

# UK

# Harmony



Indian Orthodox Church-Diocese of UK, EUROPE & AFRICA

Monthly News Letter-UK Region

Volume 1 Issue 1

November 2012

*Live in Harmony  
with one another.  
Do not be proud,  
But be willing to  
associate with peo-  
ple of low position .  
Do not be conceited.*

*Romans 12: 16*

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## CATHOLICATE CENTENARY CELEBRATIONS

Christian Year 2012 is very remarkable in the history of the Orthodox Church in India. This year, Malankara Orthodox Church, one of the oldest Apostolic Church in the world is celebrating the centenary of the establishment of Catholicos in India. The dawn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century was a dawn of a new era for the Malankara Orthodox Church. On 15<sup>th</sup> Sept 1912 the Catholicate of the East was established in Malankara and it was blessed, sanctified and established by H.H. Moran Mar Ignatius Abd Al Massiah, the former Patriarch of Antioch. On the same day H.G. Paulos Mar Ivanios Metropolitan was elevated as the first Catholicose in India, by the Patriarch. By this event the Malankara Church obtained the freedom of administration. It enabled the Church to elevate the Catholicose. Consecrate the Metropolitans and Holy Chrism, without depending any foreign dignitaries. As a result, our Church grew much in every step. The number of faithful, parishes and Dioceses grew in number and it became a universal Church as and when Parishes and Dioceses were established in each and every nook and corner of the globe.



Catholicate of the East  
H.H Basileios Marthoma  
Paulose II

## Shepherd's Message



Diocesan Metropolitan  
H.G. Dr. Mathews Mar Thimotheos

It has been a long time wish for us that there should be a timely Newsletter published for all the regions in our Diocese so as to get all the updates and for the parishes to get mutually connected. 'Harmony' harmonise what we dream!

We take this opportunity to appreciate everyone who worked together in publishing this.

May God Bless you all

*Read more on Kalpana next page*

# THE INDIAN (MALANKARA) ORTHODOX CHURCH

Diocese of UK- Europe and Africa

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43/GEN/2012

10 October 2012

**Blessings to the Vicar, Managing Committee Members and Faithful of all the Parishes of the Indian Orthodox Church, in the UK and Ireland:**

*Live in harmony with one another. Do not be proud, but be willing to associate with people of low position. Do not be conceited. **Romans 12: 16***

**Dearly Beloved in the Lord,**

It has been a long time wish for us that there should be a timely Newsletter published for the region so as to get all the updates and for the parishes to get mutually connected. 'Harmony' harmonizes what we dreamt!

There are two interesting terms in the classical and New Testament Greek which are generally translated as 'harmony'. The first one is *harmonios*, which literally means adapted or well-fitting. This word has been in the use for explaining on how the stones on a wall could be 'well-fitted'. The second word is *symphoneisis* which literally means harmony, agreement and concord. From the very early times onwards both these terms had been used to explain the synchronized musical notes as well. The title reference of the Newsletter "Harmony" has been carefully coined to reflect our anticipated harmonious life. Looking through the above referred to words for its classical meaning this is becoming more symbolic too, as, if we stay in 'harmony' we are playing the role of a 'well-fitted' stone along a protective wall. Precisely, staying together in harmony is protection. Further to this, owing to the extended musical meaning of the word any sound that goes irregular or unharmonious is referred to as 'cacophonous'. Our life should be harmonious (symphonic) with the will and love of God almighty which certainly assures protection in life.

It has been over three years now that we have formed this Diocese and it was indeed a humbling experience for us to be your shepherd in Christ. We appreciate each one of you for your commitment to the life of the Church, the body of Christ. We assure you of our continued prayers for all of you. We would like to see you and your next generation to be faithful to God, living in harmony.

We take this opportunity to appreciate everyone who worked together in publishing this. May God bless you all.

+ Mathews Mar Thimothios Metropolitan



Rev. Fr. (Prof.) George Joy

## BIBLE STUDY

### A study of Mathew 23:1-12

This passage forms the first part of the St Mathew's account of Jesus' final discourse (chs 23-25) as approximately balancing with the first discourse (chs 5-7: *Sermon on the Mount*) in length and thrust. But whereas in the first Jesus opens with blessing (Mt 5:3). His last opens with the woes against the religious elites, the scribes and the Pharisees. Jesus here condemns the religious leadership of his time with the ostracized 7 woes recorded in ch 23. At the same time, scribes and Pharisees are hardly the main audience; the explicit audience as in the first discourse (5:1-2, 7:28) consists of both disciples and crowds.

#### The Authority of the Scribes and Pharisees

Undoubtedly Jesus endorses the authority of the Scribes and Pharisees to interpret and enforce the Law of Moses. These people were now in the place of leadership that Moses was to the Israelites. They were the teachers and enforcers of the Law which Moses gave to the people. It was necessary for them to keep the Law of Moses before the people for they did not have scriptures available to them as we do today. Somebody had to read the Bible of that day and then convey it to the people. This was a good thing, and necessary for the people to have the guidance that God intended for his people. This was a positive role, and Jesus goes on to say that the people were to obey the truth these leaders did bring to them. The problem was that they began to add all kinds of regulations until the religious life was a burden than a blessing. They became hard and cruel legalistic leaders, but the people looked up to them as the most spiritual of all people.

The seat of Moses may mean many things. (1) It was an actual piece of synagogue furniture upon which authorised interpreters of the Torah (Law) sat and every synagogue had one of these. It was occupied by the supreme and legal authority on Law. (2) The expression is a metaphor referring to the fact that the Pharisees had assumed the role of being the Law's interpreters. (3) "The seat of Moses" was a specially designed chair (used as a stand) upon which the Torah scrolls was placed when not in use during the synagogue service. (4) The expression refers to the social position of the Pharisees as those who control access to the Torah. It is possible to see that all these would have some validity .

#### Putting Piety on Parade - Phylacteries and Tassels

**Phylacteries:** The Pharisees had an obsessive and compulsive desire to attention to them. The most explicit way of doing that was to wear phylacteries on their forehead and lengthen the tassels on their garments. The phylactery comes from the word signifying to keep, preserve or guard. They were worn as amulets or charms and thought to defend or preserve those who wear from evil. These were small strips of parchment on which four Old Testament portions were written and then sewn up in leather and worn upon their foreheads and left arms. On the first of which was written Ex 12: 2-10; on the second, Ex 13:11-21; on the third, Deut 6:4-9; and on the fourth Deut 11:18-21. The tradition of wearing phylacteries was based on a literal interpretation of the passage where God commands the Israelites to have the Law as a sign on their on their foreheads and frontlets between their eyes (Ex 13:16). It is usually eighteen inches long and about an inch wide. The Jews called it "Tephillin", because they used them in time of prayer, especially it was worn as one went to the synagogue; they imagined that there awas a great deal of holiness was there in wearing it.

**Tassel:** Tassels refer to loose threads which were attached to the borders of the outer garment as a fringe. This fringe was commanded in order to distinguish them from other nations, and they might remember to keep the commandments of God (Numb 15:38-40; Deut 22:12). The Pharisees made them broader than other people to show that they had extra ordinary respect for the Law.

(contd..p4)

*Speak to the Israelites and say to them: 'Throughout the generations to come you are to make tassels on the corners of your garments, with a blue cord on each tassel.*

*Numbers 15.38*

These religious elites broadened their phylacteries and enlarged the borders of their garments to exhibit to the public as if they were more religious than others.

Jesus says "They do everything so that people will see them".

1. Their design was none other than to please men and to vaunt themselves.
2. It was a religion of exhibition. It was all for show to get the admiration and attention of others.
3. They did not care how they looked at God or God looked at them, they only wanted people to be impressed with their piety. Reputation was their goal; they were delighted to get the admiration of men.
4. What they did was a show of outer piety to conceal the inner wickedness.
5. They were religious show offs all to get public attention and approval from others.
6. It was not a professing of Faith but a flash; a public display of external religiosity.
7. The form of their godliness was to separate themselves from others; they wanted to dress differently and appear pious.
8. They had a very dangerous "Holier than Thou" attitude – a sickening sanctimonious smugness.
9. They had an ego trip; they wanted a type of gratification that comes when you think that others think you are more important, special and holy.
10. They wanted first place and pivotal position everywhere and anywhere – and their best credibility was their lack of humility.
11. They were power mongers and surrounded themselves with trappings of power so as to look down upon others.

*But the LORD said to Samuel, "Do not consider his appearance or his height, for I have rejected him. The LORD does not look at the things people look at. People look at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart."*

*1 Samuel 16:7*

*For God said,  
'Honor your father  
and mother and  
'Anyone who curses  
their father or  
mother is to be put  
to death*

*Matthew 15 4*

One of the great dangers we face in the church and religious communities today is the spiritual pride at all levels both in the sacerdotal ranks and hoi polloi. We often find an aggressive strategy employed by the religious authorities to establish their authority and power upon the ordinary who are faithful to God. Public display of piety whether by the clericals or laity is abhorrence to God.

### **Titles of Honour and Respect**

The Scribes and Pharisees had an inflated sense of importance and loved titles denoting any kind of authority. They expected people to greet them in the market places with the title "Rabbi" which means a great person. Their disciples were required to call them also Father and Master. Jesus forbids the use of titles imposing dominion and authoritarianism on fellow human beings. Let us look at these titles

**Rabbi:** Jesus says the Pharisees and Scribes love "people to call them Rabbi. You must not be called Teacher, because you are all brothers of one another and have only one Teacher". The Scribes were the interpreters and teachers of the Law or Scripture and they laid such a stress that "he who salutes his teacher, and does call him Rabbi, provokes the Divine Majesty to depart from Israel".

Two things are implied in the words of Jesus. First, when he says you are all brothers of one another he is denying the unlawful claims of the Pharisees and Scribes that they are people of a separate class having greater authority and dignity than others; and therefore are to be honoured and respected with apposite titles and position. Second, as supreme interpreters of Law, they assumed having exclusive power and authority over others, the dominion over men's faith, a power to make laws for others, and to impose them in a magisterial way. As teachers they thought that they have absolute authority to judge what is right and what is wrong. The absolute authority to judge what is just, right and good or unjust and wrong are not with human beings, as they can be subjective and relative. The jurisdiction of one person over another is conditional and restricted. God's decision is the only ultimate truth. (1 Sam 16:7)

**Father:** Another prohibition is "call no one here on earth Father, because there is only one Father in Heaven". Does it mean that we cannot call our biological father in that manner, or is it wrong to call our spiritual leaders and priests 'Father'? Certainly, it is not; the point is not the word, but the meaning you attribute to it. (See Ex 20:12, Mat 15:4, Eph 6:1-3).

(contd..p5)

The term 'Father' had a very wide implication for the Jewish community. Generally the word 'Father' denotes authority, eminence, superiority, right to command and claim to particular respect besides the responsibility of giving love, guidance, instruction, rebuke, protection and nourishment...etc.

Beyond this there is another tangible aspect in the father-son relationship in the Jewish understanding. Physical descent was not necessarily a privilege for someone to be called a son, but father's recognition and acceptance was all the more important. (See Ex 4:22, 2 Sam 7:14, Jn 1:12,13, Rom 8:14,19) It was in this sense Jesus addressed God "Father", and the same is intended when He asked us to call God "Father in Heaven". Therefore when Jesus says "call no one Father' He means, do not crave for the recognition and acceptance the human beings give, but care for the acceptance and recognition which God gives.

**Leader:** The third thing forbidden by Jesus is "you should not be called Leader". The Jewish religious authorities claimed that they were leading the people to all truth and life (Mt 23:13, 16). They demanded implicit obedience to what they teach and say. By enjoining all triviality to the law which Moses gave they were leading the people astray and giving them a twisted and distorted understanding of God. When Jesus says "the one and the only leader is Messiah", He is succinct that Christ and Christ alone can lead us into all truth and show us right path where we should go (Jn 14:6). In some translations we might find the original word in the New Testament rendered as 'Master'. Here again Christ as the only Master, His command, judgement and decision should be the final word in our life. We don't need to be afraid of the authoritarian magisterial imposition of precepts if Christ is our Master and if God is on our side.

*Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."*

*John 14.6*

## *Parumala Thirumeni Pray For Us*



Feast of St. Gregorios of Parumala (Parumala Perunal) is celebrated with great respect and divinity in Malankara Orthodox Church during the month of November.

Saint Gregorios of Parumala is popularly known as '**Parumala Thirumeni**'. Metropolitan Geevarghese Mar Gregorios of the Malankara Orthodox Church who departed this world on November 2<sup>nd</sup> 1902, became the first declared saint from Malankara (Kerala, India) naturally to be called, 'Parumala Thirumeni'. He shines in the cloud of witnesses as a bright luminary giving rays of hope to millions in their suffering and struggles.

All the Parishes and Congregations of the Malankara Orthodox Church under the Diocese of UK, Europe and Africa are celebrating Parumal Perunal in the month of November 2012

# Chit-Chat

# Kids Corner



Rev. Fr. Varghese Mathew

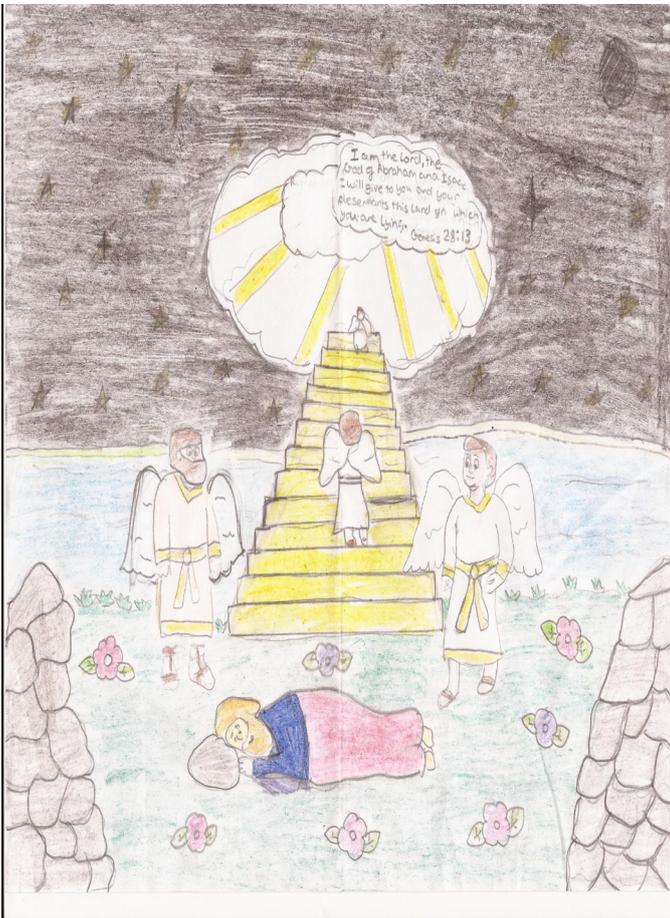
## ORTHODOX SYRIAN SUNDAYSCHOOL ASSOCIATION OF THE EAST DIOCESE OF UK (OSSAE-UK)

OSSAE-UK feel proud to be part of the spiritual progress of our diocese, hence feel privileged to be with this very first and special edition of our Diocesan News Letter of Catholicate centenary year. We take pride in sharing our fond memories of our Sunday school (SS) days with younger generation. As part of our ongoing commitment, we recognise our responsibility in learning and imparting Christian values and tradition to our next generation. Fr.Varghese Mathew has been appointed by our diocesan Metropolitan in order to develop and coordinate SS activities at diocese level. On 25/08/12, Thirumeni had launched OSSAE-UK centralised activities at the family conference. Currently, centralised registration of SS, development of a database is happening at a quick pace. So far about 600 children, 80 teachers from 12 units registered. Few more to follow with the exception of very few parishes do not have Sunday school activities.

### Immediate tasks of the OSSAE-UK

To have uniformity in curriculum year, semester, syllabus, and assessment mode in par with the oriental orthodox syllabus by working close with the OSSAE central office and the Outside India Region office (OIR). To have a coordinated meaningful OVBS in the diocese. To coordinate talent competitions and to organise a Sunday school meet in 2013 for offering wider opportunity and participation to our young people. In order to discuss and formulate an action plan on matters including the above as well as a offering teaching guidance, one day conference for all SS teachers to be organised on **2<sup>nd</sup> Feb 2013** ( Kalpana to follow with details).

For registering your SS, for involving any area of your interest/expertise, valuable suggestions and to receive Sunday school news, please contact; Fr.Varghese Mathew, 078830377061, [sundayschool.iocuk@gmail.com](mailto:sundayschool.iocuk@gmail.com)



Jacob's Dream at Bethel

Salet Shaji.

Class 9, St. Gregorios, London

Relevant video messages can be viewed on: [Indian Orthodox Sunday School Diocese of UK - YouTube](#)

Inviting your prayerful involvement in our great mission for developing OSSAE-UK for the benefit our young generation.



The Holy Trinity

Greshma Reji.

Class 6, St. Gregorios, London

# SYNERGY - Youth Joint

Rev. Fr. Thomas P John

## OCYM-UK

On Sunday August 26th, 2012, His Grace Dr. Mathews Mar Thimothios held a youth meeting at the conclusion of the 2012 Annual Family Conference. At this meeting, Rev. Fr. Vijay Thomas, Rev. Fr. Mat Alexander, Ms. Ceena Varghese and Fr. Abraham Thomas spoke to the youth about the importance of consistent worship, study and service. It was the decision of that body to officially organize a youth movement for the United Kingdom. As a result the following members were elected:

### **Leaders of MGOCSM of the UK:**

Annu Matthew

Youth Coordinator UK Diocese

Hanson Raju (St Thomas IOC North London)

Youth General Secretary UK Diocese

[hansonraju@hotmail.com](mailto:hansonraju@hotmail.com)

### **NORTHERN ZONE:**

Calvin Poovathur (St Gregorios IOC Belfast)

Comittee Member

[calvinpoovathur@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:calvinpoovathur@yahoo.co.uk)

Sony Eliza (St George IOC Manchester)

Comittee Member

[soneysonu@hotmail.com](mailto:soneysonu@hotmail.com)

### **CENTRAL ZONE:**

Jamie Jacob (St Mary IOC Bristol)

Comittee Member

[j\\_jacob19@hotmail.com](mailto:j_jacob19@hotmail.com)

Aswin Shaji Mathew (St Stephen IOC Birmingham)

Comittee Member

[ash\\_mathew@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:ash_mathew@hotmail.co.uk)

### **SOUTHERN ZONE:**

Carol Thomas (St Thomas IOC Cambridge)

Comittee Member

[carol\\_sweet7@hotmail.com](mailto:carol_sweet7@hotmail.com)

Justin Joy (St Gregorios Brockley London)

Comittee Member

[justineujoy@yahoo.com](mailto:justineujoy@yahoo.com)

The mission of these elected members are to rejuvenate the younger generation that resides in the UK through spirituality and active participation in church based activities. As an initial plan we decided to start by making sure that there is at least a youth movement active in every church. The age group for this spiritual organisation will be between 13-30. As part of this some of our members have planned and will be visiting various churches to initiate this.

It is extremely vital and important that we build a strong foundation to build a strong church in the UK, and our younger generation will help us in doing this. The proactive committee members will make sure that we achieve this vision and therefore help us to complete our phase 1 of our mission.

To bring together the talents in our midst, the committee has decided to arrange a Logo competition for our youngsters. The logo is for our OCYM-UK. It is an initiative to create a unique identity for us in UK. We are confident that we will be receiving a lot of response for the same.

# DIVYA BODHANAM



## Growing in the Wisdom of God

Divya Bodhanam is the Theological Training Programme for the Laity in the Church, founded in 1984 by H. H. Baselius Marthoma Mathews I of blessed memories (Catholicose of the East and Malankara Metropolitan) by the initiative of Late Lamented H. G. Dr. Paulose Mar Gregorios (Former Principal, Orthodox Theological Seminary, Kottayam).

**Rev. Fr. Mathew Abraham**

Diocese of UK, Europe and Africa, Divya Bodhanam central committee has been appointed by Diocesan Metropolitan H.G Dr. Mathews Mar Thimothios. With gratitude I would like to inform you that Thirumeni has appointed me as the UK regional co-ordinator for this programme. With Diocesan Metropolitan's permission and blessings, we are looking forward to organise a formal launching ceremony of Divya Bodhanam Programme on our Diocesan day, the 4th of November 2012 at St. Gregorios Indian Orthodox Church, London. I would expect your prayers, support and involvement for the success of this programme.

### The Aims of Divya Bodhanam:

- To educate the people in basic Orthodox Christian faith and practices.
- To train the people to build up a true Christian life-pattern in the midst of modern challenges of the world.
- To help Christian parents and families, by which the growing generation shall be properly cared and nurtured in a true Christian way.
- To encourage Christian leaders to work in the spiritual organizations of the Church at parish and diocesan levels.
- To prepare the people to face the new challenges, ideologies and problems of the time and to respond with a Christian mind filled with deep faith and complete trust in God.

### The course offers orientation in

- Christian Theology
- Church History
- New Testament and Old Testament
- Counselling
- Communication
- Spirituality
- Religion
- Sacraments

For Further details contact

Rev. Fr. Mathew Abraham Palathinkal -UK Region Co-ordinator  
[frbobby74@gmail.com](mailto:frbobby74@gmail.com) Mob.07787525273

UK Region Organizers: Suku Daniel and Baiju John

## Serving Christ In Our Place of Work

**Dr. Pothen Alexander**

It is not so long ago we had anxieties about the future of our church in this country and had various discussions implying that once the generation that started the church, passes away, the church may not be in existence. We are now privileged to see with our own eyes 15 parishes in UK and the magnificent family conference we have had this year. Because of the hard labours, sacrifice and the vision of our members, our church is now a living reality. It is a tangible demonstration of God's power in a cynical age. God has called us to be here at this particular time in the world history, when we are going through recession, and the whole nation is going through difficulties. God has called us to serve Him and we are seeing a new phase in the growth of the Christian faith .It is by being in the hands of Jesus that we can be part of the Christian ministry.

Christianity primarily spread via the trade routes; and not by specialised evangelists, but by ordinary Christians going about in their day to day jobs. We have a responsibility in doing our part in our work place. We live in the midst of a different culture and this itself adds to difficulties at work. The following in my mind are some of the major issues.

### **Pressure at work.**

There are unlimited demands and expectations at our work place and we may feel trapped like rats. There is an expectation to create a new future, through our work and ideas, and this is a delusional way of thinking. The fact is that we cannot create the future and God is in control of the future. We are called to make wise choices with the help of Holy Spirit and ultimately God will decide the future. On Sundays whenever possible we should stop work, celebrate the joyous occasion of the resurrection of Christ, confident in the knowledge that God is in control of the future. While at work, we should not be surprised to find ourselves under pressure but at the same time we must remember that it is God who decides the future. The workplace is an ideal setting for practicing Christian values and setting an example. How we behave at work is a testimony to our beliefs and an opportunity to glorify God. Don't make the mistake of setting poor examples by getting angry. This makes us look bad and it hurts other Christians. Instead, work to develop the attributes of patience, faithfulness, honesty, and submission. Any hardships that come your way can be seen as stepping stones to growing your relationship with God and sharing your love with others.

"There is nothing better for a man than to enjoy his work, because that is his lot." (Ecclesiastes 3:22)

"People with a hot temper do foolish things; wiser people remain calm." "If you stay calm, you are wise, but if you have a hot temper, you only show how stupid you are." Proverbs 14 (17, 29)

### **A place of Danger.**

The risks of materialism, of too much money or power are corrosive and dangerous. Like the weeds that strangle the good seed, materialism can strangle our Christian commitment and witness and may squeeze us in to a materialistic world. There is also a risk of excessive work, fatigue and burn out. We need time to step back from the daily frantic activities and look at the world more reflectively. We are limited and frail and so we have to learn to live within the boundaries of our humanity. This means taking opportunities for adequate rest as well as bearing one another's burdens. We all came in to this world totally dependent on the love and care of others, and most of us will end our lives totally dependant on the love and care of others. The apostle Paul tells us that we should 'bear one another's burdens and so fulfil the law of Christ'.

### **A Place of Witness and compassion.**

Work place is where we are called to be witnesses. We are not just witnesses to ethical principles and moral values but should be witnesses of Jesus Christ.

(contd..p10)

*"There is nothing better for a man than to enjoy his work, because that is his lot' "*

*( Ecclesiastes 3: 22)*

We are called to be salt and light, preventing corruption and decay, and shining truth to dark corners of daily lives and activities. We need to create an emotional connection with others at work, the person to person relationship. We need compassion and it should not be in what we are saying but should be in what we are doing. Here is the command from St Paul, the Apostle, "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. "And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God." (Romans 12.1-2)

The expression probably means that they we should devote the vigorous, active powers of our bodies and souls to the service of God. During Old testament times, Jews offered animals for sacrifice. They were dead and could not be presented again. In opposition to this, we are to present ourselves with all our living, vital energies. Christianity does not require a service of death or inactivity. It demands vigorous and active powers in the service of God the Savior. Our sacrifice should be our life, with all its energies, its intellectual, moral, and physical powers, as one long sacrifice; one continued offering unto God. An immortal being presented to him; presented voluntarily, with all his energies, from day to day, until life shall close, so that it may he said that he has lived and died an offering made freely unto God. This is true Christianity. As Psalmist said in Chapter 51, "My sacrifice is a humble spirit; God will not reject a humble and repentant heart"

*"And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God." (Romans 12.2)*

#### **A place of Love.**

Christians invented the word Agape to describe the special kind of love that was distinctively Christian. One of the essentials of this is respect. We have to respect others as equal, a Christian love that says I am here to respect you because you are unique. It is by showing this love to others that we can demonstrate the reality of the presence of Christ in our midst.

In our relationships with one another, we should have the same mind set as Christ Jesus: as it says in Philippians 2. 5-11.

"The attitude you should have is the one that Jesus Christ had. He always had the nature of God.....to the glory of God the Father".

(Acknowledgement CMF)



### **DIOCESE OF UK, EUROPE and AFRICA CENTRAL CHARITY PROGRAMME**

All My Dearly Beloved in Christ,

The Diocese of UK Europe and Africa is passing through its initial stages of establishment. By the Grace of Almighty God, our growth as a community is remarkable under the able leadership of our Diocesan Bishop His Grace Mathews Mar Thimothios.

For the smooth functioning and speedy development of the diocese number of organisations has been formed and the responsibilities are entrusted to different persons. I have been assigned to take the responsibilities of organising and leading the 'Diocesan Charity Programme'. I would like to take this opportunity to express my humble gratitude to Thirumeni for entrusting me for this task and request all of you, your valuable support to make the Project a great success

Though individual Parishes and Congregations are doing their best in different charity works and the same is well appreciated. Nevertheless we do not have a central charity programme coordinated by the Diocese. The following key elements but not limited to are envisaged in the Diocesan Central Charity Project

1. Propose a meaningful name for our charity.
2. Establish a diocesan charity committee.
3. Raise necessary fund for Diocesan level charity activities.
4. Find out genuine needy people/projects in the UK and India.

With Prayers

Fr. Tom Jacob  
frtomjacob@yahoo.com



# Ladies Wing

## Martha Mariam Samajam - UK, Europe and Africa Diocese

Rev. Fr. Happy Jacob

Glory be to the Holy Father, Holy Son and the Holy Spirit.

A few words about the women's wing Since the formation of Diocese, Martha Mariam Samajam have been well established in the UK Europe and Africa Diocese under the guidance of president, H G Dr Mathews Mar Thimothios and Vice-presidents Rev Fr. Varghese Mathew.

Rev. Fr. Happy Jacob has taken over the vice-president role since July 2012. 15 registered units with approximate 200 members function in the diocese. Units are divided into three regions. Regional secretaries along with Mrs. Shali Saji Varghese, joint secretary and Mrs. Beena Joy, treasurer organise the activities of the Martha Mariam Samajam.

Regional secretaries are Mrs Aleyamma Thomas, Dr Susan kuruvilla (North), Mrs Jainy Ashik, Mrs Sherry John (South), Mrs Siny Thankchan and Mrs Reshmi Vinod representing central region. Each unit arrange Prayer meetings, Bible studies and Charity works and helping the churches at unit level.

Since 2011, two annual diocesan level conferences and three regional meetings were conducted. Theme of the first year was, "Christian Parenting - Challenges in the Changing Contexts. We were blessed to have spiritual leaders from our church and sister churches as honourable speakers in each meeting. This year we are planning a lot to do .The main programmes are arranged on motto 'Pray, Act, Shine'. Apart from the routine projects, all members got the chance to join the lay training programme- Divya Bodhanam. With the help of our members I hope we can make better live better and serve our church. If any wants to work along with this group please contact the secretaries or parish priests.

Thanking you all In the service of our Lord

Happy Achen



Diocese of UK, Europe and Africa– Martha Mariam Samajam 2nd Annual conference held at London

# PARISH NEWS



OVBS 2012  
St. Mary's Indian Orthodox Church, Bristol  
(above)

St. Gregorios Indian Orthodox Church,  
Southend-on -Sea (right)



Parish Day Inauguration of St. Gregorios Indian Orthodox  
Church, London on 6th October 2012

DIOCESE  
INFORMATION

UK Regional Office  
St. Gregorios Indian  
Orthodox Church,  
Cranfield Road,  
London SE4 1UF  
Tel .07541814466



A special service held at St Margaret's Church, Westminster on 30 October 2012 to commemorate the Coptic Feast of Nayrouz, marking the new Coptic Year. The service was the first of its kind for the Coptic community in the United Kingdom.

Please visit  
[www.indianorthodoxuk.org](http://www.indianorthodoxuk.org)

## May Their Souls Rest in Peace



MR. I. JOHN (84)

Member of St. Gregorios  
Indian Orthodox Church, London



MR. RAJAN GEORGE (57)

Member of St. Gregorios  
Indian Orthodox Church, Glasgow

## Reflections

Thank Almighty for the first issue of our Diocesan Newsletter-UK Harmony. Heartful gratitude to Thirumeni and all the well wishers for your co-operation and support.

Please send us your Feedback, News and Articles to [office@indianorthodoxuk.org](mailto:office@indianorthodoxuk.org)

-Thomas P John Achan

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