



# The Stream

A monthly publication of the Diocese of South-West America

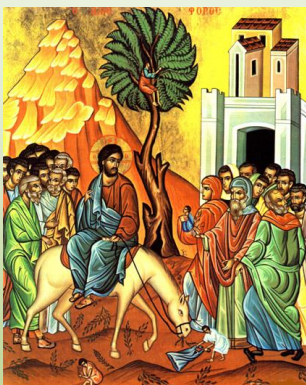
March 2014

"And the Spirit immediately drove him out into the wilderness. He was in the wilderness forty days, tempted by Satan; and he was with the wild beasts; and the angels waited on him. Now after John was arrested, Jesus came to Galilee, proclaiming the Good News of God, and saying, 'The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the Good News.'" - Mark 1:12-15

**"Fasting is wonderful, because it tramples our sins like a dirty weed, while it cultivates and raises truth like a flower."**

**St. John Chrysostom**

**"O, Lord Jesus Christ Son Of God, Have Mercy on Me a Sinner"**



## HOLY WEEK

## 2014



**March 2014  
Vol.3 Issue 3**

### UPCOMING DATES 2014

**40th Friday  
April 11**

**Lazarus Saturday  
April 12**

**Palm Sunday  
April 13**

**Holy Thursday  
(PESAHA)  
April 17**

**Good(Holy) Friday  
April 18**

**Holy Saturday  
April 19**

**Easter Sunday  
(Resurrection)  
April 20**

**MARK YOUR CALENDARS!!!**

**DIOCESAN CLERGY CONFERENCE  
AND DIOCESAN ASSEMBLY 2014**

**Thursday & Saturday,  
May 15 & 17, 2014:  
Urshlem Indian Orthodox Center**

**Friday, May 16, 2014:  
St. Gregorios, Houston**



### What's News this Month

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Do you have articles or news you would like to share in 'The Stream' newsletter? Would you like to share 'The Stream' with -your family and friends. Please e-mail us at [thestreamdswa@gmail.com](mailto:thestreamdswa@gmail.com)

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**CATHOLICATE DAY**  
6th April 2014



**MALANKARA ORTHODOX SYRIAN CHURCH**

**Catholicate Day  
April 6, 2014**

## Metropolitan's Column

### *Metropolitan's Column*

Dearly Beloved

In Numbers 21:4 and the verses that follow, we read about the journey of the Israelites from Mount Hor along the route to the Red Sea. Along the way they became hungry and murmured against Moses. The murmuring of the people against Moses was always considered by God as being against God himself because the whole endeavor of Moses is directed by God and is the project of God. Since it was God's project, Moses never attempted to punish the Israelites and allowed God to discipline them. Thus God punished the rebellious Israelites by sending poisonous snakes whose bites resulted in the death of many Israelites. Moses pleaded before God on behalf of the people, reminding Him of the ignorance and weakness of this poor people. God heard Moses' plea and Himself provided a solution - Moses was to raise a bronze serpent in the middle of the camp, and those who looked upon the bronze serpent were saved from death. Later, the people began to worship the bronze serpent, and this developed into idolatry. We recall Hezekiah, the king of Judah, who, as part of the purification of the temple, removed all idol worship and broke the bronze serpent into pieces. It suffices to say the images we use in the world should not be worshiped in and of themselves; rather, they should have the primary purpose of pointing and leading us to Christ.

The cross erected upon Calvary should point us to Jesus Christ, who became the sacrificial lamb for us. The cross placed in the midst of Great Lent in the midst of the church also gives us this message - one of directing our minds and thoughts to Calvary and toward the crucifixion of Christ. That is and should be our ultimate aim. In Genesis 3:3 it is said by the woman, "God said, you shall not eat the fruit of the tree that is in the middle of the Garden". Jesus was crucified in the middle of the earth to save the human being (representing humanity) who had eaten the fruit from the tree in the middle of the Garden of Eden, resulting in separation from God (death). Just as the poison of the serpent is used as the remedy to save the life of a person bitten by a serpent, the tree erected on Calvary and its fruit are essential for the salvation of humanity.

As we pass the half way mark of the journey through Great Lent, our focus must remain on Calvary and the passion of Christ. As a reminder of this, the cross is raised in the middle of the church at Mid Lent. Let this Holy Week be a blessed experience of our journey to Calvary. Let us all have sincere repentance and confession and thus experience Holy Passover. All of us, together, will then have a great resurrection from the old life to a divine life.

Your shepherd in Christ,  
Alexios Mar Eusebius



## Ecumenical Corner - *Memory Eternal*

### *Memory Eternal H.H. Ignatius Zakka Iwas, Patriarch of Antioch, Syriac Orthodox Church*

His Holiness Patriarch of Antioch and all the East Ignatius Zakka I Iwas, has entered eternal rest in Germany on March 21, 2014 at twelve noon, due to a massive heart attack. The Patriarch was under medical treatment a long time due to his fragile health condition. His Holiness had been residing in Lebanon since the beginning of civil war in Syria.

Patriarch Ignatius Zakka Iwas I the 122nd Syriac Orthodox Patriarch of Antioch and all the East was known for his involvement in ecumenical dialogue. He was a president of the World Council of Churches and he had written many books and articles. He served as Patriarch for over 30 years, and began his life in the ministry over 60 years ago. He was present, as a deacon, to see the reunification of the Malankara Church in 1957, but also saw it split again in 1972 while Metropolitan of Bagdad. During his time as Patriarch there were times for hope of healing the division in the Malankara Church, but unfortunately never came to fruition.

The Patriarch was born on April 21, 1933 in Mosul, Iraq, and his given name was Sanharib Iwas. He completed his elementary studies at the school of Our Lady's Parish and was transferred to St. Thomas Syriac Orthodox Church School, both in Mosul. In 1946, he began his theological studies at Mor Ephrem seminary in Mosul. In 1948, while still a student at Seminary he was ordained as a *Korooyo* (Reader). In the year 1953, he was ordained to the rank of *Hy'podiakono* (Sub-Deacon). The following year he was tonsured a monk. He left Mosul at that time to become secretary to the Patriarchs, H.H. Ignatius Afrem I Barsoum and then H.H. Ignatius Yacob III. In 1955 he was promoted to the rank of *M'shemsono* (Deacon).

On November 17 1957, Patriarch Yacob III ordained him a priest. In 1960 he pursued further studies in New York, where he studied oriental languages and completed a master's degree in English at City University and a further master's in pastoral theology at the General Theological Seminary. In 1962 and 1963, Iwas was delegated by the patriarch as observer at Second Vatican Council. On November 17, 1963, he was consecrated by Patriarch Yacob III as Metropolitan of Mosul, and he took the episcopal name, Severios. The next year, during renovation work on the sanctuary wall of the Metropolitan church in Mosul, relics of the St. Thomas the Apostle were found. In 1969 he transferred to be archbishop of Baghdad and Basra. Nine years later, he was given additional responsibility for the new diocese of Australia.

Following the death of Patriarch Yacob III on 25 June 1980, Iwas was elected by the synod of the church to be the 122nd Syriac Patriarch of Antioch. He was enthroned as patriarch on September 14, 1980, on the feast of the Holy Cross, by Baselios Paulose II, Catholicos of India (Malankara Jacobite), in St. George's Patriarchal Cathedral in Damascus.





**Sooboro**  
Wednesday Prayer

Let us unite to pray for others!

**Tele-Prayer Meeting in Malayalam**  
 From 10:20am to 11:30am (CST) every Wednesday.  
 Bible reading, hymns, devotional message,  
 intercessory prayer for the needy & the sick.  
 Please send prayer requests to: [sooboro@ds-wa.org](mailto:sooboro@ds-wa.org)  
 Phone #: (218) 632-0187  
 Access code: 3703#



## Ecumenical Corner - Memory Eternal



### *Memory Eternal Metropolitan Philip Saliba*

Metropolitan Philip Saliba of the Antiochian Archdiocese of North America has fallen asleep in the Lord. On March 19, 2014, Metropolitan Philip of the Antiochian Archdiocese passed away while receiving treatment from a heart attack in Florida.

The Metropolitan was born in Lebanon, being the fourth of five children to his parents. He did his undergraduate seminary studies in Lebanon then served the Patriarch of Antioch as his deacon. Later he went on for higher studies in London, and then later in America at Holy Cross Greek Orthodox Seminary, and at St. Vladimir's Orthodox Seminary. He was ordained a priest in 1959, and served as pastor at the St. George Parish in Cleveland. In 1966 he was elected as bishop, to succeed Metropolitan Anthony, Archbishop of New York. He was consecrated a bishop on August 14, 1966, in Lebanon.

His Eminence was a great humanitarian who supported and worked for peace in the Middle East, and started missions to help the helpless in the numerous conflicts that plague the Middle East. The Metropolitan was also a key figure in uniting the Antiochian Archdiocese, and healing many of the divisions within the diocese and in parishes during his episcopacy. He was also instrumental in making the Orthodox Christian faith more accessible to America, by receiving 2000 Evangelical Christians who desired to become Orthodox in 1987. He has led the Antiochian Archdiocese for over 40 years, and helped it to grow into a dynamic church. Upon hearing of Metropolitan Philip's death, our Diocesan Metropolitan, H.G. Alexios Mar Eusebius, sent a letter of condolence on behalf of the diocese showing our support and prayers to the Bishops, Priests, Deacons, and faithful of the Antiochian Archdiocese.

May the Memory of Metropolitan Philip be Eternal!

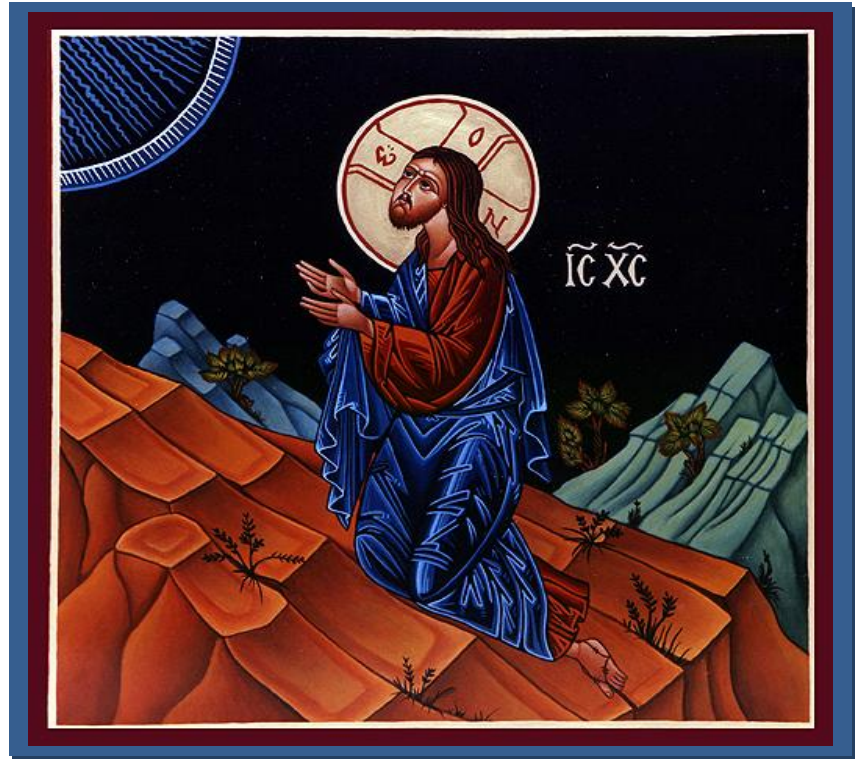




## Faith Study

**Thoughts on Suffering - Rev. Fr. James Cheriyan**

Suffering has become an inevitable part of our human existence. In one way or the other we all have suffered, it could have been an experience of the past; something that you are still facing on a daily basis or something that has not presented itself before you. Whether we like it or not, the reality of suffering is something from which we cannot escape while living our mortal human lives. When God created Adam and Eve, and placed them in the garden of Eden, suffering was not a part of God's blueprint for their future. This was something that man, in and with his own free will, decided to bear upon himself through his disobedience to the command of God. We never want our loved ones to suffer. For that is a true characteristic of genuine love. If that is the case it becomes very logical to raise the most common question, "Why does God allow suffering?" If God is love and the most perfect and unfailing model of love, how can he bear to see his own creation suffer? Why has the experience of Paradise been taken away from us for such a long time?



Well, as mentioned earlier, suffering was not a part of God's plan for man. God wanted us to be free of suffering. There is no suffering in the Kingdom of God. There is no suffering when man becomes a part of Divine grace and glory. The problem of suffering was induced on our nature by our own choice. When there is a movement from the presence of God, to the opposite direction, sufferings come as a part-and-parcel of such a movement. This is what happened in the garden of Eden and this is what has been happening ever since in our daily lives.

Since suffering has become an integral part of our life, there has to be some meaning and Divine purpose to this phenomena. Now, that should not, by any means, be interpreted as there is a need for suffering for us to find the meaning and purpose of our lives. As the Fathers of the Church, while talking about martyrdom have always asked the faithful not to put themselves in harm's way by seeking out voluntarily for the glory and crown of martyrdom. Similarly inducing suffering on ourselves for the crown of glory is not true spirituality. Neither is running away from it for the passing luxuries and comforts of this world. A believer will not be able to enjoy the joy of resurrection, until he or she understands the Cross of suffering.

**MGOC SM DEVOTIONALS**

<http://www.mgocsmamerica.com/devotionals>

MGOC SM North America releases weekly devotionals based on the Gospel readings for each week. These devotionals are written by leaders of the Church- both clergy and lay leaders. This is a great way to revamp your week with self-reflection and in the word. Please subscribe and spread the word in your areas as well

## Around the Diocese

***Lenten Retreat at St. Thomas Indian Orthodox Church of South Florida***

During this Holy Lenten season, the youth of St. Thomas Indian Orthodox Church of South Florida (Hollywood, FL) took it upon themselves to organize a Lenten Retreat for the MGOCSM South Florida area on March 21-23, 2014


Rev. Fr. Aju Phillip Mathew (NJ) served as guest speaker where Achen spoke on the theme verse taken from St. Matthew 5:14-16 "You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hid. No one after lighting a lamp puts it under the bushel basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all in the house.



In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven." Twenty-five MGOCSM youth members from the three Orthodox churches of South Florida partook in the retreat which focused on finding our "divine lights" within and letting those lights shine to others around us. Additionally, the participants had an in-depth study of the liturgical tones of our church, their origin, and practiced various kuklions in different tones. The study of the tones concluded with a game show-like competition, Game of Tones, which quizzed the youth on what they'd learned.

Enlightened with the messages of using our talents to serve God and being shining examples of Christ-like love and righteousness, the youth had a most fruitful and spiritually renewing experience during this 3-day retreat. The retreat culminated with Holy Qurbana service on Sunday, March 23 celebrated by Rev. Fr. Joy Pyngolil and assisted by Rev. Fr. Aju Phillip Mathew.





## Diocese of South-West America

### 1<sup>st</sup> Dallas Area Orthodox Convention


# APRIL

# 4-6

Fri-Sun

Time : Fri - 7:00 PM, Sat, Sun - 6:30 PM

Venue: St Mary's Orthodox Valiyapally  
14133- Dennis Ln  
Farmers Branch | TX 75234



Rev. Fr. Ninan V George

# Towards

# Spritual Transformation

God's Spirit Dwells in You.... (1 Cor 3:16)

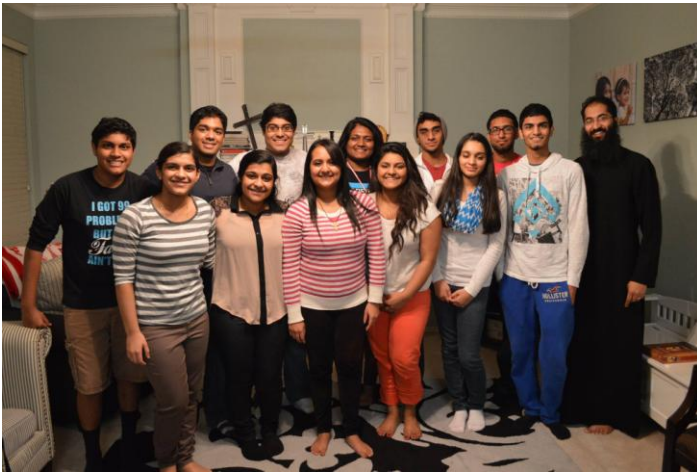
Rev. Fr. Raju M. Daniel (Convener) St. Mary's Orthodox Valiyapally	Rev. Fr. Rajesh K. John (Choir Cordinator) St. Thomas Orthodox Church
Rev. Fr. John Kunnathusseril St. Mary's Orthodox Church of India	Rev. Fr. C.G. Thomas St. Gregorios Orthodox Church
Rev. Fr. Thampan Varghese St. George Orthodox Church	Rev. Fr. Binu Mathew St. Pauls Orthodox Church
Rev Fr. Teji Abraham St. James Orthodox Mission Church	



## Around the Diocese

### ***SBAC (Sisters and Brothers Within Area Codes)***

The MGOCSM of the Dallas Area recently began a new ministry known as SBAC (Sisters and Brothers Within Area Codes). This ministry was created to unite all the MGOCSM members in a certain area regardless of church affiliation to come together for fellowship. These bible studies will be held on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Friday of every other month, in 3 groups of areas in the Dallas area. For the month of February, these bible studies brought good attendance by the youth and were led by Rev. Fr. Mat Alexander (Dallas/OK Area Youth Minister), Rev. Fr. Teji Abraham (Vicar, St. James Orthodox Mission Church), and Danny Thomas.



### ***Falling asleep of Rev. Fr. Dr. Paul Varki***

On March 26, 2014, Rev. Fr. Dr. Paul Varki passed away. Born in Kuruppampady, Kerala, India, he was the son of Chirackal Varki Paily and Aleyamma Paily. He is survived by his wife Mariamma and children Elizabeth Varki Jobes (son-in-law Theodore) and Paul Chirackal Varki (daughter-in-law Roslyn). His grandchildren were Taylor, Sarah, Sophia, Mirabel and Max Paily. He is also survived by his six brothers and sisters and was predeceased by his sister Annamma Mani. After coming to America in 1957, he obtained a Masters in Divinity from Princeton Theological Seminary, earned a Masters in Social Work from the University of Pennsylvania, and obtained a Ph.D in Clinical Psychology. He was a board-certified Clinical Psychologist for 40 years working at various state hospitals in the Philadelphia region, including Norristown, Haverford, and Byberry. Rev. Fr. Dr. Varki was dedicated to serving those who suffered from mental illness. During those years, he also maintained a private practice in the Delaware Valley. Rev. Fr. Dr. Varki was an ordained priest in the Indian Malankara Orthodox Church. He was a member of the clergy at the St. Gregorios Malankara Orthodox Church in Bensalem, PA. Paul Varki Achen was laid to rest on March 31, 2014 at the Rosedale Memorial Park in Bensalem, PA. May the memory of Rev. Fr. Dr. Paul Varki be eternal.

**Slootho**  
Tuesday Prayer  
Let us come together for  
fellowship and intercession!

### **Tele-Prayer Meeting in English**

From 9:05 pm to 9:35 pm (CST) every Tuesday.  
Soothoro prayer, Devotional message,  
Intercessory prayer for the needy & the sick.  
Please send prayer requests to: [slootho@ds-wa.org](mailto:slootho@ds-wa.org)

Phone # (218) 632-0187

Access code: 3703#





## Around The Diocese

### ST MARY'S ORTHODOX VALIYAPALLY - DALLAS 14133- DENNIS LN, FARMERS BRANCH, TX 75234

#### PASSION WEEK APRIL 2014-WORSHIP SCHEDULE

CHIEF CELEBRANT:

HIS GRACE ALEXIOS MAR EUSEBIUS, DIOCESAN METROPOLITAN

##### SATURDAY, 12TH

2:00PM HOLY CONFESSION  
5:15PM-6:30PM RETREAT  
6:45PM EVENING PRAYER

##### SUNDAY, 13TH PALM SUNDAY (HOSANNA)

8:00 AM MORNING PRAYERS, HOLY QURBANA  
& BLESSING OF PALM LEAVES  
7:00 PM EVENING PRAYER

##### MONDAY, 14TH

5:00 AM MID-NIGHT PRAYER & MORNING PRAYER  
12:00PM NOON PRAYER  
7:00PM EVENING PRAYER & DEVOTIONAL MESSAGE

##### TUESDAY, 15TH

5:00 AM MID-NIGHT PRAYER & MORNING PRAYER  
12:00PM NOON PRAYER  
7:00PM EVENING PRAYER & DEVOTIONAL MESSAGE

##### WEDNESDAY, 16TH PASSOVER (PESAH)

3:00PM HOLY CONFESSION  
6:00 PM EVENING PRAYER & HOLY QURBANA

##### THURSDAY, 17TH

5:00 AM MID-NIGHT PRAYER & MORNING PRAYER  
12:00PM NOON PRAYER  
6:00 PM EVENING PRAYER, DEVOTIONAL ADDRESS & FEET WASHING SERVICE

##### FRIDAY, 18TH GOOD FRIDAY

5:00AM MID-NIGHT PRAYER  
8:00 AM MORNING PRAYER, PROCESSION,  
VENERATION OF THE HOLY CROSS, CHORUKA & KANJI  
5:00 PM EVENING PRAYER & ALL-NIGHT VIGIL

##### SAT- 19TH SATURDAY OF GOOD NEWS & ALL DEPARTED SOULS

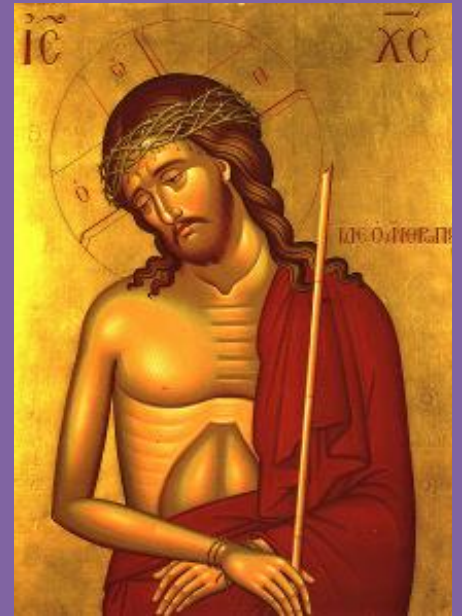
5:00AM MIDNIGHT PRAYER  
10:00 AM MORNING PRAYERS & HOLY QURBANA  
7:00 PM KYAMTHA EVENING PRAYER & DEVOTIONAL MESSAGE

##### SUNDAY, 20TH FEAST OF THE HOLY RESURRECTION (EASTER)

5:00 AM MIDNIGHT PRAYER, RESURRECTION SERVICES,  
HOLY QURBANA & BREAKFAST

[www.STMARYSDALLAS.COM](http://www.STMARYSDALLAS.COM)

### The Bridegroom Icon



The Bridegroom Icon shows Christ humiliated, crowned with thorns, cloaked in scarlet, bound and holding a reed. The crown is a symbol of Christian marriage in the Orthodox Church, and the ropes binding Christ's hand are a near-universal symbol of marriage. The reed used as a mock-scepter is a symbol of humility, of a person that does all possible to bend in service to others. Why does He suffer? Because of human sin. The betrayal of Judas, the hatred of the Jews, the cowardice of Pilate, the cruelty of the Romans: this is why Christ appears as He does. What form of humanity is not represented by those who mocked Jesus? Yet still He stands before us. While we are still as unfaithful as harlots, Christ is betrothed to us. This is Divine Love, that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Such perfect, divine, love casts out all fear; and so instead of the stern Judge of the Apocalypse to spur us to repentance, we "behold the man": the Bridegroom Who burns with such love for us that He suffers death on the Cross. A good sign we have benefited from the rigors of Lent is when we look upon our humiliated King and still worship Him. Ah...but, no, even the Roman soldiers did that. With hard-hearts they hailed Him as king, bowed down before him, then led Him off to be executed. Our worship, our repentance, must be longer-lasting.

" When the fast makes its appearance, like a kind of spiritual summer, let us as soldiers burnish our weapons, and as harvesters sharpen our sickles, and as sailors order our thoughts against the waves of extravagant desires, and as travelers set out on the journey towards heaven. Lay hold of the pathway which leads towards heaven, rugged and narrow as it is. Lay hold of it, and journey on.."

- St. John Chrysostom-





## Reflections

**Conquer Fear, Take Control**- Dr. George Samuel Dallas

Anita Murjani, in her book, "Dying to be Me" gives an explanation as to how over two hundred tumors in her body disappeared instantly and how she came out of a near death experience. This miraculous cure baffled the medical community and the scientists alike and neither one of the group has been able to provide any explanation for the cure with no medical intervention. However, M/s Murjani offers a believable explanation herself. She says that the biggest fear of all that faces the mankind is DEATH itself. When she crossed the line, facing death, she found that it was a blissful experience and the fear of death disappeared. Once the ultimate fear disappeared all other kinds of fears became insignificant including her fear for the tumors that has been eating away her body and life itself. Once the disease found out that it is not being feared, it withered away instantly. Whether this explanation is palatable to you or not, that is the only explanation that makes sense. In 1995, I faced one of the most severe heart attacks any one can face per my doctors. Since my heart attack persisted over one hour, my doctors were less than optimistic on my survival. In fact he said the following: "George, you are having one of the worst attacks one can have. Your chance for survival isn't good at all. Even if you survive the attack, your quality of life wouldn't be desirable since the attack would have caused sever damages to the your vital systems". God had other plans. Almost 20 years after the attack, I am healthy and active leading a normal life. This really baffled my cardiologist. He took time to review the tapes during the heart attack process and he found out that, I was in fact joking with the medical personnel who was frantically trying to save me from the attack. His conclusion was that I kept my sense of humor through the entire process and in his words, " you exhibited no fear at all". He added that in a heart attack, more often than not, it is the fear for the decease and the fear of the impending death that kills, and not the attack itself.

FEAR is the result of the anxiety for the unknown. People never fear the past, nor do they fear the present. Both these tenses are visible to us. However, that is not the case with the future, whether that future is one second from now or years from now. When God laid out the plans for our life, he kept the future hidden from us, because he wanted us to act in the present to define the future. We are constantly being bombarded with the trigger points for fear whether it is the insurance companies- "what will happen to your kids should some thing happens to you tomorrow"-; or the news reports that predict economic disasters, or weather reports that predict natural calamities, or the environmentalists who predict global warming resulting in the destruction of our planet of millions of years etc. The 24 hour news sets up an environment to create news and by definition news qualifies to be newsworthy only if it has negative connotations. These negativity in the air waves and printed media keeps on instilling constant fear in us, consciously or un consciously. This constant fear keep on taking a toll on our life. Fear breeds inefficiency, fear devoid us of peace, and fear ultimately makes our body susceptible to all sorts of diseases and eventually leads us to death itself which we fear most.

How do we tackle this fear. The underlying reason for the fear as stated in this article is the anxiety for the future. This is where we must look at the power above. Who defines and designs our future and intentionally made it invisible to us. It is the Lord Himself. Why would we ever think our creator will intent any ill for us. All of our fear is caused by our lack of faith in God. In the New Testament itself the Lord said "fear not" one hundred times. He said, " But not a hair of your head will Perish" (Luke 21:18). " Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you eat or drink, or about your body..... Look at the birds of the air, they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than them". (Mathew 6:25-30). Our problem is that we say we believe in God, but we do not believe in His Words. A true faith in God and His words eliminates the fear and anxiety in our lives and that is the way to a life filled with peace and happiness and above all a body devoid of diseases.

## Know Our Parish

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We're on the Web!

Visit us at:

[www.ds-wa.org](http://www.ds-wa.org)

## ST THOMAS MALANKARA ORTHODOX CHURCH

9414 Shiloh Rd. Dallas, TX 75228



Our Current Vicar  
Rev. Fr. Rajesh K. John

### CHURCH HISTORY

St. Thomas Malankara Orthodox Church is a parish under the Diocese of South West America. The parish currently has 62 families that come together in prayer and worship in the traditional Orthodox service.

The St. Thomas congregation was started in 1992 and became a fully pledged parish in 1993 under American diocese with the blessing of senior metropolitan, His Grace Dr. Thomas Mar Makarios and metropolitan, His Grace Mathew Mar Bernabas. In 2006, His Grace Mathews Mar Bernabas and H.G. Zachariah Mar Nicolovos consecrated the present day church.

- *Founding Vicar: Rev. Fr. Cherian Kunnel*
- *Vicar from 2004 to 2007: Rev. Fr. Regie Mathew*
- *Vicar from 2007 to 2009 : Rev. Fr. Mammen Mathew*
- *Current Vicar: Rev. Fr. Rajesh K. John*



Current Church

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