



Deepam



His Holiness Moran Mar Baselios Marthoma Didymus I Confirmed as Catholicos of the East and Malankara Metropolitan

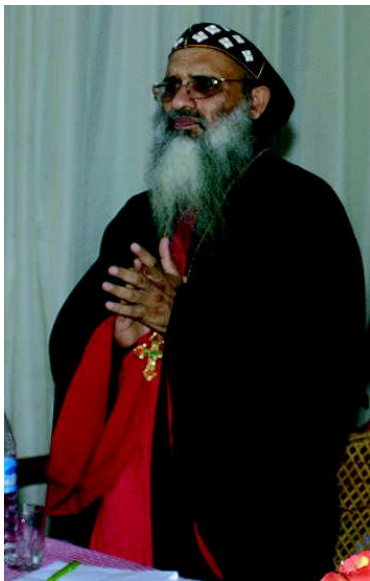
The Malankara Orthodox Syrian Christian Association met on September 21, 2006 at the Parumala Seminary. This was in light of the Additional District Court in Kerala judging in favor of the appeal, filed by our Church, against the judgment from the 2nd Class Court of Ernakulam; that prevented the holding of the Association meeting by Bava Thirumeni. The judgment in our favor was passed out on September 20 and the Association Secretariat did a wonderful job in conducting the meeting on September 21 with more than 3,000 members attending. All the Bishops of our Church were also in attendance. Two historic resolutions were passed at this meeting:

1) All Malankara Association decisions taken between the dates of January 1, 1971 and March 20, 2002 were ratified.

2) The Malankara Association decision to select the Metropolitan of the Malabar Diocese, His Grace Thomas Mar Timotheos, as the Catholicos-designate was approved and confirmed. His Grace Mar Timotheos lawfully ascended to the position of Malankara Metropolitan with the title of Moran Mar Baselios Didymus I. Additionally all decisions made by Didymus I Catholica Bava and by all Holy Synods, Managing Committees and Working Committees under the leadership of Didymus I Catholica Bava were approved and confirmed.



His Grace Paulose Mar Milithios to be Sole Nominee for Position of Catholicos-Designate



The Managing Committee of the Church convened on September 27, 2006 and unanimously approved HG Mar Milithios to be nominated for the position of Catholicos-Designate.

This brings an exciting and passionate discussion concerning the position. Initially, four Thirumenis were nominated to the Holy Synod for the position of Catholicos-Designate: HG Mar Theodosius, HG Mar Makarios, HG Mar Epiphanius and HG Mar Milithios. Additionally, HG Mar Eusebius and HG Mar Athanasius informed the Holy Synod that they were interested in entering the race. The results of the election at the Holy Synod were as follows: 14 for HG Mar Milithios; 5 for HG Mar Theodosius; one each for HG Mar Makarios and HG Mar Epiphanius. At this point, HG Mar Theodosius, HG Mar Epiphanius, HG Mar Eusebius withdrew from any further consideration. In the ensuing Managing Committee meeting, the unanimous decision was taken to nominate only HG Mar Milithios. Immediately, HG Mar Athanasius and Mar Makarios withdrew from any further consideration. The Malankara Association is expected to unanimously select HG Paulose Mar Milithios, Metropolitan of the Kunnankulam Diocese, as the Catholicos-Designate of our Church on October 12, 2006.

Milithios Thirumeni, who is currently 60 years old, was elected as a Thirumeni at a very young age. He is widely known for his piety, simplicity of life style, administration and life

of faith. He is the first Metropolitan of the tradition-rich Kunnankulam area and established the Diocese as a powerful center of Orthodox believers. He faced numerous difficulties, both financial and secular, in Kunnankulam and overcame all challenges with determination and purity of intent while still maintaining a reputation for compassion and integrity.

Please watch for a biography of Milithios Thirumeni in the next edition of Deepam.

St. Thomas Church News

- **Condolences:** We are sorrowed to inform you that a long-term member of our church, Philip Joseph (Baby), husband of Ruby Joseph and father of Giby Joseph and Justin Joseph, passed away Sunday, September 17. The funeral was on Thursday, September 21, with many of the church members and Houston area priests in attendance.
- The 2006 Church Picnic was held on Saturday September 16 at The George Park in Richmond. Almost 300 church members attended this fun-filled occasion.
- The Church General Body has approved the Church Expansion project and postponed the Recreation Center project. A 12-member Construction Committee was formed to proceed with Church Expansion planning. Under the leadership of our Vicar, this committee includes Mr. S.K. Cherian, Mr. Manoj Thomas, Mr. Mathew George, Mr. A.C. Oommen, Mr. Chacko Thomas, Mr. George Thomas, Mr. Gheevarghese Mathai, Mr. Jaison John, Mr. Jake Kurian, Mr. Joshua George and Mr. Stephen T. George.
- We are planning on holding a Houston Orthodox Convention hosted by our Church. Rev.Fr.Dr. George Pulikottil has agreed to bless our first ever Orthodox Convention with his presence and leadership.

FOCUS - The New Kid on the Block

Have you ever felt like you just don't fit in at church? Lost in the crowd? Too old to go to MGOCSM? Too young to go to Marth Mariam Samajam? If the answer is yes, then FOCUS is the place for you. FOCUS, the Fellowship of Orthodox Christians in the United States, is a new spiritual organization that will strive to minister to the young adults of the church between ages 23 - 35.

The objectives of FOCUS set forth by the American Diocese are to:

1. Provide spiritual nourishment and guidance to young adults who are facing the various challenges of living a Christian life in the modern American world.
2. Train these young adults to provide leadership to youngsters in the MGOCSM, Sunday School, and OVBS programs in a mentoring relationship.
3. Teach young adults ways to become active members of the parish in terms of administration and various spiritual activities of the parish.
4. Actively pursuing those brothers and sisters who have left the church, or remain away from the church for various reasons, and yet have not been presented with a way back in.

Our goal is create an atmosphere in which the young adults feel welcome and accepted; a place where they feel like they belong. The beauty of building a new organization is that it will be tailored to the needs of its members. If you would like to be involved or to get further information on this new and exciting endeavor, please contact Risha George at rishageorge@gmail.com or 832.282.0725.

Marth Mariam Samajam

- The Marth Mariam Samajam members want to celebrate and congratulate Mrs. Susie Kuruvilla as the new Sunday School Headmistress. Susie is the first woman to become the Sunday School Headmistress in the history of our church.
- The Marth Mariam Samajam held their second Fasting Prayer on September 30. More than 30 members were present for a very spiritual get together. Topics of discussion varied from Family Life, God's Grace, Baptism, and St. Mary. Join in for the next prayer meeting to be held on October 22 .
- Marth Mariam Samajam members are reminded to support the ongoing charitable collections: a Nursing student in India is in need of \$1000 to complete her education. Please turn in your contributions to Susie Kuruvilla or Presy Kuruvila.

Sunday School

- The 2006-2007 Sunday School year got off to a great start on Sunday September 10, 2006.
- Mrs. Susie Kuruvilla has been appointed as the new Sunday School headmistress. Congratulations Susie!
- K.O. Mathew has been our previous headmaster and has done an outstanding job. We wish you all the best!
- The annual Sunday School Anniversary will be held on Sunday October 29, 2006 immediately following Holy Qurbana
- The Southern Regional Sunday School Teacher's conference was held on Saturday, September 23, 2006 in San Antonio. Over 70 teachers from the region came and participated in the event.

OCYM

- If you have not heard, OCYM began conducting bible studies every Sunday after Holy Quarbana inside Church. These meetings are designed to deliver a short but powerful message, so please join us. The meetings start after Holy Qurbana, at noon.
- Come learn and grow in the Orthodox faith as our Aroopala Achen continues his discussion series on the Holy Qurbana. These enlightening sessions take place at our monthly prayer meeting. Our next meeting will be Saturday, October 14.
- As a fundraising project to benefit the Mar Baselios Children's Home (for orphans and the destitute) in Kerala, OCYM is hosting a Talent Show on November 25, 2006, in the church auditorium. Auditions will be held Sunday, October 29. The Talent Show is open to all members, so please come, showcase your talent and more importantly support this worthy cause.