



Alexios Mar Eusebius
Metropolitan

MALANKARA ORTHODOX SYRIAN CHURCH

DIOCESE OF SOUTH-WEST AMERICA



3101 Hopkins Road,
Beasley, TX 77417, USA
Office: (281) 403-0670
Fax: (281) 459-0814
website: www.ds-wa.org
email: mareusebius@ds-wa.org

DSWA/C/04/2014

February 28, 2014

Blessings to our Cor-Episcopoi, Priests, Deacons, Parish Managing Committee members and all the faithful of our Diocese!

Dearly beloved,

As we begin our journey through the Great Lent, let us recall the great example of our Lord who by his life taught us the discipline of fasting combined with intense prayer, which leads us to gain strength and victory in the constant spiritual battles we encounter in the world. Just like how Moses, Elijah, and our Lord fasted for 40 days, we too must discipline our body, soul and mind, preparing ourselves to embrace the Risen Lord.

St. Basil the Great reminds us that “true fasting is rejecting evil, holding one’s tongue, suppressing one’s hatred, and banishing one’s lust, evil words, lying, and betrayal of vows.” Fasting is incomplete if we are unable to control our words and actions to reflect purity of heart and simplicity of soul. We must examine ourselves both internally and externally, and wholeheartedly embrace the tools given to us by the Church. The reciting of the special prayers of the Lenten season, prostration forty times after fasting till noon, genuflection during prayer, abstinence from restricted food for the whole Lent, along with meditation, silence, culminating in repentance and the Sacrament of Holy Confession, and participating in the Holy Pesaha should lead us to change and give us the experience of the Resurrection, that is, putting to death those sins and habits that entangle us to the world, and be raised up with renewal of life in Christ.

Let this Great and Holy Fast be an opportune time for us to draw strength from the Almighty as we seek to conquer our passions and the pleasures of this world. May the prayers of the Fathers and Doctors of the Church, departed clergy and all the faithful departed be a stronghold for us throughout this spiritual journey.

Your shepherd in Christ,

Alexios Mar Eusebius, Metropolitan