

St. Thomas Indian Orthodox Church,
Greater Washington



St. Thomas Mirror

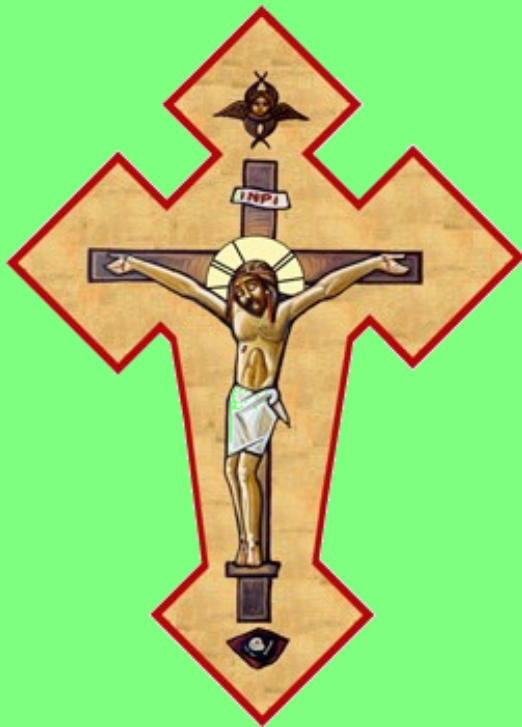


April

2014

The Great Lent Ends

Was crucified



Indeed our Lord is Risen



Vicar's Message

Dearly Beloved ones in Lord Jesus,

April 2014 is a memorable month in the Golden Jubilee year for us with Passion Week, Easter and Parish Feast of St. Thomas.

Easter, the resurrection of Jesus Christ on the third day after his crucifixion at Calvary as described in the New Testament. The New Testament teaches that the resurrection of Jesus, which Easter celebrates, is a foundation of the Christian faith. The resurrection established Jesus as the powerful Son of God and is cited as proof that God will judge the world in righteousness. God has given Christians "a new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead".

Easter is linked to the Passover and Exodus from Egypt recorded in the Old Testament through the Last Supper and crucifixion that preceded the resurrection. According to the New Testament, Jesus gave the Passover meal a new meaning, as he prepared himself and his disciples for his death in the upper room during the Last Supper. He identified the matzah and cup of wine as his body soon to be sacrificed and his blood soon to be shed. Paul states "Get rid of the old yeast that you may be a new batch without yeast -as you really are. For Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed"; this refers to the Passover requirement to have no yeast in the house and to the allegory of Jesus as the Paschal lamb.

One interpretation of the Gospel of John is that Jesus, as the Passover lamb, was crucified at roughly the same time as the Passover lambs were being slain in the temple, on the afternoon of Nisan 14.

Let me conclude by highlighting the following:

1. Easter is the Hope for the people sufferings from Illnesses, Bondages and Persecutions.
2. Easter is the identification with the marginalized, oppressed and suppressed.
3. Easter welcomes the redemption of the Cosmos (Universe).
4. St. Thomas proclaimed the real faith "My Lord and My God" and he witnessed as the martyr for us.

May God Bless His Abundant Mercy upon you.

Yours in Christ,

Fr Dr Johnson C John Chirathalackal

Dear Members,

Since April falls under the Passion Week schedule and Perunaal; Bible classes and other activities of our spiritual organization will be based on the time and availability.

* Monthly prayer meeting for April is cancelled due to Church Perunnal services.

* MMVS will have Bible class by Mrs. Susan Abraham (Ansa's mom) on April 6th.

Food Roster

04/6 - Libu Varkey & Minu
04/13 - Thomas K. Varghese
04/15 - Good Friday - Church Food
04/20 - Easter - Church Food
04/27 - Joy C. Thomas

Dates to remember

April 5th - Church retreat 10:00 am by:

Rev Fr. George C. Cherian for Adults

&

Rev. Fr. George C. Mathew for MGOCSM followed by Holy Confession.

April 6th - General Body meeting after breakfast

April 13th - Hosanna (Palm Sunday) 8:00 AM

April 16th - Maundy Thursday service 6:30 PM

April 17th - Evening service 6:30 PM

April 18th - Good Friday service 8:00 AM

April 19th - Holy Saturday service 8:30 AM

April 20th - Easter service 8:30 AM

April 26th - ECKC Meeting 2:00 PM

April 26th - Evening Prayer 6:00 PM

April 27th - Edavaka Perunnal 8:30 AM

April 2014 Worship Schedules

BIBLE READING

April-6: Sixth Sunday of Fifty Days Lent (Catholocate Day)

OT Family : Binu Abraham and family

[Deuteronomy 25:13-16, 26:1-13 & Job 42:1-10]

Epistle reading : I Peter 4:12-19 & II Corinthians 9:6-15

Holy Week Bible Reading:

April-13: Hosanna/Palm Sunday - (Boys' and Girl's Day)

Genesis 49:8-15, I Samuel 2:18-26,16:1, Daniel 1:16-20, Micah 4:1-5, I Kings 3:4-14, Zephaniah 3:11-20 & Jeremiah 30:18-22

Holy Qurbana - I John 5:1-12, Romans 8:18-25, St.John 12:12-19

For Procession (at the Western Entrance) - St.Luke 19:28-40

For the Blessing of the Palm leaves – Zechariah 9:9-12, Isaiah 51:9-11, I John2:7-14, Romans 11:13-24 & St.Mark 11:1-11

April-18: Good Friday

Morning – Leviticus 4:1-7,16;3-34, Numbers 19:1-11, Acts 22:30-23:16, I Corinthians1:18-31,

Hebrews 9:11-14, St.Matthew 27:3-10, St.Mark 15:1-10, St.Luke 22:66-71

Third Hour (9 a.m.) - St.Matthew 27:12-31, St.Mark 15:12-18,

Noon (12 p.m.) - St.Luke 23:26-34, St.Matthew 27:34, St.John 19:23-24, St.Matthew 27:36-37,

St.Luke 23:39-45, St.John 19:25-27

Ninth Hour (3 p.m.) - St.Matthew 27:45-56, St.Mark 15:33-41, St.Luke 23:44-49, St.John 19:23-30

Veneration of the Holy Cross – Genesis 22:1-14, Exodus 17:8-14, Isaiah 52:13-53:8, I Peter2:19-25,

Galatians 2:20-3:14,6:11-18, St.Luke 23:55-56, St.John 19:31-42

April-19: Gospel Saturday (Saturday of Good Tidings)

Genesis 8:1-12 , Zechariah 12:11-13:7, Jeremiah 38:2-13, Micah 7:8-13

I Peter 3:13-22 & Romans 6:1-14

April-20: Easter Sunday

Celebration of the Holy Cross – Isaiah 60:17-22, I Peter 5:5-14, Romans 16:1-16,

St.John 14:27,15:11-15,17-19

Before Holy Qurbana – Leviticus 23:26-32, Isaiah 60:1-7,11-16,61:10-62:5

Holy Qurbana – Acts 2:22-36, I Corinthians 15:1-19, St.Matthew 28:1-20

April 26: St.Thomas Feast evening prayer 6:00 PM followed by procession and benediction

April-27: New Sunday (Sunday after Easter - The Feast of St.Thomas)

Genesis 41:41-46, Ecclesiastes 12:1-8, Jeremiah 1:4-12 & Isaiah 40:9-15

I Peter 2:19-25 & II Timothy 2:1-13

Member's Corner

Know about our Fathers commemorated in the 5th Thubden

..... Continued

8. **St. Gregory (329 – 389):** He was the contemporary and friend of St. Basil. When he was compelled to be a bishop he hid himself in the monastery of St. Basil. But later, when St. Basil became the bishop, was compelled by St. Basil and ordained by him. He later became the bishop of Lasema in Capadocia in 372 and then Patriarch of Constantinople in 379. He presided over one of the sessions of the 2nd Ecumenical synod of Constantinople. He was the author of many hymns and sermons. The premeons of Pentecost day were compiled from his thoughtful sermons about Holy Spirit. He is generally known as Gregory of Naziansus. He died in 389

9. **Mar Dioscorus of Alexandria:** He became the bishop of Alexandria in 444. He presided over the 2nd Ephesus synod in AD 448 in which the heretic Euteyctus (for Monophysitism) was excommunicated. But in the council of Chalcedon convened by Emperor Marcius in AD 451, he was bitterly ill-treated by the Western Churches as he gave lead to oppose Diophysites (supporters of the theory of the two natures of Christ). In 454, Emperor Marcion exiled him. He was killed by his own body guard in exile. But later the Alexandrian Church brought his holy relics back to Alexandria. All the Orthodox churches who do not accept the council of Chalcedon honour him as a great saint.

10. **Mar Thimotheos:** He succeeded Mar Dioscorus as the Patriarch of Alexandria, from 457-477. He fought against both heresies of Chalcedonians and Eutychians.

11. **Mar Philoxinos:** Bishop of Maboog (Iraq) from 485 – 519. He was a great theologian who translated the Holy Bible in Syriac. He was a leader and opponent of Chalcedonian. His lovely meditations and prayers got a place in our prayer books too. The enemies put him in jail and smoked him to death in AD 519.

12. **Mar Anthimos (Constantinople):** He started his career as an officer in the palace of Empress Theodora. He resigned the post and became a monk. Later in AD 535 he was ordained as the Patriarch of Constantinople. With the favour of the Empress, he achieved many things for the prosperity of the Church. When he was compelled to accept the Chalcedon heresy by the Emperor Eustinian he resigned and left the patriarchate. The Emperor arrested him, but Theodora helped him even in the jail and favoured him with privileges. He met martyrdom in the jail.

13. **Mar Ivanious: (Constantinople):** 347 – 410. Better known as John Chrysostum. He was born in Antioch. At the age of 13 he embraced monastic life. Chrysostum, the Greek word means “golden tongued” earned from his eloquent preaching. In 398 he became the Patriarch of Constantinople. He raised his voice against the immorality of the then Empress and was exiled. He was the author of a liturgy, a number of letters, of moral and ascetic treatises, including the work on priesthood of about 600 homilies, and commentaries, and occasional festal and panegyric orations. He passed away in AD 416 in exile.

14. **Mar Coorilos (Cyril of Alexandria):** In A.D 429 he became the patriarch of Alexandria and adorned the throne of St. Mark till his death in 449. He was a great theologian and fought against Nestore, the heretic. He was the Holy Father who presided over the 3rd ecumenical synod of Ephesus which excommunicated Nestore.

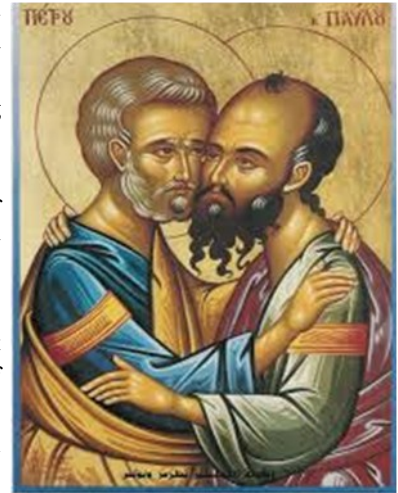
15. **Mar Severious: (Crown of Syrians):** He was born in 460 in Alexandria and became the Patriarch of Antioch (512-519). He was author and theologian. Being reluctant to accept the Chalcedonian faith, Emperor Eustinian banished him. He wrote a number of epistles in exile. He is the Holy Father who wrote the prayer “O Lord who dost dwell under the protection of the Most High, protect us beneath the shadow of the wings of thy loving kindness” which we use in Soothara and the prayer we use at the opening of the public celebration of the Holy Eucharist.

To be continued.....

Member's Corner

Shubkono

It would be good if we know what is ‘Pethratha’ before getting to understand about Shubkono. The Sunday before the Great Lent is called the Pethratha Sunday. The Syriac word, ‘Peturta’ means “looking back” or “reconciliation”. [1] The liturgical Season of Great Lent is one of the kinds of introspection- looking back to one’s own life, and of real reconciliation in preparation of the Great Lent. It is finishing of the old ways and returning to God. The season of Great Lent is the time of preparation for the feast of the Resurrection of Christ. It is a time of renewed devotion, prayer, fasting, and almsgiving. These can be achieved only with repentance to return to the great commandments of God.



Shubkono, also known as the service of reconciliation is conducted on the first day (Monday) of the Great Lent, at the end of third hour. The service of reconciliation or Shubkono stands at the 'threshold of Great Lent.' The service marks the actual doorway into Lent, the threshold on the other side of which stands the fullest measure of blessing that the Church hands out to her faithful throughout the world. As we stand at the threshold of the fast, we sing of Him

who stood before the gates of Eden. One of the hymns in the Shubkono liturgy says “Brethren, let us love one another, for it is the completion of the commandments.” [1b]. Even the High Priest seeks the forgiveness of the people and paves the path, so that the people can come and reconcile.

Another important service related to reconciliation is the ‘The Kiss of Peace. Rev. Fr. K. P. Paul Ramban [2] writes ‘When we give the kiss of peace to one another we mean the following: First, since we are getting ready to communicate with God through His Body- we cannot be, divided in ourselves and in with each other. Secondly, being made at peace by the kiss which we give one another, we are made at peace with God. Thirdly, the peace, which we give one another, quenches away mutual enmity. Fourthly, by the peace which we give, we signify that Christ has made an end of the enmity between God and man, between the people and the gentiles, between the soul and the body, and has caused peace and love to reign among us. Fifthly, by the peace which we give at this time, we fulfill the word of the Lord who said ‘If thou offer thine offering ...etc’ and ‘leave thine offering, and go be reconciled with thy brother’. . It would be interesting to note that the kiss of charity mentioned by St. Peter ‘Greet ye one another with a kiss of charity’(1 Peter 5:14) is so simple, and yet so hard. A good start would be to know that it may okay to have different thoughts, but we have to work out the evil thoughts that we allow to permanently stick in our mind.

As we enter the Great Lent, let us be reconciled in our hearts, minds, and souls. O Father God, please help us to use this as an opportunity to truly understand the meaning of the prayer. You taught us through words "Forgive our debts and sins as we forgive our debtors." Bless us so we may forgive.

Neil T. Eapen. *(compiled with assistance from others)*

References:

Deacon Renjan Mathew, Pethratha Sunday, March 2014

Rev. Fr. K. P. Paul, The Eucharist Service 2003, Georgias Press ,NJ ,USA