

St. Paul's Mar Thoma Church  
2425 Gus Thomasson Rd.  
Mesquite, TX 75150

# THE EPISTLE

A MONTHLY PUBLICATION



November 2008



*Lectionary Information*

**Sunday, November 2, 2008 - (Malayalam Service)**

Sanctification of the Church - World Sunday School Day

**Lesson 1:** Proverbs 23:15-26

**Epistle:** Ephesians 6:1-4

**Lesson 2:** Hebrews 12:1-13

**Gospel:** John 6:1-14

**Sunday, November 9, 2008 - (English Service)**

Renewal of the Church

**Lesson 1:** Ezekiel 37:15-23

**Epistle:** Romans 12:3-13

**Lesson 2:** Ephesians 4:1-16

**Gospel:** John 4:19-26

**Sunday, November 16, 2008 - (Malayalam Service)**

Annunciation of Zechariah - Hope to the World

**Lesson 1:** 1 Chronicles 24:1-9

**Epistle:** Hebrews 5:1-10

**Lesson 2:** Revelation 8:1-5

**Gospel:** Luke 1:8-25

**Sunday, November 23, 2008**

Annunciation of Virgin Mary - Surrendering to God's will

**Lesson 1:** Zechariah 2:10-13

**Epistle:** Galatians 4:21-31

**Lesson 2:** Ephesians 1:3-14

**Gospel:** Luke 1:26-38

**Sunday, November 30, 2008 - (Malayalam Service)**

Visitation of Mary to Elizabeth -  
Joyful expectation of Christ's Coming

**Lesson 1:** Genesis 33:1-17

**Epistle:** 2 Corinthians 1:3-11

**Lesson 2:** 1 Thessalonians 3:6-13

**Gospel:** Luke 1:39-45

**FAREWELL TO COORILS THIRUMENI**

During the Episcopal visit to Dallas, the St. Paul's Family will have a fellowship time with Coorilos Thirumeni on Saturday, November 22 at 6.30PM at the Church. This will be Thirumeni's last visit to our Parish before leaving back to India.

All the Parishioners are requested to attend this Meeting



## MESSAGE FROM VICAR

*“His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and godliness. Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature and escape the corruption in the world caused by evil desires.” 2 Peter 1: 3-4*

My dear sisters and brothers in the love of our Lord,

Life and order out of deathly chaos, and comfort and hope amidst utterly desperate crises are the traits of God’s marvelous acts! For a believer such experiences testify the realization of the promises of God. We need to continue to thank God, both at the personal and collective levels, for all such restorative and liberating acts of God. Let us continue to pray that God’s blessings and guidance will enable us together to be perseverant in our commitment, and the newly evolved ways regarding our Church Construction Project may remain in our hearts as a recuperating act of God. It is our honest efforts with absolute trust in God that makes the difference in every situation, all the more specially in situations of confusion, misgivings, and uncertainty.

As we move on to a new Liturgical Year the readings and the themes of meditation linger on ‘sanctification’ and ‘renewal’ of the Church. A note of expectation and hope, and a sense of total dedication towards its accomplishment are reflected in the texts and are seriously delved into during the month November. Sanctification is the act of the Spirit of God in Jesus the Christ. The act of imbuing external objects with ‘sacredness’ is normally denoted by ‘sacralization’. Sanctification essentially involves a process of inner transformation, a transformation of the total being or person. It is the sanctifying presence and acts of the Spirit that transforms the ‘mortal’ humans to participate in the ‘divine nature’ and makes possible to attain the ‘new being’. It is very important to note the relationship of the believer and the Spirit as discussed in terms of ‘participation’ or ‘sharing’, in many contexts (see 1 Cor. 10: 14-22; 2 Cor. 13:13; Phil. 2:1; Heb. 6: 4 etc.). It is our ‘fellowship’ and ‘participation’ with Christ through the abiding Spirit and through the ‘life-giving flesh’ that accomplishes our sanctification and participation in the divine nature (cf. 2 Peter 1:4). We should try to understand that this question remains a vital concern in the discussions of Eastern theology, even from the times of the early church fathers. It is also contextually significant for us to seriously look into this at the ‘Halloween’...!!

‘Renewal’ of the Church is integrally related to the experience of sanctification. The sanctified church – and the sanctified believer - makes the fruit of the Spirit (love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control – Gal. 5:22) real and concrete. Thus renewal necessitates a radical change from self-centered values to the values of the Spirit-filled reign of God. The central focus of the ‘gospel’ was the eruption of this

reign in Jesus the Christ (cf. Luke 4: 18-21). Therefore the renewed church should remain as the abiding 'sign' of the gospel in the world. But alas! What remains by and large are 'signs' with little signification!! Jesus vehemently addressed this hypocritical existence of religion.

(see Mt. chapters 6 and 23).

Hans Kung in the light of the Second Vatican Council pointed out five aspects that should challenge the Church - the church that is truthful as per the message of Jesus should be:

- i) provisional**, that is to exist with unambiguous awareness of her temporary role of witnessing the reign of God,
- ii) unassuming**, that is to be trusting in God and conscious of the need for grace, not making any claims of her own,
- iii) ministering**, that is not to covet for 'power and glory' for her own; opting 'way of the cross' instead of 'triumphal procession',
- iv) conscious of guilt**, that is not to be self-righteous, aware that "she carries her treasures in only earthen vessels, that her lights are faint and flickering, her faith weak, her knowledge obscure..." and
- v) obedient**, that is to be radically for the reign of God, and not with "her own liturgical, dogmatic and juridical laws and regulations, traditions and customs as commandments of God..."

Though explicitly these challenges are to the institutional church, the actualization of renewal begins with every believer at the 'ordinariness' of life. St. Teresa of Avila observes about progress in the spiritual life as a "continuous striving toward greater depth and to the core of one's being, each step moving us closer to a vision of the ultimate".

Let us long and pray along with St. Paul that we may "...be made new in the attitude of your minds; and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness." (Eph. 4: 23-24)

May God bless us all,

Affectionately yours in the Lord,

Koshyachen

**" TRY NOT TO BECOME A MAN OF SUCCESS, BUT RATHER TRY TO BECOME A MAN OF VALUE."**

**ALBERT EINSTEIN**

## Youth Chaplain's Message

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,



**Have you ever felt that you're not getting enough out of worship? Any worship for that matter, liturgical or "praise and worship"? Maybe even that it's just not complete or enough? What or who or where is the problem?**

Often the real problem rests in that worship is not truly understood for what it is essentially. In St. John 6:41-42 it reads, "Then the Jews began to complain about him because he said, 'I am the bread that came down from heaven.' They were saying, 'Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How can he now say, I have come down from heaven?'" No matter how much Jesus tried to convince them, the Jews just could not grasp who Jesus *really* was! Why? Simply, they had blinded themselves to the divine nature of Jesus Christ. So, confined their faith to their own understanding and saw nothing in Jesus but, a man.

In the same way, if we confine worship to the things of our understanding, to the material and physical alone, we blind ourselves to its divine nature and mystery.

Worship is spiritual in essence and beckons believers towards a higher plane of faith. Therefore, true spirituality relies on personal and true faith so that completeness and wholeness may be realized in worship.

There is a story of how the Russian Prince Vladimir of Kiev, while still a pagan desired to know which was the true religion and sent his followers to investigate. They traveled to various countries without being satisfied until they reached the city of Constantinople. Here they attended the Divine Liturgy in the great Church of the Holy Wisdom. Writing to Vladimir the envoys stated, "We knew not whether we were in heaven or on earth, for surely there is not such splendor or beauty anywhere upon earth. We cannot describe it to you; only this we know, that God dwells there among men, and that their service surpasses the worship of all other places, for we cannot forget that beauty".

Although, their methods may have been questionable the understanding of the envoys that worship is not simply earthly or temporal but, mysteriously divine and ethereal is notable. This is the experience of true worship. That is, where the boundaries of heaven and earth even the finite and infinite cease and we, together with the divine chorus of angels praise God. Thus, the Church on earth simultaneously lives in both the heavenly and earthly realms. It is our union with Christ in faith that makes this truth a reality. We need to equip ourselves in faith in order to move beyond the obvious and tangible elements to experience this spirituality. In so doing, with St. Paul we may literally exclaim, "he is not far from each one of us. For in Him we live and move and have our being..."(Acts 17:27-28).

May the Almighty Lord strengthen us all to see with the eyes of faith the depths of worship anchored in Spirit and Truth!

Your brother in Christ,  
Jaisen Achen  
H- 972-495-5393  
C- 214-604-6678  
revjathomas@yahoo.com

## **YOUTH CHAPLAIN OFFICE HOURS**

Jaisen Achen will have open office hours at the parsonage, 1014 Fairhaven Drive, Garland, every week Mon-Thurs 10:30am-4pm for counseling or any other needs. No prior appointment is necessary for these times. If anyone would like to meet at another time, they should call or email Jaisen Achen in order to confirm an appropriate time. Also, please indicate that couples who are preparing to get married should meet with the youth chaplain for premarital counseling at least a few months before the wedding.

## *Church Activities*

### **SUNDAY SCHOOL:**

Regular classes at 8.45am.

**Sunday, November 2** - World Sunday School Day

**Sunday, November 9** - Teacher's Meeting after Holy Qurbana

**Saturday, November 29** - St. Paul's Sports Day (Ping-Pong, Carroms, Chess)

### **SEVIKA SANGHAM:**

**Saturday, November 1** at 10 a.m. -

Bible Study at the residence of Mrs. & Mr. Omana & P. P. Cherian of Sunnyvale.

**GARAGE SALE :** St. Paul's Sevika Sangham is arranging a 'Garage Sale' on Saturday, Nov. 15, 2008, as part of the Fund mobilization programs towards the Construction Project. Usable items as appropriate for sale are welcomed from all our families. For details please contact the SS Office-bearers.

### **YOUTH FELLOWSHIP:**

**Fridays** at 7pm - Prayer Fellowship at the Church.

**Tuesdays** 7-8pm - The Youth Fellowship Bible Study at Church with Jaisen Achen . Youth Fellowship members ages 13 and older are encouraged to attend.

### **YUVAJANA SAKHYAM:**

**Sunday, November 9** at 6:30pm -

Meeting at the residence of Mrs. Manju & Mr Stanly George, Mesquite.

### **PARISH MISSION:**

**Fridays, November 7, and 21** at 7pm -

Bible Study/Prayer fellowships at the Church.

**Friday, November 14** at 7pm

Dallas area meeting Mar Thoma Church of Dallas at Farmers Branch

**Sundays** 9-9:30am - Intercessory Prayer fellowship.

### **MALAYALAM CHOIR:**

**Sundays, November 2nd & 16th** - Practice sessions after Holy Qurbana.

### **ENGLISH CHOIR:**

**Saturday, November 1 & 15** at 10am - Practice Session at Church

### **SPECIAL PRAYER:**

**Fridays, November 7, 14, 21, and 28** from 9.30 to 11.30am - The residence of Mrs. & Mr. Jaisy & Raju George, 922 Dandelion Dr, Mesquite, TX.

**NOTE: All the recognized organizations of the Church are advised to complete the process of electing the office bearers and representatives to the Parish Executive Committee for the year 2009, during this month (November) itself.**







We know that God created the world. But what is the most important creation of this creator? You may say heavens and earth OR angels and archangels OR maybe the entire universe. But if we think deeply the above may not be true. Creation of the man in His own image is the right answer to the question. God made man a little lower than the angels and crowned him with glory. God made him the master of all His creation. What a privilege? Does the man understand this fact. Man thinks he can do anything and forgets to give glory to his creator, who gave dominion to His creation. God wants man to have His very nature. God's character is humble, holy, righteous, compassionate, caring, loving, and forgiving. If we look at Psalm 8:3-4, King David Says, "When I consider Thy heavens, the work of Thy fingers, the moon and the stars which Thou hast ordained, what is man, that Thou art mindful of him?" God has placed all things under his feet. How glorious is the name of our Lord on earth. We should praise Him with our whole heart and tell him about His marvelous works. God wants us to be closer to Him, then only He can come to us. Man tries to go away with his problems and brood over his actions, but God never leaves us alone. He loved us so much and gave His life for us on Calvary and rose from the dead, appeared to many then ascended to heaven. He did all these things to show us how much he loves us so that we may live for Him now and forever.

We have good reasons to believe that the BIBLE presents an accurate picture of Jesus Christ, His life and teachings, impact on history, fulfillment of prophecy and so on. To sum up the above, we can see that He was the true Son of God.

BIBLE tells us that an intelligent and superpower was actively involved in the creation of this universe. Many scientists claim naturalistic evolution, they do so because of their assumption that no supernatural being was involved. Christianity, however, tells us that human beings are similar but different from animals. Human beings possess personality,

consciousness, a spirit, an ability to think, and to have a personal relationship with God. But man fell into sin through his sinful nature and rejected his creator. God wants us to love Him with all our hearts and not be forced to do so. We have the choice whether to stick to His laws or ours. Evil is the intruder which influenced the first man, Adam. Jesus Christ is the solution to our problems. God is not sitting idly by while humanity goes to sin. He came to this world to set an example for mankind, how to live sinless in a sinful world. Accordingly, He came to this world to free us from our sins and died on the cross. Remember that the dreadful day is approaching, when all mankind has to stand before God's perfect justice. Spiritual growth comes by observing God's way of life which is revealed in the HOLY BIBLE. To become members of the divine family, one should follow His perfect righteous holy character and obey His commandments. Thus God's supreme masterpiece of creation has been finished by His resurrection to eternal life.

### CHURCH EVENTS

11/02 - World Sunday School Day

11/15 - Talent Evening under the auspices of the Choir, at Church Auditorium at 6PM

11/22 - 6PM @ St. Paul's - Fellowship time with Coorilos Thirumeni

11/23 - Holy Qurbana & Farewell to our Diocesan Episcopa Rt. Rev. Euakim Mar Coorilos - 9AM at MT Church, Farmers Branch - (All Mar Thoma Churches of Dallas Area). **There will not be any worship service at the other Mar Thoma Parishes in Dallas.**

11/27 - Thanks Giving Day - Holy Communion and Lunch

11/29 - St. Paul's Sports Day

*Prayer Meetings*

**AGAPE**

**LEADER: MATHEW BABU**  
972-771-1058

**Saturday, November 29 @ 7:00 pm**  
Residence of Mr. & Mrs. Vinod Cherian, Garland, TX

**EBENEZER**

**LEADER: ANNA JOHN (LIZY)**  
972-289-2675

**Saturday, November 1 @ 7:00pm**  
Residence of Mr. & Mrs. Lillikutty & Thomas K. J, Mesquite TX

**EMMANUEL**

**LEADER: MATHEW SAMUEL**  
972-494-5545

**Sunday, November 2 @ 6:30pm**  
Residence of Mr. & Mrs. Thomas George, Rockwall, TX

**Sunday, November 16 @ 6:30pm**  
Residence of Mr. & Mrs. Viju Varghese, Rowlett, TX

**MANNA**

**LEADER: P.P. CHERIAN**  
972-203-2018

**TBD**

**SHALOM**

**LEADER: ABRAHAM KOSHY**  
972-681-7083

**TBD**

**ST. PAUL'S MAR THOMA CHURCH**  
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MESQUITE, TX 75150

Phone: 972 613 9080

**PARSONAGE ADDRESS**

5906 BLUE OAK DRIVE  
GARLAND, TX 75043  
972 226 0976

**ARTICLES NEEDED!**

If you would like to submit any articles in English or Malayalam,  
please send it to: [Jacobkab@hotmail.com](mailto:Jacobkab@hotmail.com)

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**WE'RE ON THE  
WEB!**

**WWW.STPAULSMTC.ORG**

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PRESIDENT  
REV. C. K. KOSHY

TREASURER  
MR. OOMMEN KOSHY

VICE PRESIDENT  
MR. EASOW CHACKO

ACCOUNTANT  
MR. THOMAS GEORGE

SECRETARY  
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MR. BABU P. SIMON  
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