

ST. THOMAS INDIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

1009 UNRUH AVE, PHILADELPHIA, PA 19111

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MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

AUGUST 2025

VOLUME XXIX ISSUE 8

Vicar's Message

St. Mary in our Liturgy

August is the month of the most important Memorial Day of St. Mary. St. Mary is remembered in December, prior to Christmas on annunciation Sunday, in January as the Festival of the Seeds”, on March 25 the fixed date of Annunciation, and September 1-8 her birth. No other saint is remembered in the Church as much as St. Mary is. No wonder why St. Mary has an important part in the liturgical tradition of the Orthodox Church.

In the liturgical tradition of the Church, Mary occupies an important place. Every Kauma ends with “Hail Mary” prayer. In the daily prayers for a week, Wednesday is dedicated for St. Mary. This is a set of prayers we use on Sundays during the “season of the Cross”. If we look at the structure of every day’s prayer, we can see several prayers and hymns are attributed to St. Mary. Especially for the midnight prayers, the first Kauma is dedicated to St. Mary. Of the Kukulions used for daily



prayers and Holy Qurbana, one is dedicated to St. Mary. Special memorial festival in honor of St. Mary, special prayer including Promion, Sedra and Ethro prayers are full of memory of St. Mary. The same is seen in the special prayers of Christmas Day worship. Above all, the Intercessory prayer to St. Mary as a separate entity is also used in worship. Most of the parishes in the Malankara Church in Kerala do use these Intercessory prayers almost every Sunday because people request her intercession every week. To make a long story short, intercession to St. Mary is an essential part of Orthodox worship system.

Many imageries are used in the worship taken from the Bible such as the Ark of Covenant

Moses made (symbolizing the 10 commandments the Word of God kept in it, St. Mary bearing the Word of God, Christ Himself), the burning bush that Moses saw, the Tree that gave the lamb for Abraham's sacrifice, the rock that gave water to Israelites, the fish that gave the drachma, the locked chariot that Ezekiel saw, the locked garden and sealed fountain (in Songs of Solomon), etc. These are all indications of the importance of the intercession to St. Mary in the Church. In fact, a branch of theology namely, 'Mariology' was developed during liturgical development in the history of the Church. In the 5th century the name "Theotokos" became popular calling St. Mary the 'bearer of God'.

One may wonder why this much of importance is attached St. Mary! This is because the intercession of St. Mary became part of the spiritual experience of many Christians, especially the Roman Catholic and Orthodox

Christians. Many apparitions (appearances) and personal experience of the intervention of St. Mary on different occasions became the means of seeking her mediation. Thus, many pilgrim centers like Fatima, Lourdes, Zeitoun, Manarcadu, Velankanni and so on became very popular. All these pilgrim centers carry millions of miracles attached to the intercession of St. Mary.

One thing we should keep in mind is that St. Mary is not God. She is not equal to Jesus either but she as a normal woman was able to obey God perfectly and proved herself a means of blessing to others. This is possible for us too. By submitting to the will of God we can also be means of blessing to others. St. Mary is teaching this lesson to us through her life witness. May her prayers be a solace for us.

Lovingly,

Rev. Fr. M. K. Kuriakose, Vicar

Events and Announcements

Past Events Highlights

- **July 25th – 27th** – Talmeedo Men’s Ministry Camp was held at HTRC.
- **July 27th** – Parish Annual Graduate Felicitation.
- **Aug 2nd** – MMVS One-day Area conference was held at St. George Fairless Hills Church.
- **Aug 3rd** – Parish General Body meeting.
- **Aug 6th** – Feast of the Holy Transfiguration.
- **Aug 6th – 9th** – Sabro High School camp was held at HTRC.
- **Aug 9th – 10** – MOCF Convention took place at St. Mary’s Cathedral.

Upcoming Events

- **Aug 15th** – Feast of the Assumption of St. Mary.
- **Aug 16th** – Annual Parish Picnic will be held at West Goshen Park.
- **Aug 17th** – Diabetes Awareness seminar conducted by The Good Samaritan Society (Snehatheram) will be held in our Parish Hall.
- **Aug 23rd** – STIOC 3v3 Basketball Tourney will be held at Pickup USA at Warminster.
- **Aug 30th** – Rev. Fr. M. K. Kuriakose Golden Jubilee Ordination Anniversary.
- **Sep 6th** – Season of Us – Joint Program with GROW and Talmeedo event at Stagehouse Tavern, Somerset, NJ.

Parish Highlights

Graduates Felicitation







Church Reminders

Digital Payment: All donations can 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 items such as coats, 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. Unclaimed items will be donated to charity.

Spiritual Organization Updates

Men's Forum

- Men's Forum has weekly meetings after the Holy Qurbana every Sunday.

FOCUS

- Monthly meetings are conducted by FOCUS.

MMVS

- MMVS has weekly meetings after the Holy Qurbana every Sunday.
- MMVS Area Canned Food Collection is ongoing during the month of August to celebrate MMVS month.

MGOCSM

- Bible Study will be held in church on the last Saturday of the month.

OCYM

- OCYM has weekly meetings after Holy Qurbana every Sunday.

CAYA

Regular monthly meetings are conducted virtually or in person.

GROW

- GROW Sprouts activities are taking place. Please see the GROW Sprouts calendar for details.

Save the Dates

50th Ordination Anniversary Celebration of Rev. Fr. M. K. Kuriakose

YOU ARE CORDIALLY INVITED TO THE

GOLDEN JUBILEE
ORDINATION ANNIVERSARY
CELEBRATION OF

Rev. Fr. M. K. Kuriakose

HELD ON
SATURDAY, AUGUST 30TH, 2025
5PM - 8PM

EVENING PRAYER FOLLOWED BY PUBLIC MEETING AND DINNER

ST. THOMAS INDIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH
1009 UNRUH AVENUE,
PHILADELPHIA, PA 19111

RSVP : [TINYURL.COM/FRMKK50](https://tinyurl.com/frmkk50)
PLEASE RSVP BY AUGUST 20TH, 2025

Parish Annual Picnic – Aug 16th

ST. THOMAS INDIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH INC.
1009 Unruh, Ave, Philadelphia, PA 19111

St. Thomas Indian Orthodox Church
ANNUAL PICNIC

West Goshen Park
West Chester, 1023 Fern Hill Road, West Chester, PA 19380
Saturday, August 16th 2025 (8:30am-4:30pm)

\$40 PER FAMILY
FOOD GAMES FELLOWSHIP & FUN
\$10 PER PERSON

TICKETS MUST BE PURCHASED IN ADVANCE

For more information please contact :
Secretary : Susan David 518-362-6201 | Picnic Coordinator : Samkuty John 215-375-6171

Season of Us – Sep 6th

G.R.O.W.
GROWING OUR FUTURE WOMEN
Young Women's Ministry

TALMEEDO
LAMB
NEW MINISTRY

SEASON OF US

LET THE SEASON OF NEW CONNECTIONS BEGIN!

September 6, 2025

Venue: Stagehouse Tavern
Somerset, NJ
Ages 24 & UP

Early Bird \$45 (until Aug 5th)
Regular: \$55

STIOC 3v3 Basketball Tourney – Aug 23rd

STIOC 3v3 Tournament will be held on Saturday morning August 23rd at PickupUSA, Warminster

15 dollars per person (Bring cash only, no apps or card)

All members of the church can join Sign up deadline on August 12th.

For more information contact
Felix Ronnie (267-243-5364)
Josh Mathew (215-882-0032)

St. Thomas Unruh 3 v 3 Basketball Tourney

MMVS Canned Food Most Needed Items

Caring for Friends™ Sharing food and friendship

Food Drive
Donations

Support Caring For Friends By Donating Much-Needed Food Items

Needed Items:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Canned Items • Beans • Chicken • Fish • Vegetables • Fruit • Soup/Stew/Chili 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boxed Items • Rice • Pasta • Breakfast Items • Crackers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other Items • Peanut Butter • Jelly
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Member Announcements

Births

- ❖ **July 29th** – Baby boy, **Christian Anoop George**, was born to Tigy & Anoop George (#311). Grandparents are Annamma & Nallumalayil George.

On behalf of the parish, we express our heartiest congratulations to the new parents and grandparents. May God grant you many blessings.

Memorials

- ❖ **July 24th** – **Mrs. Kunjannamma Mathai**, father of Mr. Biju Mathew (#269) passed away in Mulanthuruthy, Kerala.
- ❖ **July 25th** – **Mrs. Mariamma John**, sister of Mrs. Annamma Varghese (#128) passed away in Kerala.
- ❖ **July 31st** – **Mr. George Poothicote**, brother of our Diocese Metropolitan, His Grace Zachariah Mar Nicholovos passed away in Kerala.

- ❖ **Aug 10th** – **Mrs. Leelamma Panicker**, aunt of Mr. David Philip (#322) passed away in Kerala.
- ❖ **Aug 14th** – **Mrs. Mariamma Johnson**, mother of Rev. Fr. Dr. Johnson C. Johnson, Vicar of St. Thomas Mascher Street, passed away in Kerala.

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.

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.

Memorial Prayer List

As you know, members can submit names of departed loved ones that need 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 only names, no dates.

August Wedding Anniversaries

Mr. & Mrs. Thomas Abraham	Aug 2	Mr. & Mrs. Ajo Raju	Aug 21
Mr. & Mrs. Stephen Rajan	Aug 2	Mr. & Mrs. David Philip	Aug 21
Mr. & Mrs. Abraham Varughese	Aug 14	Mr. & Mrs. N. V Thomas	Aug 21
Mr. & Mrs. Mathew P Cherian	Aug 15	Mr. & Mrs. Anoop Joseph George	Aug 22
Mr. & Mrs. Varghese Baby	Aug 15	Mr. & Mrs. Shibu Thomas	Aug 22
Mr. & Mrs. Renji Varghese	Aug 15	Mr. & Mrs. Thomas Vakkayil	Aug 22
Mr. & Mrs. Georgeyo Oommen	Aug 16	Mr. & Mrs. Vinod Jacob	Aug 24
Mr. & Mrs. Ashok Koshy	Aug 17	Mr. & Mrs. Jiju Mathew	Aug 26
Mr. & Mrs. Rajan Koshy	Aug 17	Mr. & Mrs. Kochupurackal Thomas	Aug 27
Mr. & Mrs. Manoj Thomas	Aug 19	Mr. & Mrs. Alex P Symon	Aug 29
Mr. & Mrs. Cibu Joseph	Aug 19	Mr. & Mrs. Suresh Cherian	Aug 29
Mr. & Mrs. Jacob Kuruvilla	Aug 20		



August Birthdays

Zeena Jacob	Aug 1	Ashok Paulose	Aug 10
Cherian Philipose	Aug 2	Varghese Mammen	Aug 10
Chinnamma M Varghese	Aug 2	Eliza Leela Panicker	Aug 12
Jijo George Varghese	Aug 2	Joel G Panicker	Aug 13
Joel Jacob	Aug 2	Augustin Babu	Aug 13
Merly Mary Mathews	Aug 3	Jibin Verghese Jacob	Aug 13
Justin Mathai	Aug 4	Emersyn Grace Jacob	Aug 13
Dony Davy	Aug 4	Sneha Reynold	Aug 13
Saya Alina Thomas	Aug 4	Johan Anto Panicker	Aug 14
Jaison Daniel	Aug 5	Alexandra Geevarghese	Aug 14
Jonathan Matthew Cherian	Aug 5	Liana John	Aug 14
Abraham John	Aug 5	John Thomas	Aug 14
Aleyamma George	Aug 6	Achamma Cherian	Aug 15
Lambert Thomas	Aug 7	Nadukemuriyil V Thomas	Aug 15
Siny Varghese	Aug 7	Tincy Raju	Aug 16
Leelamma O Panicker	Aug 8	Rachel A Varghese	Aug 16
Mathews T Varghese	Aug 8	Abel T Anooj	Aug 16
Josh Job	Aug 9	Mikayla Maria Cherian	Aug 17
Crisia Maria Shibu	Aug 9	Alex Mathew	Aug 18
Sheena Jose	Aug 10	Thomas Abraham	Aug 18
Jacob Thomas	Aug 10	Christina S Thomas	Aug 18

George Abraham	Aug 18	Shawn Stephen	Aug 25
Naomi Panicker	Aug 18	Jonah Thomas	Aug 25
Shelby Alisha Thomas	Aug 18	Riny Saju Mathew	Aug 25
Ninan Mathai	Aug 19	Nallumalayil Joseph George	Aug 27
Paul P Mavely	Aug 19	George Varghese	Aug 27
Hannah Mary Thomas	Aug 19	Judy Philip	Aug 27
Stephan Kalathil	Aug 20	Luke Lynnson	Aug 28
Sherin Sara Anish	Aug 20	Sharon Jacob	Aug 29
Flamy Philip	Aug 21	Thomas Samuel	Aug 29
Aaron George	Aug 21	Bibin George	Aug 30
Aben G Panicker	Aug 21	Cijo Joseph	Aug 30
Mariamamma Mathew	Aug 21	Rosamma Baby	Aug 30
Amelia E George	Aug 21	Anugraha Thankam John	Aug 30
Isabel J Mathew	Aug 22	Betsy George	Aug 30
Joel Joe Zachariah	Aug 22		
Bindu Job	Aug 23		
Sajan Thomas	Aug 23		
Anoj Thomas	Aug 23		
Kochupurackal Thomas	Aug 24		



Sunday School News

- ❖ **Aug 31st** – Parish Assigned Competition & Summer Reading Challenge submissions due.
- ❖ **Sep 7th** – Sunday School classes resume.

Steven Kurian, Principal

Tel.: 267.450.6815, Email: stevekurian@gmail.com

One Year Bible Reading Schedule - August

Date	I	II	III
August 1	2 Samuel 18	Jer. 22	Romans 9
August 2	2 Samuel 19	Jer. 23	Romans 10-11
August 3	2 Samuel 20-21	Jer. 24	Romans 12
August 4	2 Samuel 22	Jer. 25	Romans 13-14
August 5	2 Samuel 23	Jer. 26	Romans 15-16
August 6	2 Samuel 24	Jer. 27	Mark 1
August 7	1 Kings 1	Jer. 28	Mark 2
August 8	1 Kings 2	Jer. 29	Mark 3
August 9	1 Kings 3	Jer. 30	Mark 4
August 10	1 Kings 4-5	Jer. 31	Mark 5
August 11	1 Kings 6	Jer. 32	Mark 6
August 12	1 Kings 7	Jer. 33	Mark 7
August 13	1 Kings 8	Jer. 34	Mark 8
August 14	1 Kings 9	Jer. 35	Mark 9
August 15	1 Kings 10	Jer. 36	Mark 10
August 16	1 Kings 11	Jer. 37	Mark 11
August 17	1 Kings 12	Jer. 38	Mark 12
August 18	1 Kings 13	Jer. 39	Mark 13
August 19	1 Kings 14	Jer. 40	Mark 14
August 20	1 Kings 15	Jer. 41	Mark 15
August 21	1 Kings 16	Jer. 42	Mark 16
August 22	1 Kings 17	Jer. 43	1 Cor. 1-2
August 23	1 Kings 18	Jer. 44	1 Cor. 3
August 24	1 Kings 19	Jer. 45-46	1 Cor. 4-5
August 25	1 Kings 20	Jer. 47	1 Cor. 6
August 26	1 Kings 21	Jer. 48	1 Cor. 7
August 27	1 Kings 22	Jer. 49	1 Cor. 8-9
August 28	2 Kings 1-2	Jer. 50	1 Cor. 10
August 29	2 Kings 3	Jer. 51	1 Cor. 11
August 30	2 Kings 4	Jer. 52	1 Cor. 12-13
August 31	2 Kings 5	Lam. 1	1 Cor. 14

Please remember to keep the Sunday School children and staff in your daily prayers.