



Melbourne Orthodox Cathedral Bulletin

JANUARY 2024



ST. MARY'S INDIAN ORTHODOX CATHEDRAL, MELBOURNE.

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VICAR'S DESK

Rev. Fr. Aji K Varughese

Dearly beloved in Jesus Christ,

2023 has become a part of history. It turned out to be an eventful year that made us experience joys, sorrows, fulfillment of dreams, disappointments, smiles, sobs, agonies, losing loved ones, making new bonds, and fighting and winning against all odds. The two-faced Janus enables us to look toward the past and future. It allows us to introspect. Let us look at the balance sheet of our life.

Let us journey through the new year as a seeker of virtues. Hope this year will provide us opportunities to repair many broken relationships and enable us to strengthen bonds with others. May we be able to look at others with empathy and compassion. Let us make 2024 a year of blessings, peace, and spiritual awakening.

Carols brought us the message of the birth of our Lord. I express gratitude to all the spiritual organizations for their participation in the carols and the Christmas Eve programs.

Praising the Lord for His abundant mercy and praying for peace and happiness in the coming days.

May God bless you all.

Yours loving
AJI ACHEN



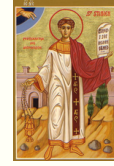


LITURGICAL CALENDAR

JANUARY 2024

SEASON OF EPIPHANY

January 2024



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3 Oath of Koonan Cross 60th Mem of H.H. Baselios Geevarghese II Catholicose. (Devalokam Catholicate Aramana)	4	5	6 Denaha (Feast of Epiphany) - Baptism of our Lord
7 1st Sunday after Epiphany Beheading of St. John the Baptist	8 Commemoration of St. Stephen, the First Martyr.	9	10	11	12	13
14 2nd Sunday after Epiphany	15	16	17	18 Commemoration of St. Samuel, St. Simon and St. Anthony	19	20
21 3rd Sunday after Epiphany	22 Nineveh Lent begins	23	24 Commemoration of Prophet Jonah	25 Nineveh Feast	26	27
28 Sunday of all the departed priests	29	30	31			



SMIOC family celebrates Christmas Eve - 2023 at the Epping Memorial Hall on 10-Dec-2023

His Grace Dr. Yakoob Mar Irenios Metropolitan was the chief guest of the evening.

We had some marvelous performances from all the spiritual organizations and members of the church. A glimpse of it below.



CHRISTMAS EVE - 2023(2)

JANUARY 2024



CHRISTMAS EVE - 2023(3)

JANUARY 2024



SUNDAY SCHOOL

Sunday School family expresses its deepest condolences and prayers to our dear Vicar Rev Fr Aji K Varughese on his beloved mother's passing.

Sunday school's annual examination for grades 10 and 12 was conducted on 03 December. Aaron Santosh John, Abel Sunil, Diya Mariam Ninan, Feba Susan George, Leah Parveen, Nigil Tharakan, Sairah, Varghese Stellina Ann Sajith, and Thomas Jean Kuriakose appeared for the Grade 10 examination. Aaron Aji Varghese appeared for the Grade 12 examination. Below is a glimpse of the students appearing for the examination.



MARTHA MARIYAM VANITHA SAMAJAM

Martha Maria Vanitha Samajam team lead carol service on 26th November under the guidance of our Vicar Rev. Fr. Aji K. Varughese Achen and Carol Coordinators. It was indeed a very blessed day filled with lots of joyful moments. Presence of our lady Santa was the highlight of the day.



H.G. Dr. Abraham Mar Seraphim celebrated Holy Qurbana on the Vanitha Dinam day followed by a inspirational speech. The MMVS members



Rev. Fr. Aji K. Varughese along with members of SMIOC Youth donated Christmas presents at Footscray Uniting Church this morning, on behalf of the SMIOC community. 43 gifts were collected from the Christmas Giving Tree Appeal organised by SMIOC Sunday School and MGOCSM & OCYM. Thank you to the Sunday School students and the larger church community for their donations.



Youth Speaker Series: H.G. Dr. Abraham Mar Seraphim Metropolitan

SMIOC MGOCSM & OCYM were pleased to host its inaugural Youth Speaker Series, with guest speaker H.G. Dr. Abraham Mar Seraphim, Diocesan Metropolitan of Thumpamon and President of MGOCSM Global. His Grace's session lasted approximately one hour, answering questions from the Cathedral's youth, addressing the queries and concerns of the next generation regarding faith and life as a Christian in a secular society.



YOUTH FUNDRAISER CHRISTMAS PHOTOBOOTH

Throughout the month of December, following service on Sunday and at the Christmas Eve function, the youth conducted a Christmas Photobooth as a fundraiser for the SMIOC MGOCSM & OCYM. Groups were able to take photos in the Christmas themed set and children also had the opportunity to write letters to Santa which they posted in Santa's mailbox

The photobooth was inaugurated by H.G. Dr. Abraham Mar Seraphim Metropolitan on Sunday 03 December 2023. The fundraiser was a grand success with over 50 family photos being captured, with prints and digital copies distributed.



Christmas Carols @ Ballarat congregation

Team Youth supported the Cathedral Carol's to the faithful of St Dionysius Indian Orthodox Congregation, Ballarat on Sunday 17 December 2023.



End of Year Celebratory Dinner

To mark the end of the 2023 year, specifically the end of the year's 'Midweek Meditation' series, the youth went to dinner at Cornerstone Pizzeria, Coburg, following the Dukhrono of St. Thomas Holy Qurbana.

TRAVELS IN GREECE & TURKEY (A SERIES)

We were fortunate to make this trip to Greece and Turkiye(Turkey) and though it was planned to be a discovery of these lands yet later we realised that we are treading on the lands explored by St. Paul during his missionary journeys.

St. Paul was converted from zealous Zionist Saul a Pharisee and a student of the Rabbi Gamiel in Jerusalem to a humble apostle who was ready to sacrifice himself to spread the Good News as instructed by the Lord and famously said in Galatians3:13 that "It is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me". From a persecutor of Christ followers he was transformed into a beacon to spread the light to the non -Jews.



Dr. Bonny Varghese

St. Paul commenced his trips usually from Antioch Syria and landed in Athens on his second mission. We on the other hand had planned our trip starting in Athens. Greece is a lovely land steeped in history and convinced that it is the birthplace of democracy. It also is the origin of most important words that we know e.g. Technology from the Greek words Techne(arts/skill/craft) and Logos (Word or collection). It made us realise how indebted we are to this civilization and how many beliefs have originated from their myths.

Our first day visit was to the Acropolis (polis=city and acro=high) which means the highest point in the city of Athens. The city overlooks the beautiful blue Aegean Sea and was the crucible of philosophy, arts and culture. The Parthenon which is now only a remnant of the magnificent splendour that it would have been, overlooking the city and was dedicated to their Goddess Athena Nike in 438 B.C, took 9 years only to build and was made of Pendeline marble. A rectangular shaped hall 30x19 metres facing the East and had Doric columns of marble 1.9mtrs wide and 10.4mts tall, 17 such on the flanks and 8 on east/west side.



The Parthenon

It must have been such a gigantic and technically advanced challenge getting these marble pillars and stones in one piece and assembling it on the base structure of the Parthenon. We were a bit short of breath reaching the top, imagine the workers then!

They had a system of cranes using ropes to pull them into place is what I understand.

The Statue of Athena Parthenos and the other artefacts in the Parthenon are no more but some can be viewed in the Acropolis museum at the base of the Acropolis. The Pediment on the top of these pillars and under the roof level some survived the time are very impressive and depicts the Greek mythology. The east facing had the birth of Athena and the fight against Poseidon the Sea god. Athena was produced without a mother but from the forehead of Zeus their main god. The museum has artefacts dating back to 500 BC and is a great architectural and artistic complex bequeathed by Greek antiquity to the world and gives us an insight to their culture and how advanced Athens was for their times. It is said that even if we dig with our fingers into the hill we will come across some antiques, the archaeology discovery is ongoing and they are bound to come across more of these findings.

The Parthenon model has been replicated all around the world one such is the Lincoln Memorial Washington..... (contd.)

CONDOLENCES

SMIOC Family extends its heartfelt condolences to the grieving family.




Mrs E. M. Thomas (86)
F/o Mr. Sajith Thomas
Date: 30/Dec/2023



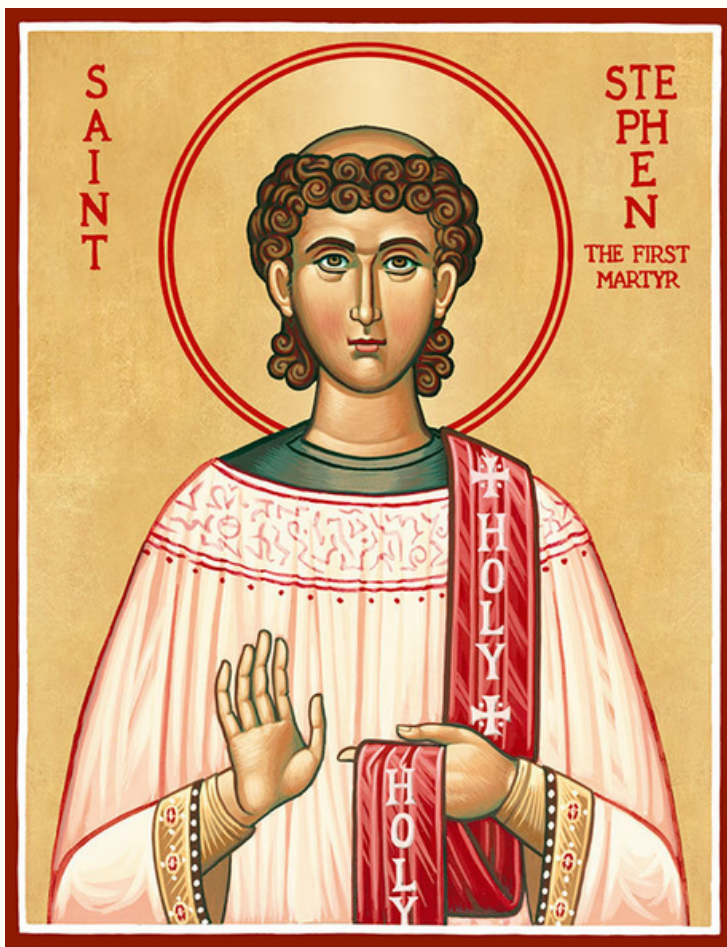
Mr. Yohannan Abraham (89)
F/o Mr. Santhosh Yohannan
Date: 03/Jan/2024

STAY IN TOUCH WITH US

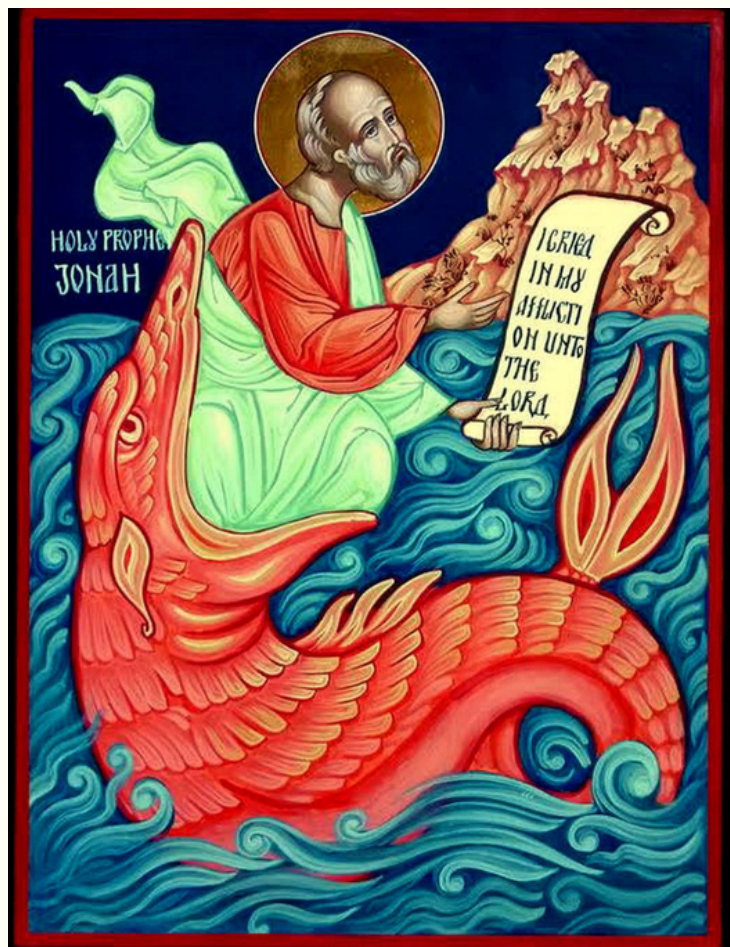
 Vicar: Rev. Fr. Aji K Varughese  +61 466 460 552  +61 3 9383 7944
 118-122 Nicholson Street, Coburg, Melbourne, VIC, Australia, Victoria.
 @SMIOCMelbourne
 www.stmarysioc.org.au/
 Cathedral: @SMIOCMelbourn
 MGOCSM & OCYM: @SMIOCYouth
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St. Stephen, The First Martyr



Prophet Jonah