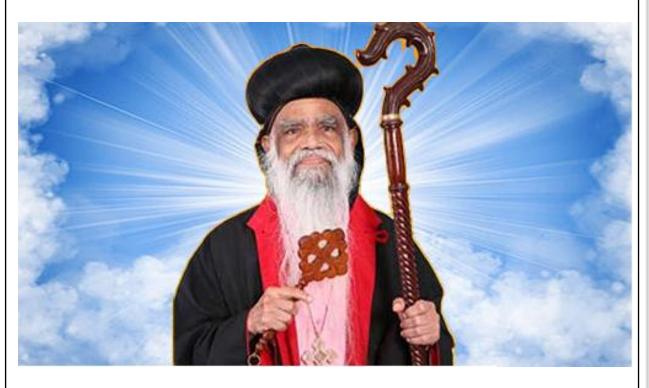
December 2012 Vol. I Issue 06

Go In Peace, O Good and Faithful Shepherd



H.G. Mathews Mar Barnabas, Metropolitan 1924 - 2012

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MERRY
CHRISTMAS
AND A
BLESSED AND
HAPPY NEW
YEAR



Thirty days of
Mourning declared
by both
Metropolitans of
the American
Dioceses
in
Memory of H.G.
Mathews Mar
Barnabas of Blessed
Memory



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SPOTLIGHT ARTICLE: St. Issac the Syrian, Homily 60



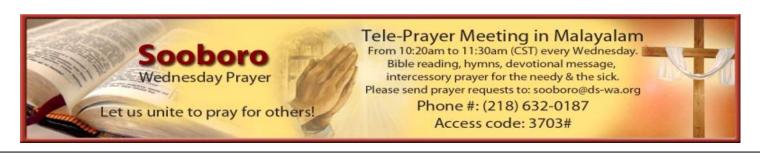
If a man readily and joyfully accepts a loss for the sake of God, he is inwardly pure. And if he does not look down upon any man because of his defects, in very truth he is free. If a man is not pleased with someone who honors him, nor displeased with someone who dishonors him, he is dead to the world and to this life. The watchfulness of discernment is superior to every discipline of men accomplished in any way to any degree.

Do not hate the sinner. For we are all laden with guilt. If for the sake of God you are moved to oppose him, weep over him. Why do you hate him? Hate his sins and pray for him, that you may imitate Christ Who was not wroth with sinners, but interceded for them. Do you not see how He wept over Jerusalem? We are mocked by the devil in many instances, so why should we hate the man who is mocked by him who mocks us also? Why, O man, do you hate the sinner? Could it be because he is not so righteous as you? But where is your righteousness when you have no love? Why do you not shed tears over him? But you persecute him. In ignorance some are moved with anger, presuming themselves to be discerners of the works of sinners.

Be a herald of God's goodness, for God rules over you, unworthy though you are; for although your debt to Him is so great, yet He is not seen exacting payment from you, and from the small works you do, He bestows great rewards upon you. Do not call God just, for His justice is not manifest in the things concerning you. And if David calls Him just and upright (cf. Ps. 24:8, 144:17), His Son revealed to us that He is good and kind. 'He is good,' He says, 'to the evil and to the impious' (cf. Luke 6:35). How can you call God just when you come across the Scriptural passage on the wage given to the workers? 'Friend, I do thee no wrong: I will give unto this last even as unto thee. Is thine eye evil because I am good?' (Matt. 20:12-15). How can a man call God just when he comes across the passage on the prodigal son who wasted his wealth with riotous living, how for the compunction alone which he showed, the father ran and fell upon his neck and gave him authority over all his wealth? (Luke 15:11 ff.). None other but His very Son said these things concerning Him, lest we doubt it; and thus He bare witness concerning Him. Where, then, is God's justice, for whilst we are sinners Christ died for us! (cf. Rom. 5:8). But if here He is merciful, we may believe that He will not change.

Far be it that we should ever think such an iniquity that God could become unmerciful! For the property of Divinity does not change as do mortals. God does not acquire something which He does not have, nor lose what He has, nor supplement what He does have, as do created beings. But what God has from the beginning, He will have and has until the [unending] end, as the blest Cyril wrote in his commentary on Genesis. Fear God, he says, out of love for Him, and not for the austere name that He has been given. Love Him as you ought to love Him; not for what He will give you in the future, but for what we have received, and for this world alone which He has created for us. Who is the man that can repay Him? Where is His repayment to be found in our works? Who persuaded Him in the beginning to bring us into being Who intercedes for us before Him, when we shall possess no [faculty of] memory, as though we never existed? Who will awake this our body for that life? Again, whence descends the notion of knowledge into dust? O the wondrous mercy of God! O the astonishment at the bounty of our God and Creator!

-cont'd on p. 8



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Metropolitan's Column

Metropolitan's Column

As a diocese, we have been mourning the falling asleep of the former Metropolitan and the modern architect of the undivided American Diocese, the Late, Metropolitan Mathews Mar Barnabas. There is no doubt that His Grace's memory will be eternal in the hearts of the faithful of the Malankara Orthodox Church. He was a strict disciplinarian and a teacher who did not compromise the faith and practices of the Church for anyone. In the United States, there are several Orthodox jurisdictions that each holds their national and traditional values. Among them, the Malankara Orthodox Church holds onto a unique heritage, not only bearing the St. Thomas Tradition but also growing into two dioceses in North America under His Grace's leadership. The Church is forever indebted to His Grace for his contributions, especially for the growing generation in North America.

Last month when we were in India, we are able to spend some time with His Grace at Pushpagiri hospital. At the time, he was healthy and in good spirit despite his old age. We were able to pray together, and we never thought it would be our last meeting. It was when we reached Dubai on our return to the U.S. that we heard of His Grace's passing. We were able to make arrangements to return to India and attend the funeral and burial services. There is no doubt that Sts. Peter & Paul Orthodox Church, Valayanchirangara will be a pilgrim center for our faithful, especially with His Grace entombed there.

When we were appointed as the Metropolitan of this newly formed diocese, His Grace welcomed us and offered support, guidance, and advice. Despite his frailty and old age, His Grace attended the inaugural meeting of the diocese in Houston and gave an inspiring speech. Even after, whenever we visited New York, we made it a point to see Valiya Thirumeni and spend time with him. He was so delighted to always welcome us and share his knowledge and experiences of strict monasticism, ardent Orthodoxy, faith in the Fathers, and commitment to the Holy Church. On behalf of the Diocese of South-West America, we offer our deepest condolences and continue to seek his intercession. Though his presence will surely be missed, may his memory be eternal!

Though we are mourning the loss of our beloved shepherd, we take this opportunity to once again greet everyone following the Feast of the Nativity of our Lord. As we celebrate the birth of Christ, let us rededicate our lives unto Him. As we approach the end of 2012, let us take a moment to thank God for this past year and also remember all those who have passed from us. Let us join together in prayer and ask God to bless His creation with His divine peace. May 2013 be a new beginning for us all and may it bring an abundance of blessings to all our blessed endeavors. May God Almighty grant us patience, hope, and strength while blessing us with the divine gifts of His love.

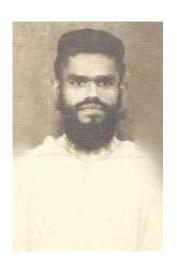
With love and prayers, Alexios Mar Eusebius The Stream Page 4 of 10

A Tribute to a Spiritual Father: H.G. Mathews Mar Barnabas (1924-2012)

The Golden Bishop



With the Wooden Cross









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A Tribute to a Spiritual Father- cont'd

Mar Barnabas: The Golden Bishop with the Wooden Cross

Rev. Fr. Dr. Joy Pyngolil, Secretary, Diocese of South-West America

It was July $3^{\rm rd}$, 2012 - the last time I had a chance to meet with our beloved Thirumeni at his residence in Pampady Dayara. He was very excited, energetic and eager to learn about the progress of his former diocese which he divided and gave to two of his successors. When I told him about the Educational Scholarship established in his name in the South-West American Diocese, he was so overjoyed that he immediately dictated a kalpana to the diocese to commend them for their efforts. As we shared our memories and our time together, I was reminded of the bishop I began my ordained ministry with many years ago.

I was trained and ordained for the outside Kerala Diocese by H.G. Mathews Mar Athanasius. However, it was the humble nature and commitment to ministry of H.G. Mathews Mar Barnabas that led me to choose the Idukki diocese for my parish ministry upon ordination prior to migrating to the United States. Mar Barnabas was a simple and humble

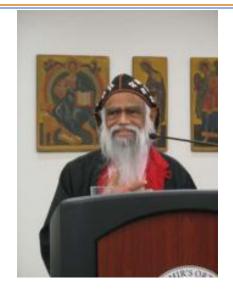


bishop opined a 'golden bishop with a wooden stick'. I emphasize the word, "golden" because he was of 24 carat – flexible and true to his nature without the taint of amalgamation with the things of this world. His only flaw a short temper - easily ignited, easily extinguished; and in his later years, even this was much abated. I loved him and cared for him just as any responsible child who had no eyes on paternal inheritance. (He did not have any!). As in any healthy parent-child interaction, we had our share of disagreements, but it never lessened the filial bond between us. Even that day, it remained the same – his instruction, his chastisement and his love – unchanged by time. --Cont'd on next page

A reflection on H.G. Mathews Mar Barnabas- Rev. Fr. Christopher Mathew

As I reflect on the life of Mathews Mar Barnabas, I will always remember the man who was a man of prayer, spiritually disciplined, and love. From the time that thirumeni arrived in America his impact was immediate. In a time when there were many struggles for our churches here in America, Barnabas Thirumeni provided a firm spiritual foundation to steer his flock in the right direction.

I was a young child when thirumeni arrived to America, and I remember my father telling me that thirumeni was already known as a great spiritual man who gave powerful retreat messages, and that it was a blessing that he is coming to help lead our diocese. His style was one of strict spiritual discipline, and knew that it was a disciplined life that gives us the ability to come to knowledge of God. This strictness made him a polarizing figure when he first came to America, but as we all grew to know him, we came to realize that this strictness was not out of some need to have power over us, but it was a life lesson that he learned and lived so that we can come closer to Christ.--Cont'd ob p 7



Above: Barnabas Thirumeni presenting a lecture at the St. Vladimir's Orthodox Theological Seminary in New York



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A Tribute to a Spiritual Father- cont'd

Shepherd, Teacher, Chaplain: Set Apart From the Rest- Rev. Fr. Mathew Alexander

We are all the same. This man was different. Let's be honest, to some degree or another, we are all materialistic, greedy, self-centered, self-promoting, morally compromising, two-faced, and basically "of this world." His Grace Mathews Mar Barnabas wasn't. The three aspects of Thirumeni that I will remember most are His Grace's gifts as a shepherd, a teacher, and a chaplain.

His Grace was unlike any person I have ever met. At times this made encounters with Thirumeni fairly uncomfortable. Thirumeni never said what everyone wanted to hear, or went with the flow. But, I have learned that love isn't just giving in to what everyone wants. Love doesn't enable sin. Love, though patient and accepting, isn't content to leave us as we are. Love has the courage to correct when there is wrong, to sharpen when there is laziness, and to humble when there is pride. When sin attacks the flock like a wolf upon sheep, it is the shepherd who takes his staff and strikes it down. Thirumeni did nothing less for us when we or our parishes were caught up in pride, greed, self-centeredness, or any other sin. As a shepherd he protected his flock, both through prayers, and also concerted action. He was passionate about the worship of the Church. The worship should always be done in a meaningful, clearly understood way, so that it may benefit everyone. It should never be done for show or as a performance. Who can forget Thirumeni's insistence on solemn, penitential tunes for Hearken Gracious. Or His Grace's constant training on how to correctly read the Bible loudly and clearly to the congregation. The Acolytes under his pastoral ministry are above and beyond the ordinary, and truly reflect an organized, purposeful angelic ministry. Thirumeni was fond of saying that when the worship is done perfectly, everyone will appreciate it, and that will truly give glory to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

-Cont'd on next page



"The Golden Bishop with the Wooden Cross" - Cont'd from p.5

It was on March 22, 1992 His Grace arrived in the US to take responsibility of the American diocese – with no home into the midst of a storm. Even then, God prevailed and provided our bishop a home with the family of K.M. Jacob. I believed in His Grace as we weathered those difficult times and stood by him as he passed through the fires on September 6, 1996 and returned humbled but victorious. It was his transparency whether it was in matters of character, principle or finance that helped our small diocese to secure a great place for itself. I was fascinated by his generosity. He always gave his share for any new church buildings in his diocese. I recall his donation of \$5000.00 to the Orlando church prior to its construction when I was serving there for a short period of time. As a father, his joy was in giving to his children. He never bothered about his survival or overly concerned himself with money. God blessed him abundantly and he distributed abundantly.

Among the 25 books he authored on prayer and many other aspects of religious life, the greatest is the untold story of his life - a life authored by His Grace and lived according to His will. As a shepherd, he considered himself as a father to all and expected full obedience from all. He was honest and true to his calling as a monk, practicing piety in his prayer life and prayer in his daily devoted service to Christ and His Church. As we remember this great life, let us continue to request his prayers and intercessions and pray God grant him eternal life.

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A Tribute to a Spiritual Father- cont'd

A reflection on H.G. Mathews Mar Barnabas- cont'd from p 5

My first impressions of thirumeni was a strict pious monk who demanded perfection in the altar. Thirumeni was well educated in India, and spoke in English but he had a heavy accent that was difficult for us young children to understand at first. But as we began to know our spiritual father through the years and his visits to our parishes, we began to see that this strict pious monk had a profound love for God, and shared that love with us all. The best times to be around thirumeni would be when it was a small group of people, or just your family at home, and thirumeni would teach and be open about life. As a spiritual father, his way of life began to attract many young people into the ministry including myself. This is a testament to thirumeni's love for his children and wanting to make sure that the young generation in America would grow strong in the Faith. He was always insistent that our churches and achens should have at least 1 English qurbana per month, and that sermons should always be done in English so that all members in the congregation could understand. Thirumeni was instrumental in building up our MGOCSM in North America so that our children could flourish.

I know for a fact that all the young priest, deacons, seminarians of our dioceses in America have all been impacted by thirumeni's presence in our lives, because he always took care to teach, support and love us during our time of formation as ministers of the Holy Church. We will all remember sitting at the aramana and having thirumeni have us all sit down and listen to him teach us a lesson from the scriptures. We will all remember having to help type a chapter (or two) of the many books that he had written. We will all remember being taught how to read slowly and clearly for the benefit of the members of the church when we read the scripture reading during service. Thirumeni would also take time to know each of us, and make sure to impart his knowledge and wisdom for our specific needs. He shared his life lessons as a pastor and chaplain when he was a young priest. He had taken the time to even teach some of his young seminarians Malayalam, even as hard as it was to teach young American boys who had no understanding of Malayalam. All these things Thirumeni did because he loved us, and truly experienced the love of Christ in his life, and wanted to make sure we all did as well.

As sad as it is that now thirumeni is no longer physically with us, I know we have a man of fervent prayer, praying for his spiritual children on earth so that we continue to grow in Christ.

Shepherd, Teacher, Chaplain: Set Apart From the Rest-cont'd from p. 6

The greatest need of the youth of America was to quench its thirst for teaching. This was Thirumeni's greatest gift to his spiritual flock. His Grace was always teaching. If His Grace was in your church, he was teaching. If His Grace was in your home, he was teaching. If you were in the Aramana visiting Thirumeni, His Grace would sit you down next to him and teach. As a first year seminarian, trying to grasp all that was being thrown at me, I remember asking Thirumeni all sorts of questions. Whether the questions were about the Holy Trinity, the Holy Scriptures, the church lectionary, or even bioethics and birth control, Thirumeni always had an immediate, well-thought out answer. Thirumeni was quite brilliant. 80+ years of reading scripture, praying the canonical prayers, celebrating the sacraments, and communing with God had formed an incredible guru. In 1966, His Holiness Baselios Augen wrote in the Foreword to *A Devotional Study of the Holy Qurbana* that "we pray that God Almighty grant health and long life to Achan to produce similar books for the benefit of our people." The youth of America owe a great deal of thanks to God for answering His Holiness' prayer.

Perhaps the most enduring picture in my mind since Thirumeni passed away is the image of His Grace walking into a hospital room to visit patients. At His Grace's heart, he was a chaplain. Much of His Grace's life was spent doing this particular ministry. When His Grace entered a hospital, you could see Thirumeni's face shine and energy flow through his tired bones. His bed-side manners were text-book. Thirumeni would immediately go into the room, hold the persons hand, look into their eyes and listen. In those moments, the room was emptied of pain and suffering and filled with the grace and love of God. If Thirumeni ever heard someone was in the hospital, he would not rest until he had visited them, even when His Grace was more frail than the patient he was visiting. I do not believe this aspect of His Grace's ministry has ceased just because his body has gone to the grave. If His Grace's heart was set on it during his lifetime, surely as his soul is swept up into the presence of God now, it pleads in intercession for those who need it.

His Grace Mathews Mar Barnabas lived through 88 years of massive change in the world. Every decade of his life, his environment, and the world around him changed drastically. But, His Grace remained the same. While everyone else was content to flow downstream, Thirumeni walked against the current. His Grace lived by a completely different set of standards. While everyone else sought riches, His Grace sought poverty. While everyone else sought glory, His Grace took on humility. While everyone else tried to fit in, His Grace stood up and spoke the truth. It was these qualities that made His Grace a great arch-pastor, a great teacher, and a great healer. For me, as I watched His Grace being lowered to the grave by his disciples, and the devotion and love of His Grace's successors, His Grace Mar Nicholovos and His Grace Mar Eusebius, I realized that Thirumeni had forever changed the world he lived in. With so many following His Grace's path, the current in the river seems to have changed direction.

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From Around the Diocese

5th Annual Dallas Area Flag Football Tournament

On Saturday, November 24th, 2012, the Dallas Area hosted their 5th Annual Orthodox Flag Football Tournament, which was held at Bruton Soccer Complex in Mesquite, Texas. Teams from St. George Dallas, St. Gregorios Dallas, St. Mary's Valiyapally, St. Mary's COI, St. Thomas Dallas, and St. Paul's Dallas all participated in this tournament. In the Elite League, St. Gregorios Dallas came out with a win over St. George Dallas, claiming their first championship. Stanley Thomas was named the MVP. St. Mary's COI won the Younger League championship, claiming their victory over St. Mary's Valiyapally. James Jacob was named the MVP. All glory to God for such a wonderful tournament, and special thanks to all who participated and supported, as well as the Dallas area committee for all their hard work and dedication in making this year's tournament a great success.

Jithin Zachariah
Dallas/OK Area Council Representative





St. Gregorios, Austin at Ecumenical Celebrations



St. Gregorios Orthodox Church choir at the Ecumenical Christmas held on December 8, 2012 at Austin, Texas. St. Alphonsa Catholic Church, St. Thomas Malankara Syriac Orthodox Church, St. Gregorios Orthodox Church and Austin Mar Thoma Church participated in the ecumenical service.

Rev. Fr. Sam Mathew gave the Christmas message

Catholicate Centenary Celebrations at St.Thomas, Oklahoma City, OK

St. Thomas Orthodox Church, Oklahoma City, OK, celebrated 1960th year anniversary of the throne of St. Thomas and 100th year of the establishment of the Catholicate in India on December 2nd, 2012 with a Holy Tri-mass, public meeting and lunch. Very Rev. Yesudasan Pappan Cor- Episcopa, Vicar, St. Gregorios Orthodox Church, Queens, NY, was the chief celebrant of the Trimass assisted by Rev. Fr. K.Y. Wilson, Vicar, St.Thomas Orthodox Church, Atlanta, GA, and Rev. Fr. Cherian M. Kunnel.



Immediately after the Holy Eucharist, the meeting started inside the Church. The gathering was welcomed by Clara Thomson, MGOCSM Secretary. In his inaugural speech, Very Rev. Yesudasan Pappan Cor- Episcopa, reminded everyone the true meaning of freedom from a Biblical standpoint and how freedom goes hand in hand with rules and regulations. Rev. Fr. K.Y. Wilson gave a brief history of the Malankara Orthodox Church and the Catholicate in Malankara. Rev. Fr. Cherian M. Kunnel thanked everyone for attending the meeting. The event concluded with lunch for all, sponsored by Mr. Sunny Pulipra, a member of our Church.

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SPOTLIGHT ARTICLE: St. Issac the Syrian, Homily 60- cont'd from p. 2

O might for which all is possible! O the immeasurable goodness that brings our nature again, sinners though we be, to His regeneration and rest! Who is sufficient to glorify Him? He raises up the transgressor and blasphemer, he renews dust unendowed with reason, making it rational and comprehending and the scattered and insensible dust and the scattered senses He makes a rational nature worthy of thought. The sinner is unable to comprehend the grace of His resurrection. Where is gehenna, that can afflict us? Where is perdition, that terrifies us in many ways and quenches the joy of His love? And what is gehenna as compared with the grace of His resurrection, when He will raise us from Hades and cause our corruptible nature to be clad in incorruption, and raise up in glory him that has fallen into Hades?

Come, men of discernment, and be filled with wonder! Whose mind is sufficiently wise and marvelous to wonder worthily at the bounty of our Creator? His recompense of sinners is, that instead of a just recompense, He rewards them with resurrection, and instead of those bodies with which they trampled upon His law, He enrobes them with perfect glory and incorruption. That grace whereby we are resurrected after we have sinned is greater than the grace which brought us into being when we were not. Glory be to Thine immeasurable grace, O Lord! Behold, Lord, the waves of Thy grace close my mouth with silence, and there is not a thought left in me before the face of Thy thanksgiving. What mouths can confess Thy praise, O good King, Thou Who lovest our life? Glory be to Thee for the two worlds which Thou hast created for our growth and delight, leading us by all things which Thou didst fashion to the knowledge of Thy glory, from now and unto the ages. Amen.

St. Isaac the Syrian, Homily 60.

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Know our Parish

St. Gregorios Orthodox Church, Tampa, Florida



In the land of the ever rising sun, Tampa, Florida, a group of believers of the Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church (India) formed a congregation on the 4th of November, 1989 named after the Holy Saint of the Church, St. Gregorios of Parumala under the leadership of Rev. Fr. Samuel K Mathew. On November 09, 1990, Rev. Fr. George Paulose, Valanadyil, Onakkoor, was appointed as the Vicar of this congregation and the Holy Qurbana was conducted regularly at the parish hall of the Holy Redeemer Lutheran Church in Temple Terrace. The small congregation started to grow slowly and one acre land with a building was purchased in May 1994 and the worship started in this building. On January 01, 1995, Rev. Fr. George Paulose, the Vicar, laid the foundation stone for a new church building and parish hall in the presence of Rev. Fr. P.M.Zacharia and all faith full believers of the congregation. By the hard work, continuous prayers, generous contributions from the faithful, well-wishers and friends, the new church and the parish hall came up very fast like a 'lily of the valley'. The new church and parish hall were consecrated on the 15th and 16th of August 1997 by H.G. Mathews Mar Barnabas, former Metropolitan of the American Diocese and late H.G. Dr. Thomas Mar Makarios, Metropolitan of the Diocese of Canada and Europe in the presence of several priests, faith full members and well-wishers. Under the leadership of Fr. George Paulose, the parish continued to flourish in the upcoming years.

spiritual organizations like Sunday School, and Morth Marium Samajam, were functioning regularly as scheduled. As years passed by, the members felt that the space inside the church was insufficient. To accommodate more people, it became a compelling need to have a bigger church building. The Vicar, Rev. Fr. George Paulose, encouraged the members to have a new church building. By the Grace of God Almighty, with the intercessional prayers of St. Gregorios of Parumala and with the submissive prayers of the faithful members, the congregation hoped and firmly believed that their dreams will be fulfilled in the near future. In the month of April, 2004, the church was able

to purchase five acres of land located on Jefferson Road near I 75 and the foundation stone was laid on the 5th of October by the former Metropolitan of the American Diocese. In 2010, the General body elected Manoj Max Palakkat (Treasurer), Binu Cheriyan (Secretary) and John Jacob as Convener and V.G.Koshy, Koshy Mammen, Kunjummen, Dr. Sunoj Abraham, Sunny Jacob, Aji Mathews, Varghese Koshy and Asha Varghese as committee members. The ground breaking ceremony for the new church was conducted on the 27th of February, 2011.

It took more than a year to complete this new church building project. The new like towers a lighthouse, surrounded by a scenic background. The icons on the dome in the middle of the church, and the Risen Christ on the east wall of the altar resemble a real orthodox look. The charm and the solemnity of this new church are not often seen in many other Malankara Orthodox churches. It's like a "full bloom of rose of Sharon". On the 12th of August 2012, Rev. Fr. George Paulose, accompanied by Rev. Fr. Cyril Davy, conducted the first Holy Qurbana in the new church.

The year 2012 is a mile stone in the history of the Malankara Orthodox Church of India because the centenary celebrations of the Catholicate throne of St. Thomas. This new church is a gift to the Indian Orthodox believers in Tampa of the Malankara Orthodox Church.

"True faith, canonical worship, and goodwill to help the poor & needy" is the main motto of the church. Rev. Fr. George Paulose has passionately encouraged the faithful members to contribute generously towards charity. The church has extended a helping hand to the Hurricane victims in Honduras & Haiti, earthquake victims in Gujarat, India & Japan, the handicapped children of Mulanthuruthy, rehabilitation of the Blind in Calcutta, build homes for the homeless, provide financial help for poor girls to pursue Nursing, and offer financial assistance for poor girls to get married.