



GREGORIAN GAZETTE

MAY 2006

VOL:III

ISSUE VI



From Death to Resurrection, from Resurrection to Ascension

George Achen

“CHRIST IS RISEN, INDEED HE IS RISEN” is the message, experience and proclamation of the Church during the season of the great Resurrection. See the witness of St. Paul and his companions at Antioch (Acts of the Apostles 13: 26 -39): "And we declare to you glad tidings -- that promise which was made to the fathers. God has fulfilled this for us their children, in that He has raised up Jesus. As it is also written in the second psalm: 'You are My Son; today I have begotten You.'" The risen Christ is the basis and also the hope of Christian life. Thus St. Paul says to Corinthians: “And if Christ is not risen, then our preaching is empty and your faith is also empty.”

The Church celebrates the feast of Resurrection in each occasion of her liturgical life. Being resurrected in Him and by Him, the Church itself becomes the RESURRECTED BEING. This is the call and mission of each true Christian.

Holy Week 2006

CONTD BACK PAGE

Saju Varghese

Holy Week services began Sunday, April 9, 2006 with Evening Prayer led by H.G. Dr. Thomas Mar Athanasius, Thomas Achen, George Achen, and Paul Achen. Thirumeni then led a meditation to help those who were present prepare themselves for the week set apart to partake in Jesus’ passion. The Evening Prayers of Monday and Tuesday were also led by Thirumeni, Thomas Achen, and Paul Achen, and just like Sunday, Thirumeni led the meditation. The meditations were conducted by Thirumeni in a class-
room as intended to heighten the atmosphere and attitude of the participants to be spiritually ready to participate in the prayers and services. The participants were not only remember, but through meditation and prayer,

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Photographs in this edition of the Gazette courtesy of :
 Holy Week-Elizabeth Varghese
 Football Tournament-Stanley Thomas and Sherene Panicker
 MGOCSM Service Project-Diju Skariah

Gazette Staff and Board
Fr. M. K. Thomas
Fr. George Pulikkottil
Liju Paul (Malayalam Ed.)
Liju Varghese (English Ed.)

- 7. Sunday** - Third Sunday after Easter
Reading— Acts 4:8-21, Hebrews 3:1-13, St. John 21:15-19
- 13. Saturday** – MMVS One Day Conference @ Church 10AM-4PM
Fun Night @ Church 5.30PM
- 14. Sunday** - Fourth Sunday after Easter
MMVS Lucky Drawing
Sunday School Bible Verse Competitions
Reading—1 John 5: 13-21, Hebrews 11:3-6, St. Luke 24: 13-35
- 19. Friday**– Sunday School Teachers' Meeting @ Church 7PM
- 20. Saturday**- IGNITE @ Church 1PM
Sunday school camp training @ Church 9AM—12PM
- 21. Sunday** - Fifth Sunday after Easter
Diocesan Level Competition entries due
Youth Group Monthly Meeting after Holy Qurbana
FOCUS Group Meeting after Youth Meeting
Reading - 1 Peter 3: 17-22, Hebrews 11: 32-40, St. Luke 9: 51-62
- 23. Tuesday**– Prayer Team Meeting 7.30PM
- 25. Thursday**– Ascension
Reading—Acts. 1: 4-11, Ephesians 4: 1-16, St. Luke 24: 36-53
- 27. Saturday**– OVBS Training @ Church 9.30AM-4.00PM
- 28. Sunday** - Sunday before Pentecost
Sunday School Final Exams
Reading - Acts. 21: 7-9, 1 Corinthians 7:1-2, 25-34, 9: 1-10,
St. John 17: 13-26

Planning Ahead

- June 3— MGOCSM Bible Study and Summer Conference Kick-Off @ St. Thomas Church 10AM—1PM
- June 17— Walk-A-Thon @ Chicago Park District 9AM
- June 22-25— Sunday School Summer camp
- June 25— Centralized exams for 5th, 8th and 10th Graders 12.30PM
- July 8— MGOCSM Picnic
- July 12-15— Family and Youth Conference
- July 21-22— OVBS at Church
- August 3-6— MGOCSM Summer Conference

FROM FRONT PAGE to immerse themselves in the reality and experience of Christ's passion.

On Wednesday night, Holy Qurbana was celebrated by Athanasius Thirumeni to remember the institution of the Holy Qurbana when Jesus, during the Jewish festival of the Passover, shared the bread and wine that He blessed and declared were His Body and Blood with His disciples, the first Holy Communion. On Thursday night, Thirumeni officiated the Feet Washing Service which commemorates the time when Jesus washed the feet of His disciples after the Passover Meal. It was a great moment when Jesus demonstrated his humility to His disciples, which is experienced by the Church through this service when the chief celebrant (Athanasius Thirumeni) washes the feet of twelve individuals (composed of acolytes, deacons, and priests). All the churches in the Chicago land area partook in this service as Fr. Sunoj from St. Mary's, Fr. Slomo Isaac and Dn. George Poovathoor from St. Thomas, and Fr. Daniel from St. Gregorios (Bellwood) all played integral roles in the blessed service.

On Friday morning, the services began at 9.00am with Morning Prayers, followed by the 3rd Hour, 6th Hour and 9th Hour Prayers. Following the 3rd Hour Prayers we process the wooden Cross, representing Jesus, to reenact the procession of Jesus to Golgotha. The Hours of Prayer, led by Thirumeni, brought our worshipping community through the day of the Crucifixion of our Lord utilizing the meditative hymns and prayers developed through the life and practice of the Church intended to elevate our spiritual participation in the sacrificial and redemptive act of our Lord Jesus Christ. **CONTD PG 5**



FROM PG 4 Through the physical acts of bowing down in full prostration to the Lord, these prayers incorporate not only our mental and spiritual dimension, but also submit our physical dimension to Him. Following the 9th Hour Prayer, Thirumeni led in the service of the Adoration of the Cross and then the burial of Christ, which occurred while the sanctuary was veiled by the curtain. Evening Prayer was prayed that evening, followed by Holy Qurbana Saturday morning to commemorate the time Jesus spent in Hades preaching to the departed souls.

The day of the Resurrection began with the Evening Prayer Saturday evening, with the curtains and the colors of the Church returning to the celebratory red from the somber black that clothed the Church throughout Holy Week. Following the Resurrection Morning Prayer Sunday, Athanasius Thirumeni took the Cross, representing Christ, and, with the sanctuary unveiled, lifted the Cross high and triumphantly announced the Resurrection of Jesus Christ. This was followed by the celebration of the Holy Qurbana with a special service during the prayers of intercession when the Cross is adored and Christ is praised and announced to the four quarters of the world (East, West, North, and South). Thanks to the spiritual leadership of Thirumeni and our achens, as well as the dedicated and faithful prayer and participation of the worshipping community, the Holy Week services, which culminated in the Feast of the Resurrection of our Lord, was blessed and hopefully a transformative experience for everyone.



Family Night—April 2006

On Saturday, April 22, 2006, our church held its first Family Night of 2006. The evening, with emcees Preethu Alexander, Jeslin Panicker and Eugene Yohannan, was a great success! The festivities started off at 5:30PM with evening prayer, followed by a potluck dinner provided by the aunties of the church. The program itself included a number of wonderful programs, including songs, a dance and a skit by some Sunday school students, with very entertaining interludes from the emcees, and ended promptly at 9PM. The program featured church members of all ages and overall was an enjoyable time for everyone who attended. Thanks to all the performers, coordinators, chefs and everyone else behind the scenes who helped make the evening! Let's all look forward to attending and participating in our next Family night, which will be held in the Fall.

2006 Family & Youth Conference

The 2006 Family & Youth Conference will be held from July 12th to 15th at Hudson Valley Resort & Conference Center, Kerhonkson, New York. His Holiness Baselios Marthoma Didymus I, Malankara Metropolitan and Catholicos of the East, and our Diocesan Bishops, His Grace Mathews Mar Barnabas and His Grace Zachariah Mar Nicholovos, along with His Grace Dr. Thomas Mar Makarios, will be leading the conference. Other leaders are Rev. Fr. Paul N. Tarazi, Professor of Old Testament at St. Vladimir's Seminary; Zachariah Mani, administrator of the Medical Mission, Pondicherry; and Tenny Thomas, graduate student at Union Theological Seminary, New York.

Youth and parents with children are encouraged to attend. For those who have not attended a family conference yet, come and attend this year's conference & experience the fellowship. Please bring your forms and payment by May 7th, so that we can get the early bird rate and have accommodations together on the same floor. For further information or with questions, please contact Sally Korah (630.832.7862) or Betty Gladstone (773.775.4867).

The Gregorian Gazette is looking for a columnist to write about current events around the world. If you are interested in at least writing one such article, please email info@gregoriangazette.com.



MMVS Silver Jubilee

One Day Conference

Saturday, May 13, 2006

Theme: "Holy Church, the Bride, the Most Holy"

Leader: Fr. George Pulikkottil **10AM-4PM**

Registration Deadline: May 7, 2006

On May 13, 2006, our church's chapter of the MMVS will be celebrating its Silver Jubilee. To commemorate this event, MMVS will be hosting a one day conference at church from 10AM-4PM, led by George Achen. Don't miss it!

As part of the celebrations, the **Lucky Drawing** will be held after church on Sunday, May 14th.

Divyabhodhanam

The culminating seminar for the book, *Deva Janam*, was held on Saturday, April 29, 2006 from 2-5PM at our church. Slomo Achen spoke at this event. Classes will resume starting May 21st, as scheduled, with the new book *Pravachakka Sandhasan (Prophetical Message)*. If you have any questions, please contact Mr. Paul Babu, Ms. Marykutty Mathews, or George Achen.

Missions Trip 2006

Last summer, for the first time in the history of the American Diocese and its Student Movement, 10 MGOCSM members participated in a Mission Trip to India. On the trip, they spent two weeks at St. Paul's Baliagram and Bhalabavan with the boys and girls of the institution teaching them, learning with them and spending much time in prayer. The second Mission Trip to India is scheduled for Saturday, May 27- Friday, June 16, 2006. Four young men will be participating in the trip this year, and one of them is our very own Steve Thomas. The locations for this year's trip include Pampady Dayara Boys Home and St. Mary's Boys Home, Thalacode. After the two week Mission trip, the group will visit various church institutions and organizations and spend time with the Church hierarchy. Binu Achen will be leading the group. Let us continue to keep this mission trip and the participants in our prayers, especially Steve.

MGOCSM Football Tournament

Stanley Thomas

On Saturday, April 8th, MGOCSM held its 5th annual Flag Football Tournament. Six teams participated in the all-day event, including our church's own **Oak Park Disciples (OPD)**. The main focus of OPD is to establish the team as one family united in Christ and to show our unity on the field when playing in the tournament.

The months leading up to the tournament was a time of practice, teamwork and fellowship. Through this, OPD achieved great success in the tournament by going all the way to the semifinals. Through the grace of God, there were no serious injuries and we were able to portray ourselves like our name suggests, as Disciples of Christ.

We would like to thank all the teams, the supporters and the tournament coordinators for making the 2006 MGOCSM Flag Football Tournament a success. We would also like to praise God for blessing us for five years as OPD and pray for many years to come.

OPD Roster: Alwin Joy, Besil Mammen, Binu Vaidyan, Charles Yohannan, Danny Varghese, Jason Thomas, Jinu Alex, John Mathew, Justin Joy, Libu Yohannan, Leju Yohannan, Nuni Mani, Remy Panicker, Rijo Thomas, Roy Mathew, Senin Paulose, Shawn Thomas, Sijin Mathew, Stanley Thomas, Steve Thomas, Sunil John

MGOCSM Day

Sunday, April 23, 2006 was the day designated by our Church as MGOCSM day. In commemoration of this day, the Chicago Region MGOCSM planned a weekend with service and a common Holy Qurbana celebration. As part of these activities, on Saturday, April 22nd, the Chicago Region MGOCSM had a community service project.

Approximately 25 members of the MGOCSM gathered at Marquette Park in Chicago for a day of helping make one of the busiest parks in the Chicago Park District ready for the summer. From 9am to 12pm, our MGOCSM members, with the leadership and help of George Achen, shoveled mulch into wheelbarrows which they delivered and spread around the playground to make the play areas safer for local children again. For MGOCSM day on April 23rd, the MGOCSM of the Chicago Region was invited to St. Mary's Church in Oak Lawn for an English service and lunch thereafter. It was a time to thank God for what He has done and continues to do for the MGOCSM here in Chicago and pray for his continual blessings on us. Special thanks goes out to the members of St. Mary's church for hosting this MGOCSM day celebration.

Guys Bible Study

On April 22nd, the Ignite Bible study held its first meeting at church. With Thomas Achen presiding over our meeting, a few of our church guys came out to learn more about what Ignite was and what its purpose was in our church. For those who might not know, Ignite is a Bible study for our guys in high school and above. The purpose of the Bible study is to unite all our guys through study of scripture and fellowship with each other. We want to foster and develop relationships that will help us truly become men of God. If you missed the last meeting...NO

PROBLEM! We are having our **NEXT MEETING ON MAY 20th at 1PM in our church** and we encourage all of our guys to attend! Come for the Bible study and stay for the fellowship. Feel free to bring anyone who is interested and don't forget your BIBLES! If you have any questions please contact Steve Thomas at 847.

609.7816 or e-mail ignite.biblestudy@gmail.com. Hope to see you on the 20th!

Campus Ministry

Loyola Campus Ministry met this past Thursday, May 4, 2006 at a nearby Chipotle from 8:30p.m.-10:15p.m. Loyola students, Junior, Nina George; Sophomore, Anup Alexander; and Freshmen Rosmi Itteera and Jisha Panicker were joined by UIC students Sophomore, Reena Abraham and Freshman, Anju Skaria along with George Achen and Saju Varghese. After dinner and the end of the Bulls game, topics ranging from school and upcoming finals to the Gospel of Judas were covered. Please contact Anup Alexander (630.915.6349) for more information about the Loyola Campus Ministry. A great time was had by all and we are looking forward to starting up again at the beginning of the next academic year!

Fun Day Announcement

Saturday, May 13, 2006 will be our first Fun Day event: Movie Night at the Gregorian Theater (basement of the church!!) at 5.30PM. The movie will be "**CHRONICLES OF NARNIA.**" Tickets are \$2.00 each and will include movie, food and drinks. There will be sign up sheets at church on Sunday, May 7th. You can also contact the Fun Day coordinators to sign up.

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Jocelyn Varghese jvlove3@yahoo.com

Julie Jokutty julie_19@hotmail.com 847.529.7459



FOCUS Group Meeting—May 21st, contact Sibyl Thomas for more information.

Sports Ministry

Softball will begin the last weekend of May, details to follow. Please contact Libu Yohannan or Justin Joy for more information.

Sunday School
Learning to Live the Life

g was held on Saturday, April 22nd at 3.00PM at church. The was "Current Culture & Life - Past, Present and Future from a e" led by Tiju Joseph. We compared the lifestyle of the early Church and today. Particularly, the concept of sharing of wealth was discussed. We should be able to view the whole humanity as one body.

2. Song competitions were held on Sunday, April 23rd. Around 38 students participated. The song and speech (held previously on April 2nd) competitions were well coordinated by Jason Thomas.

3. The Central Region OVBS Training Camp will be held at our Church on Saturday, May 27th from 9.30 AM to 4.00 PM. The actual OVBS will be conducted on July 21st and 22nd at our church. Arun Varghese is the director of OVBS and Susan Abraham is the assistant director.

4. The Parent-Teacher coordinator program is working well. Classes are getting together and developing fellowship.

5. The Summer Camp for 2nd - 8th graders is heating up. The camp coordinators are meeting and program details are being planned. The program includes Bible study, arts & crafts, life of the Church, theatre, prayer, Holy Qurbana, boat ride, scavenger hunt and a camp fire. 42 students have already registered. Excitement is in the air!

As a reminder, the camp will be held at Conference Point near Lake Geneva in Wisconsin from Thursday, June 22nd thru Sunday, June 25th led by Aju Semmassan and Gregory Semmassan. The training session for the camp counselors is planned for Saturday, May 20th from 9.00AM to 12.00PM. Please keep the camp in your prayers.

6. The next Teachers' Meeting will be held on Friday, May 19th at church at 7.00PM.

Prayer Requests—Please send your prayer requests to www.1church.org/prayerteam.htm. We will join you in bringing your requests before God. Questions or prayer requests? Please contact:

Julie Polachira-815.295.2469; jpolachira26@yahoo.com

Stacy Thomas-847.722.0446; stacy_thomas79@yahoo.com

Original articles from church members are always solicited, please submit your articles to info@gregoriangazette.com.

MESSIAH IS COMING BIBLE TRIVIA!!

PROVIDE THE NAME OF THE BOOK THE PROPHECY COMES FROM

1. Which book of the Bible prophesies that the Messiah would be born of the seed

of a woman?

“Behold, virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.”

2. The Messiah would be born in Bethlehem.

-Daniel -Isaiah -Micah -None of the Above

3. “His ministry would begin in Galilee.”

4. True or False: Zechariah foretells that the Messiah would enter Jerusalem on a Donkey?

5. His disciples remembered that it was written, “The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up.”

6. That he would speak in parables.

-Isaiah -Psalms -Malachi -None of the Above

7. True or False: Isaiah’s prophecy that messiah would be a stumbling stone is fulfilled in 1 Peter

8. Who prophesied that he would be betrayed for thirty pieces of silver?

-Isaiah -Zechariah -Micah -None of the Above

9. Where are we told that his hands and feet would be pierced?

-Psalms -Ezekiel -Haggai -Jeremiah

HAVE FUN SEARCHING THROUGH THE WORD OF GOD FOR THE ANSWERS!!

Contest is open to Sunday School students only. If multiple submissions have the same number of correct answers, the prize winner will be selected at random. Please submit in the Gregorian Gazette Submissions box in the library.

MAY BIRTHDAYS

3. Harsha Paul

5. David Molayil

6. Amanda Korah

6. Remy Panicker

7. Jennifer John

10. Pinky Chacko



FROM FRONT PAGE For this purpose, the Sundays between Resurrection and Ascension are especially set apart for meditation on the presence of the resurrected Christ amongst his disciples. During this season, through the readings from the Gospels, the Acts of the Apostles and the Epistles, we hear the witnesses of the apostles of the things that happened from Resurrection to Ascension at Jerusalem. We not only fully believe and acknowledge this account by reading and affirming it each year, but also, teach the fundamentals of Faith to the coming generation through this significant liturgical act. There can be no life in a person, who is not celebrating this reality of Resurrection.

In death and burial, our material body identifies with the earth and decays; whereas in resurrection, it transforms to a state of immaterial and receives a momentum contra to earth. We no longer come down, but go up! He has descended into the earth, so that we can ascend into heaven! Hence St. Paul says to the Colossians: "If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is sitting at the right hand of God. Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth. For you died and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ *who is* our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory." (Colossians 3: 1-4) The heart and thought of a true Christian must be on the resurrected Christ. Christ and Christian should not be two realities any longer; rather One unique entity, the resurrected Being. This is the core point of Christian life. Thus Jesus prayed at Gethsemane, "that they all may be One, as You, Father, *are* in Me, and I in You; that they also may be One in Us that the world may believe that You sent Me." (John 17: 21) The Church realizes this experience of Resurrection and transformation when she prays: "Let us lift up our minds, understanding, and hearts to where our Lord Jesus Christ sits at the right hand of the God the Father"

Ascension thus becomes the logical conclusion of the state of Resurrection. Being resurrected, hence means being in the process of ascension. Through the experience of resurrection, let us set our goal forward to ascending. Ascension does not mean going away from this world, but making the world, Creation, transformed in Christ. Then there would no longer be any fear of death, material limitations and lust; rather abundant Life, voluminous Grace and eternal Peace. The meaning of the Lord's prayer, "Our Father in heaven, Hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as *it is* in heaven," becomes more clear with this understanding.

May God bless us, to be transformed from Death to Resurrection and from Resurrection to Ascension.

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