



**ST. MARY'S INDIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH  
OF ROCKLAND, INC. NEW YORK**  
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<http://www.stmarysrockland.org>  
**News Letter –August 2004**

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Dearly beloved,

Our Lord Jesus Christ left us with only one prayer. When the disciples asked him 'teach us to pray' Jesus gave Lord's Prayer in reply. This prayer has been said without interruption for the last two thousand years.

'Our Father' - here we find the meaning of love. The Father who art in heaven – Our life is lifted up or raised up to heaven for heaven is the vertical dimension of life. The reference of a human being to the higher and spiritual is the idea behind this. This vertical connection is the faith of man in the divine love which embraces and permeates the whole world. This divine connection is the ultimate glory and destiny.

When this vertical dimension is clear, there is no problem to have the horizontal dimension. If I explain this, when our relation with God is clear, we will connect with other human beings. We can see this connection in the Cross. The vertical and horizontal dimensions of the Cross connect in the middle. There is no cross without these two dimensions. We have to keep up the relationship with God and with our fellow beings. That is the joyful affirmation.

My dear friends, we are carrying all enmity against our fellow beings. Some of us are acting like we are the real saints. Do we have the real concern about others? If we don't take the initiative to restore the broken relationship with our fellow being, there is no victory in spiritual life. Our Father in heaven will connect with us in our prayers only when we clean up our malice and vengeance against our fellow humans.

May God help each one of us to connect with God and keep the good relationship with others.

With Love and Prayers

Raju Varghese Achen

## PARISH NEWS

### **Perunal**

Church Perunal is scheduled to conduct on Saturday August 14th & Sunday August 15th .H. G. Geevarghese Mar Coorilose will be the chief celebrant for the Perunal.

### **Perunal Program**

8/14/04 -Saturday-7:00 PM Evening Prayer  
7:30 PM Devotional Address  
(H. G. Geevarghese Mar Coorilose)  
8/15/04 - Sunday –8:45 AM Holy Qurbana  
12:00 Noon Procession  
12:30 PM Nercha Vilambu  
1:00 PM Annual Auction

### **Prayer Meeting**

Next monthly prayer meeting will be held on Saturday August 28th 6:00 PM at the residence of Mr. Mathew P. John, 125 Zugibe Ct, West Haverstraw, NY 10993. (845) 942-4510.

### **MGOCSM Raffle:**

All the parish members are reminded to take serious effort in selling the MGOCSM raffle tickets assigned to them. Since there are no other fund-raising programs this year, this is our only chance to collect some money for the Church.

### **Family Conference**

Some of our members participated in the Diocesan Family and Youth conference held at Pittsburgh, PA on the dates of July 14th, 15th, 16th and 17th. The family conference was a great success. Our Kochamma (Susan Varghese) is the Secretary of the family conference. Kudos to kochamma for the great job done. Our members who participated in the conference presented a skit which was a tremendous hit. Thanks to all the participants of the skit for their hard work. Some of our female members also participated in the presentation of “Margam-kalli” with members from other Churches. Thanks to our Vicar and other members who helped organize the events during the family conference.

### **Picnic**

Annual Picnic of the Church was conducted on yesterday July 31st at Anthony Wayne Park, Bear Mountain, NY.

### **OVBS**

Our Church hosted the joint session of OVBS with St. Mary’s, West Nyack on July 23rd, 24th and 25th. There were nearly fifty registered kids. Kids learnt songs, did crafts and had a very good time. On July 25th, after the Holy Qurbana closing ceremony of OVBS was conducted. Closing ceremony included procession around the church, presentation of cultural activities by each class and distribution of the certificate. Thanks to all the members who donated food, money and participated in the OVBS to make it a success. Special thanks to coordinators Mrs. Lizy Philip and Geevarghese Yohannan for their hard work.

### **Diocesan Metropolitan's Visit:**

Diocesan Metropolitan H. G. Mathews Mar Barnabas visited our Church and celebrated Holy Qurbana on July 25th. Thirumeni was accompanied by Deacon Roy George and Leason Daniel. We were fortunate enough to have Thirumeni for the closing ceremony of the OVBS 2004. The Parish extends sincere thanks to Thirumeni for blessing us with his visit to our Church.

### **Coffee Hosts for August:**

8/1/2004 – Alex Madampil & Family, 8/8/2004 – Open, 8/15/2004 – Church Perunal  
8/22/2004 – George Thamaravellil, 8/29/2004 – Mathew P. John

### **Church Maintenance for July:**

/4/2004 – Benoye Mani and George Andrews, 7/11/2004 – Varghese Ninan and George Mangalathu, 7/18/2004 – Philip Cherian and Roy Chengannur,  
7/25/2004 – Abraham V. Abraham and Varghese Cherian (Ben)

### **New Born:**

Mr. John Thankahen Jr. and Gladys John were blessed with a baby boy on July 24th. Congratulations to the whole family.

### **Committee Meeting:**

There was a joint meeting of the Board of Turstees and Church Managing Committee on July 25th to discuss half-yearly accounts and parish visit report.

### **Half Year General Body Meeting:**

There will be Church General body meeting on today August 1st, after the Holy Qurbana to discuss the half-yearly accounts.

### **Telephone Directory:**

Updated Church directory was distributed on July 25th. Members are requested to discard the old directories and use the latest version as there are nearly ten address/ phone number changes.

### **Moving out of State:**

Binu and Swapna John (Son-in-law and Daughter of Mr. Mathew Jacokutty) moved to North Carolina. We pray to God that new place bring more prosperity and blessings to the family.

### **Visiting India:**

Mr. Thomas Alex and Family, Mr. Raju Zachariah and Family, Ponnu Varghese

### **Sad Demise :**

Mrs. Annamma Abraham, Mother of Mrs. Kunjamma Jacob (Grandmother of Elizabeth, Ancy and Susan) passed away in India on July 3rd.

Brother of Mr. John Muckadackal.

### **Preist Visited:**

- Rev. Fr. M. T. Kurian celebrated the Holy Qurbana at our Church on July 18th. Kurian Achen has served American Diocese for thirty years and is now settled in Kerala.
- On July 4th, Rev. Fr. P. George celebrated the Holy Qurbana at our Church. Our Achen had to attend the Southern Region Family Conference in Austin, Texas. The parish is thankful to P. George Achen for accepting our invitation and celebrating the Holy Qurbana for us.

**BIRTHDAYS IN AUGUST**

1. 03- Arun Zachariah
2. 03- Priya Zachariah
2. 03- Reba Mathews
3. 04- Linda Baby
4. 10- Anie S. Thermadam
5. 11- Vinoy Thomas
6. 15- Julie Geevarghese
8. 15- Issac Mathew
9. 19- Geejo Geevarghese
10. 20- Suseela Abraham
11. 20- Ruby P. John
12. 23- Beena Pappen
13. 26- Jessica P. John
14. 26- Aleyamma Muckadackal
15. 28- Mariamma Jacobkutty

**WEDDING ANNIVERSARY IN AUGUST**

1. Thankamma & Alexander Madampil -08/15
2. Bekkie & George Thamaravelil -08/17
3. Rinu & Geevarghese Yohannan -08/24
4. Annie & Philip Cherian -08/31

**Reminder**

- Coffee host list for the year is available. Please fill up the vacant dates.
- *Please e-mail your articles to be published in our news letter To [sajanpothen@yahoo.com](mailto:sajanpothen@yahoo.com) or [benny@starbeamsoft.com](mailto:benny@starbeamsoft.com)*

## **DIOCESEN NEWS**

### **Family & Youth Conference**

#### **Six Hundred Participants In Pittsburgh Conference**

Pittsburgh: July 15, 2004: The colorful annual event of the American diocese, the Family and Youth Conference-2004 began at 6pm at the University of Pittsburgh in Johnstown, with a colorful ceremonial procession. Traditional Kerala Nazrani costumes by the participants with 'Chenda Melam' and 'Thalappoli' stole the hearts of the many especially the youngsters. It took 15 minutes to reach Pasquerilla Performing Art Centre, where the conference is conducted.

The conference started with evening prayer. Thereafter, the opening ceremony was conducted by lighting the traditional lamp Nilavilkku'by Metropolitan Mar Barnabas, followed by an opening song by Chinnu and a folk dance by girls.

After the presidential address by Mar Barnabas, Fr. Ninan T. Easo introduced the participants to the audience. Metropolitan Geevarghese Mar Coorilos, Prof. M. P. Mathai, Binoy Viswam (MLA Sadanandapuram), Fr.K.G.Philipose (diocesan secretary) spoke on the occasion.

The first day of the conference ended with a family social hour at 10pm. About 600 members are participating in the conference from different parishes of the American diocese.

On the second day of the conference, Prof. M. P. Mathai presented the theme to the adults and Metropolitan Geevarghese Mar Coorilos to the youngsters in different halls of the Pasquerilla Performing Art Centre. Malayali Orthodox Community was thrilled to receive the messages given by the key note speakers of the conference; for it is a rare occasion to get such. The theme for this year's conference is "Not to be served, but to serve" (Mark 10:45.)" We are so fortunate receive such a wonderful speaker to communicate with us the theme this year. I know that His Grace Mar Coorilos was the former General Secretary of MGOCSM and was with the youngsters for a long time. He talked to our minds and hearts. Since I live in America, I didn't care about others. But His grace's words moved us to think otherwise" said one of the youngsters who attended the conference.

"The theme was well presented by Prof. M. P. Mathai. No doubt, he is an eloquent speaker. We are blessed. I feel I had gone through a retreat and now feel I am rejuvenated to work in the church in a different way" said one of the adult member to IOH.

Every one is quite happy about the atmosphere of conference centre. Each one is enjoying every moment of the conference.

After the presentation of the theme, the participants were divided into four groups named after four colors to discuss and explore more on the theme. Members of these groups were so live and active while discussing on the theme as if they were wholeheartedly involved. For each group, one priest and one lay leader was set as the moderators. The findings will be presented at the end of the conference.

The leaders and executive members of this conference were busy in all arrangements and every nook and corner of the conference was taken care of by them. All the sessions were on time and smooth. There is no confusion, many feels. The melody of Conference Choir was so inspiring.

Plenty of food, but American, youngsters and children enjoyed it; for adults, it worked as a change. Participants are quite satisfied about the food service.

Sports competition and games were the main attraction of the conference on July 15. Pittsburgh heard the joyous shouts out of Malayalies every where in the sports field, while competition went on. Some won, some lost, but all kept the sports spirit.

In the evening after the prayer the verity entertainment program started. 24 parishes presented their programs and altogether there were 44 programs. Talented ones of Indian Orthodox Church in America got a good exposure before the elite audience. Among them, the musical drama presented by St. Thomas Philadelphia was a blend of technology and art.

"A good vacation and spiritually nourishing" all agrees. Bishops, clergy and laity all under one roof. It is really a wonderful experience, while talking to IOH Media, one first time participant told us. The conference will end on Saturday after Holy Qurbana.

## **Orthodox Marriage Bureau website launched**

Bhopal: The vicar of "Bhopal St. Thomas Orthodox Cathedral, Fr. James Varghese has launched a website ([www.nizee.com](http://www.nizee.com)) on Nov. 2, 2003.

God made a suitable companion 'Eve' for 'Adam' in 'Eden Garden'; keeping this in mind Fr. James named this service as "Eden Alliance". Eden Alliance calls in all parts of the world before accepting any profile. Eden Alliance is a medium for all Christians who live in all parts of the world to select life partners for their children. For the details of the fee structure and services, you may log on to [www.nizee.com](http://www.nizee.com)

This website contains information about Christianity and all dioceses and parishes around the world. This web site also contains the information about the Sunday Schools, Prayer Groups and youth activities and mission works run by Orthodox Church in various parts of the world.

"All parishes and their spiritual wings can submit their details to this website without any charge. All non commercial groups can advertise FREE and display their activities. A special section "COUNSELING" is also there to get solutions to personal problems. Any one can send contributions to [nizee.com](http://nizee.com) Groups can popularize and sell their products like cassettes, Magazines and other items on [nizee.com](http://nizee.com) without any charge. Christians also can utilize this website for their business prospects" says the site's Director 'Starwin Is-sac' .

## **CHURCH NEWS**

### **Dr. Paul Vijayakumar and Wife Appointed as Evangelists**

Kottayam: July 26, 2004: Dr. Paul Vijayakumar and his wife Rosamma Paul were appointed as full time Evangelists of Malankara Orthodox Church by His Holiness Baselius Marthoma Mathews II on July 9, 2004 vide Kalpana No.133/2004. Dr. Paul Vijayakumar and family received Christianity 10 years ago by joining St. Mary's Orthodox Church, Thalavoor in Kollam District and witnessing the Lord since then.

Catholicos Elect Thomas Mar Themothios and Kollam Diocesan Metropolitan Mathews Mar Epiphanius had given testimony to Dr. Paul in the Holy Episcopal Synod of Malankara Orthodox Church for this appointment.

The Dr. Paul's family is originally from Brahmin community and converted to Christianity after receiving a miraculous healing in their family. Dr. Paul is a medical practitioner and his wife Vasanthakumari Antharjanam was a teacher by profession. In her illness she experienced the appearance of St. Mary and got cured completely from her illness. This miraculous healing led the family to embrace Christianity and thus they joined Thalavoor St. Mary's Church after receiving Holy Baptism. There after she resigned her job as a teacher and started witnessing the Lord Jesus.

Though Dr. Paul Vijayakumar is from a rich family, for embracing Christianity, they were ousted from their own family and given no shares. They left their family empty handed, with their three children Prince (M.Com), Princy (Student, M.B.B.S) and Prijith (plus two) and now live in a rented house at Thalavoor. Being a rich man, many asked Dr. Paul to return to his family for a better living. But he refused, and these couples believe that they got a more share in the kingdom of God and never cared for the material things.

"if the believers could support Dr. Paul to have a house of his own, that would be a great support for his full time ministry and children's education." said Fr.Abraham J. Paniker, the vicar of St. Mary's Thalavoor.

This is the second missionary family after Br. Paul Ciniraj Mohammad (Malankara Sabha Missionary) who embraced our church 25 years ago. Paul Ciniraj was from Muslim community.



