



Melbourne Orthodox Cathedral Bulletin

DECEMBER 2023





CONTENTS

- Vicar's Desk
- Liturgical Calendar: December 2023
- Christmas Carols Roundup
- Sunday School
- Martha Mariyam Vanitha Samajam
- OCYM & MGOCSM
- Mission Outreach Services
- Condolences
- Upcoming Events
- Stay in touch with us
- Bulletin Editorial Board



VICAR'S DESK

Rev. Fr. Aji K Varughese

Dearly beloved in Jesus Christ,

December is the best time of the year. We have pleasant weather, carol songs, and chiming bells around. It is Christmas time. The time of giving and receiving happiness. It reminds us of the greatest gift that mankind was ever given – our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. St. John 3:16 says, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believed in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." God blessed us with His most precious possession.

In the gospels, we read about the Wise Men who presented valuable gifts to Baby Jesus. They traveled far and wide with only a shining star as their guide to reach their destination. When they met Christ, they discovered a new way of life. The utmost gift that anyone can give is self-sacrificial love. When we select Christmas gifts for our loved ones, the sacrificial love of our Lord should come to our mind. He loved us so much that He died on the Cross for us. "Christmas Gift", a famous short story by the Nobel laureate Pearl S. Buck is about a poor boy's gift to his beloved father on Christmas. The value of a gift is determined by the mind behind it. The concept of Santa Claus and his bundle of presents reminds us of our duty to the less privileged ones around us. All festivals should be celebrated by sharing with others what we have. This will make our Lent season meaningful.

Every Christmas brings us fond memories of the times we spend with our loved ones. So, it is our duty to provide similar happiness to our children. It's the time we can show them how much we value and care for them. We should also teach them the value of giving and sharing. Let the lent season and its culmination in the feast of our Lord's incarnation into this world give us plenty of happiness and reasons to care for others.

I wish you all a very happy Christmas and a prosperous New Year.

May God bless you all.

Yours loving

AJI ACHEN





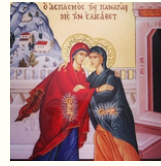
LITURGICAL CALENDAR

DECEMBER 2023



SEASON OF SANCTIFICATION

December 2023



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1 Beginning of the Feast of Nativity (25 days fast)	2
3 Sunday of St. Mary's journey to Elizabeth 51st Commemoration of HG Thomas Mar Dionysius Metropolitan (Mt. Tabor Dayra, Pathnapuram).	4 Feast of the martyrs St. Barabara and St. Juliana	5	6 Feast of St. Soke, Bishop of Myre (St. Nikolas, Christmas Father).	7	8 48th Commemoration of HH Baselios Mar Augen I Catholicos (Devalokam Catholicate Aramana)	9 11th Commemoration of HG Mathews Mar Barnabas Metropolitan (St. Peter's & St. Paul's Church, Valayanchirangara)
10 Sunday of Birth of John the Baptist (Children's Day).	11	12	13 33rd Commemoration of HG Daniel Mar Philoxenos Metropolitan (Basil Aramana, Pathanamthitta)	14	15	16
17 Sunday of Revelation to St Joseph.	18 Feast of St. Thomas the Apostle (Commemoration of the Day he was Stabbed by Spear)	19	20 Feast of Mar Ignatius Nourono of Antioch.	21 Dukhrono of St. Thomas the Apostle	22	23
24 Sunday before Christmas	25 Yeldho, Incarnation of our Lord (Christmas).	26 Feast of the Exultation of St. Mary, Mother of God 37th Commemoration of HG Yakkob Mar Policarpos Metropolitan	27	28	29	30
31 First Sunday after Christmas						LENT DAYS



CHRISTMAS CAROLS 2023-WEEK 1



Click the days Facebook page link for more [Day#1](#) [Day#2](#)



CHRISTMAS CAROLS 2023-WEEK 2



[Click the days Facebook page link for more](#)

[Day#3](#)

[Day#4](#)



SUNDAY SCHOOL

Sunday school Grade 10 students under the leadership of their teacher Mrs Renny Samuel conducted a charity bake sale on 19th November 2023. All proceeds of the bake sale would go towards helping St Mary's English medium school, Betapur-Andamans.



Sunday school along with MGOCSM and OCYM is conducting a Charity giving tree from 26th November to December 2023. We will be donating the gifts collected through the Uniting Gifts for Families Christmas appeal.

On 26th November Junior Choir celebrated a successful year by recognizing all the members, especially the piano players. Special thanks to Mr Philip M John, Mrs Anusha Chacko, and Miss Shilpa George for mentoring and leading the junior choir.





MMVS monthly meeting was held on 12 November under the leadership of our Rev Vicar Aji K Varghuese. Smitha Geo shared a message on this day with references from Ephesians 6:12-18 explaining our constant war with Satan and his power. She mentioned St. Paul's advice to take God's armor in order to get victory over him and his power and stand strong. Smitha explained the various weapons used in our defense against Satan namely the belt of truth, God's righteousness, hope, faith, God's word, and our preparedness to learn the Gospel.



MMVS bids adieu to Smitha who is moving to Brisbane this December. MMVS recognizes her valuable support, dedication, and contribution and it is befitting to arrange a farewell and wish her Good Luck.



OCYM & MGOCSM

Team MGOCSM and OCYM SMIOC decorated the Cathedral on Wednesday 22nd November, in anticipation of the Nativity Lent. Over the course of 9 hours, and over 30 volunteers beautifully transformed the Cathedral. Well done Team Youth





Throughout the month of November, the youth have continued their fortnightly Midweek Meditations. The session begins with vespers and compline in English, following with a meditation session led by a fellow youth member on a theme or portion from the bible. On 17th November 2023, Aaron Zacharia led a session on the theme of repentance. On 29th November, Daniel Joy led a session on the theme of Discovering God's Purpose for Your Life.



On 18th November, 11 volunteers led the Sausage Sizzle at Bunnings Warehouse Coburg. Team Youth sold 1152 sausages and 41 liters of drinks and made a total revenue of around \$4.5k. Great job Team Youth!



WATCH THIS SPACE FOR MORE

An exciting series of travel experiences across the ancient cities of Greece and Turkey, bringing to us all the beautiful insights and significant connections to the lands explored by St. Paul during his missionary journeys.

This series will start to be published in the January edition of the Bulletin.

MISSION OUTREACH SERVICES

Rev. Fr. Aji K Varughese celebrated the Holy Qurbana followed by the service of the Feast of St. Gregorios of Parumala across the different congregations.



GEELONG - 10 Nov



BALLARAT - 17 Nov





BENDIGO - 24 Nov



CONDOLANCES

SMIOC Family extends its heartfelt condolences to the grieving families.



Mrs K. P. Ammukuty
M/o Rev. Fr. Aji K Varughese
Date: 02/Dec/2023



Mr. Paulson Thekkakara
F/o Mr. Vineeth Paul
Date: 17/Nov/2023



St. Mary's Indian Orthodox Cathedral Melbourne



Warmly welcomes

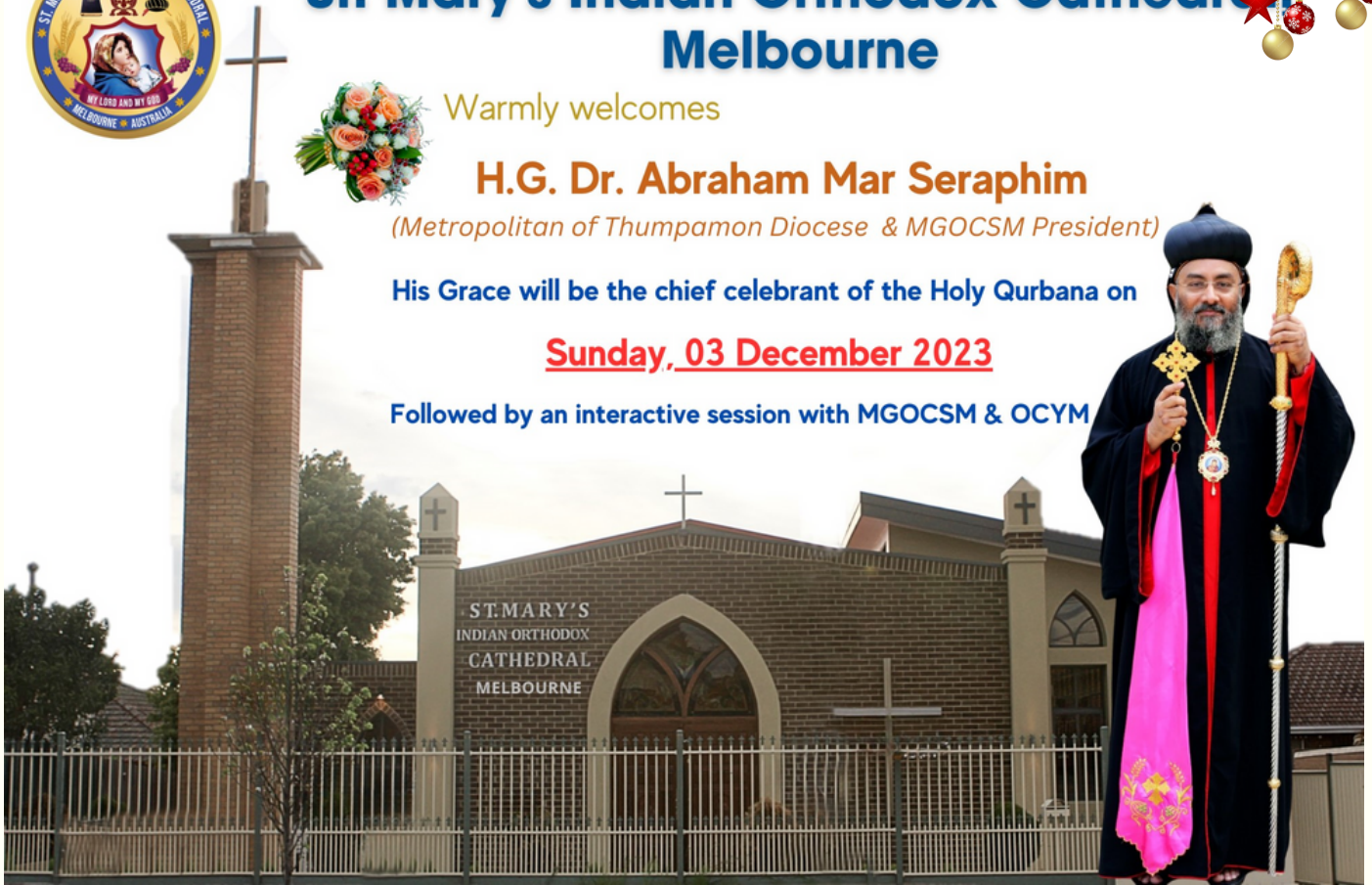
H.G. Dr. Abraham Mar Seraphim

(Metropolitan of Thumpamon Diocese & MGOCSM President)

His Grace will be the chief celebrant of the Holy Qurbana on

Sunday, 03 December 2023

Followed by an interactive session with MGOCSM & OCYM



YOUTH SPEAKER SERIES



**H.G. Dr. Abraham
Mar Seraphim**

Sunday 03 December 2023
following Holy Qurbana



SMIOC Youth
Worship • Study • Service



St. Mary's Indian Orthodox Cathedral Melbourne

Warmly welcomes

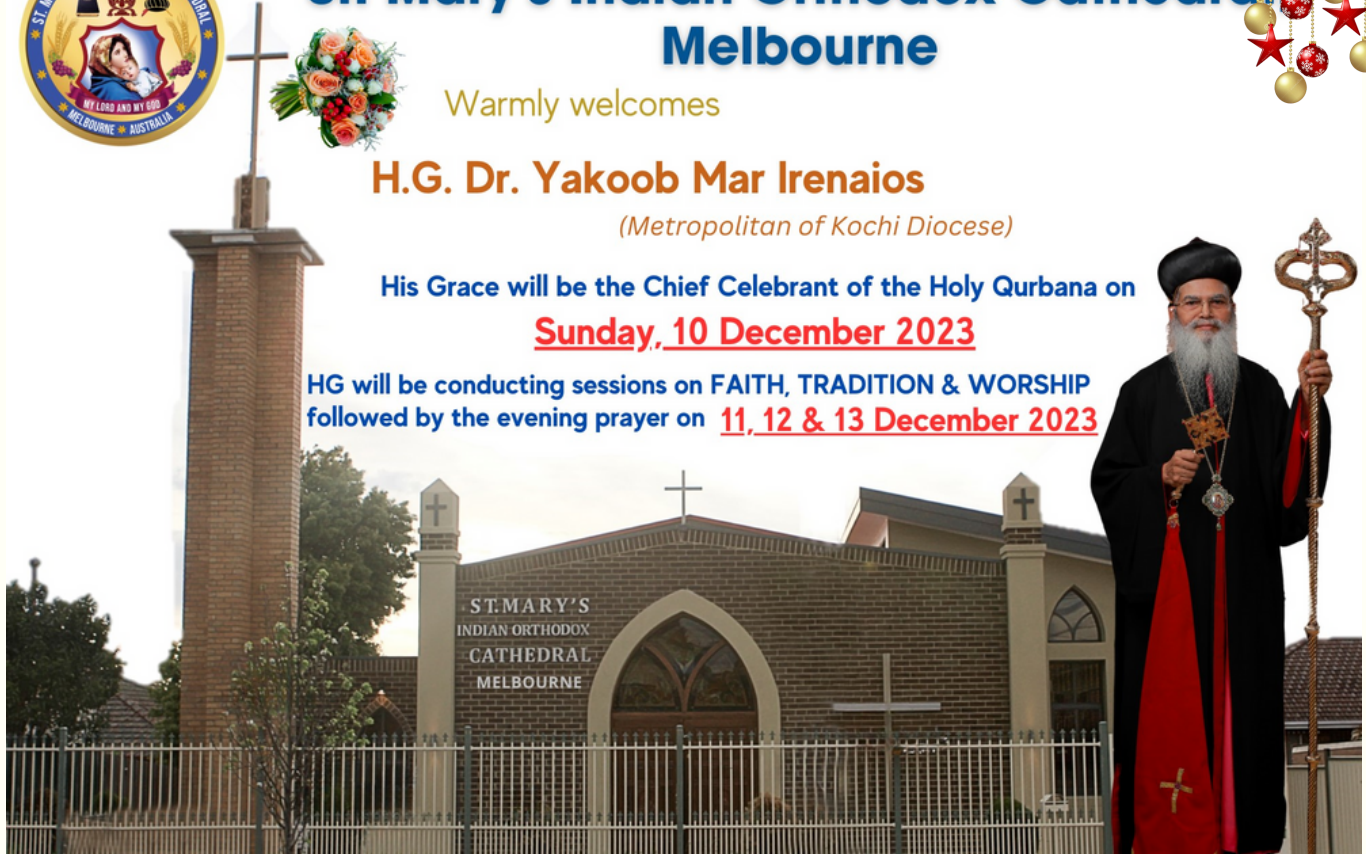
H.G. Dr. Yakoob Mar Irenaios

(Metropolitan of Kochi Diocese)

His Grace will be the Chief Celebrant of the Holy Qurbana on

Sunday, 10 December 2023

HG will be conducting sessions on **FAITH, TRADITION & WORSHIP**
followed by the evening prayer on **11, 12 & 13 December 2023**



Christmas Eve 2023

*St. Mary's Indian Orthodox Cathedral,
Melbourne.*

Chief Guest: H.G. Dr. Yakoob Mar Irenaios Metropolitan

Date: Sunday, 10 Dec 2023 from 6:00 PM

Venue: Epping Memorial Community Hall

Address: 827 High St, Epping VIC 3076



ST MARY'S INDIAN ORTHODOX CATHEDRAL
Sunday School x MGOCSM & OCYM

ST MARY'S INDIAN ORTHODOX CATHEDRAL
Sunday School x MGOCSM & OCYM



GIVING TREE GIFT GUIDE

We are donating gifts through the Uniting Gifts for Families Christmas appeal.

We need brand new (unwrapped) gifts suitable for children aged 0 to 17 years.

CHARITY GIVING TREE

For many families, it will be a struggle to afford gifts. We want to ensure that everyone who comes to us for support this Christmas will not go without gifts.

Collecting gifts under the Christmas Tree from

**SUNDAY 26 NOVEMBER 2023 TO
SUNDAY 17 DECEMBER 2023**

BABIES AND TODDLERS

Toys - rattles, plush or bath toys
Blankets and bedding items
Building blocks or Duplo
Story or educational books
Clothes, pyjamas, bathers, shoes

CHILDREN 9-14 YEARS OLD

Board and card games
Reading and activity books
Outdoor equipment - skateboards, bikes, scooters
Fun stationery and stickers
Headphones or speakers
Clothes, pyjamas, bathers, shoes

CHILDREN 4-8 YEARS OLD

Outdoor games - frisbees, balls, cricket sets
Board and card games
Plush toys, dolls, action figures
Cars, trucks or train sets
Building blocks or Lego
Story or colouring in books
Craft supplies - paint, pencils
Clothes, pyjamas, bathers, shoes
Dress up outfits and accessories

TEENAGERS

Books
Make up - lip gloss, nail polish, gift packs
Body lotions, perfume, aftershave or deodorant
Accessories - headbands, jewellery, hats, scarves
Handbags, backpacks, wallets or purses
Gift cards
Sports and fitness equipment
Headphones



Joy to the world

*St. Mary's Indian Orthodox Cathedral
wishes you and your family
Merry Christmas and a Blessed New Year 2024*

Christmas Carols Schedule 2023

18, 19 November	25, 26 November
02, 09 December	16, 17 December

STAY IN TOUCH WITH US

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 MGOCSM & OCYM: @SMIOCYouth



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Icon of Nativity



St. Thomas, the Apostle