

St. Thomas Indian Orthodox Church,  
Greater Washington



*St. Thomas  
Mirror*

EDITION : 24

FEBRUARY 2016

**The Great Lent**



HOLY SEASON OF LENT

## Vicar's Message

Dearly Beloved in Christ Jesus,

2016 Great Lent is so important that we will participate an early Easter on March 27<sup>th</sup>. The earliest Easter ever recorded in the Gregorian calendar from 1753 onwards was on March 22<sup>nd</sup>, both in 1761 and 1818. This year we will celebrate the Annunciation to St. Mary and will commemorate the crucifixion of Jesus Christ (Good Friday) on March 25<sup>th</sup> 2016.

Great Lent, is the most important fasting season in the church year in Orthodox Christianity which prepares us for Easter. The purpose of Great Lent is to prepare us to not only commemorate, but to enter into the Passion and Resurrection of Jesus. The totality of the Orthodox life centers around the Resurrection. *Lent is not for the sake of Lent itself, as fasting is not for the sake of fasting.* Rather, these are means by which and for which the individual believer prepares himself to reach for, accept and attain the calling of his Savior.

Therefore, the significance of Great Lent is highly appraised, not only by the monks who gradually increased the length of time of the Lent, but also by the lay people themselves. In the Orthodox Church, asceticism is not exclusively for the "professional" religious, but for each layperson as well, according to their strength. As such, Great Lent is a sacred Institute of the Church to serve the individual believer in participating as a member of the Mystical Body of Christ.

It provides each person an annual opportunity for self-examination and improving the standards of faith and morals in his Christian life. The deep intent of the believer during Great Lent is encapsulated in the words of Saint Paul: *"forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal of the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus"* (Philippians 3:13-14). Through spending more time than usual in prayer and meditation on the Holy Scripture and the Holy Traditions of the Church, the believer in Christ becomes through the grace of God more god-like. *Observance of Great Lent is characterized by fasting and abstinence from certain foods, intensified private and public prayer, self-examination, confession, personal improvement, repentance and restitution for sins committed, and almsgiving.*

May God bless us all,

Yours in Christ,

Johnson Achen



### Members celebrating birthday

Mathew Chacko 2/4  
Suresh Eapen 2/4  
Lali Koshy 2/7  
Renjith Thomas 2/7  
Luke Benny 2/9  
Tintu Abraham 2/12  
Sneha Abraham 2/13  
Bixa Kurian Kanneth 2/14  
Shiney Sam 2/17  
Bijoy Thomas 2/17  
Varghese Abraham 2/18  
Stephen Sam 2/19  
Alka Jays 2/20  
Anu Abraham 2/20  
Joshua Thomas 2/24  
Joel Abraham 2/24  
Ryan Mathew 2/26  
Saramma Thomas 2/26  
Sajjan George 2/26  
Ryan George 2/27



### Members celebrating wedding anniversary

George Varghese and Saramma Varghese 2/2  
Rajan Varghese and Remani Varghese 2/27

### Food Roaster

#### Milithios Fellowship Group – February 2016

Preethy Kanneth (Leader)  
Tintu Abraham  
Ammini Chacko  
Della Rio

### Dates to Remember

February-7: Kothine Sunday - Pethrutha of the Great Lent  
February-14: Lepers' Sunday  
February-21: Palsy Sunday

### Spiritual Organizations

02/07/2016 MMVS - Bible Discussion  
02/14/2016 MGOCSM  
02/21/2016 Men's Forum  
02/28/2016 Bala Samajam

# Worship Schedules

## SERVICE

### 02/07/2016 – Malayalam

Morning Prayer 8:30 am - 9:30 am.

O.T. Bible Reading :

[Exodus20:1-21,Joel2:12-20,Isaiah58:5-14]

Epistle Reading

[Acts11:19-26 OR Revelations2:1-7, Colossians3:1-17,St.John2:1-11]

### 02/14/2016 – English

Morning Prayer 8:30 am - 9:30 am.

O.T. Bible Reading : Johan Thomas, Naveen Ninan, Sneha Abraham

[Genesis7:6-24,IIKings5:1-14,Isaiah33:2-9]

Epistle Reading

[Acts9:22-31,Romans3:27-4:5,St.Luke5:12-16,4:40-41]

### 02/21/2016 – Malayalam

Morning Prayer 8:30 am - 9:30 am.

O.T. Bible Reading :

[Ezekiel33:23-34:12,Exodus4:10-17,IIKings2:1-11,Isaiah5:20-25]

Epistle Reading

[Acts5:12-16.19:8-12,Romans5:1-11,St.Mark2:1-12]

### 02/28/2016 – English

Morning Prayer 8:30 am - 9:30 am.

O.T. Bible Reading : Teena Varghese, Nitya Ninan, Nidhi Mathew

[ISamuel7:10-17,Numbers17:1-8,Isaiah56:1-7]

Epistle Reading

[Acts4:1-12,Romans7:14-25,Matthew15:21-28]

\*\*\*\* If any of your family member's anniversary/birthday falls on this month and doesn't see under birthday/anniversary column; please login to our church website and update \*\*\*\*

Sunday School Day cake cutting 01/31/16



Bible Trivia January winner : Team John

