

# ST. THOMAS INDIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

1009 UNRUH AVE, PHILADELPHIA, PA 19111

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## MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

SEPTEMBER 2023

VOLUME XXVII ISSUE 9

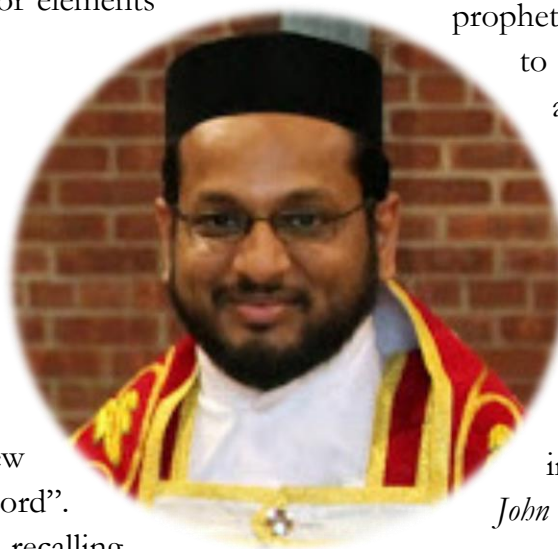
### Assistant Vicar's Message

#### Day 2 – Elements of Prayer

We can pray to God with or without words. What type of words do we use? The type of words used in prayer can be categorized in different headings. The acronym A.C.T.S. is useful for us to remember four types of words or elements of prayer.

#### Adoration

Adoration is praising God for who God is and what He has done. The Lord's prayer begins with us praising the name of God. Halleluiah is a phrase that recurs in our prayers. Halleluiah is a Hebrew phrase that means "Praise the Lord". Many times, we praise God by recalling how majestic and incomprehensible God is to us. Other times, we praise God by recalling his awesome works like the creation of the universe and the work of salvation through Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. The trisagion is a good example of a prayer of adoration (*See Rev. 4:8*). In



our private prayers we can praise God for all the blessings He has given to us. (*See Psalms 63:3-4; 95:3-5; Hebrews 13:15; Revelation 5:12*)

#### Confession

Confession of our sinfulness and unworthiness is an essential element of prayer. Remember we learned yesterday that through prayer we enter into the presence of God. When we stand in the presence of the Holy One, we remember how sinful and unworthy we are. When the prophet Isaiah had a vision of God in His temple, the prophet confessed his sinfulness: "Woe to me, for I am ruined! Because I am a man of unclean lips, And I live among a people of unclean lips" (Isaiah 6:5). Most of our liturgies (prayer services) begin with Psalm 51, a psalm of repentance. The Holy Qurbana includes many prayers of repentance including the inspiring Husoyo prayer. (*See I John 1:4-9; Psalm 25:11; Jeremiah 31:34*)

#### Thanksgiving

The verse that follows our theme verse says, "in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you" (1 Thess 5:18). We have to remember that everything we have is a gift

from God. We need to thank God for the gift of salvation and for our personal blessings. The word “eucharist” is another term for Holy Qurbana and “eucharist” means “thanksgiving.” In the Holy Qurbana we say, “This Qurbana is mercy, peace, sacrifice, and thanksgiving”. Through the prayers of thanksgiving, we should adopt an attitude of gratitude.

**Supplication**

Supplication means requests. Traditionally when we think of prayer, we think of the requests we make to God. We might ask God for protection, forgiveness, healing, and other blessings. In our prayers, “bovoosos” are supplicatory prayers. The Syriac word “bovooso” means supplication. St

Paul says, “Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God” (Philippians 4:6). Prayer for others (intercession) is a special type of supplication. (*See also Ephesians 6:18; 1 Tim 2:1-4*).

The A.C.T.S acronym is useful to remember the different elements of prayer and also to form our own prayers in private and group settings.

Lovingly, Fr. Sujit Thomas, Asst. Vicar

Ref: See “Abba Father” by Rev Fr Baby Varghese, Unit I, Lesson 3 “Elements of Worship”

**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 August

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### August 4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> – Orthodox Vacation Bible School

More than 200 children from the Philadelphia Area parishes participated in the first OVBS held in our area since the COVID Pandemic. Thanks to the many volunteers who both taught and otherwise supported the running of this, the largest OVBS in our Northeastern Diocese.

### August 12<sup>th</sup> – MMVS Retreat

The Area Marth Mariam Vanitha Samajam conducted its Shoonoyo Retreat at our Parish. The chief speaker was our Vicar, Rev. Fr. M.K. Kuriakose.

### August 15<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> – College Summer Summit

The Summer Summit is a new initiative by the MGOCSM of our Diocese conducted at the Holy Transfiguration Retreat Center. The main speaker was Rev. Fr. Immanuel Punnoose from the Southwest Diocese. More than 60 college-aged students attended.

### August 19<sup>th</sup> – Annual Church Picnic

Our Annual Church Picnic took place at Wilson Farm Park. Events included our traditional games for young and old alike such as candy-picking, lemon and spoon, shotput, musical chairs, and a variety of races. Once again, our Food Team provided both breakfast and a delicious cookout for lunch. Thanks goes out to the Picnic Coordinator, Mr. Mathews Varghese for organizing this event.

*See group photo on next page.*

### August 27<sup>th</sup> – Parish Onam Celebration

Our Parish celebrated the traditional Kerala Harvest Festival, Onam, in the most traditional of celebrations. The parish members were served the Sadya at each table on a banana leaf. The celebration was capably coordinated by our Parish OCYM with help from MGOCSM and other spiritual organizations.

*See group photo on next page.*



### Church Picnic



### Parish Onam





### Parish Onam



# September 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.

**Digital Payment:** All donations may be made by Apple Pay / 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.

## Save the Date

**September 7<sup>th</sup> – Feast of the Nativity of the Virgin Mary**

Evening Prayer begins 6:30pm followed by Holy Qurbana and Festal Services

**September 13<sup>th</sup> – Feast of the Holy Cross**

Evening Prayer begins 6:30pm followed by Holy Qurbana and Festal Services

**September 15<sup>th</sup> & 16<sup>th</sup> – MOCF Gospel Convention (Flyer Attached)**

@ St. George Orthodox Church, Fairless Hills.

**September 17<sup>th</sup> – FOCUS on Family Event (Flyer Attached)**

Online @ 6:30PM

**September 23<sup>rd</sup> – MGOCSM Back to School Conference: “Finding our Identity as Christians”**

- Speaker will be Rev. Subdeacon Predeep Chacko.
- Registration is \$15 before September 16<sup>th</sup> and \$20 afterward.

**October 7<sup>th</sup> – Parish Harvest Festival**

Come experience all the fun and games at our Annual Harvest Festival. There will also be food, auctions, and our world class cultural performance. Tickets will be available in September.

**October 14<sup>th</sup> MGOCSM Gala & Reunion (Flyer Attached)**

**Fasts & Feasts**

<u>Date</u>	<u>Event</u>
9/7	Feast of the Nativity of the Virgin Mary
9/13	Feast of the Holy Cross

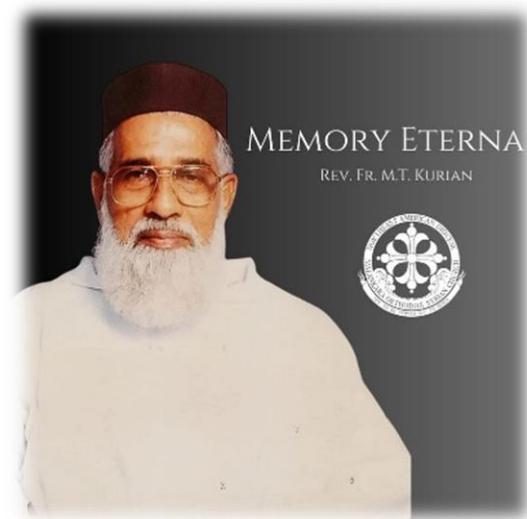
**Diocesan Calendar**

<u>Date</u>	<u>Event</u>
September 17	FOCUS on Family Event
September 15-16	MOCF Gospel Convention
September 23	MGOCSM Back to School Conference
September 27-28	Clergy Conference
October 14	MMVS Annual One-Day Conference
November 25	MGOCSM One-Day Conference

**Departed Clergy**

**August 1<sup>st</sup> – Rev. Fr. M.T. Kurian**

M.T. Kurian Achen was a pioneer priest and had served as Vicar of various parishes of our Diocese, especially in the Greater Washington D.C. and Baltimore area.



### August 18<sup>th</sup> – Rev. Fr. Andrew (Leeson) Daniel

Leeson Achen had served as the Vicar of various parishes of our Diocese, as a Diocesan Council member, and also as the Vice President of the MGOCSM of our Diocese.



### August 20<sup>th</sup> – His Grace Zachariah Mar Anthonios, Former Metropolitan of the Kollam Diocese

Thirumeni was the former Metropolitan of the Kollam Diocese. As Thirumeni shifted to retirement, Thirumeni resided at the Anthonios Monastery in Kollam.



**May the memories of our Departed Clergy be eternal!**

## Member Announcements

### Memorials

- ❖ August 1<sup>st</sup> – **Mrs. Lilykutty Abraham**, mother of Mr. John Abraham (#323) and Mrs. Sheeja Mammen (#324)
- ❖ August 12<sup>th</sup> – **Poulose Maveli**, father of Paul Maveli (#329)



- ❖ August 15<sup>th</sup> – **Mr. Thomas Varghese**, Father of Mr. Sunil Thomas (#109) and Mr. Moni Thomas (#229)
- ❖ August 17<sup>th</sup> – **Mr. P.M. Abraham**, Uncle of Dr. Mathew P. Cherian (#241)
- ❖ August 17<sup>th</sup> – **Mr. Joseph P. Iype**, Uncle of Dr. Mathew P. Cherian (#241)
- ❖ August 23<sup>rd</sup> – **Mrs. Achammaa Eapen** (85), mother of Mrs. Mini Jose (#238)
- ❖ August 23<sup>rd</sup> – **Mrs. Thresiamma Chacko** (95), grandmother of Mrs. Suvarna Varghese (#127)

*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 (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.

## SEPTEMBER WEDDING ANNIVERSARIES

Mr. & Mrs. Job John	Sep 1	Mr. & Mrs. Jacob K. Thekekuttu	Sep 14
Mr. & Mrs. Rajesh Geevarghese	Sep 3	Mr. & Mrs. Saju Paul	Sep 14
Mr. & Mrs. Varughese John	Sep 7	Mr. & Mrs. Mathew Varghese	Sep 15
Mr. & Mrs. Binoy Varghese	Sep 7	Mr. & Mrs. Jiju George	Sep 16
Mr. & Mrs. Jacob T. Mathai	Sep 8	Mr. & Mrs. Jino Jacob	Sep 19
Mr. & Mrs. Thankachan K Mathai	Sep 10	Mr. & Mrs. Anoop John	Sep 20
Mr. & Mrs. Anoop George	Sep 10	Mr. & Mrs. George Varghese	Sep 27
Mr. & Mrs. Babu M Kunjandy	Sep 12	Mr. & Mrs. Anu Thomas	Sep 28
Mr. & Mrs. Thomaskutty Varghese	Sep 13	Mr. & Mrs. Yohannan Mathew	Sep 30
Mr. & Mrs. Joy Jacob	Sep 13		



## SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS

Alvin Anil	Sep 1	Jennifer Mariam Philip	Sep 11	Anu. Pulickal Varughese	Sep 22
Susmitha Thomas	Sep 2	Nivedh Philip	Sep 11	Ajin John Abraham	Sep 22
Vivek K Paulose	Sep 2	Brown Varghese	Sep 13	Sarah M Samuel	Sep 23
Jacob Kuruvilla	Sep 3	Zariah Geevarghese	Sep 14	Viji P Koshy	Sep 23
Carolyn Miriam Cherian	Sep 3	Jonathan B Varghese	Sep 15	Alissa Jose	Sep 23
Panickal Y Mathaikutty	Sep 3	Sosamma Educula Chacko	Sep 15	Smitha Jacob	Sep 23
Joshua J Mathew	Sep 4	Elsa Thomas	Sep 16	Joanna Sunil George	Sep 25
Angelina Susan Zachariah	Sep 4	Kunjamma Thomas	Sep 16	Gitty George Abraham	Sep 25
Jacob Chacko	Sep 4	Saramma Varughese	Sep 17	Shinu Augustin	Sep 25
Elizabeth Thomas	Sep 4	Annamma Geevarghese	Sep 17	Adam Mavelly Paul	Sep 26
Alex T Raju	Sep 5	Suja Mary Mathew	Sep 18	Varghese Panicker	Sep 26
Simon Daniel Jaison	Sep 5			Nicole Samuel	Sep 26
Liya Sara Aji	Sep 5			Smitha Thomas	Sep 27
Niju Mathew Cheriyan	Sep 6			Shaji Thomas	Sep 28
Shinu P Thankachan	Sep 7			Smitha J Mathew	Sep 28
Raji George	Sep 7			Anoop Joseph George	Sep 28
Varghese P Abraham	Sep 8			Linda Elsa Aji	Sep 28
Anoop George	Sep 8			Christiana Rachel Shibu	Sep 28
Samkutty John	Sep 8			Jibin Vaidian	Sep 29
Isaac Varghese	Sep 9			Achamma Kurian	Sep 29
Hanah M. mathew	Sep 9			Julee P Saji	Sep 29
Priya Mariam Saji	Sep 11			Binish George	Sep 30





# Sunday School News

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

- Classes will resume after the Labor Day on September 10<sup>th</sup>.
- OVBS 2023 was held in person at our church on Friday, August 4<sup>th</sup>, and Saturday, August 5<sup>th</sup> from 9am - 4pm.

## One Year Bible Reading Schedule - September

<i>Date</i>	I	II	III
<i>September 1</i>	2 Kings 6	Lam. 2	1 Cor. 15
<i>September 2</i>	2 Kings 7	Lam. 3	1 Cor. 16
<i>September 3</i>	2 Kings 8	Lam. 4	2 Cor. 1-2
<i>September 4</i>	2 Kings 9	Lam. 5	2 Cor. 3-4
<i>September 5</i>	2 Kings 10	Ezekiel 1	2 Cor. 5-7
<i>September 6</i>	2 Kings 11-12	Ezekiel 2	2 Cor. 8-9
<i>September 7</i>	2 Kings 13	Ezekiel 3	2 Cor. 10-11
<i>September 8</i>	2 Kings 14	Ezekiel 4	2 Cor. 12-13
<i>September 9</i>	2 Kings 15	Ezekiel 5	Luke 1
<i>September 10</i>	2 Kings 16	Ezekiel 6	Luke 2
<i>September 11</i>	2 Kings 17	Ezekiel 7	Luke 3
<i>September 12</i>	2 Kings 18	Ezekiel 8	Luke 4
<i>September 13</i>	2 Kings 19	Ezekiel 9	Luke 5
<i>September 14</i>	2 Kings 20	Ezekiel 10	Luke 6
<i>September 15</i>	2 Kings 21	Ezekiel 11	Luke 7
<i>September 16</i>	2 Kings 22-23	Ezekiel 12	Luke 8
<i>September 17</i>	2 Kings 24-25	Ezekiel 13	Luke 9
<i>September 18</i>	1 Chron. 1	Ezekiel 14	Luke 10
<i>September 19</i>	1 Chron. 2	Ezekiel 15	Luke 11
<i>September 20</i>	1 Chron. 3	Ezekiel 16	Luke 12
<i>September 21</i>	1 Chron. 4	Ezekiel 17	Luke 13-14
<i>September 22</i>	1 Chron. 5	Ezekiel 18	Luke 15
<i>September 23</i>	1 Chron. 6	Ezekiel 19	Luke 16
<i>September 24</i>	1 Chron. 7	Ezekiel 20	Luke 17
<i>September 25</i>	1 Chron. 8	Ezekiel 21	Luke 18
<i>September 26</i>	1 Chron. 9	Ezekiel 22	Luke 19
<i>September 27</i>	1 Chron. 10	Ezekiel 23	Luke 20
<i>September 28</i>	1 Chron. 11	Ezekiel 24	Luke 21
<i>September 29</i>	1 Chron. 12	Ezekiel 25	Luke 22
<i>September 30</i>	1 Chron. 13-14	Ezekiel 26	Luke 23

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



# FOCUS ON FAMILY

*Save the Date*



Friday Sept 15, 2023  
6:30 pm EST

A Panel Discussion designed to support **PARENTS** as they send children off to college with their survival toolkit...

Communication

Peer Relationships

Resources



Sbdn. Shojil Abraham,  
MGOCSM General Secretary



Mrs. Varsha Varghese,  
MA, LLPC



THE MGOCSM OF THE NORTHEAST AMERICAN DIOCESE  
INVITES YOU TO OUR FIRST EVER

**GALA & REUNION**

3-COURSE MEAL - LIVE MUSIC - COMEDY -

*Join us as we to celebrate the MGOCSM leaders of North America! Reconnect with old friends, and meet new ones over a great meal & entertainment! All proceeds will support the ministry of the MGOCSM of the Northeast American Diocese*

~ 10.14.2023 ~

AT ELEVEN O'CLOCK IN THE MORNING  
BARNYARD & CARRIAGE HOUSE  
754 TOTOWA ROAD, TOTOWA, NJ 07512

*Formal Attire is Requested*



SCAN CODE FOR TICKETS  
RSVP BY SEPT. 25 2023  
VENMO: @MGOCSM-NEAD



# MALANKARA ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP OF PENNSYLVANIA (MOCF PA)



## Gospel Convention 2023 പ്രബോധന ശുശ്രൂഷ 2023

Blessed rather are those who hear the word of God and obey it!  
ദൈവത്തിന്റെ വചനം കേട്ടു പ്രമാണിക്കുന്നവർ അത്രേ ഭാഗ്യവാന്മാർ

St. Luke 11:28

Friday, September 15 & Saturday, September 16

### Location:

St. George Malankara Orthodox Church, 520 Hood Blvd, Fairless Hills, PA 19030

### Schedule:

Evening Prayer: 6:00 p.m., Devotional Songs: 6:40 p.m.

Message: 7:00 p.m.

### Convention Choir:

MOCF PA Choir (Organized by: Mr. Philip Varghese)

### Contact Details

Very Rev. K. Mathai Cor Episcopa, Chairman (215) 526 4813; Rev. Fr. K. K. John, Vice-Chairman (215) 904 7398; Rev. Fr. Abu Peter (914) 806 4595, Convention Coordinator; Mr. John Panicker, Secretary, (215) 605 5109; Dr. Jerin G Juby, Treasurer (215) 478 1090



Chief Guest

**H.G. Zachariah Mar Severios Metropolitan**  
Idukki Diocese

**Member Parishes:** St. Gregorios Malankara Orthodox Church, St. Mary's Orthodox Church of Philadelphia, St. Mary's Malankara Orthodox Cathedral, St. Thomas Malankara Orthodox Church, St. John's Indian Orthodox Church, St. Thomas Indian Orthodox Church, St. George Malankara Orthodox Church, & St. Luke Orthodox Mission Church