



Alexios Mar Eusebius  
Metropolitan

# MALANKARA ORTHODOX SYRIAN CHURCH

## DIOCESE OF SOUTH-WEST AMERICA



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DSWA/C/08/2014

June 10, 2014

Blessings to the Vicars, Parish Managing Committee members, and all the faithful of St. Stephen's Orthodox Church, Houston!

Dearly beloved,

We take this opportunity to announce the retirement of our Rev. Fr. Dr. C.O. Vargis from the active responsibilities of this parish. As you all know, our beloved Achen has been serving the church as a priest over the past 50 years. Achen is also the pioneer of establishing a parish in Houston. He traveled all the way from Corpus Christi to celebrate Holy Qurbana in Houston in the '70s. As the founder of the first parish and a leader of the community, we thank God for his vision, dedication, and sacrificial service to the people of Houston despite his health condition. Achen has defended Orthodoxy in every way and is committed to the Faith and Tradition of the Church without compromise. As he retires from active parish responsibility, we are sure his years of ministry will never be forgotten.

His pastoral ministry is no doubt a model for all priests. He takes special effort to visit homes and extends his services as a priest especially to those who migrate to the US and seek help. He also motivates the young in the orthodox faith as well as in their studies and career. He talks to kids at their level and all the small kids in Houston consider him their Grandfather. He took special effort to publish the service book of the Holy Qurbana and common prayer book for the use of the young generation. At present he is heading the Liturgical committee formed to prepare an American edition of the service book of Holy Qurbana and Common Prayer.

As a senior priest of the church, Achen should get support from all our people and will have the freedom to attend and conduct liturgical services in any parish in this Diocese, especially at St. Stephen's Orthodox Church, Houston. We appreciate the senior priest Rev. Fr. M.T. Philip, new Vicar Rev. Fr. Jake Kurian and the Managing Committee and all the faithful for organizing a meeting honoring his service to the parish. You should also support Achen in all ways especially as directed to you regarding the monthly financial allowance. We once again thank him for his dedicated service to the Orthodox faithful in Houston and uphold him in our prayers. May God grant years of peace, health, and furtherance in all good things to our beloved Achen.

May the intercession of Mary the Mother of God, St. Thomas the Apostle to India, St. Stephen the patron saint of this parish and St. Gregorios and St. Dionysius be a fortress for all of you.

Your shepherd in Christ,

Metropolitan Eusebius Alexios