



MALANKARA ORTHODOX SYRIAN CHURCH DIOCESE OF SOUTH-WEST AMERICA

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Blessings to all our beloved Vicars, Priests of the locality, Cor-Episcopoi, Ramban, and faithful of all our parishes in the Diocese of South-West America!

Beloved Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

As we enter the sacred season of **Great Lent**, let us embrace this time as a divine gift—a season of repentance, renewal, and deeper communion with God. The Church calls us to engage in the threefold discipline of **prayer, fasting, and almsgiving**, not as mere obligations, but as pathways to spiritual transformation.

Prayer lifts our souls to God, cleansing our hearts and filling us with His grace. **Repentance** humbles us before the Lord, opening the door to His mercy. **Charity** teaches us to love as Christ loves, seeing His image in the poor and needy.

Let us remember the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, who calls us to sincere fasting and true humility: *"But when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, that your fasting may not be seen by others but by your Father who is in secret. And your father who sees in secret will reward you."* (Matthew 6:17-18) Let us also take to heart the words of St. Ephrem the Syrian, whose Lenten prayer guides us in this holy season: *"O Lord and Master of my life, take from me the spirit of sloth, despair, the lust of power, and idle talk. But give rather the spirit of chastity, humility, patience, and love to Thy servant."* Above all, let us fix our hope on the glorious Resurrection of Christ, which is the fulfillment of our faith and the promise of eternal life. The struggles of Lent are not in vain, for they lead us to the joy of resurrection when Christ triumphs over sin and death, granting us the hope of new life in Him. As St. Paul reminds us: *"If we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with Him."* (Romans 6:8)

May this Lenten journey purify our hearts, strengthen our faith, and give us the hope of Christ's victory. Let us pray fervently, repent sincerely, give generously, and walk in the light of His Resurrection, so that we may one day rejoice with Him in His heavenly kingdom.

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

Urshlem Aramana, Beasley
February 28, 2025

Metropolitan Dr. Thomas Mar Ivanios