

Melbourne Orthodox Cathedral Bulletin



APRIL 2023

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VICAR'S DESK:

Rev. Fr. Aji K Varughese



We are entering another holy week. It begins with the chanting of Hosannah, welcoming Messiah to the temple. Many people spread their cloaks on the road. Then we join the Passover (Pesaha) with His Disciples where He exhorts us to take part in His blood and flesh. We witness His Crucifixion, the agony of which prompted him pray "Abba Father..... Take this cup from me. Yet not what I will, but what you will." (Mark 14:32)

After that we will experience the peace and joy of Resurrection. 50 days long Lenten prayer and fasting will enable us to realize the godliness in us. Let that be the leading light for us, our family and the larger society. After receiving the Holy Spirit, the disciples were sent to different parts of the world to spread this light.

"Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the LORD rises upon you". (Isaiah 60:1)

The Lord is exhorting us to spread the divine light we received through this verse. We can begin by spreading the light to our near ones.

God doesn't want us to keep the divine light within ourselves. The prayer, "Oh! Lord please rise up in me" and the verse "You are the light of the world" (Matthew 5:14) are the same. Not knowing the source within, the musk deer roams around in search of the fragrance.

When the light of the Resurrected one rises in us, we will be illuminated. If we can be the light bearers, where we are, definitely it will help many more to shine brighter.

"If you want to shine like a sun, first burn like a sun." - APJ Abdul Kalam

But we have a long journey ahead and for that we should keep our lights from getting extinguished. I hope and pray that the light we received through Lent will enable us to brighten up the lives our fellow beings.

By the abundant blessing of our Lord, we could acquire a new property in the neighborhood and the building within it could be sanctified after renovation on 26th Mar 2023. I congratulate all the members behind this great achievement and place them in the hands of the Lord.

I wish you all the peace and blessings of Easter. May God bless you all.

Yours loving,
AJI ACHEN

LITURGICAL CALENDAR - APRIL 2023

- 1st Apr - Lazarus' Saturday
- 2nd Apr - Hosanna/Palm Sunday
- 3rd Apr - Monday of the Holy Week.
- 4th Apr - Tuesday of the Holy Week.
- 5th Apr - Wednesday of the Holy Week,
58th Commemoration of HG Kuriakose Mar Gregorios Metropolitan (Pampady Dayara).
- 6th Apr - Passover (Maundy Thursday).
- 7th Apr - Holy Friday of Crucifixion.
215th Commemoration of Valiya Mar Dionysius Metropolitan (Marthoma VI) (Puthencavu Cathedral).
- 8th Apr - Gospel Saturday (Saturday of Good Tidings).
- 9th Apr - Kyomtho/Easter.
- 10th Apr - Hevero Monday.
- 11th Apr - Hevero Tuesday.
- Hevero Wednesday.
- 12th Apr - 10th Commemoration of HG Geevarghese Mar Ivanios Metropolitan (Mar Baslios Dayara, Njaliakuzhy).
- 13th Apr - Hevero Thursday.
- 14th Apr - Hevero Friday.
Commemoration of Confessors of Faith.
327th Commemoration of Marthoma II (Niranam Valiyapally).
- 15th Apr - Hevero Saturday.
- 16th Apr - New Sunday (First Sunday after Easter).
- 17th Apr - 72nd Commemoration of Catholicate Ratnadeepam HG Geevarghese Mar Philoxenos Metropolitan (Puthencavu Cathedral).
- 21st Apr - 229th Commemoration of Yuhanon Mar Ivanios Episcopa (Chengannur Old Syrian Church)
- 22nd Apr - 335th Commemoration of Marthoma III (Kadampanadu Cathedral).
- 23rd Apr - First Sunday after New Sunday (Second Sunday after Easter).
Feast of St. George.
- 25th Apr - 353rd Commemoration of Marthoma I (Ankamali Cheriyapally)
Feast of Saint Mark the Evangelist.
- 27th Apr - 352nd Commemoration of Mar Gregorios Abdel Jaleel Bava (Vadakan Paravur Church).
- 29th Apr - Commemoration of Mar Sabor & Mar Afroth.
- 30th Apr - Second Sunday after New Sunday (Third Sunday after Easter).

SUNDAY SCHOOL

On 18th March, Sunday school teachers attended a teacher's training session organized by OSSAE East Asia Region. The theme - "Stewardship in Sunday School teaching" was conducted by Prof. Dr. Marina Rajan Joseph. Meeting was blessed with the presence of Madras Diocesan Metropolitan - H.G. Geevarghese Mar Philioxenos.

On 19th March, the finale of Year 2023 - His Holiness Moran Mar Baselios Marthoma Paulose II Bible Quiz competition was conducted by Sunday school along with Prayer Groups. 8 teams formed to the finale from the shortlisted 32 students participated in the competition. Sunday School extends its gratitude to Mr. Aby M Mathew from Melbourne Mar Thoma Church for his esteemed service as the Quiz Master. Sunday School acknowledges with gratitude Vicar Rev Fr Aji K Varughese's leadership, guidance, and support throughout the program. The event would not have been a success without the tireless contributions of Prayer secretaries, volunteers, mentors, parents, and participants. Special thanks to all the mentors for their time and effort, Aleyamma John, Ashley Thomas, Bindu George, George Varughese, Jisha Lalu, Sanchiya Royce, Sheela Joy, Shilpa George, Siby Nirmal, Simi Joseph, Sona Mary John, Suban Varghese, and Surya Thomas. The results of the quiz competition are as follows.

The First place went to St Gregorius #2: Team members - Austin Suban(Captain), Alita Aiju, Ethan Jiju, and Eva Ajith, mentored by Sona Mary John and Suban Varghese.
 The Second place went to St Gregorius #1: Team members - Ann Grace Philip(Captain), Irene Elsa Philip, Johaan John Mathews, and Alexia Alex, mentored by Bindu Philip.
 The Third place went to St Dionysius & St Thomas: Team members - Nathanael Jacob Ninan(Captain), Diya Mariam Ninan, Reuben Dennis, and Danil George, mentored by Surya Thomas and Aleyamma John.

Dates to remember: March 26th will be the last day of the first term for Sunday school. The Sunday School will resume on 23rd April for term 2.



OCYM & MGOCSM

Over the last few weeks, the MGOCSM & OCYM participated in the Ramsho and Soutoro prayers, which were conducted in English on Wednesdays. Up to sixty faithful attended weekly, with the majority of those representing MGOCSM and OCYM fellowships and their families.

Following the prayers, the youth gathered to discuss various themes that arise during the Lenten season. Following Jessie and Joel's session last month, Shilpa George led a discussion on Lent and Inner Peace, Nithin Tharakan led a session on Putting God first, and Sam Jacob led a session on sacrifice.

On 15 March 2023, following the Lenten evening prayers, the MGOCSM & OCYM joined the MGOCSM & OCYM East Asia Region Lenten Retreat virtual session, together from the Cathedral, led by H. G. Abraham Mar Stephanos, inaugurated by H. G. Geevarghese Mar Philoxenos.

Members of the SMIOC - MGOCSM & OCYM contributed to the Oasis Oceania's Great Lent series. These videos were short reflections on various themes that arise throughout the Lenten period. These videos are available to view on the Oasis Oceania Facebook and Instagram page, and the MGOCSM & OCYM East Asia Youtube channel.



PRAYER GROUPS

2nd April	-	No Prayer meeting (Palm Sunday).	
9th April	-	No Prayer meeting (Easter Sunday).	
16th April	-	St. Gregorios.	- Residence of Mr. Benny Mathoor, Tarneit
23rd April	-	St. Dionysios	- Residence of Mr. Thomas Panicker, Craigieburn.
30th April	-	No Prayer meeting (5th Sunday)	-

ARTICLE - LENT, FASTING AND FOOD

Mum... what's for Dinner? No Meat? Seriously... One among the few questions which most parents come across during this period of Great Lent.

We as parents take every effort to explain to our children that as per Christian tradition or as per Orthodox Christians, it's a period in which we are meant to give up some comfort or adopt some spiritual practice by abstaining from certain foods which we like the most. And I think, for us, that's true. Lent is a season of repentance, of turning away from our sins and focusing on God with intention.

We also add to our explanation that because food is a central part of our lives, we give some of that up, and it reminds us three (or more) times a day that God is bigger than our wants, but that God provides for all of our needs.

For a moment, let's keep aside our Christian traditions or philosophies and merely look into these 50 days from a human perspective in order to give our kids a slightly different perspective and give them a bit better understanding and some connection.

Let's look at the verse from the Book of Genesis (2:16-17)

"And God said, Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you, it shall be for food." What I understand here is that a non-meat diet is re-affirmed as people's spiritually proper diet, from the time of creation.

Besides many people also believe in vegetarianism and fasting for spiritual, nutritional, and ethical reasons.

Ethical reasons may include a concern for God's creation, a concern for animal rights and welfare, or both.

Spiritual reasons include how a meatless diet boosts one's meditation. In meditation, if we wish to experience ourselves as souls, a vegetarian diet speeds up our progress. We need to have purity of heart by which we can experience the Creator our God almighty.

Nutritional reasons include that animal protein is not required for human growth and development. "The nourishment obtained from a purely vegetarian diet is adequate to achieve total health" as per Ayurveda.

Having said that Ayurveda does not impose vegetarianism but yes a diet with less meat could create a strong connection between the body and mind, and this connection can be nurtured and maintained through mindful living and eating.

God communicates to us primarily through our feelings and thoughts. Hence it is quite imperative to have that purity in feelings and thoughts, which can be mainly attained by following a lifestyle, consisting of Vegetarianism and fasting. And this in turn will help human beings to have that calmness and positivity in their life.

By fasting and abstinence, as Christians, we would be feeling that we are showing a sign of sacrifice for the love of God. But if we look from a different perspective, "Don't we feel that our Lord Almighty himself is pointing towards the fact that through this period of lent and fasting, our Lord is trying to look after his creation, which is us, by purifying our mind and body, hence giving us more energy spiritually and nutritionally."

by: Mr. Suban Varghese



NEW PROPERTY - 124 NICHOLSON ST RENOVATION

By the Grace of Almighty God and the unceasing prayers of our Patron Saint Mother Mary, St. Mary's Indian Orthodox Cathedral acquired the adjacent property, 124 Nicholson Street, Coburg in January 2023. It has been determined to renovate the acquired property to make it beneficial for the Sunday School students and initiated the renovation works from mid-February 2023.

With the dedication and commitment of a number of volunteers from the church, we were able to renovate the property to its glory by painting, flooring, decking, landscaping, re-tiling, replacing some of the windows, etc. The blessing of the House had been conducted by our Vicar on 26th March 2023 after the Holy Qurbana.

New

Old



ARTICLE - THE LENT

It would like to talk briefly about Lent, when my mother and father told that lent was coming soon the first thing that came straight to my mind is NO MORE FAST FOOD!

But is that all that we need to do during Lent? Of course not!! Lent is the period of preparation to celebrate Lord's resurrection at Easter. it's not just staying away from certain foods that we all love. We can observe lent by Prayer, Fasting, Charity and Repentance.

What can we do as kids? Maybe, we stay away from watching tv, listen to parents and teachers and also be good with our peers .

St Mathew 4:4 says 'Men shall not live with bread alone but of every word that comes out of the mouth of God'.

You see, Lent is more than just giving up food, Lent is learning about God and re-strengthening our relationship with him. And that is what I think Lent is truly about

by: Mr. Adam Phillip Alex



POEM - ESTHER, HAMAN & MORDECAI

So cruel and full of hate toward the Jews
He creeps up with a menacing plan
With his power in 2nd command to abuse
To kill all before the 13th of Adar began

His plans go smoothly as he expects
But with a sudden twist, it turns into a crisp
All he had done changed when Mordecai come to an effect
This was the sudden flip

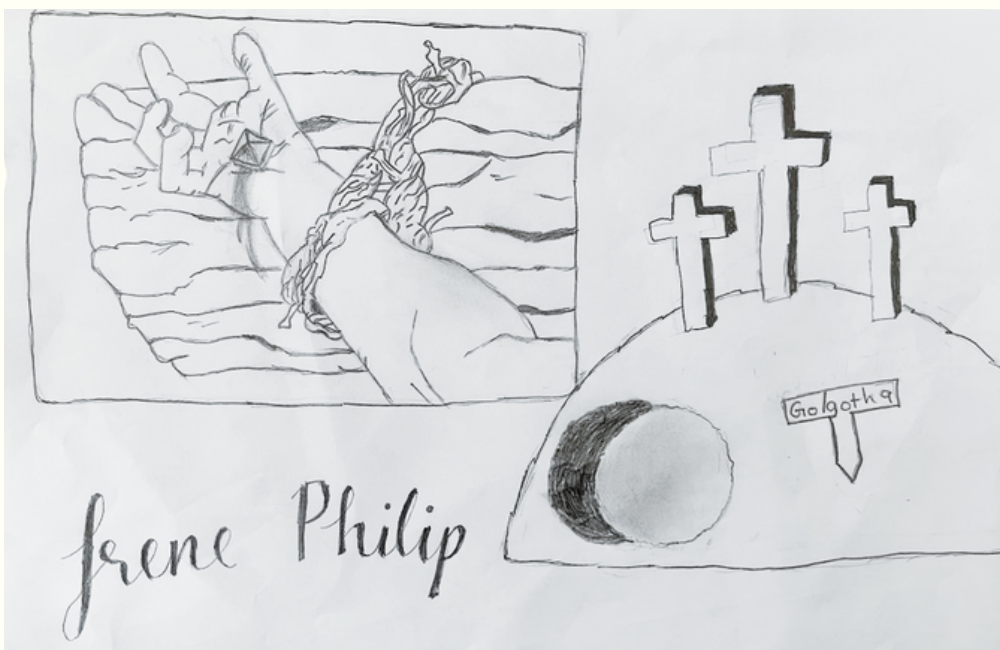
Now it was Esther's turn to r everse the decree
She went to the king with no fear and spoke
She invited him and Haman to a banquet that was guaranteed
On that day Esther said she will make another banquet as a joke

The next day she accused Haman of such a thing he did
Now the king was in such a rage like a wild pig
The king was so mad that he called him a kid
And made him hang on his own giant twig

by: Mr. Austin Suban



DRAWING - CRUCIFIXION



by: Miss. Irene Elisa Phiilip



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GREAT LENT - 2023

ST MARYS INDIAN ORTHODOX CATHEDRAL, MELBOURNE

Mid-Lent

6:30 PM - Evening Prayer (Tue, 14 Mar)
 7:00 PM - Holy Qurbana

Annunciation to St. Mary (Sat, 25 Mar)

8:00 AM - Morning Prayer
 8:30 AM - Holy Qurbana

40th Day of Great Lent

6:30 PM - Evening Prayer (Thu, 30 Mar)
 7:00 PM - Holy Qurbana

Lazarus' Saturday (01 Apr)

8:00 AM - Morning Prayer
 8:30 AM - Holy Qurbana

Palm Sunday (Hosanna) (02 Apr)

7:30 AM - Morning Prayer
 8:15 AM - Holy Qurbana & Palm Sunday service

Gospel Saturday (08 Apr)

8:00 AM - Morning prayer
 8:30 AM - Holy Qurbana.

Easter Sunday

5.30 PM - Evening Prayer (on Sat, 08 Apr)
 6:15 PM - Night Prayer
 6:50 PM - Easter Service
 8:00 PM - Holy Qurbana

Maundy Thursday (Pesaha)

6:30 PM - Evening Prayer (on Wed, 05 Apr)
 7:15 PM - Holy Qurbana

Good Friday (07 Apr)

8:00 AM - Morning Prayer, Hourly Prayers & Good Friday service
 8:30 PM onwards - Night Vigil



Holy Week Prayer Timing: 7:00 PM - Evening prayer || 12:00PM - Noon Prayer || 6:30 AM - Morning Prayer.