

News at St. Mary's  
October -December 2012  
Volume 14 Issue 3



**St. Mary's Indian Orthodox Church of Rockland  
Suffern , New York**

**Editors**

**Mrs. Betsy Thomas**

**Mr. Varghese Cherian**

**Church Officials-2012****Vicar: Rev. Fr. Dr. Raju Varghese****Secretary:** Mr. Varghese Cherian**Joint Secretary:** Mr. Saju A. George**Treasurer:** Mr. John V. Abraham**Joint Treasurer:** Mr. Jeemon Varghese**Managing Committee**

Mr. Benny Kurian (Ex. Officio), Mr. Philipose Philip, Mr. John Jacob,

Mr. Liju Paul, Mr. Alex Abraham, Mrs. Kunjamma Jacob

Mr. Joseph P. Thomas, Mr. Manoj John, Mr. Saju A. George

Mrs. Abegale Thomas, Mr. Chacko Paul, Mr. Mathai Thomas (2013)

Mr. Jeemon Varghese (2013)

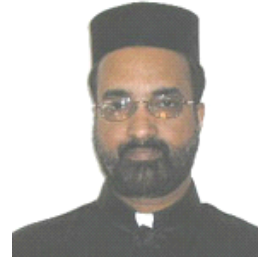
**Building Engineer:** Mr. Samuel V. Abraham**Internal Auditor:** Mr. Mathew P. John**Church Newsletter:** Mrs. Betsy Thomas & Mr. Varghese Cherian**Webmaster:** Mr. Saju George & Mr. Benny Kurian**Martha Mariam Samajam****Secretary:** Mrs. Lisa A. George; **Joint Secretary:** Mrs. Elizabeth Saji**Treasurer:** Mrs. Lizy Philip; **Joint Treasurer:** Mrs. Soosan Cherian**Central Committee Member:** Mrs. Rachel Abraham**Sunday School Principal:** Mr. Mathai Chacko**Arts School:** Mr. John Jacob**M.G.O.C.S.M.****Vice President:** Mr. Philipose Philip**Secretary:** Ms. Michelle George; **Joint Secretary:** Ms. Tiffany George**Treasurer:** Mr. Prince Abraham, **Joint Treasurer:** Mr. Nevin Pothen**Area Representative:** Ms. Michelle Pothen**Prayer Meeting:** Mr. Saji M. Pothen**Food:** Mr. Sunu Koshy, Mr. Jeemon Varghese; Mrs. Abegale Thomas

**Vicar's Message**

Ephesians 6:1-2

Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right.

"Honor your father and mother"--which is the first commandment with a promise--



On January 16, 2013, CNN reported "President Barack

Obama on Wednesday proposed background checks on all gun sales and bans on military style assault weapons and high-capacity magazines as part of a package of steps to reduce gun violence in the wake of the Newtown school massacre last month."

According to a survey, 55% of Americans generally favor stricter gun control laws, with 56% saying that it's currently too easy to buy guns in this country. However, only 39% say that stricter gun controls would reduce gun violence all by themselves.

What do people achieve by going into a school and shooting children dead? There may be reasons for the gunman to do this and kill himself. Criminal behavior among children has its roots in habitual deprivation of parental love and affection. The corrective action must start with family values. The relationship between parents has a powerful effect on children from their younger age. Children react to quarreling parents by disobeying, and expressing antisocial behaviors. Quarreling parents mostly vent their anger on their children. Parental hostility and physical and emotional abuse of the child shapes the future criminal.

Every 45 seconds a marriage ends in our country. With it ends not only a covenant of love, but also the stability of a home, financial solidity, and a model of committed love for children to take into their own marriage. Committed marriages establish solid families which build strong communities. Where marriages are committed to serving Christ and each other, relationships flourish.

For a growing child, the happiest and most tranquil family situation is the intact

(continued)

nature of marriage. From a dysfunctional family, the possibility to have an irresponsible child is much higher. Broken family atmosphere diverts the attention of the child to criminal behavior. The different types of bad things a teenager can easily involve may be alcohol, drug use, poor academic performance, violence in different ways, out of wedlock births, sexually transmitted diseases etc.

The real root causes of violent crimes are unstable, dysfunctional families. We as a church and a community have major responsibility to build up intact families where Jesus is present in all their happiness and sorrow. Parents should be their role models in the religious and secular lives. Children grown up in the families who give importance to Christian values will reduce violence and murder.

On behalf of each and every person who belongs to St. Mary's, my sincere thanks to Mrs. Betsy Koshy and Mr. Varghese Cherian for all their sincere efforts for the publication of our church newsletter.

With prayers and best wishes

Raju Varghese Achen

01/16/13

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*On behalf of Achen, the Secretary, Treasurer and Newsletter Editor,  
We would like to thank you all for an amazing year. Thank you for  
your cooperation, your understanding and your patience. If we had  
published something incorrect or offended anyone, I apologize for any  
misunderstanding. Together, let us hold hands and embrace the new  
year.*

**Church News****NEWLY WED**

Mr. Eldho Varghese and Mrs. Reshma Varghese married on June 18, 2012. Congratulations to the newly wed couple.

**PRAYER MEETING**

A special thanks to Mr. Manoj John and family for hosting the prayer meeting in November; unfortunately we were unable to conduct the December prayer meeting, but would like thank Mr. Liju Paul and family for offering to hold it. If you did not get an opportunity to host a prayer meeting, please sign up on the bulletin board or speak to Mr. George Thamaravelil, for prayer meetings in 2013, slots are still available.

**MARTHA MARIAM VANITHA SAMAJAM**

Martha Mariam Vanitha Samajam held their election for 2013 on Sunday, December 6 after the Holy Qurbana. Congratulations to the newly elected officials.

Treasurer = Mrs. Elizabeth Saji  
JT. Treasurer= Mrs. Tiji Kuriakose  
Secretary = Mrs. Lipsey Mathews  
JT. Secretary = Mrs. Mary Thomas  
Central Committee = Mrs. Rachel J. Abraham

**MGOCSM**

MCOSCM hosted the annual Thanksgiving meal on Sunday, November 25. It was enjoyed by all church members. Special thanks to all the MGOCSM members for their hard work.

MGOCSM continued their tradition of visiting the Westchester Medical Center on Christmas Day. Many of our MGOCSM members participated in this event. MGOCSM members had offered gifts to the children at the hospital. Special thanks to Mr. Jose Abraham for coordinating this event.

**CHRISTMAS CAROLING**

Our church Christmas Carolers visited 68 houses this year. This year the Sunday School children along with their parents also participated. A grand total of \$13,307.00 was collected from the generous families. Special thanks to the coordinators, Mr. George Thamaravellil and Mr. Saju George for all their hard work.

**NORTHEAST MARTHA MARIAM SAMAJAM QUIZ COMPETITION**

Our church won second prize in the quiz competition held by the NE American Diocese Martha Mariam Samajam at their annual conference, held at St. George Church, Portchester on October 20, 2012. This is the first time our church is getting this prize at the Diocesan level. The church extends its hearty congratulations to the winners.

**JCC CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION**

This Christmas season, St. Mary's had the opportunity of hosting the annual JCC Ecumenical Christmas Celebrations on Sunday, December 30th. Many families had participated in this celebrations. Our Sunday School children re-enacted the Nativity Scene under the leadership of Mrs. Manju John. Our choir sang beautiful holiday songs. Special thanks to all those who made this a grand success. Our member Mr. Saji M. Pothen is the current secretary of JCC.

**H.G.MATHEWS MAR BARNABAS ENTERED INTO ETERNAL REST**

His Grace Mathews Mar Barnabas moved on from this world at around 3:15 AM (Indian Standard Time) on December 8, 2012. His Grace was admitted to Pushpagiri Hospital, Thiruvilla (Kerala) for a pain-related issue. He was placed in a mobile mortuary and seated in an upright position, as it is customary for a Metropolitan. His Grace was buried at St. Peter's and St. Paul's Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church, Valayanchirangara, Perumbavoor, Kerala, India on December 12, 2012. Many faithful from our Diocese under the leadership of Diocesan Metropolitan participated in the funeral process and funeral. Our church member, Mr. Philipose Philip attended the funeral service.

Thirumani was very close to our church and touched many people's lives. We will truly miss His physical presence amongst us, but can be assured that He is interceding for us in Heaven. Let us also remember Him in our prayers.

**NEW YEAR MESSAGE FROM REV. Fr. K.M .GEORGE**

Beloved Brothers and Sisters,

The Love and Peace of Christ be with you, throughout the New Year and beyond.

This Christmas day, I visited some very elderly people and a lady who has always been confined to a wheelchair. They could not go to church or take part in any Christmas celebrations. The warmth and love with which they received me filled me with light and hope. I was inspired and humbled by the great joy and hope they radiated in spite of their illness, old age and disability. This was their precious Christmas gift to me. No celebration, no festive dinner, no company of friends could give me that quality of pure joy and delight that I received from them.

As we welcome the New Year 2013, let us remember that our Christian faith is a future-oriented faith. It is a faith underscored by hope and love. Listen to what St. Paul says about our future hope: “**..forgetting what is behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the heavenly call of God in Christ Jesus**” (Philippians 3: 13b-14).

According to what Jesus taught us, there is only one life for us. Short or long, this one life has to be lived with deep faith, fervent hope and compassionate love. If these three great gifts are absent in our life, our life becomes empty, meaningless and dark. On the contrary, if we have even a trace of faith, hope and love we will be able to radiate light and life to many around us.

As we prepare to welcome the new year, let us walk forward holding the hand of Jesus Christ, our only source of Light and Life in this world.

Trusting in the grace and power of our Lord, we may make new decisions, like for example:

- **Let us see if we can give some hope and encouragement to at least one person every day, by a simple smile, a word of appreciation, a positive nodding of head or a silent prayer.**
- **Let us make a point to visit or call on the phone at least one elderly or sick person every week just to greet them bearing in mind the love of Christ.**
- **Let us make a list of people who need our prayers and spiritual support, and silently pray for them every day.**

Yours In Christ,  
K M George achen

**OCTOBER****BIRTHDAY LIST**

|                            |                       |
|----------------------------|-----------------------|
| 10/01-Annamma Varghese     | 10/09-Jyothis Jacob   |
| 10/01-Jacob T. Varkey      | 10/09-Aleyamma Thomas |
| 10/01-Saji John Thankachan | 10/15-Lisa George     |
| 10/02-Viji Kurian          | 10/16-P. K. Mathai    |
| 10/03-Simon Thermadam      | 10/17-Suja Pothen     |
| 10/03-Christine Livia Saji | 10/20-Anu T. John     |
| 10/05-Mariamamma Paul      | 10/22-Sarah Joseph    |
| 10/05-Lena Paul            | 10/24-Saju George     |
| 10/05-Sherin John          | 10/25-Maghen Mathew   |
| 10/06-Vinu Thomas          | 10/25-Siju Philip     |
| 10/09-Baby Varghese        | 10/25-Rinu Varghese   |
| 10/09-Mary Issac           |                       |

**WEDDING ANNIVERSARY**

10/02-Ciji & Benoye Mani  
10/09-Mariamamma & Chacko Paul  
10/14-Lisa & Renjith Kuruvilla  
10/31-Annamma & Thomas Varghese

**BIRTH ANNOUNCEMENT**

Congratulations to Vigi and Johnson on the birth of their baby boy, Jordan, born on October 13. God bless their family.



**NOVEMBER****BIRTHDAY LIST**

|                                |                                 |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 11/01- George Koshy            | 11/20-Varghese Ninan            |
| 11/02-Emil George              | 11/22-George Mangalathu         |
| 11/02- Grace Elizabeth Abraham | 11/24-Varghese Cherian          |
| 11/06- Nicholas Mathai Koshy   | 11/24- Molly John               |
| 11/10-Abraham V. Abraham       | 11/25-Danny Kuriakose           |
| 11/10-Ricky J. Kuriakose       | 11/25-Gracy Thomas              |
| 11/10-Aleyamma Parackal        | 11/25-Annie Philip              |
| 11/11-Mano Zacharia            | 11/26-Ajimol Phillips           |
| 11/13-Bekkie George            | 11/26-Shinu Philip              |
| 11/14-Neetha Mathai            | 11/28-Jolly Geevarghese         |
| 11/15-George Thamaravelil      | 11/28-Philip Cherian            |
| 11/18-Vigi Cherian             | 11/29-Rev.Fr. Dr. Raju Varghese |
| 11/19-Nithin Mathai            | 11/30-Lizy Philip               |
| 11/20-Sosamma Jose             | 11/30-Jiya Abraham              |
| 11/20-Mariamamma Baby          |                                 |
| 11/20-Elizabeth Saji           |                                 |

**WEDDING ANNIVERSARY**

11/01-Gracy & George Mangalathu  
11/03-Vigi & Johnson Thomas  
11/04-Susan & Thomas Alex  
11/05-Betty & Raju Zachariah  
11/10-Ancy & Saju George  
11/23-Kunjamma & George Andrews  
11/27-Rachel & Thomas K. George

**DECEMBER****BIRTHDAY LIST**

12/04-Mathews P. John  
12/06-Thomas K. George  
12/06-Irene James  
12/07-K. Geevarghese  
12/08-Genuine Jacob Thomas  
12/12-Elizabeth Abraham  
12/21-Jubin Geevarghese  
12/21-Reena Kurian  
12/22-Tiffany George  
12/24-Dr. Lisa Paul  
12/25-Sunu Koshy  
12/29-Seena Alex

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**New Elected Officials for 2013**

Our Church Annual General Body was held on Sunday, Dec 2nd after the Holy Qurbana. The following are the elected officials for 2013:

Secretary- Mr. Joseph Thomas

Treasurer- Mr. Liju P. Paul

Joint Secretary- Mr. Saji M. Pothen

Joint Treasurer- Mr. Jeemon Varghese

Internal Auditor- Mr. Varghese Ninan

The Committee Members for 2013 are: Mr. John Abraham (Ex Official), Mr. Varghese Cherian, Mr. Abraham Pothen, Mr. Saju George, Mr. Saji M. Pothen, Mr. John Jacob, Mrs. Sindhu Roy, Mrs. Lizy Philip, Mrs. Rachel George, Mr. Sunu Koshy, Mr. Kuriakose T. Chacko, Mr. Manoj John, Mr. Mathai Thomas, Mr. Jeemon Varghese.

**My Hurricane Sandy Experience****By Rhea Mathews**

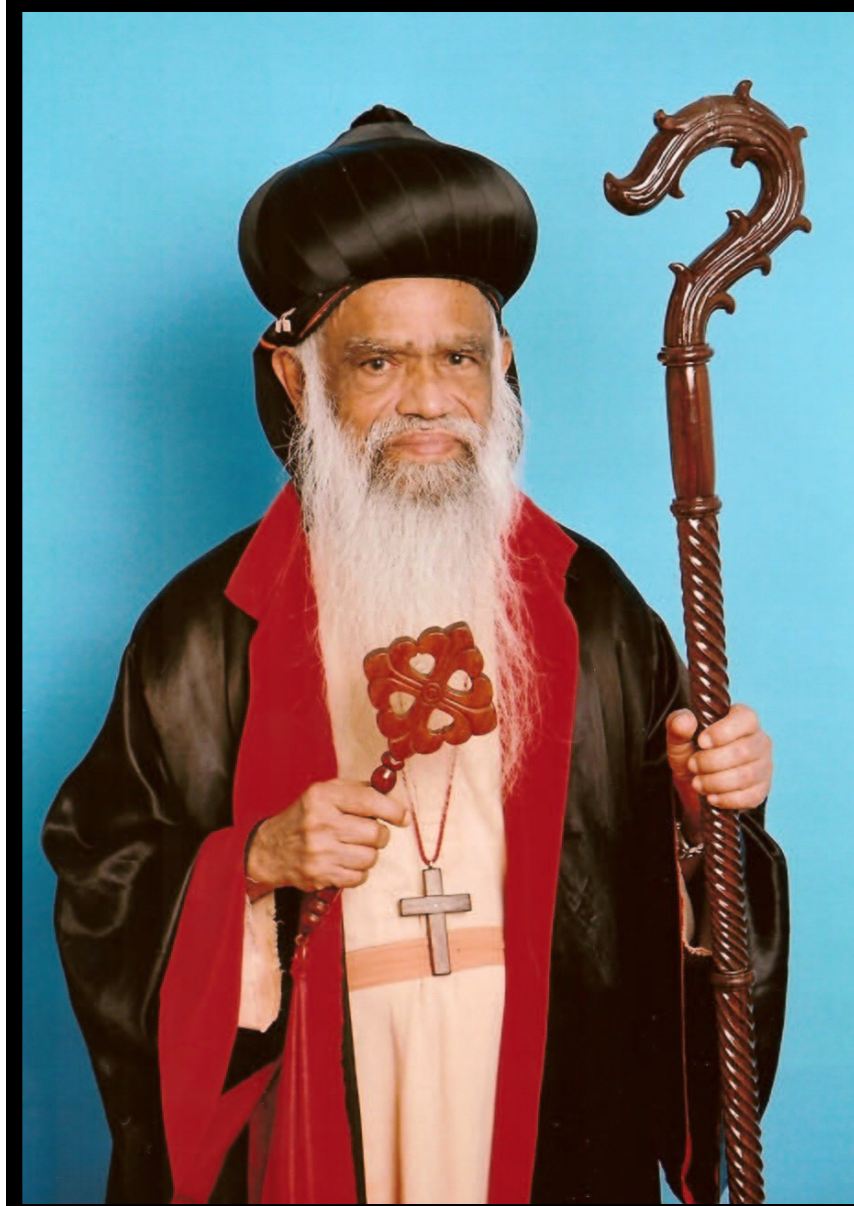
Hurricane Sandy was a terrifying experience. Many people suffered as trees were uprooted, the wind gusted strongly, and rain fell hard. Many people, like me, lost power and some still do not have power yet. Some lost their houses entirely; a few even lost their lives, due to this angry tempest.

Although my house is still standing and my loved ones and I are fine, my experiences were horrible. On Monday night the power went out, so there was no heat, light, or water for many days. The gusts of winds and torrents of rain scared me and let my thoughts run wildly into horrible possibilities. The wind frightened me the most; it seemed to fill the trees with an evil spirit causing them to shake violently with fear of falling over. The rain reminded me of shattering glass, its constant crashing refusing to let me rest. My only solace was the candlelight and my family around me.

We are an extended family so living in our house had become impossible. My aunt, uncle, and cousins shifted to my aunt's sister's house. My parents, grandparents, sister, and I moved into a hotel. Thus, a house once full of color and life was now a cold and barren wasteland.

I have grown much attached to my house; the memories made there have made it into my home, a place I will never forget. Being away from my home and my family was unbearable, but I thank God, for this horribleness lasted only a week. On Sunday, our power came back, and a cold house became a home again.

In the end things started to become normal, even though some mourned the loss of their family members, some wept over the loss of their homes, and many were enraged by the loss of power. Yet, life continued. Stores, workplaces, and schools reopened and the election was held. People restored the peace. They reached to help each other by donating things, offering shelter, and showing kindness. I hope this will be a sign to *all* people to forget their hard feelings for one another, repent, and appreciate the God-given chance to live once again. I hope people become selfless, understanding, caring and loving. It is times like these that we are awed by humanity and times like these that bring us closer to one another and God. Tempests and hurricanes may blow us over and knock us down, but unlike trees, we will slowly be able to stand again.



**His Grace Mathews Mar Barnabas**

August 9, 1924-December 8, 2012