

# ST. THOMAS INDIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

1009 UNRUH AVE, PHILADELPHIA, PA 19111

Phone: (215) 342 1500 Fax: (215) 342 2700 [www.stthomasphiladelphia.org](http://www.stthomasphiladelphia.org)

## MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

JULY 2025

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### Vicar's Message

#### St. Thomas in our Life

July 3<sup>rd</sup> is the day designated for the memory of St. Thomas the Apostle to India. Some historians are of the opinion that July 3<sup>rd</sup> is the martyrdom day of St. Thomas, but majority of the historians believe that the martyrdom was on December 23<sup>rd</sup>. However, it is historically learned that the transfer of the holy relics of St. Thomas from Mylapore (India) to Edessa (now in South Turkey) was in the 3<sup>rd</sup> century. The Edessan Church declared it a festival day and that tradition was followed by the Indian Church as the Indian Church was in touch with the East Syrian Liturgical calendar. Later, the relics were moved to Ortona in Italy where they are kept in a casket.

It is important for the Indian Church to remember the evangelistic mission of St. Thomas in the very first century making her proud of this heritage. In recent years several Christians of non-apostolic tradition, including Pentecostals, sensed the importance of St. Thomas' heritage and began observing July as the month of remembrance of St. Thomas' India mission. It is important for the Indian



Church to note two factors in mind while remembering St. Thomas.

**St. Thomas' dedication to Christ:** St. John in the 11<sup>th</sup> chapter of his Gospel presents St. Thomas as the courageous Apostle who was willing to die for Christ (verse 16). And he fulfilled that willingness by accepting martyrdom. It teaches the simple lesson that Christians must be dedicated to Christ like St. Thomas was. We hardly see dedicated Christians these days. To die for Christ is out of question to many! To practice the love and unity that Christ taught us is the primary lesson we must learn to bear witness to Christ. We have become a laughingstock by many as our actions and behavior are simply unchristian. To follow Christ is not easy or cozy. Look at St. Thomas who traveled to such a distant place

where nothing was conducive to the preaching of the Gospel. A lot of suffering and loss are demanded to follow Christ. Those of us who love comfort and security can never witness to the love of Christ. We should have an organized attempt to take the consequences of staying strong in Christ. It may cause loss of material wealth and fame, but it will bring the right kind of witness. We have a long way to go on this path. We must look back to St. Thomas who was willing to take all these losses for the sake of Christ.

**Sharing the Word of God:** St. John talks about Jesus as the Word that became flesh. This Word is the life and light. Later in his Gospel and epistles St. John affirms how Jesus became the light of the world. To become the light of the world means to enlighten those who live in darkness and to show the true path as Jesus said, "I am the Way, the Truth and the Life". In everything we do, we have guidance in the Word of God. That Word is Jesus Himself. We should not hesitate to take that Word for our defense and guidance. That Word will instruct us in all situations advising how to proceed. Those who do that will remain in peace and concord with others, no matter how tough life is. May be in our suffering, or in our joy, the Word will show us the right path. Often, we

depend on human wisdom or these days Artificial Intelligence. Such worldly guidance will not help us to share the Word with others. Sharing the Word is sharing the Lord with others. We must revisit our ecumenical attitude to reformulate our relationship with other Christians to join hands to share the Word and the Lord. In the present world our challenge is to remove the confusion that the rest of the non-Christian world raises: which is the true Church; Who are the true followers of Christ? One thing is true that not a single denomination can claim the wholeness of the Christian faith and therefore, the unity of the Christian world is imperative for a corporate witness. We all should stop blaming each other in the name of theological nuances and come to the fundamentals of Christianity that stands for the edification and ultimate redemption of humanity. Thus, we will fulfil the mission that St. Thomas had handed over to us.

May the memory of St. Thomas bring home the Christ experience in our personal and church life!

Lovingly,

Rev. Fr. M. K. Kuriakose, Vicar

# Events and Announcements

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## Past Events Highlights

- **June 21** – Annual General Assembly of the Northeast American Diocese was held at St. Stephen's, Midland Park.
- **June 29** – Sunday School Centralized Exams for 10<sup>th</sup> and 12 grades.
- **July 3<sup>rd</sup>** – Feast of St. Thomas & Parish Perunnal.
- **July 9<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup>** – Family & Youth Conference was held at Hilton Stamford Hotel, CT.
- **July 17<sup>th</sup> – 19<sup>th</sup>** – Philadelphia Area OVBS was held in our Parish.

## Upcoming Events

- **July 25<sup>th</sup> – 27<sup>th</sup>** – Talmeedo Men's Ministry Camp will be held at HTRC.
- **July 27<sup>th</sup>** – Parish Annual Graduate Felicitation.
- **Aug 3<sup>rd</sup>** – Parish General Body meeting.
- **Aug 6<sup>th</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup>** – Sabro High School camp will be held at HTRC.
- **Aug 16<sup>th</sup>** – Annual Parish Picnic will be held at West Goshen Park.
- **Aug 17<sup>th</sup>** – Diabetes Awareness seminar conducted by The Good Samaritan Society (Snehatheram) will be held in our Parish Hall.

# Parish Highlights

## OVBS







## Valiyachen's birthday celebration



## 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

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## 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.
- One-day Area conference will be held on Aug 2<sup>nd</sup> at St. George Fairless Hills church at 10 AM.
- MMVS Area food drive in 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 wing started for girls aged 6-12 years old in our area.

## Save the Dates

Talmeedo Men's Retreat (July 25<sup>th</sup> – 27<sup>th</sup>)

TRANSFORMING MEN INTO DISCIPLES OF CHRIST

TALMEEDO MEN'S RETREAT

FORGING THE MODEL MAN

MAIN SPEAKER:  
REV. FR. GREGORY VARGHESE

JULY 25-27, 2025

HOLY TRANSFIGURATION  
RETREAT CENTER

Sabro High School Camp (Aug 6<sup>th</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup>)

THE MGOCSM OF THE NORTHEAST AMERICAN DIOCESE PRESENTS...

**SABRO**

**AUGUST 6TH-9TH** **HIGH SCHOOL CAMP**

"MAY THE LORD BE WITH YOU"

THEME BASED ON JOSHUA 1:9

MAIN SPEAKER: **REV. DN. REUBEN THOMAS**

HOLY TRANSFIGURATION RETREAT CENTER, DALTON, PA

JOIN THE FORCE, REGISTER NOW: [HTTPS://BIT.LY/SABRO2025](https://bit.ly/sabro2025)

Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube icons | @MGOCSMNE | #HIGHSCHOOLCAMP | MGOCSMNE.ORG

Annual Picnic (Aug 16<sup>th</sup>)

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 16<sup>th</sup> 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 : Samkatty John 215-375-6171

Sunday School Children & Teachers Conference

YOU'RE INVITED TO OUR

**Children's & Teachers' Conference**

**AUGUST 25-26**

**\$85**  
on or before July 31st

Check In: Monday 3:00 pm  
Check Out: Tuesday 3:00 pm

**Thrive 2025**  
Theme: Rooted in Christ, Built Up in Faith  
Colossians 2:6-7

Holy Transfiguration Retreat Center  
1000 Seminary Rd, Dalton, PA 18414

Register online at  
<https://forms.gle/TmSv8DBJm1uuBQe7>

# Member Announcements

## New Members

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- ❖ The family of **Blessy & Varghese Thomas** (Robin) (#393).
- ❖ The family of **Anitha & Saju Chacko** (#394).

## Births

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- ❖ **June 20<sup>th</sup>** – Baby boy, **Solomon**, was born to Susan & Mathew Gilmore (#126).
- ❖ **June 21<sup>st</sup>** – Baby girl, **Amaya**, was born to Asha & Joel Philip (#378).
- ❖ **July 4<sup>th</sup>** - Baby girl, **Leia Miriam John**, was born to Geena Chacko & Sherwin John (#125).
- ❖ **July 15<sup>th</sup>** – Baby girl, **Ruah Mariam Thomson**, was born to Divya & Sandeep Thomson (#279).

## Weddings

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- ❖ **July 7<sup>th</sup>** – The wedding of **Mr. Mathews Philip Venattu**, son of Rev. Fr. Philipose Venattu and Mrs. Shiny Philipose and **Ms. Jeena Elsa Abraham**, daughter of Mr. Abraham John and Mrs. Jissy Abraham (#304) took place in Kerala.

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

## Memorials

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- ❖ **June 28<sup>th</sup> – Mr. P. V. Varghese**, father of Mrs. Sheril Anoop passed away in India. The funeral was held on July 2<sup>nd</sup>.
- ❖ **July 8<sup>th</sup> – Mrs. Annamma Chacko (Molly)**, elder sister of Mr. John Eapen (#190) and aunt of Mr. Sanju John (#339) and Mr. Saju Eapen passed away in India. The funeral was held on July 14<sup>th</sup> in Kerala.
- ❖ **July 21<sup>st</sup> – Very Rev. Fr. Thomas Abraham Cor Episcopa** of the Kottayam Diocese passed away in Philadelphia. Achen was on a short visit to the US when he fell ill. His viewing was held on Thursday, July 24<sup>th</sup> at St. Gregorios Orthodox Church, Bensalem. The funeral will take place 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 (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.

### 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.

# July Wedding Anniversaries

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Mr. & Mrs. Alexander Mathew	Jul 1	Mr. & Mrs. Abraham M Thomas	Jul 12
Mr. & Mrs. Mohan Samuel	Jul 1	Mr. & Mrs. Sathees Easow	Jul 13
Mr. & Mrs. Manoj Mathew	Jul 1	Mr. & Mrs. Jobin Regi	Jul 16
Mr. & Mrs. Jestin K Abraham	Jul 3	Mr. & Mrs. Alex Pothen	Jul 16
Mr. & Mrs. Renjy Vattasseril	Jul 3	Mr. & Mrs. Binu K. Mathew	Jul 17
Mr. & Mrs. Isac P. George	Jul 4	Mr. & Mrs. Jacob P Sam	Jul 20
Mr. & Mrs. Matt P. Geevarghese	Jul 4	Mr. & Mrs. Nebu Daniel	Jul 20
Mr. & Mrs. Thomas Vaidian	Jul 4	Mr. & Mrs. Samkutty John	Jul 21
Mr. & Mrs. Cherian Varghese	Jul 5	Mr. & Mrs. Sajan Varughese	Jul 22
Mr. & Mrs. Sunil George	Jul 5	Mr. & Mrs. Shaji Thomas	Jul 23
Mr. & Mrs. Rev. Fr. Geevarghese John	Jul 5	Mr. & Mrs. Rev. Fr. Sujit Thomas	Jul 25
Mr. & Mrs. Thomas George	Jul 6	Mr. & Mrs. Anu. Pulickal Varughese	Jul 27
Mr. & Mrs. Kochukoshy P Oommen	Jul 6	Mr. & Mrs. Alexander P. Pathrose	Jul 28
Mr. & Mrs. John Varghese	Jul 7	Mr. & Mrs. Sanju John	Jul 28
Mr. & Mrs. Varghese Mathew	Jul 8	Mr. & Mrs. Anish Mathew	Jul 28
Mr. & Mrs. Oommen V Kappil	Jul 9	Mr. & Mrs. Varughese M M.	Jul 28
Mr. & Mrs. Raju T Chandy	Jul 10	Mr. & Mrs. Goldy Mathew	Jul 29
Mr. & Mrs. Ajin John Abraham	Jul 11	Mr. & Mrs. Joby George	Jul 29
Mr. & Mrs. Reynold Educula	Jul 12	Mr. & Mrs. Reji Joshua Varughese	Jul 30
Mr. & Mrs. John P Mathai	Jul 12	Mr. & Mrs. Chacko P Chacko	Jul 30
Mr. & Mrs. Philip K Thomas	Jul 12	Mr. & Mrs. Benny Mathew	Jul 31



## July Birthdays

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Rachel Bincy Nebu	Jul 1	Mathew N K.	Jul 10
Leonel Varghese	Jul 1	Abigail M Alexander	Jul 10
Meenu Ann Mathews	Jul 1	Annamma Chacko	Jul 10
Mohan Samuel	Jul 1	Saramma Thomas	Jul 10
Joy Jacob	Jul 2	Sylvia S Renji	Jul 10
Abrielle James	Jul 3	Ryan Liju	Jul 10
Jodan P. Shinu	Jul 3	Leah Mariam Thomas	Jul 11
Nohael Cherian	Jul 3	Viola Charly	Jul 11
Hanna Marie Raju	Jul 4	Felix Ronnie	Jul 12
Sosa Philip	Jul 6	Noah Mathew Alexander	Jul 12
Zephaniah Varghese George	Jul 6	Thomas Koshy	Jul 13
Joel George Varghese	Jul 7	Reji Joshua Varughese	Jul 13
Geevarghese K John	Jul 7	Regi Mathai	Jul 14
Rachel Thomas	Jul 8	Messina Ann Abraham	Jul 14
Jancy Joy	Jul 8	Rev. Fr M K Kuriakose	Jul 15
Zane Cheeran Rijon	Jul 8	Achamma Thomas	Jul 15
Suvarna Varghese	Jul 8	Prasad George	Jul 15
Mathew P Cherian	Jul 8	Jacob George	Jul 15
Jiji Mathew	Jul 8	Emil John Sam	Jul 16
Beena R John	Jul 9	Jeremiah Goldy Mathew	Jul 16
Manoj Thomas	Jul 9	Jerin Jacob	Jul 18

Emma Joy Vergis	Jul 18	Reeja Saji	Jul 26
Reuben Liju	Jul 19	Mariamamma Joseph	Jul 28
Beena Mathew	Jul 19	Chinnu Reba Mathews	Jul 29
Joseph M C.	Jul 20	Thankachan K Mathai	Jul 29
Dana Job	Jul 21	Alvin Panicker	Jul 30
Charly Mathai	Jul 22	Tony Thomas	Jul 30
Josslyn Susan Johnes	Jul 22	Sobin Benny	Jul 30
Aleyamma Rajan	Jul 22	Thomaskutty Varghese	Jul 30
Alvin Shibu Mathew	Jul 23	Jaxen Daniel Jacob	Jul 30
Sujith Mathew Thomas	Jul 23	Thomas Vaidian	Jul 30
Nathan Gregor Niju	Jul 23	Amelia Annie Paul	Jul 30
Angela S Panicker	Jul 24	Thomas George	Jul 31
Julian Raju Geevarghese	Jul 24	Suja Elizabeth George	Jul 31
Cynthia Vattasseril	Jul 25		
Tobin Thankachen	Jul 25		
Reshma Brown	Jul 25		
Remya Brown	Jul 25		
Lijin Joyes	Jul 26		



# Sunday School News

- ❖ Aug 25<sup>th</sup> – 26<sup>th</sup> – Diocesan level Sunday School Children and Teachers camp at HTRC.
- ❖ Aug 31<sup>st</sup> – Parish Assigned Competition & Summer Reading Challenge submissions due.

*Steven Kurian, Principal*

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

## One Year Bible Reading Schedule - July

Date	I	II	III
July 1	1 Samuel 13	Isaiah 56-57	Rev. 21-22
July 2	1 Samuel 14	Isaiah 58	Matt. 1-2
July 3	1 Samuel 15	Isaiah 59	Matt. 3-4
July 4	1 Samuel 16	Isaiah 60	Matt. 5
July 5	1 Samuel 17	Isaiah 61	Matt. 6
July 6	1 Samuel 18	Isaiah 62	Matt. 7
July 7	1 Samuel 19	Isaiah 63	Matt. 8
July 8	1 Samuel 20	Isaiah 64	Matt. 9
July 9	1 Samuel 21-22	Isaiah 65	Matt. 10
July 10	1 Samuel 23	Isaiah 66	Matt. 11
July 11	1 Samuel 24	Jer. 1	Matt. 12
July 12	1 Samuel 25	Jer. 2	Matt. 13
July 13	1 Samuel 26-27	Jer. 3	Matt. 14
July 14	1 Samuel 28	Jer. 4	Matt. 15
July 15	1 Samuel 29-30	Jer. 5	Matt. 16
July 16	1 Samuel 31	Jer. 6	Matt. 17
July 17	2 Samuel 1	Jer. 7	Matt. 18
July 18	2 Samuel 2	Jer. 8	Matt. 19
July 19	2 Samuel 3	Jer. 9	Matt. 20
July 20	2 Samuel 4-5	Jer. 10	Matt. 21
July 21	2 Samuel 6	Jer. 11	Matt. 22
July 22	2 Samuel 7	Jer. 12	Matt. 23
July 23	2 Samuel 8-9	Jer. 13	Matt. 24
July 24	2 Samuel 10	Jer. 14	Matt. 25
July 25	2 Samuel 11	Jer. 15	Matt. 26
July 26	2 Samuel 12	Jer. 16	Matt. 27
July 27	2 Samuel 13	Jer. 17	Matt. 28
July 28	2 Samuel 14	Jer. 18	Romans 1-2
July 29	2 Samuel 15	Jer. 19	Romans 3-4
July 30	2 Samuel 16	Jer. 20	Romans 5-6
July 31	2 Samuel 17	Jer. 21	Romans 7-8

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