

November 2007

MESSAGE FROM VICAR

Dearly beloved,
Very warm greetings to you all!

Glory to the Almighty God who guided us and cared for us in all our ways all through the last month. I am very proud of you all, my parish members for your commitment towards God and His church.

The month of November is very important to our Church for many reasons. Firstly, the Church's New Year starts this month. For the Eastern Churches, their liturgical year starts in the month of November. The first Sunday is the Sunday of Sanctification or Kodos Idto and the second Sunday is the Sunday of Dedication/ Hudos Idto. Then the Church prepares for the advent of the feast of Eldo/Christmas. Since we are the temple of God, we have to sanctify and dedicate ourselves for receiving baby Jesus in our heart, the house. For God said to Moses "You shall therefore consecrate yourselves, and you shall be holy; for I am holy" (Lev. 11:44). Unless we are holy, Lord cannot enter our house because He is holy. So consecrate and dedicate ourselves for receiving the Most Holy.

Secondly, this month we commemorate the feast of our first canonized saint, St. Gregorios (Parumala Thirumeni). We will remember his name and his sepulcher where ever we live and until the end of our life. We celebrate his dukrono in a nostalgic manner. Jesus said, He who receives a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet's reward; and he who receives a righteous man in the name of a righteous man shall receive a righteous man's reward (Mat. 10:41).

Thirdly, our annual retreat was scheduled in the first Saturday of November. This year's retreat was a great success. Almost everyone participated in the annual retreat and it was a special experience to all of us. I would like to extend my sincere thanks to all of you and Mr. Toby Manimalethu, who led the retreat. Make ourselves as a fertile land that grows the Word of God in thirty sixty and hundred fold.

May God bless you all.

In His service, Yours Santhosh Achen

CONDOLENCE

As you know our beloved Calcutta Diocesan Metropolitan Stephanos Mar Theodosios passed away on the 5th of this month at the age of 83. He was a true disciple of St. Thomas who did a great job before he was taken in to the heavenly abode. It is our duty to continue the missionary work that was lit by him in North India. On behalf of St. Thomas Indian Orthodox Church of Greater Washington, I extend my sincere condolence.

IMPORTANT DATES

Nov. 1&2: Feast of St. Gregorios

Nov. 3: Annual Retreat

Nov. 4: Kodos Edto & Church Celebrating Parumala perunnal

Nov. 8: 11th memory of H.H. Basalios Marthoma Mathews I

Nov. 11: Hodos Edto

Nov. 18: Announcement to Zechariah

Nov. 24: 92nd memory of Pulikotil Joseph Dionysius I and 11th memory of H.G.

Paulose Mar Gregorios Metropolitan of Delhi.

Nov. 25: Annunciation to St. Mary

BUILDING UPDATES

During the last two months several developments have taken place in our pursuit to build the church of God. After the final contract with the Builder was signed, we proceeded with the steps to start the construction. There was a delay of about 6 weeks. The Builder provided a revised construction schedule to begin work on Nov 2, 2007 and a handing over the key to the completed building for occupancy by June 2008. The closing of the construction loan from BB&T Bank was completed on October 2007 for \$1 million dollars. The builder S E Smoker worked with our civil engineers and

site contractor to finish the building pad leveling. We placed the foundation stone on Thursday, Nov. 8 at 8:30 a.m. that was blessed by our Diocesan Metropolitan H.G. Mathews Mar Barnabas. The concrete for foundation was laid. The building footing blocks are now being placed to build the building walls. As the construction is progressing, we have undertaken another effort to raise funds. A Malayalam Drama is being organized on Saturday, Dec. 8 and ticket sales are in progress. Two teams are going to churches in Texas to sell tickets as part of the "Lotto Gold 2008". We will be organizing such fundraisers and everyone is requested to do their best to raise funds for the smooth completion of the church construction.

CHRISTMAS CAROL

This year's Christmas carol service will start on the 24th of this month. Everybody is requested to participate.

BIRTHDAYS

Ammini Chacko

Reena Viju

Shiji Varghese

Sharlet James

Elizabeth Viju

Teena Rajan

David George

Aleyamma Paul

Shinu Eapen

Rino Rajan

Justus Koshy

WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

Thomas Varghese & Neetha

George Varghese & Susan

Davis Varghese (Boban) & Shiji