



HOLY TRANSFIGURATION RETREAT CENTER

A YEAR IN REVIEW - 2018

"WELCOME TO YOUR SPIRITUAL HOME!"

These were the joyful words of our beloved Father in Christ, His Holiness Moran Mar Baselios Marthoma Paulose II, to the clergy and faithful of our Diocese at the inauguration of Holy Transfiguration Retreat Center.

We are proud to share that the faithful of the Northeast American Diocese, and other faith communities have made HTRC their spiritual home.

2018 has been a testament to how God is using Holy Transfiguration Retreat Center to transform the spiritual lives of people from different walks of life. It is evident with the various ministerial programs this past year, Holy Transfiguration Retreat Center is truly an investment for the present and future generations of the Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church in North America.

In April 2018, we formally constituted an Advisory Board of Holy Transfiguration Retreat Center, which consists of members of our Diocesan Council, Malankara Church Committee members of our Diocese, along with working professionals from different corners of our Diocese. The responsibilities entrusted to this Advisory Board include, but are not limited to: promoting the mission and vision of this ministry, strategic planning, fundraising, and support for HTRC.

Upon their appointment, they went right to work by meeting at the end of April 2018 itself, and offered a dynamic presentation on our spiritual center at our annual Family & Youth Conference.

"You can really feel the presence of Christ at this place, and the impact it can have on our future generations is what really matters most."

- Reuben Sam



NEW DIRECTOR

In May 2018, Ms. Mary De Angelis joined the retreat center as its' new Director. Mary brings with her more than two decades of work experience in the non-profit sector as Director of Catholic, interfaith, and secular retreat centers.

Since her arrival, Mary has been instrumental in developing relationships with religious and civic communities, offering the sacred space of our spiritual home to many groups. She has successfully used this network to form a community which offers hope toward building a more compassionate world. An example of this is an event she organized to observe the United Nations International Day of Peace on September 21, 2018 at HTRC. The UN event connected over 2 billion people world wide of diverse religions in a prayer for world peace.

As the year comes to an end, Mary offered her reflection on the mission of HTRC: "His Grace's vision for Holy Transfiguration provides a place dedicated to spiritual education and guidance for his beloved diocese. With a magnanimous heart, Thirumeni has opened the doors of our home to the larger world community to include ALL people seeking to develop a spiritual compass: a beautiful example of love thy neighbor as thyself."

AREA MEETINGS & PARTNERSHIPS

In July 2018, the Diocesan Council began facilitating meetings each major area of the Diocese. All the Vicars, Assistant Vicars, Secretaries, Trustees, Committee members, Diocesan Assembly members, and ministry leaders in all parishes in each area are encouraged to participate in these meetings.

Such area meetings have been an opportunity to collaborate, and work together in promoting effective ministry, and furthering the sacred mission of our Diocese.

Deliberations on various ministries based in each area are held, along with a detailed presentation on Holy Transfiguration Retreat Center. Members of the Advisory Board of HTRC are also present to facilitate fruitful discussions, and answer questions on this ministry of the Diocese.

Since July 2018, the Bronx/Westchester, Philadelphia, and Brooklyn/Queens/Long Island areas have already met. All areas have renewed their commitment to HTRC. Most notable is the Philadelphia area, who decided that each family in the area should donate at least \$500 to the Diocesan Retreat Center by the end of the current financial year.

This past year Holy Transfiguration Retreat Center, and our Diocese together launched more than five different ministerial initiatives to benefit the faithful of the Malankara Church. It is worthy to note, there were many private programs booked by the Roman Catholic Church, and other private groups as well.

A YEAR IN REVIEW



The Winter Summit - College Ministry Conference - December 2017



Winter Summit was the first time Holy Qurbana was celebrated in the Chapel



Beautiful new furniture arrived just in time for Winter Summit



Books on Theology & Spirituality were donated to our library by Mary Knoll Seminary



"Oh Lord! How great are Your works!" - Psalm 92:5



Participants of Men's Retreat - May 2018



Diocesan Assembly - May 2018



Participants of the Marth Mariam Vanitha Samajam Camp - May 2018

*"A place to call our own home...great for retreats and conventions...a great asset for our present & future generations to relish and enjoy."
- Aju Tharian*



Summer Institute - June 2018



"Clean air, silence, healthy food, peaceful atmosphere, regular offices of prayer, various spiritual, intellectual, theological, biblical instructions, meditation techniques, etc. will enrich anyone who will stop by for have a short stay. Your prayers and help will be a great source of strength in fulfilling this great dream for the Church, the Diocese and all its parishes."

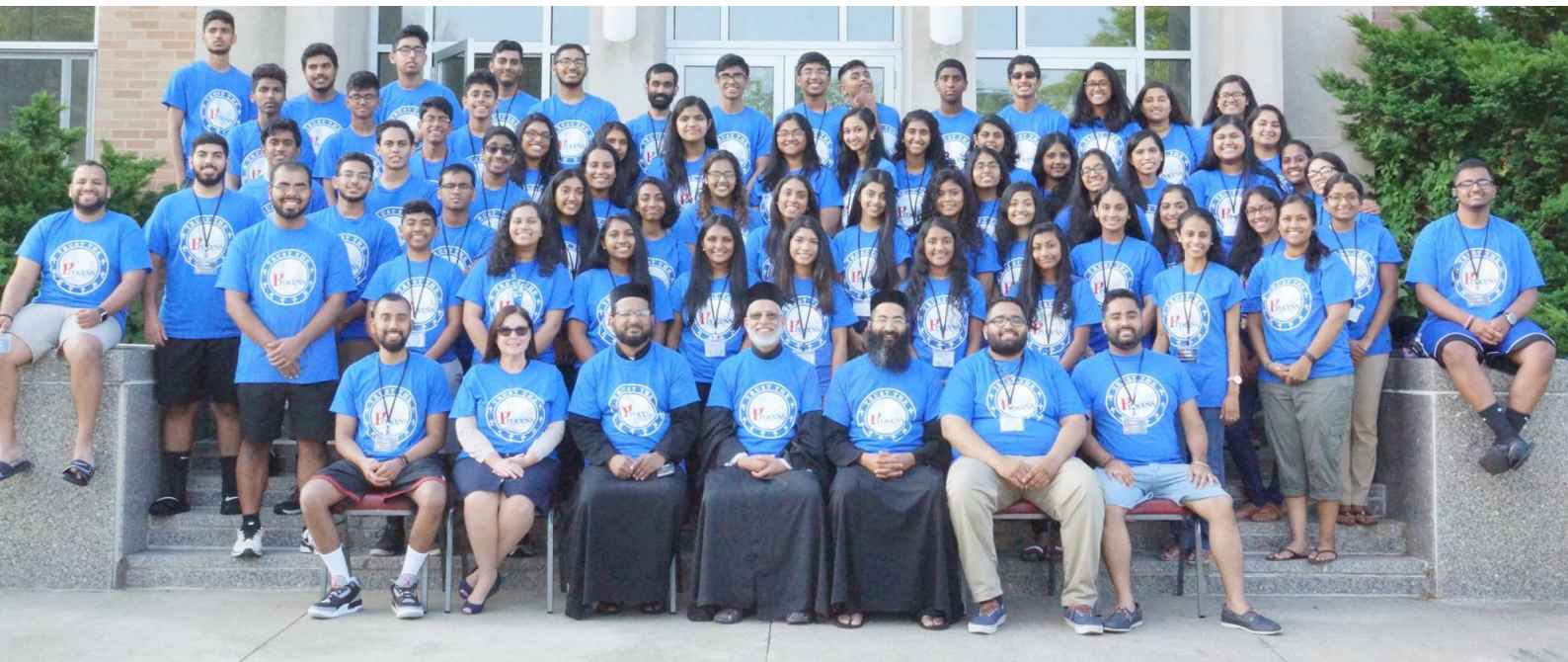
- Reverend Father M. K. Kuriakose

"Beautiful, clean and serene. Best place to have a retreat!"

- Sherin Abraham

"LORD, IT IS GOOD FOR US TO BE HERE!"

- Saint Matthew 17:4



"Our Hadootho committee loved working with the staff of the HTRC to make everything go smooth as possible. Words can't describe my time there, so I encourage the faithful of the diocese to attend a retreat or camp at the HTRC to gain that experience."

- Mathew Thomas



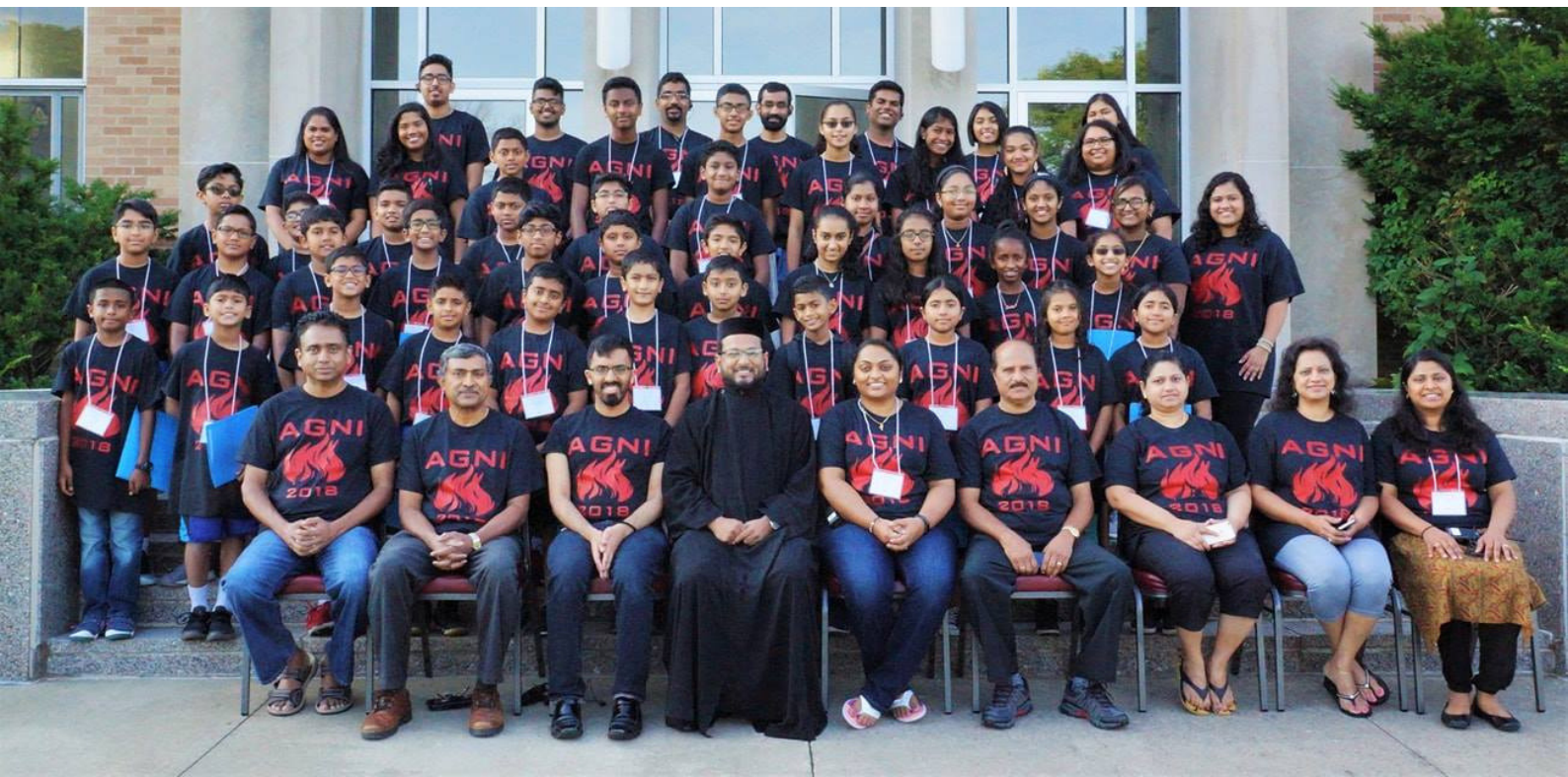
Hadootho - July 2018



Talmeedo - July 2018



"This amazing retreat center amidst breathtaking scenery will definitely be a place where generations of children, students, young adults, and adults will draw near to our Lord. Thank You for your vision and support of this ministry initiative!"
-Reverend Father Mat Alexander



AGNI - Middle School Camp - August 2018



"Great experience visiting and staying at HTRC first time. Attended Agni- Middle School Camp. Such a peaceful environment. This is a great asset for Orthodox Churches in Northeast American Diocese. May God bless in abundance."

- Jinsy Varghese



MGOCISM New Jersey/Staten Island Summer Conference - August 2018

*Check out some of the upcoming programs
of the Northeast American Diocese to be held in 2019*

December 26 to 29, 2018: The Winter Summit

May 3 to 5, 2019: Marth Mariam Vanitha Samajam Camp

June 2019: Men's Retreat

June 9 to 14, 2019: Summer Theological Institute

June 16 to 22, 2019: Talmeedo - Young Men's Retreat

July 3 to 6, 2019: Hadootho - MGOCSM of Philadelphia

July 24 to 27, 2019: MGOCSM Leadership Camp - North America

August 1 to 4, 2019: Shakthi - MGOCSM of New Jersey/Staten Island

August 2019: AGNI - Middle School Camp

August 14 to 17, 2019: Martura - MGOCSM of New York

August 23 to 25, 2019: GROW Conference

September 26 to 28, 2019: Clergy Conference



UPDATES & LOOKING AHEAD

In the recent time, the gymnasium is undergoing some serious renovation to ensure it can be used to its fullest potential. This will allow groups who use our center to have more space for meetings, and use it for recreational activities. It is also worthy to note, some areas of the gym's roof has also been repaired.

The Advisory Board has initiated a feasibility study on developing a retirement community, for not only our faithful, but the greater community. It is evident that Pennsylvania has a high retirement population, but it is also seen within our own Keralite Christian community. Many people desire to be close to their loved ones in the northeast United States, and also enjoy fellowship and community during this new chapter of their lives.

We hope to look into the possibility of making Holy Transfiguration Retreat Center, into a place of theological education and enhancement. We have begun a week long Summer Theological Institutes with theological scholars. We hope participants will be granted CEUs in the near future. This will assist us in developing HTRC as a center of Oriental Orthodox Theological education.

Although HTRC is a ministry of the Northeast American Diocese, we hope to continue keep the doors of our spiritual home open to all people who seek refuge in God. This past year we have had more than five groups outside of the Orthodox Church use our facilities. Such groups included: Saint Mary's Roman Catholic Church, the Northeast Pennsylvania chapter of CALM (Cultivating Awareness by Living Mindfully), and Matt Talbot Spiritual Retreats, to name a few.

We envision Holy Transfiguration Retreat Center to be instrumental in transforming the lives of our Malankara Orthodox faithful, and society at large.

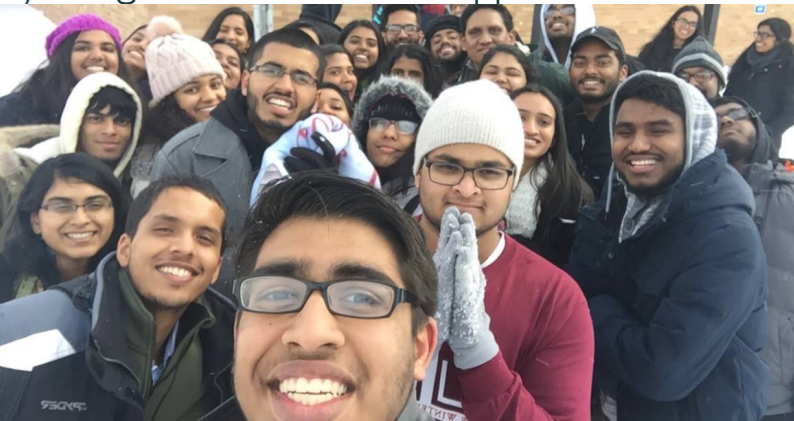
THANK YOU

As the year comes to a close, we thank God for your prayerful support towards the ministry of the Holy Transfiguration Retreat Center. It is evident from the many ministerial programs this past year, this sacred place has helped strengthen, and renew over 2,000 spiritual lives from our Diocese alone. Our retreat center truly creates an atmosphere where our people can be transfigured.

Together, we must continue to work together to invest and seek opportunities to build up, and strengthen this ministry for our people. During various major venues of our Diocese, such as the Diocesan Assembly, Family & Youth Conferences, and annual parish visitations, we have shared our earnest hope that each family in our Diocese should prayerfully commit an offering of at least \$2,000 to this sacred ministry. After all, this is YOUR center—a place of prayer, and spiritual refuge for you and your family!

HOW CAN YOU SUPPORT THIS MINISTRY?

We first must recognize that this is not a project, but rather a ministry, which belongs to God. This vision of having such a center was inspired by the daily activities happening within our Diocese. After much prayerful thought and setting out what we are in need of – God revealed this beautiful center. You can support this ministry by praying whole heartedly for it, through which God will move you to offer your valuable time, and your gracious financial support.



"Holy Transfiguration Retreat Center will be a venue where the Church can continue to be strengthened - ultimately to become transfigured people of God, who can witness the Orthodox Christian faith in this land of opportunities."

- His Holiness Catholicos Paulose II



WHY SHOULD YOU GIVE TO THIS MINISTRY?

We read repeatedly in Holy Scripture that we are called to give back our wealth, and time back to God, and yet it is very hard for us to do so. We hesitate to give because it can be very frightening. We depend on our money for security and the thought of giving up a portion of our means of security is not easy.

We must remember that our only true source of security is not money – it is God. All that we have was not taken up on our own accord, rather it was given to us by God. We are called to be good stewards and offer back to Him, the good gifts He has blessed us with in thanksgiving.

God has called upon us, and given us the responsibility to support His Bride, the Church, and Her ministries. We are called to ensure that our Church and its ministries are sustained for generations to come. When we give back to Him "gifts from His own gifts", with a generous heart, we will be transformed by our offering, and in turn He will do great work with it and bless us through it.

Holy Transfiguration Retreat Center

A ministry for the present, and future generations of the Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church in North America



FOLLOW US ON
Instagram

Fill out the information below to learn how you can support this ministry

Please print clearly

FULL NAME

STREET ADDRESS

CITY/STATE/ZIP

PHONE

EMAIL

PARISH NAME

BIRTHDAY/WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

I would like to :

- ☐ Know more about different events at HTRC
- ☐ Learn how I can volunteer at HTRC
- ☐ Support this ministry with a monthly gift of:

Circle One

\$50 \$100 \$250 \$500 \$1000 Other: \$ _____

Please make check payable to Northeast American Diocese with "Retreat Center"
in memo line, and mail it to Diocesan Chancery, 2158 Route 106, Muttontown, NY 11791

Please scan to fill out online



HOLY TRANSFIGURATION RETREAT CENTER

is a ministry of the Northeast American Diocese of the Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church

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