their 2023 ministry initiatives by preparing and selling to



the parish members Egg Curry and Appam during our Sunday refreshment hour.

May 14th – Mother’s Day

Our Parish and MGOCSM wished all the Parish’s mothers a very happy Mother’s Day

as expressed through Mr. Jayden Mathew who



gave a message on behalf of the Church. The MGOCSM also provided a fresh rose to each

mother during Dismissal.

May 21st – Karuna Blood Drive

Our Karuna Ministry sponsored a Blood Drive. The dedicated volunteers facilitated with the Philadelphia Red Cross staff to register the donors, collect blood, and provide snacks and beverages.



There were 41 donors from our Parish and the local community.

The Karuna volunteers would like to express their gratitude for all who participated.

May 27th – MGOCSM Area Bible Study

Our former Assistant Vicar, Rev. Fr. Gheevarghese John led a Bible study for the whole area's MGOCSM (7 parishes) youth.

The theme of the Bible Study was the "Road to Emmaus" from St. Luke 23:13-35. More than 40 area youth participated.



June Events and General Announcements

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.

Digital Payment: All donations may be made by Applepay / GPay / Venmo - members can scan QR codes affixed on the glass wall outside the Church office

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.

Upcoming Diocesan Events

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).

Northeast American MGOCSM Picnic (June 30 – July 1)

To be held at the Holy Transfiguration Retreat Center.

Pre-register at <https://bit.ly/MGOCSMREFRESH> by May 30, 2023.

See **attached** flyer for more details.

Northeast American Diocese Family and Youth Conference (July 12-15)

July 12-15, 2023 at the Holy Transfiguration Retreat Center.

Registration still available at Regular Rate at:

<https://form.jotform.com/fyconf2023/fyc-2023-registration>

See **attached** flyer for more details.

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 30th.

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 17th - July 23rd) - \$200 US (\$200CA)

"Late" Registration (July 24th - August 1st)
- \$250

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

DEADLINE FOR ANYONE WHO NEEDS TRANSPORTATION WILL BE JULY 1ST

Parish Committee Members:

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

Registration will close after August 1, 2023

For more information, please contact:

See **attached** flyer for more details.

Fasts & Feasts

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

Diocesan Calendar

<u>Date</u>	<u>Event</u>
June 17	Diocesan Assembly
June 17	GROW One Day Conference
June 30 – July 1	NE American Diocese MGOCSM Picnic @ HTRC
July 12-15	Family & Youth Conference @ HTRC
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

Memorials

- ❖ **Mrs. Susy George (96)**, Mother of our Diocesan Metropolitan. Burial Services were conducted on May 12th at St. John's Orthodox Valiyapally, Mepral and led by the Metropolitan, Zachariah Mar Nicholovos.
- ❖ **Mrs. Achamma Mathai (80)**, Mother of Daji Mathew (#330) and Grandmother of Joel Philip (#378).
- ❖ **Mr. PC Varghese**, cousin of John P. Mathai. May 21st.

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 loved 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 (25th, 50th etc.) or a birthday (50th, 60th, 70th, 80th 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.

JUNE WEDDING ANNIVERSARIES

Mr. & Mrs. Mathew Koshy	Jun 1	Mr. & Mrs. Ninan Chacko	Jun 9
Mr. & Mrs. Marshel Varghese	Jun 3	Mr. & Mrs. Princy Mathai	Jun 9
Mr. & Mrs. Jacob P Chacko	Jun 3	Mr. & Mrs. Shinu P Thankachan	Jun 10
Mr. & Mrs. Sunil Thomas	Jun 3	Mr. & Mrs. Mathew Varghese	Jun 10
Mr. & Mrs. Anooj K Thomas	Jun 3	Mr. & Mrs. Nallumalayil Joseph George	Jun 12
Mr. & Mrs. Biji Joseph	Jun 5	Mr. & Mrs. Rijon C Simon	Jun 12
Mr. & Mrs. T C Varghese	Jun 6	Mr. & Mrs. Asish Mathew	Jun 12
Mr. & Mrs. Shaju Varghese	Jun 7	Mr. & Mrs. Jins Thomas	Jun 12
Mr. & Mrs. Anoop T George	Jun 7	Mr. & Mrs. Brown Varghese	Jun 21
Mr. & Mrs. Tibin Koshy	Jun 8	Mr. & Mrs. Jimmy James	Jun 22
Mr. & Mrs. Varghese Mammen	Jun 8	Mr. & Mrs. Daniel Varghese	Jun 25
Mr. & Mrs. Thankachan Samuel	Jun 8	Mr. & Mrs. Joseph Philip	Jun 26
Mr. & Mrs. Justin Mathai	Jun 9	Mr. & Mrs. Jose Ninan	Jun 30
Mr. & Mrs. Thomas Varghese	Jun 9		



JUNE BIRTHDAYS

Anushka Sara Abraham	Jun 1	Micah Cheeran Rijon	Jun 10	Gina Abraham George	Jun 21
Mini Koshy	Jun 1	Rachel Mathew	Jun 11	Abraham Varghese	Jun 22
Abraham T George	Jun 1	Jessy Jacob	Jun 13	Rohan Z Paulose	Jun 22
Rev. Fr. Sujit Thomas	Jun 1	Mathew E Thomas	Jun 13	Suma Philip	Jun 22
Jins Thomas	Jun 1	Anooj K Thomas	Jun 13	Hayden Joel Varghese	Jun 23
Oommen Geevarghese Panicker	Jun 2	Emily Vattasseril	Jun 14	Aidan Robin	Jun 23
Jancy Manoj	Jun 2	Elizabeth George	Jun 15	Ronnie Cherian	Jun 23
Mary Varghese	Jun 2	Sheen Marie Thomas	Jun 17	Shishira Philip	Jun 23
Nathen Samuel	Jun 4	Treena Jossy	Jun 17	Marina Philip	Jun 23
Merlin M. George	Jun 4	Aleyamma Mathew	Jun 17	Gerin K. Abraham	Jun 24
Trintumol Thomas	Jun 4	Tibin Koshy	Jun 17	Melisa Elizabeth Thomas	Jun 24
Jiju Mathew	Jun 4			Jia Elizabeth Varghese	Jun 26
Santhosh M Baby	Jun 5			Anoop John	Jun 28
Aleyamma Thomas	Jun 5	Lillian Mathai	Jun 18	Justin Vaidian	Jun 29
Mabel Thomas	Jun 6	Mathew George	Jun 18	Leah Sara Thomas	Jun 29
Rachel Varghese	Jun 6	Varghese Mathew	Jun 18	Shawn Vaidyan Lukose	Jun 29
Andrew Varghese	Jun 6	Zachary Mathai	Jun 18	Renjy Vattasseril	Jun 29
Steven Tobin	Jun 6	Teena S Anu	Jun 18	Ashley Ann Abraham	Jun 29
Sneha Mathew	Jun 7	Joshua Jose	Jun 19	Maya S Raju	Jun 29
Sunitha Anish	Jun 7	Elna Mariam Thomas	Jun 20	Misha P Mathai	Jun 29
Anna G Thomas	Jun 9	Jissy Abraham	Jun 20	Divya Mariyam Babu	Jun 30
Lynnson Mathews Rajan	Jun 9	Timothy P. Biju	Jun 21	Ancy Binu	Jun 30
Steven Kurian	Jun 9			Sonia Kalathil	Jun 30

Sunday School News

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

- The last day for Sunday School for the academic year, 2022-2023 is June 25th. Classes will resume after the Labor Day on September 10th.
- OVBS 2023 will be held in person at our church on Friday, August 4th, and Saturday, August 5th from 9am - 4pm. Flyer is attached.

One Year Bible Reading Schedule - June

Date	I	II	III
June 1	Joshua 18	Isaiah 24	Hebrews 6-7
June 2	Joshua 19	Isaiah 25	Hebrews 8-9
June 3	Joshua 20-21	Isaiah 26-27	Hebrews 10
June 4	Joshua 22	Isaiah 28	Hebrews 11
June 5	Joshua 23-24	Isaiah 29	Hebrews 12
June 6	Judges 1	Isaiah 30	Hebrews 13
June 7	Judges 2-3	Isaiah 31	James 1
June 8	Judges 4-5	Isaiah 32	James 2
June 9	Judges 6	Isaiah 33	James 3-4
June 10	Judges 7-8	Isaiah 34	James 5
June 11	Judges 9	Isaiah 35	1 Peter 1
June 12	Judges 10-11	Isaiah 36	1 Peter 2
June 13	Judges 12-13	Isaiah 37	1 Peter 3-5
June 14	Judges 14-15	Isaiah 38	2 Peter 1-2
June 15	Judges 16	Isaiah 39	2 Peter 3
June 16	Judges 17-18	Isaiah 40	1 John 1-2
June 17	Judges 19	Isaiah 41	1 John 3-4
June 18	Judges 20	Isaiah 42	1 John 5
June 19	Judges 21-21	Isaiah 43-43	2 John - 3 John
June 20	Ruth 1-2	Isaiah 44	Jude 1
June 21	Ruth 3-4	Isaiah 45	Rev. 1-2
June 22	1 Samuel 1	Isaiah 46-47	Rev. 3-4
June 23	1 Samuel 2	Isaiah 48	Rev. 5-6
June 24	1 Samuel 3	Isaiah 49	Rev. 7-9
June 25	1 Samuel 4	Isaiah 50	Rev. 10-11
June 26	1 Samuel 5-6	Isaiah 51	Rev. 12-13
June 27	1 Samuel 7-8	Isaiah 52	Rev. 14
June 28	1 Samuel 9	Isaiah 53	Rev. 15-16
June 29	1 Samuel 10	Isaiah 54	Rev. 17-18
June 30	1 Samuel 11-12	Isaiah 55	Rev. 19-20

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

OVBS 2023
PHILADELPHIA AREA
August 4th-5th

Fri. & Sat. (9am -4pm)

Theme: Abide in God

St John 15:4

**At St Thomas Indian Orthodox
Church , Unruh Ave, PA**

Registration:

<https://tinyurl.com/OVBS2023>

Fee: \$30



For more information contact :
Judy Benny and Marina Mathew (Coordinators 2023)



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Email Us!
ministry@mgocsmne.org



Visit our Website for More
mgocsmne.org

MGOCSM OF THE NORTHEAST
AMERICAN DIOCESE
PRESENTS

REFRESH

A WEEKEND OF FUN AND FAITH

Holy Transfiguration Retreat Center

Stay the night at HTRC on Friday or join us on
Saturday for a full day of fellowship!

June 30 | 5PM Check-In

Bonfire & Dinner

Fee: \$55

July 1, 2023 | 9:30 AM - 4 PM

Picnic Games & Lunch

Fee: \$30

Pre-register at bit.ly/MGOCSMREFRESH by **May 30th, 2023**



THE MGOCSM OF THE NORTHEAST AMERICAN DIOCESE PRESENTS...

The Mirror of Erised

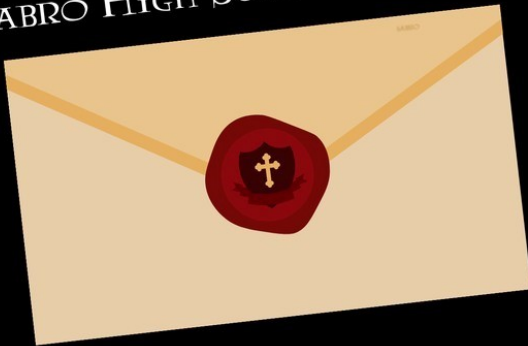
HE SAID TO THEM, "BUT WHO DO YOU SAY THAT I AM?"
SIMON PETER REPLIED, "YOU ARE THE CHRIST, THE SON OF THE LIVING GOD."
MATTHEW 16:15-16



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



FYC '23

JULY 12 - 15, 2023 @ HTRC

**REGISTRATION
CLOSING SOON...**

DISCOUNTED RATE ENDS

May 31, 2023

<https://form.jotform.com/fyconf2023/fyc-2023-registration>
