



MALANKARA ORTHODOX SYRIAN CHURCH DIOCESE OF SOUTH-WEST AMERICA

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Blessings to the beloved Vicars of the Parishes, Priests of the locality, Cor-episcopoi, Deacons, *Kaisthanees*, and faithful of all parishes in our Diocese of South-West America!

Dearly beloved,

It is with much pain and pastoral concern that we write this to you. The present age has witnessed greater technological advancement. This has certainly resulted in unimaginable improvement especially in the field of communication. All these, without doubt, are made out of the special gifts of the Holy Spirit bestowed on the humankind. These are but meant for the glorification of the Kingdom of God and for the betterment of the humankind. Unfortunately, when we see the misuse of the social media our conviction on the greater potential and goodness of the media itself is getting challenged. We are for sure that, all of you would agree with us when we say that more 'washing of the garbage' and attempts of defaming of the profiles that we see in the major share of the communications in the social media. This is letting us down for no end and our heart goes out for both who are victimized through these and who are involved in these acts of defamations. We believe that both the targeting and the targeted need more pastoral care and prayer in their lives. Further the fraudulent use of the name and logo of the Church and diocese, the profile of the officials will have both legal and disciplinary consequences.

Either us or our previous generations when left our homeland, what were the intentions, motivations and aspirations they had? What were the kind of struggles and issues we had at the time of our initial settlements to make this great country as our home? Could we recollect on how greatly God's mercy and love showered on us at the times of our needs? Direct or indirect attempts of tarnishing the profiles of our brethren are nothing but our rebellion to the will of God. Through that we are becoming ungrateful to the endless mercy and love we have privileged in our life.

We are now entering into the fasting days of the Holy Advent. We are convinced that our faithful would dedicate themselves in observing the Advent fasting with due abstention of the foods which are prevented for the season. All the same, could we also take a resolution alongside, that from now onwards we will not use the potential goodness of the social media for the spoiling of the profiles of anybody? Could we count any attempts of bad targeting as a grave sin? Let us support each other! Let us uphold the unfailing love of God! Let us become channels of God's love! Let our hearts be the manger!

We take this opportunity to earnestly plead your good heart to not to use the social media as a platform to spoil the reputation of others. Remember the commandments of our Lord:

“Take care that you do not despise one of these little ones; for, I tell you, in heaven their angels continually see the face of my Father in heaven.” (St. Matthew 18:10-11)

“Do not judge, so that you may not be judged. For with the judgment you make you will be judged, and the measure you give will be the measure you get”. (St. Matthew 7:1-2).

We

May the love of God the Father, grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the fellowship and communion of the Holy Spirit be with us forever and ever!

From Sreyas Aramana
Adoor, Pathanamthitta Dt., Kerala, India
On November 24, 2017

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Metr. Dr. Zacharias Mar Aprem