

ST. THOMAS INDIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

1009 UNRUH AVE, PHILADELPHIA, PA 19111

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MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

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Vicar's Message

CRUCIFIED WITH CHRIST

In our liturgical calendar a new season began, the season of the Cross. Beginning with September 14th we have the practice of using the Wednesday prayer for Sunday worship. Even though liturgically the Sleeba order of worship is not the right one for Sunday worship, the practice became rather firm in our tradition. One way it helped us learn the Sleeba order of worship as an alternate worship order. So, we became familiar with both the orders.

The main thrust of this season is the highlight of the meaning of the Cross and the Second Coming of Christ. For a few Sundays following September 14th Gospel readings are those with apocalyptic emphasis. Also, this season is a reminder of the importance of the Cross.

Ever since the 4th century AD the Cross became a significant symbol of Christianity. It remains as a symbol all over the world. Even though Cross became a symbol of worship from the 4th century, the Cross became a huge theological concept or ideology in the first



century itself as we see through the words of St. Paul. In the Epistles to the Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians and Colossians have this concept has been reflected in several verses.

In Galatians 1:20 St. Paul says, "I am crucified with Christ' it is no more I who live, but Christ who lives in me". In Romans 6 St. Paul says, "our old self was crucified with Christ..." There is an identification of our self with Christ in the crucified experience with Christ. Here a Christian and Christ are one 'on the Cross'. Thus, the once considered heinous way of punishment to criminals became a way for glorification and ultimate symbol of sacrifice and love. The sense of shame of death on the cross and the very power of death are

completed overturned to a sense of victory and glorification.

It will be ideal to reflect on these concepts emerging from the Cross for our times, even though it is not a happy matter for today's Christians. Now we are living in a comfort seeking generation. Nobody wants pain or struggles. Everything should be easy and cozy. Suffering has become anathema to Christians these days. This is not our tradition. In our history suffering was a matter of joy because it jibes with our Lord's command of loving the neighbor like oneself. Without a sense of suffering, one cannot love the neighbor. We have forgotten our history and tradition of sharing and caring with and for others, losing our own comfort.

When St. Paul shares his desire to be crucified with Christ, he is reflecting on his own life of suffering for Christ. Christian faith spread through the pagan world by the hands of St. Paul because he was willing to take the cross. He worked with his own hands, tent-making, while he did the ministry. He showed his courage to live up to Christ, sacrificing his own comfort. Just imagine the way Christians and Christian leaders are! Their luxury and extravaganza, using the money of ordinary people is simply with no guilty conscience. Christians have forgotten their primary call to serve their neighbor. They are no longer different from the secular world trying to seek

comfort to the maximum level. Often, when the charity collections take place, I can see how some people respond to it. People have money but they are pauper because they have taken up huge financial responsibility seeking their convenience and comfort.

Thus, we see how we lost our call to be crucified with Christ! Cross is just a symbol or a decorative piece of wood or metal! Some wear it in gold, platinum etc. Thus, they defy the commandments of our Lord! Price of gold has hit the record, and it is going up every day! I wondered how stupid the generation is to acquire this useless material. Instead of using the same money for creative things and the needs of the poor, these dead investments become sensation for people. They won't use it. They will not take it with them to the grave either. I can see the way the world is moving. Our people want to move that way. The values that the Bible impart are alien to many. St. Paul in his Epistles to Philippians 2:4 says, let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others." If only our people read the Bible that we see such counsel from the Fathers! We must be ready to be crucified with Christ in our everyday life. That is how we bear witness to our identity.

God bless you!

Lovingly,

Rev. Fr. M. K. Kuriakose, Vicar

Events and Announcements

Past Events Highlights

- **Aug 15th** – Feast of the Assumption of St. Mary.
- **Aug 16th** – Annual Parish Picnic was held at West Goshen Park.
- **Aug 17th** – Diabetes Awareness seminar conducted by The Good Samaritan Society (Snehatheram) held in our Parish Hall.
- **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.
- **Sep 8th** – Feast of the Nativity of the Theotokos.
- **Sep 14th** – Feast of the Exaltation of The Holy Cross.

Upcoming Events

- **Sep 27th** – Philadelphia Area MGOCSM Back to School Conference.
- **Oct 1st** – OCYM trip to St. Tikhon's Seminary, HTRC & St. George Orthodox Church.
- **Oct 4th** – Northeast American Diocese MMVS Annual Conference.
- **Oct 11th** – Parish Harvest Festival.
- **Oct 18th** – Northeast American Diocesan Talent Show.

Parish Highlights

Parish Annual Picnic

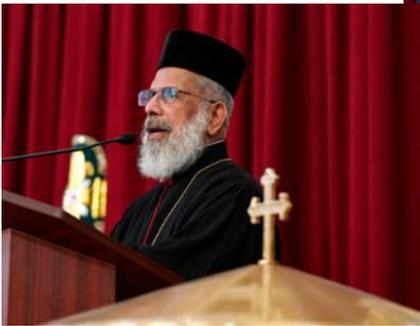
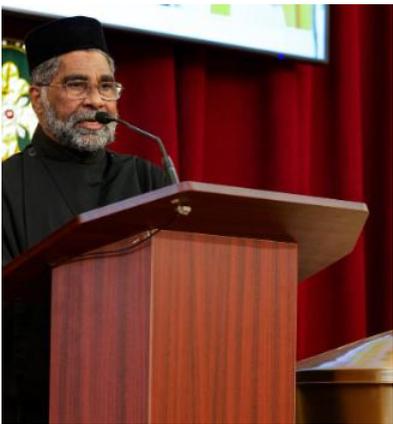






Golden Jubilee Ordination Anniversary Celebration of Rev. Fr. M. K. Kuriakose







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.
- Prayer fellowship will be held on Saturdays at 6 PM in the chapel.

MMVS

- MMVS has weekly meetings after the Holy Qurbana every Sunday.
- MMVS Annual Conference will be held on Oct 11th.

OCYM

- OCYM has weekly meetings after Holy Qurbana every Sunday.

FOCUS

- Monthly meetings are conducted by FOCUS.

MGOCSM

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

CAYA

- Regular monthly meetings are conducted virtually or in person.

Save the Dates

MGOCISM Back to School Conference – Sep 27

MMVS Annual Conference – Oct 11th



MGOCISM Philadelphia welcomes you to our

BACK TO SCHOOL CONFERENCE

September 27 | 9:00 AM - 1:00 PM

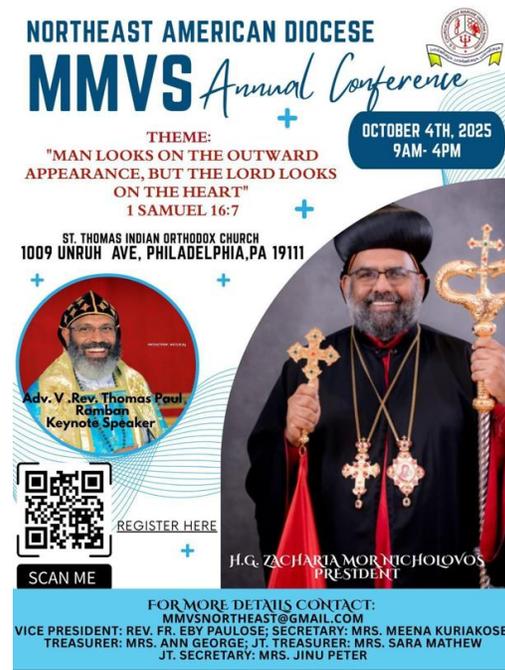
Main Speaker: Seminarian Joel Kurian

Location: St. Thomas Indian Orthodox Church, Unruh Av.

• **"GUARDIAN OF THE IMAGE"**
Genesis 1:27
"So God created humans in his image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them."

Fee: \$10

Register at: bit.ly/b2scphilly



NORTHEAST AMERICAN DIOCESE

MMVS Annual Conference

THEME: "MAN LOOKS ON THE OUTWARD APPEARANCE, BUT THE LORD LOOKS ON THE HEART" 1 SAMUEL 16:7

OCTOBER 4TH, 2025
9AM- 4PM

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

Adv. V. Rev. Thomas Paul Ramban
Keynote Speaker

H.G. ZACHARIA MORNICHOLOVOS
PRESIDENT

FOR MORE DETAILS CONTACT:
MMVSNORTHEAST@GMAIL.COM
VICE PRESIDENT: REV. FR. EBY PAULOSE; SECRETARY: MRS. MEENA KURIAKOSE
TREASURER: MRS. ANN GEORGE; JT. TREASURER: MRS. SARA MATHEW
JT. SECRETARY: MRS. JINU PETER

Member Announcements

Births

- ❖ **Sep 15th** – Baby boy, **Luke Thomas**, was born to Blessy & Jaison Thomas. Grandparents are Susan & Thomas Vakkayil (#171).

First Temple Entries

- ❖ **Aug 17th** - **Elijah Mathai Regi**, son of Melissa & Jobin Regi.
- ❖ **Aug 31st** - **Quinn Isabel Jacob**, daughter of Geena & Prince Jacob and sister of Emma.
- ❖ **Sep 7th** - **Ruah Thomson**, daughter of Divya and Sandeep Thomson.
- ❖ **Sep 14th** - **Amaya Joel**, daughter of Asha & Joel Philip.

Wedding

- ❖ **Sep 13th** – The wedding of **Ms. Libi Thomas**, daughter of Mr. Thomas Mathew Vaidyan and Mrs. Bindu Thomas, (#368) and **Mr. Niju Jacob**, son Mr. Jacob Baby and Mrs. Rachel Jacob took place in Ascension Marthoma Church, Philadelphia.

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

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.

Memorials

- ❖ **Aug 10th – Mrs. Leelamma Panicker**, aunt of Mr. David Philip (#322) passed away in Kerala.
- ❖ **Sep 6th – Mr. Anil Panicker** (#319) passed away in Philadelphia. He is survived by his wife Smitha and children Angela and Abel; and his sister Mrs. Aji Panicker (#201) and brother Mr. Anto Panicker (#268). The funeral was held on Sep 10th.
- ❖ **Sep 7th - Mrs. Amminikkutty Mathew**, sister of Annakkutty Mathew (#160) and Aleyamma Thomas (#161) passed away in Kerala.
- ❖ **Sep 9th - Mrs. Suja Reji George**, niece of Mr. Issac P George (#253) passed away in New Jersey. The funeral was held on Sep 15th.
- ❖ **Sep 16th – Mr. C. K. Alexander**, brother-in-law of Mr. Roy P. Chacko (#125) passed away in Kerala. The funeral was held on Sep 20.
- ❖ **Sep 16th – Mrs. Annamma Iype**, aunt of Mrs. Mercy Cherian (#219) passed away in Kerala. The funeral was held on Sep 19.
- ❖ **Sep 16th – Mr. John Kunnumpurathu**, uncle of Mrs. Shirley P. Chacko (#126) passed away in Philadelphia. The funeral was held on Sep 22.
- ❖ **Sep 17th – Mr. Thomas George**, brother of our former member Mrs. Susan Daniel passed away in Collegetown, PA. The funeral will take place in India.

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 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.

September Wedding Anniversaries

Mr. & Mrs. Job John	Sep 1	Mr. & Mrs. Jacob K. Thekekkuttu	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. Jacob T. Mathai	Sep 8	Mr. & Mrs. Jiju George	Sep 16
Mr. & Mrs. Thankachan K Mathai	Sep 10	Mr. & Mrs. Jino Jacob	Sep 19
Mr. & Mrs. Jaison Thomas	Sep 10	Mr. & Mrs. Anoop John	Sep 20
Mr. & Mrs. Anoop George	Sep 10	Mr. & Mrs. Varghese Thomas	Sep 26
Mr. & Mrs. Alex Mathew	Sep 12	Mr. & Mrs. George Varghese	Sep 27
Mr. & Mrs. Thomaskutty Varghese	Sep 13	Mr. & Mrs. Yohannan Mathew	Sep 30
Mr. & Mrs. Joy Jacob	Sep 13		



September Birthdays

Alvin Anil	Sep 1	Nivedh Philip	Sep 11	Ajin John Abraham	Sep 22
Susmitha Thomas	Sep 2	Jennifer Mariam Philip	Sep 11	Viji P Koshy	Sep 23
Vivek K Paulose	Sep 2	Priya Mariam Saji	Sep 11	Alissa Jose	Sep 23
Abin Cheriyan	Sep 3	Manju Jose	Sep 12	Sarah M Samuel	Sep 23
Panickal Y Mathaikutty	Sep 3	Brown Varghese	Sep 13	Smitha Jacob	Sep 23
Jacob Kuruville	Sep 3	Zariah Geevarghese	Sep 14	Joanna Sunil George	Sep 25
Carolyn Miriam Cherian	Sep 3	Sosamma Educula Chacko	Sep 15	Shinu Augustin	Sep 25
Jacob Chacko	Sep 4	Jonathan B Varghese	Sep 15	Gitty George Abraham	Sep 25
Joshua J Mathew	Sep 4	Kunjamma Thomas	Sep 16	Adam Mavelly Paul	Sep 26
Angelina Susan Zachariah	Sep 4	Elsa Thomas	Sep 16	Varghese Panicker	Sep 26
Elizabeth Thomas	Sep 4	Saramma Varughese	Sep 17	Nicole Samuel	Sep 26
Simon Daniel Jaison	Sep 5	Annamma Geevarghese	Sep 17	Smitha Thomas	Sep 27
Alex T Raju	Sep 5	Luca Samuel Varghese	Sep 17	Anoop Joseph George	Sep 28
Liya Sara Aji	Sep 5	Suja Mary Mathew	Sep 18	Linda Elsa Aji	Sep 28
Niju Mathew Cheriyan	Sep 6	Catherine Thomas	Sep 20	Shaji Thomas	Sep 28
Shinu P Thankachan	Sep 7	Jensil Varghese	Sep 20	Smitha J Mathew	Sep 28
Raji George	Sep 7	Joy Panicker Jr.	Sep 20	Christiana Rachel Shibu	Sep 28
Samkutty John	Sep 8	Seraphina Mary George	Sep 20	Achamma Kurian	Sep 29
Anoop George	Sep 8	Mariyam Goldy Mathew	Sep 20	Julee P Saji	Sep 29
Varghese P Abraham	Sep 8	Sheril Susan Varghese	Sep 21	Jibin Vaidian	Sep 29
Hanah M. mathew	Sep 9	Nimitha Thomas	Sep 21	Binish George	Sep 30
Isaac Varghese	Sep 9	Eben P Mathai	Sep 22		



Sunday School News

- ❖ Sep 7th – Sunday School classes resumed.
- ❖ Oct 18th – Diocesan Talent Competition.

Steven Kurian, Principal
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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 keep the Sunday School children and staff in your daily prayers.