



GREGORIAN GAZETTE

“He was born in 1848 AD. He was ordained a deacon at the age of 10 and became a priest at 18. Patriarch Ignatius Peter IV consecrated him as a bishop in 1876 when he was only 28. He was appointed Metropolitan of Niranam. He started a monastery at Parumala. Several schools were founded by him. He led a virtuous and strict life, assisting people in all walks of life besides teaching the deacons. Several miracles are attributed to him. He died in 1902. In 1947, The Holy Episcopal synod canonized and proclaimed him a Saint of the Orthodox Church. The faithful seek his intercession. He shines in the cloud of witnesses as a bright luminary giving rays of hope to millions in their suffering and struggles.”

Source: <http://ds-wa.org/parumala-thirumeni.html>



Saint Gregorios of Parumala

1848 - 1902

May his memory be eternal and may he continue to intercede on our behalf!

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"Beloved ones, a deep and well routed Christian life is much important in this era. We urge that you all to be serious about your spiritual life:

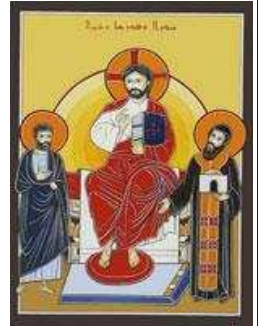
1. Be punctual and earnest in our daily canonical prayers at home, which as per our Orthodox Tradition include reading of the Bible, prostrations in front of the Cross etc. Evil powers cannot even have a glance into the families that are reciting the *Kauma* prayers, the Nicene Creed and the most powerful silent prayers prescribed in our Daily Prayer Book. This is the very reason, why the King and Prophet David sings aloud, "Evening and morning and at noon I utter my complaint and moan, and he will hear my voice" (Ps 55:17). Observing the five canonical fasts and fasting on Wednesdays and Fridays will not only keep you away from all temptations of the adversary, but also keep you in good physical health! The Orthodox liturgical life is the best holistic medicine which is well proven by the examples set by our ancestors and hence you keep it up. Only such a person can say: "The Lord is my chosen portion and my cup; you hold my lot. The boundary lines have fallen for me in pleasant places; I have a goodly heritage" (Ps 16: 5, 6).

2. Likewise, be serious and genuine on Sundays and other *Moronoyo* Feasts and occasions in the Church. Come fresh, modest and well dressed. White dresses are recommended, especially when receiving the Holy Mysteries. Completion of canonical prayers, fasting at least for six hours and true repentance are the basic requirements for receiving Holy Communion. Those who are not confessing their sins periodically, at least once in forty days, are not eligible to receive the Holy Communion. Remember: Receiving *Husoyo* is not a shortcut for Holy Communion.

CONTD PG 6

Hoodhosh Eetho

The Sunday after Koodhosh Eetho is called Hoodhosh Eetho (Dedication of Church) Sunday. The Syriac term "Hoodhosh Eetho" mean "The Feast of Dedication of the Church". In the Old testament, this was a 'Festival of Light' to the Jews. By celebrating the "Hoodos Eetho" every year, the church renews and rededicates itself as a community bearing the beacon of light to the society around us. It is the time to review and decide whether we are able to commit ourselves fully to GOD. Let us prayerfully work to be good Christians in rendering dedicated and sacrificial service to our fellow-beings and to live a life that is pleasing to God and glorifies our Father in Heaven.



Fr. Ninan George
Fr. V.M. Shibn
Liju Paul
Liju Varghese

Elizabeth Varghese
Gladstone Mammen
George Panicker
Joe Varghese

Peter Varghese
George Varghese (Publisher)

EDITORIAL BOARD

6 . Sunday - Dedication of the Church (Hoodhosh Eetho)**Feast of Saint Gregorios of Parumala**

Acts 7:44-53, Hebrews 9:1-14, St. John 10:22-38

12. Saturday - WOW Meeting 10AM @ Markose Residence, Elmhurst

MMVS Area Meeting 10AM @ St. Mary's

OCYM Meeting 6PM

13. Sunday - Annunciation to Zechariah

Chicago Regional Sunday School Teachers' Meeting 3-7PM

1 Peter 1:1-15, Ephesians 5:21-6:4, St. Luke 1:5-25

19. Saturday - KFC Large Group Session 10AM

MMVS Annual Exam 10AM @ Church

Ecumenical Basketball Tournament

Prayer Fellowship Ward 4 6.30PM (Elgin)

20. Sunday - Annunciation to St. Mary

MMVS Meeting after Holy Qurbana

1 John 3:2-17, Galatians 4:1-7, St. Luke 1:26-38

25. Friday - Annual Youth Thanksgiving Dinner 6PM @ Alias Residence, Skokie**26. Saturday - MGOCSM Basketball Tournament 9AM**

Christmas Caroling

27. Sunday - St. Mary's Visit to Elizabeth

Christmas Caroling

1 Peter 3:1-7, 1 Timothy 2:9-15, 3:11-13, St. Luke 1:39-56

PLANNING AHEAD

Dec 4 - General Body Meeting after Holy Qurbana

Dec 17 - Ecumenical Christmas Program 5PM

Dec 24 - Family Night

Dec 25 - Feast of Nativity

The Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church, Diocese of South West America, Morth Mariam Samajam 3rd Annual Conference & Ashtadashathi celebrations were conducted on Friday and Saturday, October 7 & 8 at St. Gregorios Orthodox Church, Oak Park, Illinois. The conference started at 2PM on Friday, with registration. Around 250 members from twenty two Churches of the 5 regions of our diocese participated. At 2.30 PM, the flag was hoisted. All delegates to the conference were welcomed with colorful Thalapolies and candle lights. The conference started with the lighting of the Lamp and a formal welcome. H.G Alexios Mar Eusebius, in his inaugural speech stated that at the Diocese level, Morthmariam is the most active spiritual organization of our diocese. HG reminded that MOMS motto was "Pray Act and Shine". The leaders of the conference were H.G. Mathews Mar Theodosius, Metropolitan of Idukki Diocese and Rev Deacon Sujit Thomas, of the North East diocese of America. Theodosius Thirumeni in his spiritually enriching message, talked about Theosis and stated that Illinois is Abraham Lincoln's land. Abraham Lincoln in his speeches appreciated the role of his mother in his life - Lincoln stated that what he was and what he hoped to be was due to his Mother. HG thus highlighted the important role of mothers in our life. Deacon Sujit Thomas gave an excellent class on the theme of the Conference "Sanctification by Word of God and Prayer" based on 1Timothy 4:5. He exhorted us to pray without ceasing, and to give importance to the role of intercessory prayers in our lives. We have to read the Bible in the light of our faith. He said that the message of Christ is same even though the teaching perspectives may be different. The lives of Saints should lead us to emulate them and thus lead us to be Holy. 1 Peter 1:16 states "Be Holy, for I am Holy". Group discussion followed the main talk and helped us to reflect more on the theme. The conference was also blessed with a Health session led by Drs. Chinnamma and Joseph Thomas. Friday evening, the delegates were treated to a wonderful Ashtadashathi program under the leadership of Chicago area encompassing a great Vanchipattu (Boat song), beautiful candle light dance, a meaningful skit by the group from St. Gregorios, Tampa and the thoughtful speeches from the older generation and younger

FROM PG 4 gathered representatives. The other activities that we did at the conference were the prayers for the sick, Bible Quiz, Talent show, a skit by St. Thomas Church, Arizona, talent competitions in speech and song, music ministry and Bible reading. Morning, noon and evening prayers were part of the program. A business session was also conducted. The Annual report and accounts for the year 2010- 2011 was also presented and passed. To further grow in the Orthodox faith, we also promoted the Orthodox Study Bible among all the delegates. The leadership, organization and guidance to the conference was provided by the MMVS Central Committee led by the Diocese Metropolitan - H.G Alexios Mar Eusebius, Rev Fr. George Paulose - Vice President, Susan Thampan-General Secretary and Laly Vadakedam -Treasurer, Regional, Area and Unit Secretaries. Special mention must be made of the strong support and encouragement given by Rev. Fr. Thampan Varghese, Diocese Secretary and Rev Fr Rajesh K John from St. Thomas Church, Dallas. The year 2010 – 2011 in the MMVS history is a testimony to the grace of God working through the charismatic leadership of Eusebius Thirumeni, Paulose Achen and Sally Kochamma in coordinating the activities and thus bringing together 46 parish level MMVS units in the Diocese.

The extra ordinary efforts of all the leaders and servants in this ministry in making this conference a memorable and blessed event are appreciated. The excellent arrangements, hard work and the dedicated efforts of the four Orthodox Churches in the Chicago land area (St. Gregorios Bellwood, St. Gregorios Oak Park, St. Mary's Oak Lawn and St. Thomas, Chicago) in coming together as one Body in Christ and working in a united manner through different sub committees for registration, accommodation, transportation, food, choir medical, and publicity under the leadership of the Achens : Rev Fr. Ninan V George, Rev Fr. Ham Joseph, Rev Fr. Daniel George, Rev Fr. Paul Issac and Rev Fr Abi Chacko is acknowledged. We praise God for St. Gregorios Orthodox Church, Oak Park and its dedicated team for hosting the conference and for going out of their way to make this conference a blessing to all those who attended. Let us continue to work together for His glory. May God bless.

Thanksgiving: The National Holy-Day by Fr. George Morelli

For all practical purposes, Thanksgiving Day is the closest we come to a National Holyday in the United States. Historically, it has been celebrated with everything from religious thankfulness, food, frolic and of course modern commercialism. Despite this, it is still a time for many Americans to 'count their blessings' and get together with family and/or friends. Sometimes our approach to life stops us from 'counting our blessings and giving thanksgiving to God. Psychologists call this pessimism. It is the belief that "bad events will undermine everything they do." (Seligman, 1990). It is like always seeing the cup 'half empty'. Those with optimism, confronted with "hard knocks" approach them as a challenge and try harder. Optimists tend to see the cup 'half full'. They are thankful for what they have and work harder.

Common to our American national heritage is the action of our first president, George Washington who in 1789 declared a national thanksgiving holiday honoring the newly ratified Constitution, proclaiming: the people could thank God for "affording them an opportunity peaceably to establish a form of government for their safety and happiness." Thanksgiving is part of many religious traditions: St. Paul told the Romans (14:5-6): "One man esteems one day as better than another, while another man esteems all days alike. Let every one be fully convinced in his own mind. He who observes the day, observes it in honor of the Lord. He also who eats, eats in honor of the Lord, since he gives thanks to God;" The psalmist tells us: "All thy works shall give thanks to thee, O Lord, and all thy saints shall bless thee! (Ps 145:10). The Koran states: "And He gives you all that ye ask for. But if you count the favors of God, never would you be able to number them" (14:34). A Native American Iroquois thanksgiving prayer ends with the words: "we return thanks to the Great Spirit, in whom is embodied all goodness, and who directs all things for the good of his children." Some have taken the words of Deuteronomy (26:10) "I bring the first of the fruit of the ground, which thou, O Lord, hast given me.' And you shall set it down before the Lord your God, and worship before the Lord your God", and applied this as an offering to God of themselves. They forgo being with family and friends and give themselves to others in need, serving in food kitchens and the like. However we commemorate this Holyday, let us see the fullness of the cup of gifts God has given us, and be thankful praying: "Glory to thee, who hast called me to life, ... revealed to us the beauty of the universe ... Glory to thee O' God in ages!" (Akathist of Thanksgiving, Metropolitan Tryphon of Turkestan).

Source: <http://www.orthodoxytoday.org/OT/view/thanksgiving-the-national-holy-day>

Thanksgiving Dinner: The youth group will be having its annual Thanksgiving Dinner on Friday, November 25th at the Alias Residence in Skokie at 6PM. Please keep this date free, as it promises to be a wonderful time of fellowship and tasty food! If you're interested in bringing something to dinner, please contact an OPD youth team member.

MGOCSM Tournament: Come out and support the OPD teams as they compete for the trophy at the annual MGOCSM basketball tournament on Saturday, November 26th! Keep watch for a youth email with more details as the time gets closer. Go OPD!!!

Service Project: On Sunday, December 11th, a group of 10 youth group members will be serving at the United Church of Rogers Park. If you are interested in signing up to participate, please send an email to st.gregorios.youth@gmail.com indicating that you would like to do so. Please continue to keep the entire youth group and all of the ministries in your valuable daily prayers, that God may continue to use us as a tool for His kingdom.

The annual MGOCSM Basketball Tournament will be held on Saturday, November 25th at 9am. Teams from all the Orthodox Churches in the Chicago will be coming together in friendly spirits to compete for the first place trophy. It will be held at the Ackerman Sports and Fitness Center, located at 800 St. Charles Road, Glen Ellyn, IL. Check your email for more information on the tournament in the coming weeks. Be sure to come out and support your parish players!

The MGOCSM annual Chicago Bears Coat Drive is taking place until November 27th. Please donate gently used or new coats and/or jackets to the box located in the parish basement. Donations will be given to the Salvation Army, who will then distribute the goods to those in need throughout the Chicagoland area. Thank you for your continued support with the coat drive!

Please continue to keep all MGOCSM members, leaders and activities in your prayers.

The November WOW meeting is schedule to be Saturday, November 12th at the residence of Nina Markose in Elmhurst (15W608 Diversey Ave) from 10am-12.30pm. We'll be continuing our study on the book of Ruth as well as having a time of fellowship to enjoy each other's company! Please RSVP to the evite as soon as possible so we can get a head count for who all will be there. If you need a ride or have a question, please contact Sherene Thomas or Julie Polachira

His Grace Gabriel Mar Gregorios, Metropolitan of Trivandrum, led the Bible Study and discussions at the teachers' meeting on Sunday October 23 after Holy Qurbana. Thirumeni stated that Holy Qurbana is a mystery and cannot be fully defined. It is experienced by initiation. Life also is a mystery. We can experience the richness of the liturgy of the Holy Qurbana by celebrating it. The more we prepare, the greater the experience. The Holy Qurbana is an offering and therefore we have to offer the best. We have to learn to receive incense- the grace of God. We have to practice and teach how to receive the offering of incense. We have to learn how to pray and when to make the sign of the cross. We normally cross when we say the name of Trinity, when we hear the word CROSS and when you hear Church bell. Body movements help us to concentrate and form a link to prayer. The veil is removed in Jesus Christ. We have a bold and confident access in Jesus Christ. The first procession in the Holy Qurbana celebrates the fact that the Savior has become incarnate. We celebrate the incarnation – from birth to crucifixion. HQ is entering into the presence of God.

Regional: We will hold a Sunday School Teachers' conference on Nov 13, Sunday, from 3-7pm. The goal is to reenergize the teachers with a sense of their mission and also allow them to interact with teachers of the same class so as to share ideas. Dn. Sujit Thomas is expected to be the main speaker.

FROM PG 2 3. Prayer requests should be given to priests at least before the start of the Morning/Evening prayers before Holy *Qurbana* so that they can pray for you during the entire liturgy. Since our Liturgy is holistic, there is no need for any extra prayers after the liturgy like birthday prayer, anniversary prayers etc. The priest may, however, announce their names and congratulate them on behalf of the parish. The priests are of course recommended to visit the faithful at homes and do special prayers for such occasions. Likewise, special intercessory prayers apart from the *Qukkillions* should be discouraged. These may be done along with weekdays' Evening prayers.

4. Sermon is one of the essential elements of our Liturgical Service. The priests should take this matter seriously and should equip our faithful with well prepared enthusiastic liturgical sermons. The faithful should specially pray to receive good sermons from our clergy. The liturgical services without sermons will be something a body without soul!"

The above was taken from HG Geevarghese Mar Yulios' letter to the Diocese of Ahmedabad about the Kudosh Etho.

MG Senior Fellowship - Holy Land Pilgrimage: All those who partook in the Holy Land Pilgrimage made it back safely and has a most blessed experience. Thank you for your prayers for their journey and well-being!

Kids - Korner

Some famous says from Parumala Thirumeni...

"As far as possible never do evil to anyone: or it will ruin you, your children and your house. Hold on steadfastly to prayer, fasting and works of charity. Do them with faith and devotion."

"Loss and difficulties come when God moves away. On such occasions, never look for one reason or other. Instead, know that God has kept away because of your sins: then cling to God, he will show mercy upon you."

"Remember God in everything. Let no one grieve because of you. Never let go an opportunity to do something good. Only those things will remain with you till the end."

"When we pray with a heart full of devotion, God accepts it and we receive blessings in return."

NOVEMBER BIRTHDAYS

11/06 Geevarghese, Alexander	11/13 Skariah, Meera	11/25 Panicker, Jisha
11/06 Mathew, Sara	11/13 Isaac, Jiji	11/27 Alias, Basil
11/06 Jacob, Stefan	11/15 Markose, Nina	11/28 George, Rekha
11/08 Mathai, Jovanna	11/17 Areekal, Niharika	11/28 Gandhi, Raj
11/11 Molayal, Mark G	11/20 Mathew, Alicia	
11/11 Abraham, Sarah	11/21 Panicker, Hridya	
11/12 George, Sneha	11/24 Thomas, Madalyn	
11/13 Joy, Alwin		

Happy Birthday

To You!

Holy Ordination of Fr. Zachariah Diju Skariah

On Saturday, October 29th Dn. Diju Skariah was ordained to the order of Holy Priesthood by HG Alexios Mar Eusebius at St. Gregorios Orthodox Cathedral, Bellwood. Fr. Diju Skariah, the youngest priest in the Malankara Orthodox Church, celebrated his first Divine Liturgy the very next day. The weekend was a most blessed occasion for the many faithful gathered to witness the beautiful services, among which were several seminarians, deacons and priests who had traveled from around the country to offer their prayerful support and love. The ordination service was also graced by the presence of HG Gabriel Mar Gregorios, Metropolitan of the Diocese of Trivandrum, India. Please continue to keep Diju Achen and his family in your prayers as he has taken a new step in the ministry God has entrusted to him. Achen will be serving the congregation in Kansas City, Missouri for the next couple of years as he and his wife finish up their school work there.



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