

St Mary's Malankara Orthodox Valiyapally

Estd. 1973



2013 Annual Report

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St Mary's Malankara Orthodox Valiyapally

Annual Report for the Year 2013

Introduction

"In Him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. And in Him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit."
Ephesians 2:21-22

Respected Vicar, and my dearly beloved Parish Members,

With thanks to Lord God Almighty, and with great pleasure on behalf of the Managing Committee, I respectfully submit the Annual Report 2013 of our Parish.

We continued to meet the primary mission of the church, to meet the spiritual necessities of our community in the area. We continued pursuing our vision, notwithstanding the worldly challenges facing us, reflecting Faith, Hope and Charity at all times.

Vicar & President

Rev. Fr. Raju M Daniel continued as the Vicar of our Church, serving almost 130 plus Families. With his fully dedicated service, including powerful and meaningful sermons on Sundays and feast days, The Church was able to attain tremendous spiritual growth. Spiritual organizations, through his able and proper guidance, reached higher levels. Rev. Fr. Raju M Daniel is deeply spiritual and served the Church members with his sincerity, devotion, and love that were so incredibly inspiring to all.

Youth Minister

Rev. Fr. Mat Alexander has been serving as the Youth Minister of the Dallas and Oklahoma Area for several years. Achen has been a tremendous blessing and resource to the area as he acted as a catalyst for the spiritual growth of all the faithful, with emphasis on the FOCUS, MGOCSM and Sunday School. Mat Achen regularly celebrate Holy Qurbana on third Sunday (English Service) the youth, was able to understand it and found a guide in him we pray that God continues to shower Mat Achen, and his ministry with abundant blessings for many years.

Acolytes

On behalf of all the members of the Church like to acknowledge the dedicated service of all the acolytes assisted with duties inside Altar, namely John Mepurathu, Rajan Joseph, Thomas Mathew Kuriakose Mathai Vettichirayil, Vipin Samuel, Tony John, Sabin John, Noel Johnson, Alvin Cherian, Toby John, Austin Cherian, Argey George, Nikhil Philip, Ben Boban, Akash Johnson, Morshleen Mathew, Alex John, Ashvin John, Andrew John, Akhil Raju, Chris Chandy, Jinu Mathew, Rohit George, Jake Mathew, Joel John, and Jobin John during the past year.

Managing Committee

Following members were unanimously elected to our Church Managing Committee for the year 2013

Secretary: Mr. Abraham Varghese (Prince)

Trustee: Mr. Rusk Jacob

Committee Members:

Mr. Biji Baby

Mr. George Thomas (Shaji)

Mr. James Thekkumkel

Mr. Jiju John

Mr. Jimmy Philip

Mr. Juby John

Mr. Koshy Palathumthalackal

Mr. Koshy Varghese

Mr. Kuriakose Mathai Vettichirayil

Mr. Shaji John

Mr. Shinu Mathew

Mr. Prince Zacharia (Ex-Officio)

Auditor: Mr. Thomas V Mathew

Managing Committee Meetings

The vicar/president served as the chairman of the all the managing committee. Managing Committee meetings are held thirteen times almost every month in year 2013 to discuss all pertinent day to day matters of Church and implement general body decisions.

General Body Meetings

Managing Committee requested to hold general body meetings three times in 2013. All members were invited to participate in all of the parish assemblies. All General body meetings were presided by the Vicar, Rev Fr. Raju M Daniel and commenced and adjourned with prayers. The key decisions and approvals from General Body meeting Listed below.

(1) Annual General Body(February 10th 2013)

- 1, 2012 Annual report presented by 2012 Secretary Mr. Roji Abraham.
- 2, 2012 Audit Report Read in detail by Mr. James Thekkumkel
- 3, 2012 Accounts presented by 2012 Trustee Mr. Prince Zachariah
- 4, 2013 Budget submitted by Trustee Mr. Rusk Jacob, and approved
- 5, Fundraising Initiative stage program as a deficit reduction measure - Approved
- 6, Charity Initiative to support St Thomas Ashram, Attapady – Approved

(2) Semi-Annual General Body (August 11th 2013)

- 1, 2013 Half Yearly Accounts presented by Trustee Mr. Rusk Jacob
- 2, Revised Guest Priest Budget and allowance
- 3, Alternative Fundraising Initiative Raffle Ticket – Approved
- 4, General Body approved to canceled Holy Qurbana on 1st Tuesday of the month due to lack of participation.
- 5, Approved to have English service on 5th Sunday of the months.

(3) Election General Body (November 11th 2013)

1, General Body unanimously elected following members to our Church Managing Committee for the year 2014

Secretary: Mr. Abraham Varghese (Prince)

Trustee: Mr. Rusk Jacob

Committee Members:

Mr. Thomas Mathew

Mr. Mohan Cherian

Mr. Jim Thomas

Mr. Sogini Mathew

Mr. Beena Johnson

Mr. Shibu Mathew

Mr. Sabu Thomas

Mr. Sypy Thomas

Auditor: Mr. Jinu Mathew

2, Other Positions elected

Facility Manager: Mr. Shaji V John

Technology Director: Mr. Jim Thomas

St Mary's Voice Editor: Mr. Steven Philips

Prayer Group Coordinator: Mr. Jiju John

3, Granted Negotiation room of 100 dollars for facility Rentals.

Holy Qurbana

Holy Qurbana was celebrated every Sunday and obligatory days in the church calendar. Except missed only one Sunday service on **December 8th 2013** due to the inclement weather conditions in the Dallas Fort Worth region. Holy Qurbana was offered on the third and fifth Sundays of each month and Malayalam Qurbana on the remaining Sundays. Birthday prayers, wedding anniversary prayer are conducted every Sunday, prayer for the sick, departed and other special requests are mentioned after the Holy Qurbana.

Feasts

Holy Qurbana and special service was conducted for the following feasts:

Denaha (Epiphany) - Sunday, January 5

Presentation of Our Lord Jesus Christ to the temple (Mayaltho) - Friday, February 1

Mid Lent Qurbana Celebrated by Rev. Fr. Leslie P Cherian – Tuesday, March 5

Feast of Annunciation to St. Mary (Vachanipu Perunal) – Monday, March 25

Feast of Ascension Celebrated by Rev Fr. P.K. Geevargheese – Wednesday, May 8

Feast of Pentecost – Sunday, May 19

Fasting prayer on Golden Friday (Swarna Velliyazhcha) Friday, May 19

Feast of Nativity of St. Mary (Ettu Nombu) – Sunday, September 8

The feast of the Holy Cross (Sleebha Perunal) Friday, September 13

Parumala Perunnal observed on Sunday October 27 Chief Celebrant Rev Fr. P.T Thomas

Intercessory prayer

***“Pray for one another, that you may be healed. The effective fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much.”
(James 5:16)***

Evening prayer and intercessory prayers in the name of St. Mary are conducted every Tuesday at 7:30 PM. Thanks to Intercessory Prayer coordinator Mr. Rajan Joseph for his dedicated service.

Prayer Meetings

We had a successful year of Prayer Meeting for the year 2013 with the participation of our Church members. We have conducted prayer meetings in 14 houses in the year 2013. Always the prayer meeting started and completed on the scheduled time on Saturdays, every week except the OCYM prayer meeting, which is on third week. Whenever there was no prayer meeting in a house, we have conducted it in our Church. Thanks to Rev. Fr. Raju Daniel for his leadership and promptness in the timing of the prayer meeting. On behalf of Church I would like thank General Secretary Mr. Babu Varughese, Mr. Baby T. Koduvathu, Coordinator of St.Gregorious Prayer Meeting and Mr. Biji Baby, Coordinator of St.Thomas Prayer Meeting for their cooperation in organizing and making this a successful year of Prayer Meeting.

The fasting prayer was held on the third Friday of every month from 10.00 am to noon and was attended by many for their spiritual enrichment. The attendees conducted personal prayers, Bible study, songs and worship while fasting from the previous evening. Special thanks to our Fasting Prayer coordinator Mr.M.P Kurian for his dedicated work during this period.

30th day of demise of Metropolitan His Grace Mar Barnabas

Our church along with all the other Malankara Orthodox Churches in Dallas/Fort worth Area observed the 30th day of demise of our beloved former Metropolitan His Grace Mathews Mar Barnabas this Saturday on January 12, 2013. May our beloved departed Metropolitan continue to intercede for us, and may his memory be eternal.

Diocese Council meeting 2013

With great pleasure we welcomed Our Metropolitan H.G Alexios Mar Eusebius, and All Council Members to our church for three day Diocese Council meeting from March 7-9 2013. Our Church felt very proud, and honored to host this fruitful Council meeting, and we already started seeing the results of this meeting in our Diocese.

Lent and Holy Week

The great Lent began with the Shubkono Service After Mid Lent Qurbana our church had Evening Prayer every day till Easter, Fasting prayer on Golden Friday (Swarna Velliyazhcha), and special services were conducted The Feast of Annunciation (Vachanipu Perunal) on Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, Saturday of the Good News and Easter Sunday. Most of our members also participated in Holy Confession in repentance and forgiveness of their sins.

As you all remember in the midst of great lent Our Vicar had an unforeseen situation to travel to India. I like to use this opportunity extend our sincerest gratitude our Diocese Metropolitan H G. Alexios Mar Eusebius and thank all the Vicars namely Rev Fr. Mammen Mathew, Rev. Fr. Leslie P Cherian , Rev Fr. Rajesh K John, Rev Fr Thampan Varghese, and Rev Fr CG Thomas, helped in the Absence of our Vicar, and Holy week Coordinators Mr. Kuriakose Mathai Vettichirayil and Mr. George Thomas (Shaji) for the superior job which led to this success.

Church Perunnal/ Convention

The feast of our patron St. Mary the mother of God was celebrated on the August 15th, 16th and 17th 2013. Rev. Fr. Jiji K Thomas was the chief celebrant, and delivered remarkable Devotional Message which offer encouragement and overcome the challenges and discouragements of daily life on all three days of

convention. Achens from our sister parishes along with many worshipers attended the convention and Sunday service.

- We had 40 + kids participate in the Back to School with Jesus Christ camp. I extend many thanks to Mr. Jinu Mathew and Mrs. Sogini Mathew for their ministry to our younger generation.
- Retreat on Psalms 51 was well received that we had a second session on Saturday
- Our Annual Day Celebration was very well organized and each performance outdid the other. FOCUS and Choir were performing for the first.

Our Church acknowledges that enthusiasm of our Perunnal coordinator Mr. Biji Baby, and Mr. James Thekkumkel and their ability to motivate others is what resulted in this great success.

Harvest Festival

As traditionally done members brought Goods to the church as a thanksgiving for all the blessing received from the lord. The auction was resounding success; Thank you for donating auction items and your active participation.

Perunnal Rassa

This year Perunnal Rassa without any doubt more colorful than ever before to resemble as it was done in India, and Thattukada (The road side food joint) fresh food prepared in front of you. It was a great opportunity for our next generation (Kids) to experience the Indian Way.

Honoring Our Seniors Over 70 Years Old

We have honored all our seniors' members over 70 years Old on Saturday during our church day Celebration for many years' services to our church, for establishing the foundation, and for stabilizing our church. 18 Members Honored on the day namely Mrs. Sosamma Koduvathu, Mr. Abraham Koduvathu, Mr. Abraham M Abraham, Mrs. Rachel Abraham, Mrs. Ammini Thomas, Mrs Mariamma Thomas, Mr. CU Abraham, Mrs. Annamma Abraham, Mr. Daniel Thomas, Mr. John Mathew, Mr. John Mathew Mepurathu, Mrs. Gracy John, Mr. Joseph Vaidian, Mrs. Lilly Alexious, Mr. MP Kurien, Mr. Skaria S. Kalluvilayil, Mrs. Sheelama John, Mr. KM George Once again We Thanks all of you for being there when no one else was.

Church Annual Picnic

Pilot Knolls Park in highland Village was the venue for the picnic, which was held on Saturday, September 14th. The food was great, the games were fun and the friendly atmosphere was heart-warming. We had a good turnout, and nature also cooperated to brighten our spirits on that sunny Saturday. Hats off to Picnic coordinators Mr. Koshy Varghese, Mr. Koshy Palathumtalakal, Mr. Shinu Mathew, Games Coordinator Mrs. Shiny Philip and all the volunteers for a job well done!

Talent Show

Without any doubt year I believe everyone agree that talent show this Year was a complete fun filled family Entertainment night. We have 44 talents will be displayed from all genres singing to dancing, musical instruments, Skit, Dramatic Skit " The Passion of Christ", which is practiced enough for its perfection and many more. I like to acknowledge dedication and hard work of our coordinators Mr. Prince Zachariah, and Mr. Shaji V John as the success behind this year Talent Show.

Christmas Carol

Caroling started on the Saturday after Thanksgiving. We heralded the 'Good News;' by covering individual homes. However we had lost few days of caroling due to the inclement weather conditions in the Dallas Fort Worth region. It was a joyous and blessed experience for all the participants. We thank all the families who welcomed the carolers with their warm spirit and refreshments. This year we blessed to have our Diocese Metropolitan H.G Alexios Mar Esebius as our Chief Guest for our Carol day Program on Saturday, December 21. The parish thanks the great efforts of Mr. Jiju John and Mr. Prince Zachariah for coordinating Carol house visit and Sunday school, and MGOCSM for decorating our Church to uplift the Christmas spirit, and coordinating Carol day program especially Mr. Jobi Varughese for his dedication and effort putting together a distinct Nativity Show.

Christmas Day Service

Holy Qurbana was celebrated as the feast of Eldo with great solemnity the cold weather did not deter to perform the traditional 'burning of the old'. The Christmas day service started at 5:00 A.M. with the midnight prayer followed by Morning Prayer. Immediately after the Morning Prayer the "Theejwala Shushroosha" was held in the portico followed by Holy Qurbana, Christmas Message, Benediction, Kaimuthu, and traditional Christmas feast was served after the Service at 9:00 AM.

New Year Watch Night services

Our New Year Service on December 31, started at 8.00 pm with Prayer and Worship/Meditation, Evening Prayer at 9.00 PM followed by Holy Qurbana. Turned off all the lights in the Sanctuary for Watch Night services and welcomed New Year 2014 in a spiritual way.

Episcopal Visit

In the reporting year our Diocesan Metropolitan, H G. Alexios Mar Eusebius, HG Dr Abraham Mar Seraphim, and H.G Kuriakose Mar Clemis visited us and their presence was a blessing. I express our thanks and loyalty to our beloved thirumrnis for being a beacon for our spiritual life.

Clergy Visits

Our parish had been the center of activities in the Dallas area. We opened our doors and hearts to welcome everyone. We are honored by the visits of the following clergymen:

Rev. Fr. Leslie P Cherian
Rev Fr. Mammen Mathew
Rev. Fr. Slomo George
Rev. Fr. Leslie P Cherian
Rev. Fr. Shaun Mathew
Rev. Fr. Philip Mathew
Rev. Fr. Cheriaan T Samuel
Rev. Fr. P.K. Geevarghese
Rev .Fr. Vargesghese Chacko
Rev. Fr. Jiji Samuel
Rev. Fr. Joel Mathew
Rev. Fr. Rege Mathew
Rev. Fr. Teji Abraham
Rev. Fr. EP Varghese

Rev. Fr. Mathew Koshy
Rev. Fr. Abi Chacko

St.Mary's Voice

There were three publications of St. Mary's Voice this year. Many of our members provided articles, and pictures of all our church events were published through these editions. We appreciate all the efforts and contributions by the Editorial Board and it's Chief Editor Mr.Jiju John.

Church Coir

Melodious singing is part vital part of Orthodox worship, Mr. Sabu Thomas and his choir conducted on Malayalam service of our church. The English Holy Qurbana, which is held on third Sunday of every month, led by the MGOCSM members. Singing is a God gifted Talent, and using it to praise our Lord almighty will definitely shower blessings. Thanks to all the singers and keyboard players of both English and Malayalam coir.

Charity

This year with the approval of general body we started St Mary's Charity fund to help on Charity organization as thanks giving for all the blessing showered upon our parish by our lord Jesus Christ. This year General body approved to donate St Thomas Asharam for Amount up to \$10,000, and with support of our member's generous donation we were able to donate \$8000 to the project. I like to specifically mention Mr. Lyle Varghese's name for donating the lion about for this initiative. Besides that our church always had shown utmost generosity for anyone who comes to our doorstep for help. Our Marthamariam Samajam, Youth Movement, and MGOCSM also participate in different community activities to help the poor and needy from different parts of the world.

Fundraiser Initiative

With General body Approval as a deficit reduction measure managing committee Initiated a Fundraising stage program starring top Movie artist from Malayalam Movie industry, but due to unforeseen denial of VISA by US Consulate for some of the key artists of our Fundraiser show "Thomaskutty Vittoda" The national Promoters informed us that the Tour has been cancelled, and they reimbursed all the invoiced expenses. Many of our members worked really hard towards this show, especially Program Coordinators Mr Jimmy K Philip , Mr. James Thekumkel. May the Hours/Minutes they have spend is not in vain; may our lord repay them with blessings abundantly.

This unforeseen cancellation definitely put a dent in our budget calculations, and as an alternative solution to remedy the situation. With General body approval initiated Raffle Ticket Fund raiser, but due to the fact the goals are not meet prior to the drawing date, the dates has been pushed to Easter 2014 which is April 20th.

It is quite natural to fall, but the glory is when we rise up strong when we fall. I request all our members' whole hearted support and prayer for the success of this initiative.

Malayalam Classes

We were able to restart our Malayalam learning classes for all Sunday School students on Sunday's after the regular Sunday School classes. This is an opportunity for all the youngsters to learn our mother tongue. Special thanks to our Sally Kochamma, Mrs.Beena Johnson and other volunteers for organizing these classes.

New Membership

In 2013 we had the privilege to have five more families joined to our St.Mary's valiyapally and they are

Mr. Jinu Mathew and Family
Mr. Biju Poulose and Family
Ms. Merin Kuruvilla
Mr. Sony Cherian and Family
Mr Jobi Varghese and Family

New Born

Many of our members blessed with baby and grand babies this year. Every child is a blessing and gift from God. As we welcome our newest and the youngest members of the parish, let us wish that God continues to bless the parents to raise their children as blessings to this parish

Condolences

Immediate relatives of many of our members passed away in India in reporting year. We express our deepest sympathy and heartfelt condolence to the families and offer our prayers for the departed soul.

Congratulations

1, It is with great Pride we congratulate Ms. Asha Abraham 1st Place in South region of Mar Barnabas Award which was instituted by our Diocese in 2011.

2, Congratulation to the Ms. Lijin Raju to represent Malankara Orthodox Churches in World Council of Churches (WCC) held in Busan, Korea.

3, Ann Varghese has been elected as Regional MMVS secretary we wishing all the best in her new position and pray to God Almighty to shower Blessings

SAT Award and High school graduates

This year's cash award was presented to Ms. Asha Abraham and Ms. Angela Chandy. The Church recognized this year's graduates, with a valuable gift for their achievement.

Spiritual Organizations Reports

Morth Mariam Vanitha Samajam

2013 Office bearers: President, Rev. Fr. Raju Daniel

Treasurer: Mrs. Mary Mathew, Secretary: Mrs. Liz Philips, Joint Secretary: Mrs. Raji Anup.

Members: Mrs. Molly John, Leelamma Zacharich, Ammini Thomas, Rachel Kurian, Shayne Mathew, Geetha Palathumthalackal, Beena Johnson, Saramma Raju, Annamma Duke, Susan Mathew, Molly Thomas & Annamma Varghese

Summary of Activities.

We had numerous activities, which focused on prayer and bible studies. Prayer meetings and bible studies were regularly held on 2nd or 3rd Sunday of each month after the Holy Qurbana. Inspirational messages were given by our Vicar or visiting clergies if they were present and by different samajam members.

1, World day of Prayer was held on March 2nd 2013 and there were 20 ladies participated in that prayer.

2, MMVS ladies take active participation in our monthly fasting prayer, which is held every 3rd Friday of each month. Our ladies provide lunch for all who attend.

3, Members regularly attend telephonic prayer on every Wednesday and Fridays.

4, MMVS donated \$2750 .00 to seven different individuals in house & in India as part of our charity initiative.

5, MMVS continues to send get well cards for illness or hospitalization of our members & sympathy cards to our church members for sad demise of immediate family members.

6, Our members actively participate in MMS area talent competition. This year we received 1st prize for English and Malayalam solo, 2nd prize for Malayalam solo and 1st prize for Bible quiz.

7, MMVS donated 500 dollars towards printing English service book, which was released this year.

8, We sent diocese charity cover collection in the amount of \$300.00, and donated \$100.00 for diocese building fund. 9, Fund Raising Activities include bake sale, can coin collection and member donations.

10, MMVS sent three of our members to the annual conference at Edmonton, Canada.

11, MMVS regional conference (final one for 2013) was conducted in our church with our ladies leadership and there was a large participation of our members .

On behalf of our church Our special thanks to the Secretary Mrs. Liz Philips and Treasurer: Mrs. Mary Mathew, Joint Secretary: Mrs. Raji Anup and all committee members for their leadership in the samajam activities.

Orthodox Christian Youth Movement

OCYM elected officials Shibu Mathew, as the secretary, Ani John, as the Joint Secretary, and Reji Joseph, as the Treasurer. The following committee members were also elected: Ligit Mathew, Tiju John, Nisha Abraham, Merin Mathew, and Sony Biji.

Summary of Activities.

The monthly prayer meetings were held at different OCYM member's houses. The meeting consisted of group discussion, songs, and a sermon given by our priest Rev. Fr. Raju Daniel. The Children had their own session which was organized by our committee member Merin Mathew. We were able to participate in a couple of charity projects this year. The biggest one was the North Dallas Shelter, where all the OCYM units from all churches in the Dallas area participated. We were able to go share the word of God and also sing praises to God at this shelter. As a unit we donated over \$500 worth of food to the shelter. Our members found this experience very nourishing to their spiritual and physical well-being. We were also able to donate money to a charity in India called the Gandhibhavan International Trust. Our member Tiju John presented a \$1500 check to the facility to purchase medical equipment, while he was in India on behalf of SMOCYM. This organization supports individuals from all ages by providing shelter, food, and hospital care, etc... At the end of the year, we conducted a food and money drive to provide charity in the Dallas area. Within the OCYM unit we were able to conduct many activities like bake sales, Picnic, and pickle preparation/Sales. Throughout the year we were able to conduct 3 to 4 bake sales and we averaged a profit of \$400 for each bake sale. During the month of March, we were able to come together and create our delicious OCYM Beef Pickle that we sold during Easter and made almost \$1000. This is something that the OCYM does annually. We had our annual picnic at Lewisville Lake, where we were blessed with delicious food and fun. In August, we participated in the Dallas Area OCYM family night, which we presented three wonderful programs which received multiple compliments.

On Behalf our Church sincerest gratitude to the Secretary Mr. Shibu Mathew and Treasurer: Mr. Reji Joseph, and Joint Secretary: Mrs. Ani John and all committee members for their leadership in the Youth Movement activities.

Mar Gregorios Orthodox Christian Student Movement (MGOCSM)

The year 2012-2013 started out with Rev. Fr. Raju Daniel as the President of the MGOCSM. The committee and organization was led by the following elected members:

Secretary: Babitha Palathumthalackal, Treasurer: Austin Cherian, Joint Secretary: Asha Abraham, Devotional Chair: Toby John, Community Service Chair: Sini Roy, Dallas Area Representative: Bindhu Palathumthalackal, Fundraising Chair: Argey George, Historian: Stacy Varghese, Junior Committee: Ashley Abraham, Aleesha Johnson, Rainu Sabu, Ivy Alexander, Youth Advisors: Anish Alexander, John Mathew

From the year of 2013, MGOCSM continued Monthly Bible Studies that were based on the Old Testament led by various speakers. Each Bible Study started with Evening prayer led by Rev. Fr. Raju Daniel and Rev. Fr. Mat Alexander. Monthly fundraisers such as car washes, bake sales, and sonic car hops were held to pay for different expenses. The Dallas Area Annual Lenten Retreat was hosted by our MGOCSM. Ms. Ceena Varghese, the main speaker talked about Fighting the Good Fight. The MGOCSM also gave back to the community by visiting retirement homes, hosting can food drives, and hosting a blood drive that saved many lives. The MGOCSM continued to show love towards their parents on both Mother's and Father's day through reading poems, and providing flowers and cake. An annual Good Friday Vigil was also held at our Church. Many kids and adults came together with lit candles in the sanctuary reading the Book of Psalms and meditating. The MGOCSM loves the little kids of our Church, hosting an Easter Egg Hunt and volunteering their time in the OVBS committee as teachers and assistants. Many MGOCSM members also volunteered at the Annual Southwest Sports Tournament hosted by our church in June.

Summer is the time to bring all of the members, both young and old together. This past summer we held a weekly Summer Bible Study held at the different residences of our members. This past summer's theme was "The Lives of the Holy Apostles" where Rev. Fr. Mat Alexander spoke to us every Thursday about the Lives of the Different Apostles. Many social events were held in the summer such as Main Event and a Pep-rally for all of the members participating in the Orthodox Sports Tournament. This year our C-Team brought home the C-League trophy. Every year we have a retreat held in December for our members to join together in fellowship and prayer. This year we were blessed with the presence of H. G. Alexios Mar Eusebios and our chief guest, Rev. Fr. Abi Chacko.

On Behalf our Church sincerest gratitude to the Secretary Babitha Palathumthalackal and Treasurer: Austin Cherian, and Joint Secretary: Asha Abraham and all committee members for their leadership in the MGOCSM activities. I wish May our God Almighty shower his blessings upon our MGOCSM.

Fellowship of Orthodox Christians in the United States (FOCUS)

FOCUS is a spiritual organization that caters to the spiritual needs of the older youth in the American Diocese.

Goals include:

To provide spiritual enrichment for young adults and couples via prayer meetings, Bible studies, and counseling sessions led by trained professionals, etc.

To train young adults to be active in the administration and activities on the parish level.

To use the skills and experience of young adults to provide a support system for the young people of our church via Sunday School, MGOCSM, and OVBS.

To identify and bring back young adults who have left the church for various reasons, and provide them with a way into the Christian community

FOCUS began its foundation at St. Mary's Orthodox Church Farmers Branch back in 2008 but it hasn't been until this year 2013, that FOCUS has taken a step to move forward within the church. Since the beginning of the year, FOCUS has slowly grown to have over 40 plus active members. With the blessings of our Vicar Rev. Fr. Raju Daniel and the guidance of Rev. Fr. Mat Alexander, FOCUS officially began the year with a committee consisting of:

Steven Philips- Secretary

Chris Thomas- Treasurer

Sypy Thomas- Committee Member

Sogini Mathew- Committee Member

Prem Oommen- Adviser

FOCUS began the year with a Bible Study led by Fr. Mat Alexander on 'Church History', and from there continued with monthly bible studies, a social event at Main Event Plano, and a Back To School Barbeque, in which food was provided for the whole congregation prior to school opening for the children. Aside from that, FOCUS made sure to be active in charitable functions as well. They have participated in a 5k/10k run for the Vibha Foundation in Dallas, and raised money via fundraisers for local based charity groups. One of their main charity projects that began in 2013 and will continue into 2014 is to raise money to donate to a seminarian studying in the Nagapur Orthodox Theological Seminary in India.

FOCUS hopes to build leaders within the church and have a strong voice, so that their mission and goals will be set out to be accomplished.

Our Church acknowledges that enthusiasm of Secretary Mr. Steven Philips, and Treasurer Mr. Chris Thomas and their ability to motivate others is what resulted in the success for FOCUS this year.

Sunday school

"Let the children come to me; do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of God."

St. Mathew 19:14

Sunday school was conducted regularly after Holy Qurbana every Sunday. We follow the regular school year calendar and the curriculum is approved and published by the Sunday School Association of Indian Orthodox Church. Our Sunday school under the leadership of Principal Mr. Jiji Abraham, and Secretary Ms. Sangeetha Thomas our Children were able to grow a lot spiritually and enjoyed Sunday school tremendously. Children were able to develop a lot of their

talents and exhibited them during the various competitions held in the area and under the Diocese.

Apart from conducting regular Sunday school classes we conduct the annual Parumala Trophy exam, Graduation ceremonies, Christmas Programs, OVBS and also participate enthusiastically in all Area and Regional Sunday School events.

Our Sunday school consistently performed well at area and regional Sunday school competitions. This year our Sunday school has been crowned championship for fourth time straight the rolling trophy along with other trophies won by our Sunday school students are at display in the trophy display cabinet at our Church. It is a testimony to the commitment and dedication of our parents, teachers, principals and Students.

Special thanks go to Mr. Jiji Abraham who served as the Headmaster of our Church for last three years, dedicated service by Ms. Sangeetha Thomas, and unceasing hard work by 24 teachers and off course committed support from parents.

Photo Directory

Our last Church photo directory published in 2005 and managing committee sensed a need for a complete ultimate photo directory, and to update our information database to enhance connections and communication and to further the mission of your church. Since paying for a photographer is expensive we used volunteers to take members pictures after Sunday services this great service and initiative was led by Mr. Ligit Mathew Mr Jim Thomas and Mr. Shibu Mathew we truly appreciate their dedicated hard work and commitment. I like to extend many thanks to Mr. Anish Abraham for lending some of Studio Equipment. Our photo directory is almost ready and expected to see the result of this great effort in few weeks

Pledge of Loyalty

We pledge our loyalty to the Apostolic Throne of St. Thomas, our Valiya Bava His Holiness Moran Mar Baselios Marthoma Didimos I, and the Catholicose and Malankara Metropolitan His Holiness Moran Mar Baselios Marthoma Poulouse II. We also pledge our loyalty to the Diocesan Metropolitan His Grace Alexios Mar Eusebios and all other Bishops of Holy Episcopal Synod. We pray for their long life in service of the Lord and His Church.

Acknowledgments

I thank God Almighty for giving me the opportunity to serve as the secretary of this blessed parish. When we look back at the activities of the year, we can see the collective efforts and cooperation of everyone

who made it an enjoyable year for everyone. The clear commitment of so many of you to the life of our parish resulted in our successes listed in this report.

On behalf of Mr. Rusk Jacob, the Trustee, managing committee, and myself, I thank each one of you for your support and cooperation. Our parish is blessed to have Rev. Fr Raju M Daniel as the vicar. I express our sincere thanks and respect to Raju achen his sincere interests and efforts in providing the necessary guidance to the entire parish. Let us all continue to uphold our achen in our prayers.

Honestly, I have learned that Being Secretary of a Church is not a difficult job, if you have committed people around you. The managing committee members worked diligently as a team in the planning and execution of all the activities. Thank you for all your hard work with a tremendous spirit of cooperation and mutual respect. I thank the office bearers and members of MGOCSM, OCYM, FOCUS, Sunday school, Martha Mariam Samajam, the choir, and Acolytes for their cooperation and hard work. I earnestly thank Mr. Shaji V John and Mr Jacob Vazhachira, the Facility Managers for unconditional dedication for maintaining our facility in good condition. My appreciation and thanks goes out to all our members, for your tolerance, patience, understanding, and prayers. I like to also acknowledge that your words of comfort and compliments, and constructive criticisms always been a great source of my strength and support.

Let the intercession of St. Mary, St. Thomas, Mar Gregorios, Mar Divannasios, and all other church fathers bring blessings from God almighty.

Respectfully Submitted On Behalf Of Managing Committee

Abraham Varughese

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Secretary

St. Mary's Malankara Orthodox Valiyapally