

ST. THOMAS INDIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

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MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

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Vicar's Message

THE SAVIOR IS BORN

“And she shall bring forth a son, and you shall call him JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins.”

Matthew 1:21. This was the message given by the angel to St. Joseph. For an ordinary Jew this message from God in a dream is very puzzling. First of all, St. Joseph had to deal with the situation of his betrothed wife about her pregnancy without his knowledge and in addition to that the angel gives unbelievable information about the child. The name Jesus is specifically instructed because he is going to be the savior. In the Jewish tradition the savior is the Messiah whom the community was expecting to come to save them from all their enemies. Isaiah 9:6 &7 predicted the birth of a child who will set everything right for Israel. The expectation of every Jew was very high on the coming of a Messiah who will bring them complete salvation. St. Joseph was aware of this expectation, but he was not sure, that the savior is going to be born in his family.



It is interesting to note that the angel proclaimed salvation from sin and not from the enemies. This part of the mission of the Messiah was not understood by the community to which the Messiah was born. Salvation from sin was not in their agenda, as Israelites expected the Messiah to deliver them from their earthly enemies. At the time of the birth of Jesus their enemy was the Roman Empire. Prior to that they had a long history of wars with their neighbors. Ever since they got settled in the Promised land, they had several wars to establish themselves. And after that the Persian kings enslaved them for long time. Finally, after their resettlement and building the destroyed temple at the time of Herod the Great, they had

to be under the yoke of the Roman emperor. So, we can imagine their urge for freedom from all enemies. The prophets gave them the hope of the arrival of a Messiah who will be their ultimate savior. But when the real Savior arrived, they could not recognize him because the Messiah was trying to save them from their sins rather than their earthly enemies. In addition, the Messiah taught to “love the enemies”.

Perhaps this part of the message was lost in transit for the present generation as well. The true mission of the Messiah was to straighten the path, teach the people the true way of the Lord, fulfilling the commandments given by Yahweh. Truly, human beings are under the

slavery of sin. It is from sin that all kinds of wars, hatred and feuds happened. Therefore, the Messiah taught them the true way of love that nullifies all feuds, anger, hatred etc.

In this Christmas season the greatest challenge we all have is, are we able to keep ourselves away from sin! Jesus can deliver us from our sins if we are able to accept Him as our Lord and Savior. Allow Him to make decisions for our life. Allow him to sanctify us. Hope and pray that this Christmas will give us this enlightenment!

Lovingly,

Rev. Fr. M. K. Kuriakose, Vicar

Events and Announcements

Past Events Highlights

- **Nov 22nd** – Christmas Craft Fair.
- **Dec 6th** – Ecumenical Christmas Program held at St Thomas Syro Malabar Church.
- **Dec 13th & 20th** – Christmas caroling home visits.

Upcoming Events

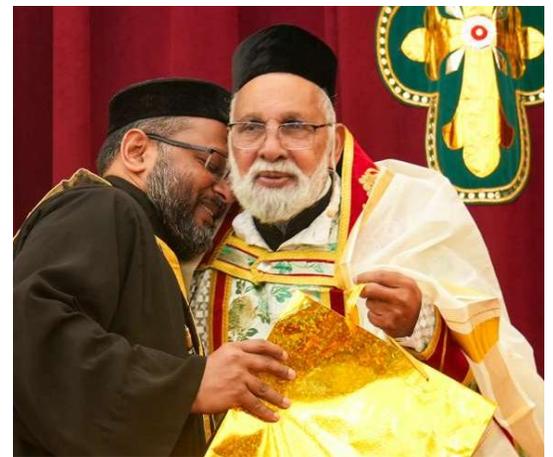
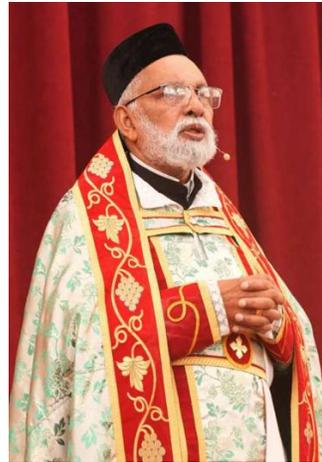
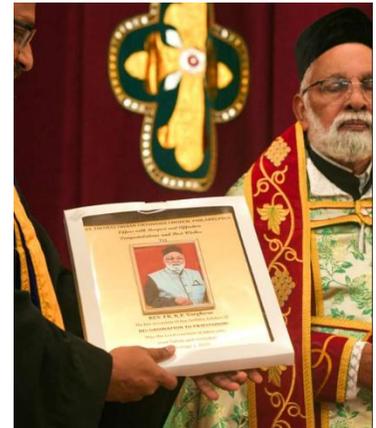
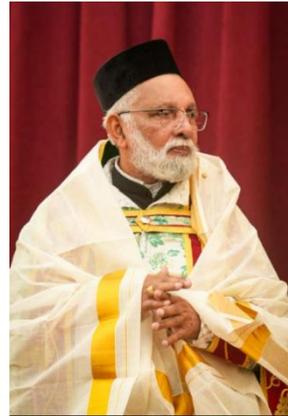
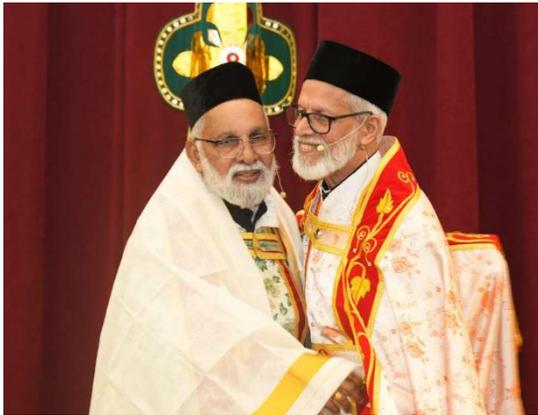
- **Dec 25th** – Christmas Day.
- **Dec 27th** – Parish Christmas Celebration.
- **Jan 7th - 10th** – Winter Summit College Students Conference.

Parish Highlights

Christmas Craft Fair



Honoring Rev. Fr. K. P. Varghese in our Parish on his Golden Jubilee Ordination Anniversary



St. Nicholas' visit to Sunday School



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

- Weekly meetings are held after the Holy Qurbana every Sunday.

FOCUS

- Monthly meetings are conducted by FOCUS.

MMVS

- MMVS has weekly meetings after the Holy Qurbana every Sunday.

MGOCSM

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

OCYM

- OCYM has weekly meetings after Holy Qurbana every Sunday.

MOCF

- Winter Canned Food Collection is in progress until Jan 4th.

Member Announcements

Memorials

- ❖ **Dec 3rd - Rev. Fr. Saji Thannimoottil**, a reverend priest of the Mumbai Diocese and cousin of Anish Mathew (#158) passed away in India.
- ❖ **Dec 4th - Sam John Varghese**, cousin of Samkutty John (305) & John Abraham (323), passed away in New Jersey.
- ❖ **Dec 20th - Mrs. Aleyamma John**, aunt of Anitha Jossy (332) passed away in India.
- ❖ **Dec 23rd – Mr. Jacob Thekkekuttu**, our beloved member (284) and husband of Susy Jacob and father of Jino & Jijo Jacob passed away in Philadelphia. Viewing & funeral services will be held in the Parish on Friday, Dec 26th at 8:30 AM.

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.

December Wedding Anniversaries

Mr. & Mrs. Roy Philip Chacko	Dec 7	Mr. & Mrs. John Panicker	Dec 27
Mr. & Mrs. Thomas P Oommen	Dec 8	Mr. & Mrs. Regi Mathai	Dec 27
Mr. & Mrs. Shibu M Baby	Dec 11	Mr. & Mrs. Biju Mathews	Dec 28
Mr. & Mrs. Saji George	Dec 12	Mr. & Mrs. Paul John	Dec 29
Mr. & Mrs. Philip T Varghese	Dec 25	Mr. & Mrs. Ashok Paulose	Dec 30
Mr. & Mrs. Sajan Thomas	Dec 26	Mr. & Mrs. Thomas Daniel	Dec 31



December Birthdays

Noel Cherian	Dec 1	Ryan Tony	Dec 12	Samantha Philip	Dec 22
Santhamma Mathew	Dec 1	Rosamma George	Dec 14	Aleyamma Chacko	Dec 23
Ann Raj Jacob	Dec 1	Matt P. Geevarghese	Dec 14	Saju Chacko	Dec 23
Annamma Jacob	Dec 1	Jacob T. Mathai	Dec 14	Litty John	Dec 23
Ruby Geroge	Dec 2	Reeba Geevarghese	Dec 14	Joel Jins	Dec 24
Simy Lynnson	Dec 2	N K Thomas	Dec 15	Allie Samuel	Dec 25
Evana Susan Joseph	Dec 3	Hannah Mary	Dec 16	Shiji Daji	Dec 25
Anitha Chacko	Dec 3	Varghese	Dec 16	Annamma Samuel	Dec 26
Josiah Thomas	Dec 4	Jovan P Shinu	Dec 16	Deanah Jubee	Dec 27
Diya Mariam Saji	Dec 5	Geena Regi Jacob	Dec 17	Lesley T Reji	Dec 27
Praveen P.	Dec 6	Lins John	Dec 17	Neha Ann Koshy	Dec 27
Geevarghese	Dec 6	Joanna Ajish	Dec 19	Noah Philip Cherian	Dec 28
Saramma Jacob	Dec 7	Abram Alexander	Dec 19	Jose K John	Dec 28
Mathews Philip	Dec 7	Jolly Varughese	Dec 19	Kiara Geevarghese	Dec 28
Venattu	Dec 7	Shaji Abraham	Dec 19	Hannah Anto	Dec 29
Mini Philip	Dec 8	Noel Mathew	Dec 19	Panicker	Dec 29
Philip T Varghese	Dec 8	Susan Chacko	Dec 20	Mathew Jacob	Dec 30
Thomas Zachariah	Dec 8	Omana Varghese	Dec 20	Anaya Anna Bivin	Dec 30
Santhra Eliza Suresh	Dec 9	Joe Zachariah	Dec 20	Rajesh Geevarghese	Dec 31
Susan Paulose	Dec 10	Saly Joseph	Dec 20	Sam Jacob	Dec 31
Elizabeth Chacko	Dec 10	Merin Rajan	Dec 20	Kurisinmoottil	Dec 31
Sosamma Cherian	Dec 11	Merlin Rajan	Dec 21	Luke Matthew	Dec 31
Richa Tony	Dec 12	Thomas Varghese	Dec 22	Cherian	Dec 31
Sheeba P Anooj	Dec 12	Riya Dony	Dec 22	Jobin Regi	Dec 31
Saju Paul	Dec 12	Hannah Varghese	Dec 22		



Sunday School News

❖ Dec 28th – Winter break - no classes.

Steven Kurian, Principal

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One Year Bible Reading Schedule – December

<i>Date</i>	I	II	III
<i>December 1</i>	Esther 9-10	Jonah 1	Hebrews 6-7
<i>December 2</i>	Job 1-2	Jonah 2-3	Hebrews 8-9
<i>December 3</i>	Job 3-4	Jonah 4	Hebrews 10
<i>December 4</i>	Job 5	Micah 1	Hebrews 11
<i>December 5</i>	Job 6-7	Micah 2	Hebrews 12
<i>December 6</i>	Job 8	Micah 3-4	Hebrews 13
<i>December 7</i>	Job 9	Micah 5	James 1
<i>December 8</i>	Job 10	Micah 6	James 2
<i>December 9</i>	Job 11	Micah 7	James 3-4
<i>December 10</i>	Job 12	Nahum 1-2	James 5
<i>December 11</i>	Job 13	Nahum 3	1 Peter 1
<i>December 12</i>	Job 14	Hab. 1	1 Peter 2
<i>December 13</i>	Job 15	Hab. 2	1 Peter 3-5
<i>December 14</i>	Job 16-17	Hab. 3	2 Peter 1-2
<i>December 15</i>	Job 18-19	Zeph. 1	2 Peter 3
<i>December 16</i>	Job 20	Zeph. 2	1 John 1-2
<i>December 17</i>	Job 21	Zeph. 3	1 John 3-4
<i>December 18</i>	Job 22	Haggai 1-2	1 John 5
<i>December 19</i>	Job 23-24	Zeph. 1	2 John-3 John
<i>December 20</i>	Job 25-27	Zeph. 2-3	Jude
<i>December 21</i>	Job 28	Zeph. 4-5	Rev. 1-2
<i>December 22</i>	Job 29-30	Zeph. 6-7	Rev. 3-4
<i>December 23</i>	Job 31-32	Zeph. 8	Rev. 5-6
<i>December 24</i>	Job 33	Zeph. 9	Rev. 7-9
<i>December 25</i>	Job 34	Zeph. 10	Rev. 10-11
<i>December 26</i>	Job 35-36	Zeph. 11	Rev. 12-13
<i>December 27</i>	Job 37	Zeph. 12	Rev. 14
<i>December 28</i>	Job 38	Zeph. 13	Rev. 15-16
<i>December 29</i>	Job 39	Mal. 1	Rev. 17-18
<i>December 30</i>	Job 40	Mal. 2	Rev. 19-20
<i>December 31</i>	Job 41-42	Mal. 3-4	Rev. 21-22

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