

February 2010

# Bodhini

An Annual Publication of O.S.S.A.E - OKR, Bangalore District Sunday Schools



Presentation of Jesus at the Temple (2nd February)



H. H. Moran Mar Baselios Mar Thoma Didymus I  
(Catholicose & Malankara Metropolitan)



H. G. Abraham Mar Epiphanios  
(Asst. Metropolitan, Bangalore Diocese)



H. B. Paulose Mar Millithios  
(Catholicose Designate)



H. G. Dr. Yakob Mar Irenaios  
(President, O.S.S.A.E - OKR)

## Bangalore District Sunday School Calendar - 2010

Date	Event	Venue (Church)
21.02.2010	Teachers Workshop	St. Stephen's Church, Vijayanagar
21.03.2010	Submission of Students List	
25.04.2010	Annual General Body Meeting	St. George Church, Indiranagar
21.05.2010 to 23.05.2010	Students' Camp - 2010	St. Gregorios School, Kengeri
26.06.2010	Executive Committee Meeting	St. Baselios Church, Marthahalli
25.07.2010	Half Yearly Examination	All Churches
22.08.2010	Memory Verses Competition	All Churches
19.09.2010	Essay Competition	All Churches
02.10.2010	Elocution and Singing Competition	Region-1: St. Thomas Church, Bangalore East Region-2: St. Mary's Valiyapally, Jalahalli
24.10.2010	Quiz Competition	St. Gregorios Cathedral, Hosur Road
06.11.2010	Executive Committee Meeting	St. Mary's Church, Begur
28.11.2010	Annual Examination (Classes Prep. to IX)	All Churches
12.12.2010	Annual Examination (Classes X and XII)	St. Gregorios Cathedral, Hosur Road
26.01.2011	Annual Day (Year 2010)	-

### AGEWISE GROUPING FOR 2010:

Sub-Junior ▶ Those born in 2003 and below  
Intermediate ▶ Those born in 1997, 1998 & 1999

Junior ▶ Those born in 2000, 2001 & 2002  
Senior ▶ Those born in 1992, 1993, 1994, 1995 & 1996

For private circulation only.

## From the Desk of the Vice President



Sunday School is one of the prime spiritual organisations in our church, where we focus on teaching and guiding our next generation to the right faith, belief and discipline. By the grace of God Almighty and with the prayers of all our Saints, we have successfully completed one more academic year with flying colours. Let this annual edition of *bodhini* help to appraise the recently concluded Sunday School academic year – 2009, to congratulate the students and the achievers, and to commend the noteworthy efforts put in by our teachers, parents and other well wishers.

while sitting beneath the Bodhi tree.

The recently concluded academic year was significantly different from the previous years. Some of the new initiatives include a structured lesson planner, half yearly examinations and region-wise competitions. The regular classes were started in the month of January and concluded in November with the annual examinations. The main competitions such as Elocution, Singing and Group Song were conducted at regional level to improve and facilitate greater student participation.

First time in the history of Bangalore Sunday schools, a two day offsite programme, Students' Camp – 2009 was organised to grow in the faith of Orthodoxy, develop self confidence and leadership potential and to know and share the spirit of Christian childhood.

To align with the curriculum prescribed by the O.S.S.A.E headquarters for Memory Verse and Biblical Quiz, the books "*Golden Verses*" and "*Biblical General Knowledge Guide*" were published under the auspices of Bangalore District Sunday Schools. It is heartening to note that these books have been well received by the Sunday School community around the world.

This was made possible by the active involvement and support of the Orthodox

community as sponsors, volunteers, contributors and reviewers. May God bless all those who have directly or indirectly supported these endeavours.

I am grateful to the Almighty God for His benevolence in making this a glorious year for us. I take this opportunity to remember with gratitude the guidance extended by O.S.S.A.E-OKR headquarters under the leadership of Rev. Fr. Dr. Reji Mathew, STOTS, Nagpur. I appreciate and thank the Vicars of all the Parishes for their blessings and active support to the Sunday school activities.

The Editorial Board of *bodhini* with Mr. Thomas George as the Chief Editor deserves a special mention for publishing such a marvellous journal within a short span of time.

May God bless all our teachers to give proper guidance and vision to our students in the academic year ahead.

Your Shepherd in Christ,

Fr. V. P. Idichandy

Vice President,  
Bangalore Sunday Schools

### CONTENTS

Message from Vice President	1
Editorial: Be Enlightened	2
A Palm Sunday Service with "shorter" Palm Leaves	3
When entering the Church...	4
Infant Baptism	5
Message from Fr. Dr. O. Thomas	6
Our Wealth... the Story of Eddie	6
Haiti Tragedy & the Book of Job	7
Competition Winners – 2008	9
Prize Winning Essay (Junior)	11
Reminiscences of Students' Camp – 2009	13
Bangalore District Publications	16
Prize Winning Essay (Intermediate)	17
Annual Report – 2009	19
Each Child Has An Angel	20
Championship & Rolling Trophies – 2009	21
Region-wise Competitions: At a Glance	22
Prize Winning Essay (Senior)	23
Competition Winners – 2009	24
Kidz Komer	26
Story of St. Stephen	28



*editorial*

## Be Enlightened

With immense pleasure and gratitude, we present the new edition of the erstwhile OKR-Bangalore District Herald – *bodhini*. This annual publication is a representation of our Sunday School activities in Bangalore District. While we outline the key activities, the intention is also to advance the knowledge and wisdom of our children and youngsters in the related contexts.

We have chosen a unique name for this annual herald "*bodhini*", which means 'something enlightening'. The prophet Isaiah records the kind of enlightenment of Lord God in Isaiah 40:14; "Whom did He consult for his enlightenment, and who taught him the path of justice, and taught him knowledge, and showed him the way of understanding?" This must be the role model description, which we should embed into the minds of our students. Like this, by seeing our students, by seeing the faith and spirit of our students, others should ask "whom did our students consult for their enlightenment". The answer is none other than the LIVING GOD.

While we coach and mentor our students, let us also pray to God, like St. Paul prayed for the saints and faithful of Ephesus, that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you a spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of him, having the eyes of your hearts enlightened, that you may know what is the hope to which He has called you (Ephesians 1:18). With these preliminary thoughts, we present the first edition of *bodhini* to all of you.

In this inaugural edition, we have included messages by our beloved Vice President Idichandy Achen, the O.S.S.A.E-OKR Director, Rev. Fr. Dr. Reji Mathew and the O.S.S.A.E. Director General, Rev. Fr. Dr. O. Thomas. We gratefully acknowledge our Ex-Vice President Rev. Fr. Thomas Oommen, for sending an article on Infant Baptism, which is one of the most difficult topics for the students.

We pay our heartfelt reverence to one of

our eminent bishops H. G. Dr. Paulose Mar Gregorios of blessed memory and humbly present an inspiring article written by Thirumeni, "Each Child Has An Angel".

Apart from the Sunday School annual report, we have included the prize winning essays of this year and also a crisp summary of the first ever Students' Camp, held in Bangalore.

The list of all individual winners and the rolling trophy winners of the year 2008 and 2009 are included in this edition. Hope our preparatory and primary students will enjoy the Kidz Korner. Also the story of Eddie and the story of the first Christian martyr St. Stephen.

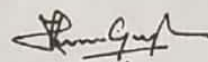
We thank Almighty God for all the blessings that He has showered on us. We take this opportunity to thank the OSSAE-OKR President H. G. Dr. Yakob Mar Irenaios Thirumeni and our diocesan bishop H. G. Abraham Mar Epiphanius Thirumeni for all the support and encouragement for this initiative. We are indebted to our district Vice President Rev. Fr. V. P. Idichandy for the guidance and advice given from time to time. The newly elected Sunday School Director of our diocese Mr. K. C. Thomas and the district Secretary Ms. Biji John had been supporting the various activities throughout the year.

We are also grateful to the respected Vicars of our churches in Bangalore district and the Staff Council members for their constant guidance and support towards the Sunday School fraternity.

With humble prayers we present the first edition of *bodhini* to each one of you. Kindly bear with us for any shortcomings.

Happy Reading!

For the Editorial Board,



Thomas George, Chempakasseril

**"Educating children should be holistic process, and not just one of stuffing their heads with information. We have to address the needs of complete development because the body and mind are linked."**

**– Sri Sri Ravi Shankar**

## A Palm Sunday Service with "shorter" Palm Leaves

By: Rev. Fr. Dr. Reji Mathew

I want to share some thoughts on the training of our children both in secular Schools and in Sunday School (SS).

**Education in Secular School and in Sunday School:** In the cover story of the Nov. 27, 2009 issue of 'India Today' Mr. Azim H. Premji says; "if we want to transform our destiny, we will have to change what we teach and how we teach. Schools need to refocus their priorities. Teachers need to move from teaching-for-exams to teaching-for-understanding. The focus of schools has to change from simply preparing children for exams to helping them learn skills they will use in their lives".

Even though our educational boards are adopting various changes, we are not up to the standards maintained internationally. I had been attracted by the educational system in Germany during my stay in the nineties. Once the children complete the 4<sup>th</sup> standard they would be divided into 3 groups as per their talents and aptitudes: the highly intelligent students were transferred to *Gymnasium* from where they could go to the universities and will become future professors, doctors, engineers and scientists; the second group were promoted to the *Berufsschule* where vocational training was given and they are brought up as clerks, accountants and bureaucrats; the third batch were sent to the *Hauptschule* which gave more emphasis on arts, crafts and hand

works and gave birth to good carpenters, masons etc. Unfortunately we have only a monolithic educational system in Indian schools; a child can be either in or out. There is little chance for a choice as per his/her talents and aptitudes.

If this is the case of secular education, what is the condition of our SS? What all virtues do we want to impart in a child? Our attempt is to teach him/her lead a meaningful life as a child of God. We should give more importance for values like love, truthfulness and obedience. Our children should grow in the faith in Jesus Christ and they should learn to respect the dignity of others. Those who receive the SSFC certificate should have a minimum knowledge about the history, theology and faith of the Orthodox Church of India. They should also develop a good behaviour and know how to live peacefully with others in family and in society. Let us take the major issues of our SS one after the other.

**Sunday School Syllabus:** The revision of the syllabus is an important aspect. The text books of our SS should be more suitable to the environment. During the current revision of curriculum at the OKR level, we have been cautious on the following aspects.

The size of the material which we prepare should suit the time allotted for it. Even though there are 52 Sundays in a year we will be getting 30 Sundays at the

most. We will not be able to take more than an hour on each Sunday. The number of lessons should not exceed 25 so that the teachers get enough time for revisions and exams.

It is a positive factor that a good number of people who work at SS are teachers in the secular schools. But they will not be in a position to prepare lessons. So we ask our theologians and historians to write down lessons. Means, the curriculum is prepared by a group of people, who have got minimum exposure to the class rooms as a teacher. Since the people who draft the lessons and those who teach are of two different academic and pedagogical streams, the syllabus can become more complicated. Therefore we have included some teachers also in the group and we provide them a guideline, along with a finalised list of lessons..

The content of a lesson should be narrated interestingly and accompanied by brief points, which students can memorise. Bible references are to help both the child and the teacher to do the home work. The pattern of the book should be compatible with child's mental set up. Eg: we provide games and puzzles in accordance with the topics mentioned in the lesson for lower classes.

**Internal Assessment of Students:** Note that, those who get high ranks in the SS are usually the rank



Reji Achen is the O.S.S.A.E-OKR Director and the Principal of STOTS, Nagpur.

holders of the secular school. The back benchers of the latter are weak in the SS too. We need to be reminded that, the primary objective of SS system is to develop the personality of a child and to bring them in a spiritual atmosphere.

Educational Psychologists say that a child's talents cannot be measured by terminal and annual examinations only. We have to develop ways and means so that the whole personality of a child is assessed. It is not bad to give a weightage, say for example 5 marks, for the presence of the child in the Church and class room on Sundays. If one has got only 80% attendance, give them only 4 marks. Another point which deserves a scoring is the character of a child. Children having good habits should get a mark for it, because our objectives justify this. Co-curricular competitions like elocution, singing, quiz etc. should also have a grace mark.

Some children may be good in presenting a project even though they cannot write the examinations fruitfully.

... Continued to page # 17

## When entering the Church...

Upon entering the church we perform *three symbolic acts*.

### [1] Remove our foot wear

It demonstrates that the place we enter is Holy, consecrated for worship and cannot be desecrated by any means. When the angel of the Lord appeared to Moses on Mount Horeb, God wanted to put-off his shoes from his feet, for the ground is Holy. [Exodus 3:5]. It also helps us to maintain the place clean and neat.

### [2] Bow our head

As we enter the church we bow our heads before His Presence with great humility. The realization of the unseen presence of Almighty, the Holy Trinity, in the house of prayer prompts us to bow our head before God.

### [3] Make the sign of the Cross

It reminds us that we have been saved by the cross of Christ. Holding three fingers together, symbolizing the Trinity, touch the forehead and move down to the chest signifying the descent of the Son of God from heaven to earth for our salvation. Taking the fingers from left arm to the right arm signifies the horizontal arm of the cross, also signifies the fact that we who were on the left as children of darkness or Satan are now brought to the right side of God as children of light.

In order to bring to our mind the full implications of making the sign of the cross, we must do it slowly and thoughtfully. Let us not do it mechanically ■

– *Shalin Susan Varghese*

### CONGRATULATIONS



**Mr. K. C. Thomas**  
Director  
OSSAE-OKR Bangalore Diocese

## Liturgical Cycle

Our Liturgical cycle begins at the end of October or the beginning of November (the first Sunday on or after 30<sup>th</sup> October) and is divided into six seasons.

1. Koodosh Etho to Yeldho (Christmas)
2. Yeldho to Kothine (First Sunday of the Great Lent)
3. Kothine to Kymtha (Easter)
4. Kymtha to Pentecost
5. Pentecost to the Feast of the Cross (14<sup>th</sup> September)
6. Feast of the Cross to Koodosh Etho

*We believe in one Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church.*

## Sunday School Regions in Bangalore District

### REGION-1

- 1) St. Gregorios Cathedral SS, Hosur Road
- 2) St. George Church SS, Indiranagar
- 3) Mar Yuhanon Mamdhana Church SS, K. R. Puram
- 4) St. Baslios Church SS, Marthahalli
- 5) St. Thomas Church SS, Bangalore East
- 6) St. Mary's Church SS, Begur

### REGION-2

- 1) St. Mary's Valiyapally SS, Jalahalli
- 2) St. Gregorios Church SS, Tumkur
- 3) St. Gregorios Church SS, Mathikere
- 4) Mar Gregorios Church SS, Hebbal
- 5) St. Dionysius Church SS, Dasarahalli
- 6) St. Stephen's Church SS, Vijayanagar

*All examinations and competitions will be conducted at regional level from the academic year 2010 onwards.*

## Infant Baptism

Baptism is one of the sacraments of our church. The infant baptism is a practice in the main stream of Christianity. Only a few among the Christians would ask whether it is biblically based, whether the children can receive the Holy Spirit and whether they have the belief in Jesus Christ.

Absence of passages in the New Testament about infant baptism should be understood as follows. New Testament writings are not complete accounts of what Jesus did and said during his earthly life (St. John 20:30-31, 21:25). The letters of St. Paul also deal with questions which are debated during those days. Infant Baptism was then not such a debatable issue. Granted that in the beginning of the church only the grownups were baptised, it does not mean that the children should not be baptised. For example at the beginning of the Jewish custom of circumcision Abraham was 99 years old and Ishmael was 13 years old (Genesis 17:24-25), but Issac the son of Abraham was circumcised on the 8<sup>th</sup> day (Genesis 21:24-25). Our Lord also undergone the same as on the 8<sup>th</sup> day (St. Luke 2:21). So here the Jewish circumcision is our model. Even today the Jewish infants are circumcised on the 8<sup>th</sup> day.

If our baptism is in the place of Jewish circumcision, we have to accept this reality.

While some Christian's say that the candidate for baptism should accept Jesus Christ as saviour and then should be baptised, but Jesus says "You did not choose me, but I choose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide (St. John 15:16).

To the question, can a child receive the Holy Spirit?, the answer is "Yes". As the disciples rebuked the mothers who brought children to Jesus, He said "Let the children come to me and do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of God" (St. Luke 18:16). The disciples were also asked to be like the infants, if they would like to enter the kingdom of God, moreover the Prophets Isaiah (Isaiah 49:1) and Jeremiah (Jeremiah 1:5) were called by God as they were in the womb of their mothers. John the Baptist also received the holy spirit in his mother's womb (St. Luke 1:15-44).

Any person can be saved because of the faith of others, if the paralytic was healed by the faith of the four men who carried him (St. Mark 2:5), the servant of the centurion by the

latter's faith (St. Matt. 9:13) and the demon possessed, by the faith of his father (St. Mark 9:24), then why cannot the infant be saved by the faith of their parents and Godfather or Godmother. It is not Biblically or theoretically wrong to baptise infants, therefore the Apostolic church baptise them. The baptism of families narrated in the Acts of Apostles, we read that Cornelius (10:48), Lydia (16:15), the Jailor (16:33) and Crispas (18:8) were baptised along with their household, which include children. Like the parents give their children the best of everything before they ask for it, it is not wise to restrict them from baptism.

Thus Baptism is an important sacrament of our church. We believe that by baptism alone, we are transferred to the realms of the kingdom of God and will be saved. We the believers in Jesus Christ and children of God also may grow in the realm of salvation ■

- Rev. Fr. Thomas Oommen

*Thomas Achen was the Vice President for Bangalore Sunday Schools. Currently Achen is serving as the Asst. Vicar of St. Mary's Orthodox Church, Malaysia.*



**Therefore let us leave the elementary teachings about Christ and go on to maturity, not laying again the foundation of repentance from acts that lead to death, and of faith in God, instruction about baptisms, the laying on of hands, the resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment.**

**Hebrews 6:1-2**

## Message from Rev. Fr. Dr. O. Thomas

In the Orthodox Church teachings, Body, Mind and Spirit are considered as a single unit like the Holy Trinity. The existence of individual is by the healthy maintenance of all the three together. Sunday school teachers have to touch all the three dimensions of the children. On this aspect a Sunday school teachers have to play more vital role than that of a secular teacher. We should tune ourselves to adapt the moods, desperations and aspirations of the children.

All the six days of the week children are burdened with lessons, home work, project works and what not? On Sunday when they come to Sunday school, try to take them into to your confidence. Don't scare them. Talk to them just as one among them when you are imparting knowledge to them about the moral values, ethics, and discipline. Make sure they are not rebelling against values and we the teachers and elders, should be a model in all respect.

Understand the children;

build a rapport with them so that they can come to you in time of need. Listen to their problems and day to day difficulties. Try to be a good friend to them at the same time don't forget your responsibilities. Introduce Jesus as their friend and saviour.

Impart a spiritual vision in them. Print and visual media are occupying major share of their time and influencing their personal life, those influences are making them to disbelieve in God, Bible and the ultimate sacrifice of Jesus Christ for our redemption. You are called to a very great responsibility. Try to grow up faithful to your calling. Try to develop the personality of the children to enable them to live in Christ's ways in this commercialised world. How they relate to themselves with society, parents, siblings, peers and others are important.

For the children most of Sunday morning is occupied by entrance coaching. Psalm 127 says: Unless the Lord build the house they labour in vain. It is in vain that you rise up early and go late to rest,



eating the bread of anxious toil; for He gives to His beloved sleep. Groom your children to be beloved to Him.

We are created in the image of God. So we should take guidance from God to keep this temple of God clean, useful and should not allow evil to dwell ■

*Speech made by Rev. Fr. Dr. O. Thomas (Director General, O.S.S.A.E) during the meeting addressed to students, parents and teachers of St. Stephen's Sunday School, on 8<sup>th</sup> January 2010.*

Compiled by:

*– Chacko Tharakan  
St. Stephen's Church,  
Vijayanagar*

**"I believe the Bible is the best gift God has ever given to man. All the good from the Saviour of the world is communicated to us through this book."**

**– Abraham Lincoln**

## Our Wealth... the Story of Eddie

Eddie Ogan is a grandmother from Colville, Washington. She wrote about an experience when she was 14 years old as she and two sisters were living with their widowed mom:

*A month before Easter, the pastor of our church announced that a special Easter offering would be taken to help a poor family. He asked everyone to save and give sacrificially. When we got home, we talked about what we could do. We decided to buy 50 pounds of potatoes and live on them for a month. This would allow us to save \$20 of our grocery money for the offering.*

*... Continued to page # 20*



## Haiti Tragedy and the Book of Job

On 12<sup>th</sup> January, just before sunset a powerful 7 magnitude earthquake rocked the island country of Haiti. You have seen the images of suffering and the aftermath on the internet and TV. The horrible irony is that this is considered to be the poorest country in the western hemisphere. Already at the bottom economically and now they have been shoved through the floor. As I watched TV, listened to people in our community, attended prayer vigils, and met with other clergy, I have been struck by the questions: Why? Why do such things happen? How can there be such evil? Where is God? What can I do? How will they ever recover?

Questions are so hard to answer in tragic times. But we ask questions nonetheless. In the Bible you would find that one book has a more disproportionate number of questions than any other. Which book is that? It is the book of Job. Job has over 330 questions in its 42 chapters. Even the book of Psalms with its 150 chapters has only 160. So why does the book of Job have so many questions? Because this book deals with a horrible tragedy.

Here is what happened. Job is a righteous man. Greater than all others. A hedge, a barrier, is set around him, his family, and his business. Suddenly, without warning, and for no reason other than his being blameless and upright, his family and business is wiped out. In the middle of the business of everyday life two rogue groups conduct a raid taking away Job's livestock and putting his servants to the sword. Then his family is lost in a freak accident when a mighty wind sweeps in from the desert, strikes the four corners of the house, collapses it, and all are lost. It was unwarranted. It was unconscionable.

A very large hit and hit hard. In many ways the events of this past week seem eerily echoed in the story of Job. Why is there then such a similarity between the events of Job and the events of this past week? It is because, even though 4000 years separate the two events, life, and I mean the things that make life meaningful, have not changed at all. Not even over 4 millennia. We all must make a living. We all love our family. We all want security. We all want a home. So what do we do in tragedy?

We do what Job did when he learned of his loss. We mourn. He was silent when he received the first two reports that his business and livestock had been wiped out. But when he received the news that his children were lost... He got up and tore his robe. Then, he fell on his knees and mourned: "Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked I will return." In other words, everything that had meaning in his life was gone. As he came into this world so Job felt he was leaving it: Barren. As the news poured in, I saw images of children lying in the streets alone crowds thronging past them. The news has shown us their faces and told their stories and the

mourning has rippled across the country. We mourn for every family lost. Every family torn apart. We weep for Haiti. We mourn because of their loss. Mourning is part of a powerful process. It undergirds our strength and reveals our soul. It helps us reach out in compassion to those who hurt.

After we have mourned, we start asking questions: How can I help? Where do we go from here? Where do we stand now? And perhaps we also wonder: How can we stop this from happening again? That last question is the tricky one. I want to look at that for a moment.

Job had a hedge of protection. A barrier which God erected but then took it away allowing Satan to have his way with Job. It is the Old Testament's way of saying even the most righteous and best of this earth are not immune to evil. Just because we are good does not mean we are protected from bad. Not in this life. The writer of Job understood this. But Job himself could not. He was too caught up in his grief and loss. Neither could Job's friends comprehend what had happened. His three friends come to him and say, in effect, only those who have done evil perish. Those who are righteous are never destroyed. They thought Job had done some terribly evil thing and this is why he was suffering. God has lifted the barrier to punish you, they said. They of course are wrong.

I was struck this week by seeing a remark made by someone on this tragedy. He appeared to assign the blame for this tragic earthquake on the Haitian people's pact with the devil made by the founders who wanted the country to be free from French control. I don't want to go into a long narrative on Haitian history but a little background is needed here. 200 years ago the French were using Haitian people as slaves.

A fellow by the name of Boukman was a voodoo priest and he led a group of Haitians in a revolt. He started this revolt by conducting a ceremony where a pig was sacrificed and the blood of the pig was spread among the participants who, caught up by the "spirits" swore to kill all the French people on the island. After many deaths the French captured Boukman and beheaded him and crushed the rebellion. Historians consider this to be the start of the Haitian revolution. So, is that remark right?

Or maybe we should ask: Is the interpretation of the words, that the earthquake is the fault of the Haitian people because they made a pact with the devil, is that correct?

No. God is not, in 2010, punishing one million people because Boukman, in 1791, cut a pig's throat and made some voodoo pact with the devil. Really, who believes... ■

Source: *Part of the speech made by an international Preacher.*



St. Gregorios Orthodox Cathedral  
Hosur Road



Very. Rev. T. K. Thomas  
Cor-Episcopa

St. Gregorios Cathedral Sunday School

Headmaster : M. K. Uthup

Teachers: Binu Philip, Dr. Jacob N. Abraham, Prasad Samuel, Geetha Jacob, Nimmi Jacob, Mariamma George, Meera Abraham, V. T. Thomas, Miriam George, Leena Joy, Accamma Chacko, Lily Jacob, George Easow, Mary Varghese, Biji John

Number of Students : 215



St. Mary's Orthodox Valiyapally  
Jalahalli



Rev. Fr. K. M. Jacob

St. Mary's Orthodox Valiyapally Sunday School

Headmaster : Moncy T. Thomas

Teachers: N. M. Achenkunju, Ancy George Susan Abraham, Jisha Joshua, Jiju Joshua, Diana Kunjumon, Sumi Saji, Juna Jacob, Melba Mathew, Susan Jacob, Alice George, Nisha Binu, Ancil George, Usha Joseph, Jiby John, Dr. Anna Isaac, Omana Ninan, P. J. Thomas, Kuriakose, Nithin Rajan

Number of Students : 197



St. Thomas Orthodox Church  
Bangalore East



Rev. Fr. Mani K. Varghese

St. Thomas Orthodox Church Sunday School

Headmaster : Jose Varghese

Teachers: K. C. Thomas, George Panackamattom, Mary Cherian, Sherley John, Ruben Jacob, Hardy Alexander, Mareena Alexander, Thomson Baby, Somi Stephen, Shilin Mathew, Mary Philip, Susan Varghese Panicker, Jessy John, Sheeja Viju, Suja Thomas, Shyni Varghese

Number of Students : 142



Mar Gregorios Orthodox Church  
Hebbal



Rev. Fr. Dr. Mathews M.  
Daniel

Mar Gregorios Orthodox Sunday School

Headmistress : Grace Varghese

Teachers: Biju Prasad, Sandeep Pullicott, Suni Eapen, Sarasu Rajan, Liya M.G., Liji M.G., Sheena Johnson, Koshy George, Marykutty Philipose, Ani C.J., Betty Biju, Latha Thomas, Sweetly Pran, Alice Monilal, Renu Benny, Y. Georgekutty, Sheeja Philip, Jolly Joseph, Sherly Stephen, Jobi Jacob, Lucy A. Koshy, Susan George

Number of Students : 88

## Competition Winners List – 2008

### ESSAY COMPETITION (Overall)

#### JUNIOR Group

- I : Sonu Mary Alex, St. George Church, Indiranagar  
 II : Nevin Cherian, St. George Church, Indiranagar,  
 Jijiss Basil Joy, St. Gregorios Cathedral

#### INTERMEDIATE Group

- I : Reshma E. Kurian, St. Gregorios Cathedral  
 II : Nissin T. Kunjumon, St. Gregorios Cathedral,  
 Christene Elizabeth, St. Mary's Valiyapally, Jalahalli

#### SENIOR Group

- I : Reshma Abraham, St. Gregorios Cathedral  
 II : Neethu Sara Alex, St. George Church, Indiranagar  
 III : Mariam George, St. Thomas Church, Bangalore East

### ELOCUTION (Overall)

#### JUNIOR Group

- I : Sonu Mary Alex, St. George Church, Indiranagar  
 II : Jerin Gregory Benny, Mar Gregorios Church, Hebbal  
 III : Aharon Abraham Maret, St. Mary's Valiyapally, Jalahalli,  
 Anish Maria Koshy, Mar Gregorios Church, Hebbal,  
 Linda Vincent, St. Dionysius Church, Dasarahalli

#### INTERMEDIATE Group

- I : Merryl Biju, St. Baselios Church, Marthahalli  
 II : Roshni George, St. George Church, Indiranagar  
 III : Shilpa M. Varghese, St. George Church, Indiranagar

#### SENIOR Group

- I : Ashin Paul, St. Mary's Valiyapally, Jalahalli  
 II : Dina C. J., Mar Gregorios Church, Hebbal  
 III : Sneha Susan George, St. George Church, Indiranagar

### SOLO SINGING (Overall)

#### SUB-JUNIOR Group

- A+ : Marian Mariam Neel, St. Baselios Church, Marthahalli,  
 Rahael Jacob, Mar Gregorios Church, Hebbal,  
 Karen Susan Alex, St. Thomas, Bangalore East,  
 Leona E. Joseph, St. George Church, Indiranagar,  
 Megha Mathew, St. Baselios Church, Marthahalli,  
 Alshi C. Viju, St. Thomas Church, Bangalore East,  
 Binil Mathew, St. Gregorios Cathedral,  
 Tania Ann Thomas, Mar Gregorios Church, Hebbal,  
 Rithin Paul Thomas, St. George Church, Indiranagar  
 A : Sandra Mary Saju, St. Gregorios Church, Mathikere,

- Jeen Maria Vaidyan, St. Mary's Valiyapally, Jalahalli,  
 Benson T. Yohannan, St. Gregorios Cathedral,  
 Jincy Anna Job, St. Dionysius Church, Dasarahalli,  
 Subin Saji, Mar Yuhanon Mamdhana Church,  
 Arthi Ann Joseph, St. Stephen's Church, Vijayanagar,  
 Jona Abraham, St. Gregorios Church, Mathikere,  
 Aman Mathew, St. Mary's Valiyapally, Jalahalli,  
 Ann S. Varghese, Mar Yuhanon Mamdhana Church,  
 Liya Mariam, St. Dionysius Church, Dasarahalli

#### JUNIOR Group (Boys)

- I : Smijo K. J, St. Thomas Church, Bangalore East  
 II : Allan Jaison, St. George Church, Indiranagar  
 III : Anoop Jacob John, St. Baselios Church, Marthahalli

#### JUNIOR Group (Girls)

- I : Sonu Mary Alex, St. George Church, Indiranagar  
 II : Sherin Johnson, Mar Yuhanon Mamdhana Church  
 III : Sandra Rebecca Mathew, St. Gregorios Cathedral

#### INTERMEDIATE Group (Boys)

- I : Mathew Issac, St. Mary's Valiyapally, Jalahalli  
 II : Arthik Alexander, St. Gregorios Church, Mathikere  
 III : Rohan Jacob, St. Gregorios Cathedral

#### INTERMEDIATE Group (Girls)

- I : Merryl Biju, St. Baselios Church, Marthahalli  
 II : Shilpa M. Varghese, St. George Church, Indiranagar,  
 Rianna Denny, St. Gregorios Cathedral

#### SENIOR Group (Boys)

- I : Akash C. Mathew, St. Thomas, Bangalore East  
 II : Anand C. Mathew, St. Thomas, Bangalore East  
 III : Ashin Paul, St. Mary's Valiyapally, Jalahalli

#### SENIOR Group (Girls)

- I : Deepthi M. George, St. George Church, Indiranagar  
 II : Bency Babu, St. Thomas Church, Bangalore East  
 III : Ria Mariam Thomas, Mar Gregorios Church, Hebbal,  
 Riya Roy, St. Gregorios Cathedral,  
 Premi Elizabeth Ninan, St. Mary's Valiyapally, Jalahalli

#### SECONDARY Group

- I : Anne Joy, St. Thomas Church, Bangalore East  
 II : Rincy Grace Xavier, St. Mary's Valiyapally, Jalahalli  
 II : Annie Kuriakose, St. Mary's Valiyapally, Jalahalli

... Continued to page # 10

## Competition Winners List – 2008 (contd.)

### QUIZ COMPETITION

- I : Mathew John & Reshma Abraham,  
St. Gregorios Cathedral, Hosur Road
- II : Mariam George & Dennis George,  
St. Thomas Church, Bangalore East
- : Abin Iype & Linda Alex,  
St. Dionysius Church, Dasarahalli
- : Nikhil Johnson & Dinah C. J.,  
Mar Gregorios Church, Hebbal

### GROUP SONG

- I : Jenifer Johnson & Group,  
St. Baselios Church, Marthahalli
- : Riya Roy & Group,  
St. Gregorios Cathedral, Hosur Road
- II : Deepthi M. George & Group,  
St. George Church, Indiranagar

## Annual Examination Winners – Year 2008

### Standard IV:

- I : Nevin Cherian, St. George Church, Indiranagar,  
Jijiss Basil Joy, St. Gregorios Cathedral
- II : Neha Sara John, St. Gregorios Cathedral,  
Sandra Rebecca Mathew, St. Gregorios Cathedral

### Standard V:

- I : Mathew Isaac, St. Mary's Valiyapally, Jalahalli
- II : Elizabeth Kuruvilla, St. Gregorios Church, Mathikere
- III : Noel Thomas, Mar Gregorios Church, Hebbal

### Standard VI:

- I : Shilpa Merin Johncy, St. Gregorios Church, Mathikere
- II : Reshma E. Kurian, St. Gregorios Cathedral
- III : Cherian Thomas, St. Gregorios Cathedral

### Standard VII:

- I : Sam Abraham Mathew, St. Gregorios, Mathikere
- II : Roshni George, St. George Church, Indiranagar
- III : Betsy Reebea Mathew, St. Gregorios Cathedral

### Standard VIII:

- I : Diya Anette Samuel, St. Mary's Valiyapally, Jalahalli
- II : Shalin Susan Varghese, St. Gregorios Cathedral
- III : Feba Mammen, St. Gregorios Cathedral

### Standard IX:

- I : Jiss Joy, St. Gregorios Cathedral
- II : Deepthi M. George, St. George Church, Indiranagar
- III : Sneha Susan George, St. George Church, Indiranagar

## Championship and Rolling Trophies – Year 2008

Individual Champion : SONU MARY ALEX, St. George Church, Indiranagar

### Annual Examination (Trophy donated by Mr. C. A. Eapen)

Winner's Trophy : ST. GREGORIOS ORTHODOX CATHEDRAL, HOSUR ROAD  
 Runner-up Trophy : ST. GEORGE ORTHODOX CHURCH, INDIRANAGAR

### Competitions (Essay, Memory Verses, Elocution, Quiz):

Winner's Trophy : ST. GREGORIOS ORTHODOX CATHEDRAL, HOSUR ROAD  
*(Donated by Mr. D. Yohannan in memory of late Mr. Y. Donnoanny)*

Runner-up Trophy : ST. GEORGE ORTHODOX CHURCH, INDIRANAGAR  
*(Donated by Mr. V. Thomas & Family)*

### Singing Competitions (Bethel Rolling Trophy)

Winners' Trophy : ST. GEORGE ORTHODOX CHURCH INDIRANAGAR  
 Runner-up Trophy : ST. THOMAS ORTHODOX CHURCH, BANGALORE EAST

### Quiz Competition (Donated by Mrs. Mercy James & Family in memory of late Mr. P. K. James)

Winners' Trophy : ST. GREGORIOS ORTHODOX CATHEDRAL, HOSUR ROAD

### Memory Verses Competition (Donated by Mr. Paul Ambooken in memory of Mrs. Aleyamma Ambooken)

Winners' Trophy : ST. GREGORIOS ORTHODOX CATHEDRAL, HOSUR ROAD

### Overall Championship for Church (for all events):

Winners' Trophy : ST. GREGORIOS ORTHODOX CATHEDRAL, HOSUR ROAD  
*(Donated by Mr. Mathew Tharakan in memory of Mrs. Anitha Tharakan)*

## And Mary said, "Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word." (St. Luke 1:38)

These lines from St. Luke 1:38 show how simple, obedient and dedicated Mary was. Without thinking what was going to happen later, she agreed to the Lord's command.

From childhood Mary had dedicated her life for the Lord and she knew that the Lord had some plan for her. When the angel told her that she would become the mother of God, Mary could have said - 'No'. She didn't. It wasn't because she had been given all the answers. It was not because God had given her a guarantee. Mary said - 'Yes', because she believed in God and trusted in His love, His grace, His mercy and His faithfulness.

In Mary we see how God blessed her faith and provided for her because she accepted his plans. God always has a plan. According to his plan, 700 years before the days of Mary, God through the prophet Micah had foretold the coming of the Saviour. Yet when the Saviour arrived through Mary, the people did not accept him because they did not have faith.

Today, let us accept God's plan for us without any hesitation as Mary did. He loves us and has a plan for us so that our lives can be filled with joy and fulfillment. Mary said yes to God's plan for her life. Let us learn that kind of obedience and acceptance of God's plan.

Everybody thinks that their mother is the best in the world. God may also have thought the same and chose a good mother - Mary, when He saw that she was simple, obedient and faithful.

"Loving Heavenly Father, fill me with your peace. Father, in the midst of worldly people make me like your mother Mary so that I will be able to accept your plan without bothering about myself" ■

— *Sherin Johnson*

*Mar Yuhanon Mamdhana Church, K. R. Puram*

**First Prize winning essay in Junior section.**

### Cover Page

Did you notice the cover page of this Magazine? As you see, the cover page shows a picture on Presentation of Jesus to the Jerusalem temple, This is one of the "Maranayo" Perunnal, which our Church celebrates on 2<sup>nd</sup> of February in every year. Do you know why this is celebrated on 2<sup>nd</sup> of February every year? Find out...

Also identify the names of the important people you can spot on the cover page.

## Annual Examination Winners – Year 2009

### Standard IV:

- I : Jane Elizabeth Vaidyan, St. Mary's Valiyapally, Jalahalli
- II : Sheryl Susan Idiculla, St. Thomas, Bangalore East
- III : Allan Jaison, St. George Church, Indiranagar

### Standard V:

- I : Sonu Mary Alex, St. George Church, Indiranagar
- II : Jijiss Basil Joy, St. Gregorios Cathedral,  
Neha Sara John, St. Gregorios Cathedral

### Standard VI:

- I : Elizabeth Kuruvilla, St. Gregorios Church, Mathikere,  
Nikil Johnson, Mar Gregorios Church, Hebbal
- II : Merryl Biju, St. Baslios Church, Marthahalli

### Standard XII final examination Winners (Private):

- 1. Janet K. Varghese, St. Gregorios Cathedral
- 2. Nithin V. Rajan, St. Mary's Valiyapally

### Standard VII:

- I : Shilpa Merin Johncy, St. Gregorios Cathedral
- II : Nikita Elizabeth Zacharia, St. Thomas, Bangalore East
- III : Christene Elizabeth Mathew, St. Mary's Valiyapally

### Standard VIII:

- I : Sam Abraham Mathew, St. Gregorios, Mathikere
- II : Mariam Thankachen, St. Dionysius Church, Dasarahalli
- III : Roshan Reji, St. Dionysius Church, Dasarahalli,  
Swarna Mariam Jose, St. Mary's Valiyapally, Jalahalli,  
Arthik Alexander, St. Gregorios Church, Mathikere

### Standard IX:

- I : Shalin Susan Varghese, St. Gregorios Cathedral
- II : Diya Annette Samuel, St. Mary's Valiyapally, Jalahalli
- III : Nimmy Mary Jacob, St. Mary's Valiyapally, Jalahalli

### Secular – Class X Toppers: 2009

- 1. Kevin Thomas, Mar Gregorios, Hebbal (ICSE)
- 2. Rahul R. Abraham, St. Thomas, Bangalore East (CBSE)
- 3. Reshma Abraham, St. Gregorios Cathedral (SSLC)



St. Baselios Orthodox Church  
Marthahalli



Very. Rev. Joseph  
Thekkekara Cor-Episcopa

St. Baselios Orthodox Sunday School

Headmaster : P. T. George

Teachers: Elizabeth Johnson, Sheenu Mammen,  
Loucy Biju, Sibi Abraham, Susan Neel,  
Annamma, Lissy Johnson, Solly Koshy, Bina  
Moncy

Number of Students : 80



St. Gregorios Orthodox Church  
Tumkur



Rev. Fr. Joshua Abraham

St. Gregorios Orthodox Sunday School

Headmistress : Suja Raju

Teachers: Sheela Issac, Shiby Mathew, Seema  
Jiji

Number of Students : 14



Mar Yuhanon Mamdhana Orthodox  
Church, K. R. Puram



Very. Rev. John Thomas  
Cor-Episcopa

Mar Yuhanon Mamdhana Orthodox Sunday  
School

Headmaster : Chacko K. C.

Teachers: Anu P. Thomas, Reena Binu, George  
Jacob, Reena Anil, Bincy Johnson, Roanna  
Phillip, Cicy Zacharia, Sansu Anna Zacharia,  
Lincy Joykutty, Ajo Joseph, Veena Ajo, Jinu  
Paul, Ansu Justus

Number of Students : 50



St. George Orthodox Church  
Indiranagar



Rev. Fr. Saji Daniel

St. George Orthodox Sunday School

Headmaster : Thomas George

Teachers: Sunny Abraham, Cincy Abbey, Mini  
Varghese, Priya Ajo, Lisa Alex, Laila George,  
Ajith M. George, Deepak C. George, Vinu  
Thomas, Sayana Varughese, Annu Mathew,  
Dolly Biji, Dr. Susan Thomas, Neethu S.  
Abraham, Minu Susan Mathew, Miriam Susan  
Daniel

Number of Students : 58

## Reminiscences of STUDENTS' CAMP – 2009

Along the boundary of the convention hall of Kalathur Gardens, forming a huge human chain, there were around two hundred and twenty five people standing in an elongated circle, each one clasping the neighbor's hands, as the sweet melody "Ithratholam Yehova Sahayichu" flowed from the loud speakers. Students had a look of achievement and "Oh not so fast!" plea on their faces. That's how we closed the camp. I couldn't join the chain, as I was on the balcony taking the photographs, but only I had the complete view of the chain, surrounded by the beautiful banners of the camp. Idichandy Achan, John Mathews Achan, Jacob Achan, Iype Alex Achan, Saji Daniel Achan were all there, with students and volunteers. Maret Ahen was there, till a little while earlier.

Camp began, a day earlier on Friday 14 June at 9.30 am, almost as planned; Idichandy Achan wanted everything to go as planned, on the tick. We started with an invocation of "Thamasoma Jyothirgamaya..." as John Mathews Achan, our chief guest from Pazhaya Seminary lighted the lamp, with our director K C Thomas sir, Biji and Idichandy Achan. The Lord's Prayer in Aramaic "Abwoon D'Bashmaya" came serenely, calming the organizers apprehensions, and raising the student's eagerness.

Planning had started way back in March, Idichandy Achan, Thomas sir, Panackamattom sir and me met at Cathedral, chocked out a draft plan about possible locations, events, games, talks, food etc. Thomas sir, Idichandy Achan went berserk with files, folders, handouts, mementos, prizes, speakers, furniture ... Panackamattom sir trained guns on culinary area. I was happy to take on the left out, a bit of planning the camp site, registration etc. We visited Kalathur Gardens on Palm Sunday; Green gardens, huge hall, playing area, cottages, lush green gardens, captive power plant ... D'accord! This is the place! Saji (the care taker) showed us around, Jikki joined us a bit later. Girls would stay in six Cottages; we would put up the dormitories on the balcony around the convention hall for boys. Kiran would give the sound system, dormitory accessories and vessels. Lo, most of it is done!

First day, we had Johny Joseph interacting with students, trying to instill the value of co-operation and win-win strategy; and a game to reinforce co-operation. Looks like, students had imbibed the competition from mother's womb; no luck; no one could figure it out till the end of the game. John Mathews Achan spoke on the camp's theme "Be strong and of good courage" (Joshua 1:9), I used to read the beginning of Joshua 1 whenever I was depressed. Achan spoke elegantly with his face showing certain grace. Day ended with young man Rijin rocking the scene with his music. All of them clapped and danced to the

tune of "Namma Yesu, Namma Kartha ..." Yesu and music has no language barriers!

There were around one hundred and sixty participants, divided in to ten groups. Each group had some assignment. They introduced the speakers, said vote of thanks, lead the prayers, participated in group discussion, and presented the group's point of view on the given topic. It was all done in great gusto, bold one came and spoke, and they spoke well. They had the prayer books with them and knew their prayers. Yes, "but did they lack a bit of creativity?" I noticed, while they presented on the topics of group discussion.

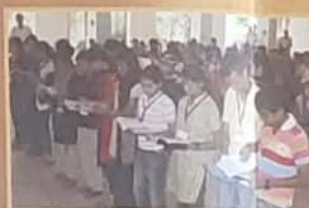
And talk about volunteers! There were fifty of them, all Headmasters, and many teachers. They were part of the organizing team, tirelessly working; Jose, Moncy uncle, Vinu and Nisha at the reception; Johny uncle busy distributing the stationeries; Jaison sir, anchoring the whole program for two days with the same serious, stoic and pleasant presence; Uthup uncle going around the dormitories; Biji managing the finance; Gracy aunty and Mary aunty taking care of girls at the cottages; Moncy uncle and Achankunju uncle extending all local support from Jalahally side.

Young lot would have a go at the food. Panackamattom sir had a detailed menu, and all materials, vessels etc. worked out. Thomas and he had purchased most of the provisions; we had few items bought from nearby place. First day's chicken and fried rice did not match the expectations, but we made up with excellent Kanji and Payar for evening of the first day and Egg curry and Appam of the second day breakfast and a grand lunch of Chicken Biriyan and custard for the second day. Rajan Uncle and Aunty supervised the catering. Catering aficionados of Indiranagar Church and Marathahally Church with P T George sir ruled the kitchen. We had our own version of "Chembeduppu" and even "Chembuvadi" wiping clean the delicious food. Participants brought their own plates and glasses. Jalahally Church missed the email mentioning it, Idichandy Achan had firm words "No plates, No food!" I thought it was bit harsh; But, Moncy uncle and Achankunju uncle came with plates, for all their wards in no time.

Good time for games, on the first day evening, in the open grounds; Playing cricket, foot ball, volley ball and many other games. Idichandy Achan proved as good a batsman as good speaker, singer and organizer. In the evening, we shifted the Thronose from Jikki's house to the stage for next day's Gurbana. Jacob Achan came with Virikootu, Jhonson and Jikki practiced with children for the choir for Gurbana.

... Continued to page # 16

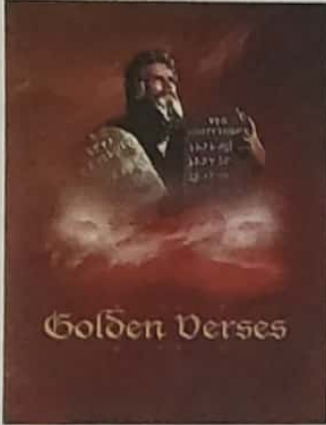
MEMORIES OF STUDENTS' CAMP - 2009





## O.S.S.A.E. – OKR, Bangalore District Publications

By the grace of God, during the academic year 2009, we had published two important books for the benefit and use of our Sunday School students in Bangalore.

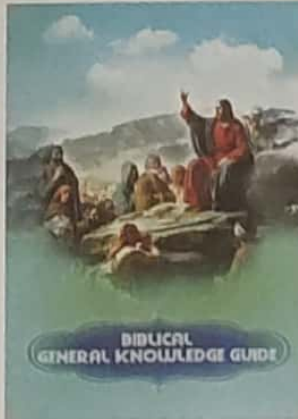


First one is a concise memory verse text book named "Golden Verses" in English. This book is compiled and organised in the same way as the original Malayalam version of the book "Thanka Vakyangal" which is published by OSSAE head quarters from Kottayam. The initial version of this book was compiled by H. G. Mathews Mar Barnabas. The English edition

has a total of 700 verses organised against most of the theological topics and beliefs. I congratulate and thank the efforts of Mr. Thomas George, Chempakasseril (Headmaster, St. George SS) for compiling this text book in English in a short span of time.

Second one is the "Biblical General Knowledge Guide", a book based on the original version of the Malayalam text "Pothu Vijnjana Sahayi", prepared by Mr. C. A. Abraham, which is used as the syllabus for the Sunday School Quiz

competition in Kerala. Apart from both Old and New Testaments of the Bible, a brief coverage on the Church History is also included in this book. I would like to place on record the valuable efforts of Mr. M. K. Uthup



(Headmaster, St. Gregorios Cathedral SS) and Mr. Thomas George, Chempakasseril (Headmaster, St. George SS, Indiranagar) for translating and compiling this text book in English. On behalf of the Bangalore Sunday Schools, I extend our heartfelt gratitude to Rev. Fr. Jacob Mathew (Old Seminary, Kottayam) for verifying the translations and helping with the corrections.

We thank Almighty God, for His grace for making these publications a reality. We wish that these books will be used by our Sunday School students to increase their knowledge of the Holy Bible. These books have already been appreciated by Sunday School community around the world. Hope that these books will be included in the official curriculum of the Outside Kerala Region in the course of time ■

– *Biji John, Secretary*

## Reminiscences of STUDENTS' CAMP – 2009 (contd.)

Children had confessions after the meditation. There was a minor emergency, a boy from Bangalore East had a fall and sprained his wrist. Dr. Anna Issac took care of the situation. We had made arrangements for resident doctors and medicines. Dr. Jisha Jacob too was there.

It rained at night, good rain, the south-west monsoon. Rains cooled the summer air; it came as an "Ashisha maani" from Almighty, for a good night sleep. But, that wasn't the case, boys in the dormitories kept on talking, playing games, chasing ghost etc. No scolding helped, they were out alone, for the first time! it was at 4.30 am, when scene quieted, I caught a quick nap and soon heard someone's voice "Get up", it is hardly thirty minutes, my Vakathanam genes sprung up, I was about to shout "Aaraada?", saw the white cassock of Idichandy Achan in time, and held back the Vakathanam shout.

Soon, we got ready for the morning Prayer. We had to push some alter assistants to take the cold bath, one even asked for hot water! I couldn't help quipping "you don't get hot water for hundred rupees". That's all what we collected from the participants. Expenditure came to around 1.25 lakh. But Idichandy Achan and HMs had asked for help, the Orthodox community helped; we had 1.3 lakh in hand. Mathukuttychaayan was magnanimous as always;

he said to give whatever we can. We managed to pay 25K, a small percentage of the rent, to him.

Morning session after Gurbana was group discussion, then Mathews Achan's class, followed up with Susan Aunt's class. Susan Aunt spoke so sweetly about the problems of the youth. Who else could talk like that? A mother! We had a group photo session; I clicked in the afternoon sun, with shadows all over. Soon, a cloud covered the sun, diffusing light for a clear shot; hand of God! Rijin came and rocked the scene with music and games for all including teachers. Soon, it was closing ceremony. We dispersed at 4.30 pm saying good bye.

I reached home at 5.30 pm. I was tired and sleepy, no luck, Idichandy Achan's call came to send the photographs for newspaper and uploading to web sites. Thomas sir was on his way to Europe, probably uploading camp photographs from his Notebook. Idichandy Achan was planning already for a three day camp at Kengeri for the next year. Panackamattom sir probably was wondering about catering arrangements at Kengeri. I just wanted to sleep, satisfied to be part of such a satisfying venture, with all these wonderful and loving people, feeling the presence of God throughout with us ■

– *Kuruville Varghese, St. Gregorios, Mathikere*

## He said "I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, make straight the ways of the Lord." (St. John 1:23)

The above verse taken from the Gospel according to St. John is a highly relevant statement if taken contextually or from a modern macro and micro perspective. Contextually this verse is the answer given by John the Baptist to the Jewish priests when asked by them as to who he was. He told them by quoting Isaiah that he was not the Messiah the Old Testament prophets had prophesied about, but only the one who was preparing the way for the Messiah.

The fact that John the Baptist stood as a transition from the Old Testament priesthood and the eternal priesthood of Christ is beautifully summarized by the Orthodox Church in this hymn – Adhyacharyatham Kaikkondaharon Moosayodonnichu. When the priesthood passed down, Moses got it, Aaron too, Moses passed it to Zachariah, Zachariah passed it to John, John did pass it to our lord, and Christ ordained Apostles twelve. They, sent forth by him passed it throughout the world.

In the micro understanding the verse can be applied to the individual self. The individual should prepare the way for the Lord in his own heart. In fact, like St. John the Baptist, the soul always cries out in the desert of despair or what the Indian sages have aptly coined – 'Maya' or the illusion of life.

In the macro understanding, we must look at the verse from the context of Christ's second coming, when every Christian will have to prepare the way of the Lord for his judgment. We must be voices that shout in the desert of ungodliness. True Christians should be alarmed at the

rise of heretical teachings that deviate from the Council of Nicea. The Arians have not been defeated. Their clones exist in the form of intellectuals who are spreading the wrong doctrine that Christ was human and not divine. Novels and documentaries which try to undermine truth in the name of freedom and liberation are selling like hot cakes.

The Christian of today shows the same stubbornness that the Jews showed in accepting the Messiah. In the world today, sin in the name of individual freedom is given a free reign. It is from these secular doctrines that the stubbornness to believe arises. Every Christian must prepare the way for the Lord now because the world is a desert of self deception and escapism. St. John the Baptist separated himself from the Jewish society and went into the desert and spoke out for the Lord. How many of us integrated into this system can actually do what John the Baptist did. We will be termed mad or crazy by the society.

Every Christian must be able to detach from the illusions of the world. It is difficult to prepare the way for the Lord and provide light until and unless there is a clear detachment from the 'Maya' – the desert of meaninglessness ■

– *Reshma E. Kurian*

*St. Gregorios Cathedral, Hosur Road*

---

First Prize winning essay in Intermediate section.

---

## A Palm Sunday Service with "shorter" Palm Leaves (contd.)

Each child should get a project according to their learning ability and mental age from class 4 onwards. Seniors (class 8 and above) can be asked to present written projects. Suppose we ask the 10<sup>th</sup> class student to prepare a life history of Parumala Thirumeni by suggesting some websites as resources they will do it. Definitely it is easier for them than to read a whole book on Thirumeni and will learn more things by doing the project. This is true of some portions of Catholicate history also.

**Co-curricular Competitions:** There is little difference between the secular school and SS as far as curricular as well as co-curricular competitions are concerned. Today's world is made up of competitions. In spite of its advantages, competition can divide a community and it can degrade the moral standards. Some parents and teachers are crazy about amassing prizes for their children. They may go to any extent to ensure points. This is a wrong practice and it is against the values for which the Sunday Schools are formed. Some families leave the Church and some youngsters may have an aversion to it due to the injustices happen at the stages of competition. So we have to rethink about the whole process and to draw some lines.

**Efficient Teachers and Parents:** Only a few teachers make lesson plans, supervise projects and correct home works. More than 70% of the teachers are women at the OKR level and many of them are employed. Due to the scarcity of time we have to appreciate them for doing at least the minimum. Among these, a good number of teachers are born and brought up in a protestant background. It is a fact that the toppers among our SS graduates do not come back as teachers.

... Continued to page # 23



St. Gregorios Orthodox Church  
Mathikere



Very. Rev. Abraham  
Marettu Cor-Episcopa

St. Gregorios Orthodox Sunday School

Headmaster : Kuruvilla Varghese

Teachers: Mini Abraham, Josephine Alexander,  
Elizabeth Saji Daniel, Shinoy Mathai, Deepti  
Boban, Siji Philip, Sanu T. Thomson, Siji George

Number of Students : 52



St. Stephen's Orthodox Church  
Vijayanagar



Rev. Fr. Skaria Mathew

St. Stephen's Orthodox Sunday School

Headmaster : P. C. Chacko Tharakan

Teachers: Annie Easo Thomas, Thomas  
Mathew, Mariamma Tharakan, K. K. Roshny,  
Lincy George, Jomcy Joy, Nidhy, Nithya, Bijoy  
M. Varghese, Rinu Varghese, Binish Philip, K. K.  
Roshan

Number of Students : 40



St. Dionysius Orthodox Church  
Dasarahalli



Rev. Fr. Iype P. Alex

St. Dionysius Orthodox Sunday School

Headmaster : Johnny O.

Teachers: V. J. Thomas, Daison, Leelamma  
Thomas, Molly Abraham, Biju Abraham, Sony  
Oommen, Mabin Alex, Alvin Johnson, Siju  
Chacko, Shyla Alias, Siji Joyce, Lincy P. Jacob

Number of Students : 60



St. Mary's Orthodox Church  
Begur



Very. Rev. P. C. Philip  
Cor-Episcopa

St. Mary's Orthodox Sunday School

Headmaster : Santosh Varghese

Sunday school will start functioning during the  
academic year 2010.

## Annual Report – Year 2009

I am happy to present the annual report of the O.S.S.AE-OKR, Bangalore District for the year 2009.

**OFFICE BEARERS:** The following were the office bearers for the year 2009:

Vice President	: Rev. Fr. V. P. Idichandy, Asst. Vicar, St. Gregorios Cathedral, Hosur Road
Secretary	: Ms. Biji John, St. Gregorios Cathedral, Hosur Road
Director	: Mr. K. C. Thomas, St. Thomas Church, Bangalore East
Staff Representative(s)	: Mrs. Mary Varghese, St. Gregorios Cathedral, Hosur Road Mr. George Panackamattom, St. Thomas Church, Bangalore East
Auditor	: Mr. Johnny O., St. Dionysius Church, Dasarahalli

### EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Church	Vicar	Headmaster/Headmistress
Mar Yuhanon Mamdhana, K. R. Puram	Very Rev. John Thomas Cor-Episcopa	Mr. K. C. Chacko
St. George Church, Indiranagar	Rev. Fr. Saji Daniel	Mr. Thomas George
Mar Gregorios Church, Hebbal	Rev. Fr. Dr. Mathews M. Daniel	Mrs. Grace Varghese
St. Baselios Church, Marathahalli	Very Rev. Joseph Thekkekkara Cor-Episcopa	Mr. P. T. George
St. Gregorios Cathedral, Hosur Road	Very Rev. T. K. Thomas Cor-Episcopa	Mr. M. K. Uthup
St. Thomas Church, Bangalore East	Rev. Fr. Mani K. Varghese	Mr. Jose Varghese
St. Mary's Valiyapally, Jalahalli	Rev. Fr. K. M. Jacob	Mr. Moncy T. Thomas
St. Stephen's Church, Vijayanagar	Rev. Fr. Skariah Mathew	Mr. Thomas Mathew
St. Gregorios Church, Mathikere	Very Rev. Abraham Maretu Cor-Episcopa	Mr. Kuruvilla Varghese
St. Gregorios Church, Tumkur	Rev. Fr. Joshua Abraham	Mrs. Suja Raju
St. Dionysius Church, Dasarahalli	Rev. Fr. Iype P. Alex	Mr. Johnny O.

### TEACHERS AND STUDENTS:

There are 950 students (373 Preparatory to Class III, 553 class IV to X, 24 in classes XI & XII) and 139 teachers on the rolls of the OKR-Bangalore District, as submitted by 11 Sunday schools of Orthodox churches.

### EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AND GENERAL BODY MEETINGS:

There were 4 executive committee meetings conducted during the year at various parishes in Bangalore. The Annual General Body was conducted on 27<sup>th</sup> March 2009 at Mar Gregorios Church, Hebbal.

### TEACHERS CONFERENCE

There were 2 teachers conferences conducted during the year. One on March 27<sup>th</sup> at Mar Gregorios Church Hebbal, which was attended by 39 teachers from various Sunday schools. Rev. Fr. V. P. Idichandy gave a talk on how to make Sunday school studies a fun factor for the children. The next teacher's conference was conducted on 29<sup>th</sup> Sept. 2009 at St. Gregorios Cathedral, where 45 Teachers from 10 Sunday Schools participated. This was a full day programme with two major speakers. The morning session was conducted by Mr. G. Chacko of St. George Church Indiranagar. Mr. G. Chacko a highly experienced teacher explained lot of inputs to make their teaching effective. The second speaker was Dr. Mathew Thomas who is a Consultant Psychologist at the Columbia Asia Hospital, Bangalore and his workshop was more practical way of dealing with children and their problems.

### COMPETITIONS:

*Memory Verses:* 54 students (Juniors: 20, Intermediate: 10, Seniors: 15) participated in the memory verses competition held on 27<sup>th</sup> Sept. 2009.

*Essay Competition:* 106 students (Juniors: 23, Intermediate: 38, Seniors: 40, Secondary: 5) participated in the essay competition held on 6<sup>th</sup> Sept. 2009.

*Elocution & Singing Competitions:* This year saw a change in the conduct of these competitions. There were two Regions, where the competitions were conducted simultaneously on 2<sup>nd</sup> Oct. 2009. The regions are as follows:

Region-1 comprised of the following churches: (i) St. Gregorios Cathedral, Hosur Road, (ii) St. George Orthodox Church, Indiranagar, (iii) Mar Yuhanon Mamdhana Orthodox Church, K.R. Puram, (iv) St. Stephens' Orthodox Church, Vijayanagar, (v) St. Baselios Orthodox Church, Marthahalli

Region-2, comprised of the following churches: (i) St. Mary's Valiyapally, Jalahalli, (ii) St. Thomas Orthodox Church, Bangalore East, (iii) St. Gregorios Orthodox Church, Tumkur, (iv) St. Gregorios Orthodox Church, Mathikere, (v) Mar Gregorios Orthodox Church, Hebbal, (vi) St. Dionysius Church, Dasarahalli.

... Continued to page # 21

## Each Child Has An Angel

An article written by H. G. Dr. Paulose Mar Gregorios of blessed memory.



Children are angels; at least many of them. But do they have angels? Does each child have an angel? Did Christ teach us so? In St. Mathew's Gospel (18:10) our Lord warned his disciples thus: "See to it that you do not despise one of these little ones; for I assure you that their angels in heaven are constantly seeing the face of my Father in heaven."

The context was the dispute among the disciples as to who among them would be "number one" in the Kingdom of Christ. Christ's answer was to pick-up a child, put him in their midst, and to say to the disciples "if you do not turn around and become

like children, you will not enter the Kingdom" (St. Mathew 18:1-3).

But what did our Lord mean about "their angels beholding my father's face?" Whatever he meant, there are two or three things which are clear:

[1] Christ puts himself on the side of the child, just as he puts himself on the side of the poor. But poverty is a state which can be remedied by the poor inheriting the Kingdom. Childhood, on the contrary, is the desired state – something which adults have to change into, in order to enter the Kingdom.

[2] We make a big mistake when we think or teach that children cannot be saved, because they are not old enough to have faith. What an absurd idea it is to think that only adults will enter the Kingdom! Christ says exactly the opposite. "Allow the little children to come to me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the Kingdom of God." (St. Mark 10:14). Our

Lord taught that to children belong the Kingdom; adults can enter only when they become like little children. Those groups who insist on adult baptism and teach against infant baptism are teaching something contrary to Christ and the Bible.

Yes, the Kingdom of God belongs to the poor, to the meek, to the oppressed, but also to children. It is theirs by natural right, it seems. Children are important, not because of what they can become as adults, but as children. That is what our Lord taught.

Still, what did he mean about "their angels?" The obvious inference is that while children may not be consciously and articulately aware of God, their counter-parts in heaven do experience the presence of God continually. Each child has an 'angelos' (messenger) or a 'counter-part' in heaven. When we become adults do we lose our angels because of our sins? I do not know the answer.

But I know that children are important just as the poor are important, for theirs is the Kingdom.

If Christ has anything to do with who gets into the Kingdom, there will be lots of children, and lots of poor people (like Lazarus the beggar) there. And we better accept them both now, and do all we can for them. For Christians are members of Christ's body and share his mind, his will, his purpose.

Let us try to see how our schools distort our children, how our society teaches them evil ways, how we let them suffer malnutrition, poverty and disease. Let us build a society where children are respected, loved and cared for. And that kind of society will not come about merely setting up a few Balbhawans or Balwadis. It is our sinful society that makes sinners out of these angel-like creatures. Let us strive to build a society where angelic children can grow up to be more than angelic human beings ■

## Our Wealth... the Story of Eddie (contd.)

*Then we thought that if we kept our electric lights turned out as much as possible and didn't listen to the radio, we'd save money on that month's electric bill. [My sister] Darlene got as many house and yard cleaning jobs as possible, and both of us babysat for everyone we could. That month was one of the best of our lives. Every day we counted the money to see how much we had saved...Every Sunday the pastor had reminded everyone to save for the sacrificial offering. The day before Easter, [my sister] Ocy and I walked to the grocery store and got the manager to give us three crisp \$20 bills and one \$10 bill for all our change. ...We could hardly wait to get to church!*

*When the sacrificial offering was taken, we were sitting on the second row from the front. Mom put in the \$10 bill, and each of us girls put in a \$20. As we walked home after church, we sang all the way. At lunch Mom had a surprise for us. She had bought a dozen eggs, and we had boiled Easter eggs with our fried potatoes!*

... Continued to page # 22

## Annual Report – Year 2009 (contd.)

### Region-1

Venue: Mar Yuhanon Mamdhana Church, K. R. Puram  
Coordinator: Mr. George Panackamattom

### Region-2

Venue: St. Gregorios Orthodox Church, Mathikere  
Coordinator: Dr. Jacob N. Abraham

### EXAMINATIONS:

This year there was a change in the conduct of the examination as well there was a half yearly examination that was conducted on the 26<sup>th</sup> of July followed by the Annual examination for classes Preparatory to 9<sup>th</sup> standard on the 29<sup>th</sup> Nov. 2009. The SSFC (Class X) and Class XII examinations were conducted on the 13<sup>th</sup> Dec. 2009. St. Gregorios Cathedral was the venue for this examination. There were 49 students who took up the class X examination. This was the first time that we had students taking up the class XII examination. There were 5 students who took up the examination.

### STUDENTS' CAMP:

Another milestone that we crossed this year was the mega event of the student camp. This was the first time that the Bangalore Sunday Schools was conducting a camp for the students. It was a 2 day camp conducted on the 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> of June 2009. The theme for the camp was, "Be strong and of good courage, be not afraid neither be thou dismayed." Joshua 19. There were 155 student and more than 50 teachers and volunteers. The Speakers were Rev. Fr. Dr. John Mathews, Mr. Johnny Joseph and Mrs. Susan Eapen. The venue was Kalathur Gardens.

### PUBLICATIONS:

This year there were two publications brought out by Bangalore District. One was the Golden Verses and the second was the Biblical General Knowledge Guide. The memory verses competition and the quiz competition were based on these two books.

### CHARITY DAY:

Charity week was observed from 1<sup>st</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> Sept 2009.

### CHAMPIONSHIP AND ROLLING TROPHIES:

Ms. Neethu Sara Alex of St. George Orthodox Church Indiranagar is the Individual Champion of 2009.

#### Annual Examination (Trophy donated by Mr. C. A. Eapen)

Winner's Trophy : ST. GREGORIOS ORTHODOX CATHEDRAL, HOSUR ROAD  
Runner-up Trophy : ST. GEORGE ORTHODOX CHURCH, INDIRANAGAR

#### General Competitions (Essay, Memory Verses, Elocution, Quiz)

Winner's Trophy : ST. GEORGE ORTHODOX CHURCH, INDIRANAGAR  
(Donated by Mr. O. Yohannen in memory of late Mr. Y. Donnoony)  
Runner-up Trophy : ST. THOMAS ORTHODOX CHURCH, BANGALORE EAST  
(Donated by Mr. V. Thomas & Family)

#### Singing Competitions (Bethel Rolling Trophy)

Winners' Trophy : ST. GEORGE ORTHODOX CHURCH, INDIRANAGAR and  
ST. MARY'S ORTHODOX VALYAPALLY, JALAHALLI  
Runner-up Trophy : ST. BASELIOS ORTHODOX CHURCH, MARTHAHALLI and  
ST. THOMAS ORTHODOX CHURCH, BANGALORE EAST  
(Donated by Mr. K.C. Thomas in memory of Mrs. Sosamma Cherian)

#### Quiz Competition (Donated by Mrs. Mercy James & Family in memory of late Mr. P. K. James)

Winners' Trophy : MAR GREGORIOS ORTHODOX CHURCH, HEBBAL ,  
ST. THOMAS ORTHODOX CHURCH, BANGALORE EAST and  
ST. GEORGE ORTHODOX CHURCH, INDIRANAGAR

#### Memory Verses Competition (Donated by Mr. Paul Ambooken in memory of Mrs. Aleyamma Ambooken)

Winners' Trophy : ST. GEORGE ORTHODOX CHURCH, INDIRANAGAR

#### Overall Championship for Church (for all events):

Winners' Trophy : ST. GEORGE ORTHODOX CHURCH, INDIRANAGAR  
(Donated by Mr. Mathew Tharakan in memory of Mrs. Anitha Tharakan)

Hon. Secretary and Treasurer  
(Biji John)

## Region-wise Competitions – 2009: At a glance

There has always been a quest towards improving and facilitating more and more students to participate in the competitions. In this endeavour, the 12 Sunday schools of the Bangalore District have divided into two regions for conducting Singing and the Elocution competitions. The region-wise competitions brought in an opportunity for more students.

The first Region-wise, Elocution and Singing competitions were held on 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2009, simultaneously at two venues. Mar Yuhanon Mamdhana Church, K. R. Puram and St. Gregorios Church, Mathikere hosted these events respectively for Region-1 and Region-2. District Vice President appointed two of the Sunday school senior teachers as Coordinators for the smooth conduct of the competition for each Region.

The competitions were held with strict supervision and neutral judges. There were three judges for each of the events. The tabulation panel was constituted by the Headmasters of the participating Sunday schools. For the first time we had participants competing with chest numbers. This was well organised by the teachers nominated for the purpose. Overall, our students performed extremely well. The judges had difficulty in finalising the prizes. The list of prize winners was announced after the competition. It was heartening to note the names of students from churches, far and

near as well as small and big in the winners list. Congratulations to all the participants and other prize winners with a note that losers do not lose heart. We thank the host churches and the parish members, who toiled hard to make each and every one of us comfortable with their hospitality, sumptuous lunch and snacks. We gracefully acknowledge the presence of the respected Vicars of the hosting churches as well as the Vicars of other churches in respective Regions. The function concluded with vote of thanks and closing prayer.

Having done such a great step towards the overall organisation, what next? Like to re-iterate a point mentioned in the above paragraph – judges had difficulty in finalising the prizes. So, should we distinguish the 1st, 2nd and 3rd prizes for a difference of 0.25 or 0.5 marks among the participants? Or, should we go for a grading system, like what we are already doing for the Sub-junior group. Will this increase the sportsman spirit in our students... a point to ponder...?

Competition is an opportunity to strengthen and maximize the God-given talents for the glory of His name. Participation in competition should be an opportunity for "self offering to God" and also to enlighten and entertain people.

– Moncy T. Thomas  
St. Mary's Orthodox Valiyapally, Jalahalli

## Our Wealth... the Story of Eddie (contd.)

*Late that afternoon the minister drove up in his car. Mom went to the door, talked with him for a moment, and then came back with an envelope in her hand. We asked what it was, but she didn't say a word. She opened the envelope and out fell a bunch of money. There were three crisp \$20 bills, one \$10 bill and seventeen \$1 bills. Mom put the money back in the envelope. We didn't talk, just sat and stared at the floor. We had gone from feeling like millionaires to feeling poor.*

*All that week, we girls went to school and came home, and no one talked much. Finally on Saturday, Mom asked us what we wanted to do with the money. What did poor people do with money? We didn't know. We'd never known we were poor.*

*That Sunday, at church we had a missionary speaker. He talked about how churches in Africa made buildings out of sun-dried bricks, but they need money to buy roofs. He said \$100 would put a roof on a church. The minister said, "Can't we all sacrifice to help these poor people?"*

*We looked at each other and smiled for the first time in a week. Mom reached into her purse and pulled out the envelope. She passed it to Darlene. Darlene gave it to me, and I handed it to Ocy. Ocy put it in the offering. When the offering was counted, the minister announced that it was a little over \$100. The missionary was excited. He hadn't expected such a large offering from our small church. He said, "You must have some rich people in this church." Suddenly it struck us! We had given \$87 of that "little over \$100." We were the rich family in the church! Hadn't the missionary said so? From that day on I've never been poor again...*

Our wealth is not measured by our keeping, but by our giving – not by our treasure on earth, but by our treasure in heaven ■

## I am the Way, Truth and Life. (St. John 14:6)

Putting St. John 14:6 in context, Jesus' meaning is clear: he's saying, "Guys, it's not about knowing information, techniques, directions, or instructions: it's about knowing me, trusting me! Stay in relationship with me, abide in me, and I'll get you to the place where you belong – the kingdom of God, knowing God, living in dynamic interactive relationship with God – the place that I've been telling you about from the beginning! 'The way' or 'the truth' or 'the life' aren't things separate from me. *I am these things, so you'll find them in me!*"

So that's how Christ himself has become "the way," "the way" does not mean some simple "method" for going to the father, but is a real live person of real character with a real personality. Since that's the case, "the truth" of salvation that we must truly know is not some specific teaching or ideology that we might simply understand and grasp hold of. It is not even "the religion" of Christianity. It's not any "thing" but it is Christ himself with his worthy character and personality, who became the way on our behalf.

... Continued to page # 27

## A Palm Sunday Service with "shorter" Palm Leaves (contd.)

Under these circumstances most of our Sunday Schools function with the help of "available teachers". Teaching has never been their choice and they become teachers by chance. So we have to train them periodically. The training is necessary not only for feeding them with the information, which they have to explain, but also for giving them the skills of a teacher. Many teachers sit while teaching and they teach by reading a portion aloud. Young children are unable to visualise things without external aids. Educational psychologists ask for maximum use of teaching aids at the early stages of teaching. The small children should have something "to do" during 45 minutes of a class hour. To ask them paint something or to put in order things which are dismantled would make the process of learning a leisurely affair.

The parents have to support the teachers by asking questions about the classes while the children return and to help the children do the exercises given at the end of a lesson. More than these, family prayers are to be conducted daily along with Bible reading. Parents should give priority for religious education and they should watch the spiritual growth of their children carefully. Even our General Body meetings should see that the Sunday Schools have got enough fund, space and teachers.

**Learning during the Worship:** Christian education happens more effectively in the Church than in class rooms. Sophie S. Koulomzin, a teacher of the St. Vladimir's Seminary in New York once said: "Every major feast, every liturgical experience that the Church emphasises should be reflected in the curriculum, and the attention of the children should be drawn to the meaning of the liturgical celebrations of the day. It will thus become far more natural for the Sunday School to encourage the children's attendance of the Church services, for the children will far better understand why this day and this service are special." (*Lectures in Orthodox Religious Education*, P. 40). Maria Montessori, who went beyond the conventions of the day to seek a new way of knowing and loving a child writes beautifully in the book *The Discovery of the Child*. "The first thing was to prepare an environment – a Children's Church which resembled a place of worship but reduced in size for the benefit of the children". Her experiments in the Model Montessori School in Barcelona helped the children experience their church tradition a lot.

Contrary to this our attempts are to force a child comprehend our religious traditions in the same way as an adult understands it. Our children are happy to come to the Church whenever there is something to do for them. They like Palm Sunday, because unlike on normal Sundays they are permitted to throw flowers and are free to make noises on that day. However, we give a small child a palm leaf, which is two times bigger than their size and telling them to hold it straight for a long time. Can we arrange a Palm Sunday with shorter leaves so that the children find it more convenient? Good Friday service is also attractive for children due to the continuous genuflections. It is a fact that they have no taste for the long services of Epiphany (*Danahat*) and the Feast of Pentacost. The Church has to make "shorter leaves" for the little hands ■

**Note:** Above article was published in a Magazine on the occasion of the 81<sup>st</sup> birthday of Fr. Dr. T. J. Joshua, the former Director General of the O.S.S.A.E. The contribution of Joshua Achen for the development of the O.S.S.A.E, which is one of the most successful initiatives of our Church, is incredible. The original article can be viewed on the OSSAE-OKR web site: <http://www.ossae-okr.org> along with the Annual Circular for the year 2010.



## Competition Winners List – 2009

### ESSAY COMPETITION (Overall)

#### JUNIOR Group

- I : Sherin Johnson, Mar Yuhanon Mamdhana Church
- II : Liya E. Paul, St. Stephen's Church, Vijayanagar
- III : Riya Mathew, St. Thomas Church, Bangalore East

#### INTERMEDIATE Group

- I : Reshma E. Kurian, St. Gregorios Cathedral
- II : Roshni George, St. George Church, Indiranagar
- III : Shilpa Merin Johncy, St. Gregorios Cathedral,  
Soji Joy, St. Gregorios Church, Mathikere

#### SENIOR Group

- I : Neethu Sara Alex, St. George Church, Indiranagar
- II : Betsy Reeba Mathew, St. Gregorios Cathedral
- III : Deepthi M. George, St. George Church, Indiranagar,  
Sneha Susan George, St. George Church, Indiranagar,  
Ashin Paul, St. Mary's Valiyapally, Jalahalli

#### SECONDARY Group

- I : Rincy Grace Xavier, St. Mary's Valiyapally, Jalahalli
- II : Mebin Alex, St. Dionysius Church, Dasarahalli
- III : Soni Rachel Oommen, St. Dionysius Church, Dasarahalli,  
Siju Chacko, St. Dionysius Church, Dasarahalli

### ELOCUTION (Region-1)

#### JUNIOR Group

- I : Neha Sara John, St. Gregorios Cathedral
- II : Allan Jaison, St. George Church, Indiranagar,  
Sheona T. Joseph, St. George Church, Indiranagar

#### INTERMEDIATE Group

- I : Shilpa M. Varghese, St. George Church, Indiranagar
- II : Roshni George, St. George Church, Indiranagar
- III : Merryl Biju, St. Baslios Church, Marthahalli

#### SENIOR Group

- I : Neethu Sara Alex, St. George Church, Indiranagar
- II : Deepthi M. George, St. George Church, Indiranagar
- III : Betsy Reeba Mathew, St. Gregorios Cathedral

### SOLO SINGING (Region-1)

#### SUB-JUNIOR Group

- A+ : Rithin Paul Thomas, St. George Church, Indiranagar,  
Annette Elizabeth Thomas, St. Gregorios Cathedral,  
Neha Zachariah, St. George Church, Indiranagar,  
Sheran Ann Mathew, St. Gregorios Cathedral,

Adam G. Alexander, St. Baslios Church, Marthahalli

- A : Irene Mathew, St. Baslios Church, Marthahalli,  
Shine A. Varghese, Mar Yuhanon Mamdhana Church,  
Allena Shaji, Mar Yuhanon Mamdhana Church

#### JUNIOR Group (Boys)

- I : Allan Jaison, St. George Church, Indiranagar
- II : Gregory Philip, St. Gregorios Cathedral
- III : George Stephen, St. Gregorios Cathedral

#### JUNIOR Group (Girls)

- I : Ann Elsa Neel, St. Baslios Church, Marthahalli
- II : Divya Denny, St. Gregorios Cathedral
- III : Anju Elsa Mathew, St. Baslios Church, Marthahalli,  
Neha Sara John, St. Gregorios Cathedral

#### INTERMEDIATE Group (Boys)

- I : Ritchu Joe Thomas, St. George Church, Indiranagar
- II : Anoop Jacob, St. Baslios Church, Marthahalli
- III : Nikhil Thomas, St. Gregorios Cathedral

#### INTERMEDIATE Group (Girls)

- I : Shilpa M. Varghese, St. George Church, Indiranagar
- II : Merryl Biju, St. Baslios Church, Marthahalli
- III : Helen Anna Neel, St. Baslios Church, Marthahalli

#### SENIOR Group (Boys)

- I : Abish Rajan, St. George Church, Indiranagar
- II : Liju V., Mar Yuhanon Mamdhana Church
- III : Mathew Thomas, St. Gregorios Cathedral,  
Sijo M. Varghese, St. George Church, Indiranagar

#### SENIOR Group (Girls)

- I : Divya Mammen, St. Baslios Church, Marthahalli
- II : Carol Issac, St. Gregorios Cathedral
- III : Carol Prins, St. Gregorios Cathedral

#### SECONDARY Group

- I : Sijoy Varughese, St. George Church, Indiranagar
- II : Ajay Thomas, St. George Church, Indiranagar

### GROUP SONG (Region-1)

- I : Deepthi M. George & Group,  
St. George Church, Indiranagar
- II : Merryl Biju & Group,  
St. Baslios Church, Marthahalli
- III : Carol Issac & Group,  
St. Gregorios Cathedral, Hosur Road

## Competition Winners List – 2009 (contd.)

### MEMORY VERSES COMPETITION (Overall)

#### JUNIOR Group

- I : Sherin Johnson, Mar Yuhanon Mamdhana Church  
 II : Noel Johnson, Mar Gregorios Church, Hebbal  
 III : Ann C. Anil, Mar Gregorios Church, Hebbal

#### INTERMEDIATE Group

- I : Shilpa M. Varghese, St. George Church, Indiranagar  
 II : Nikil Johnson, Mar Gregorios Church, Hebbal  
 III : Sonu Mary Alex, St. George Church, Indiranagar

#### SENIOR Group

- I : Deepthi M. George, St. George Church, Indiranagar  
 II : Neethu Sara Alex, St. George Church, Indiranagar  
 III : Shalin Susan Varghese, St. Gregorios Cathedral

### ELOCUTION (Region-2)

#### JUNIOR Group

- I : Rayan Jacob, St. Mary's Valiyapally, Jalahalli  
 II : Roshita Biju, St. Thomas Church, Bangalore East  
 III : Angela Susan Philip, St. Mary's Valiyapally, Jalahalli,  
 Karen Susan Alex, St. Thomas Church, Bangalore East

#### INTERMEDIATE Group

- I : Nikhil V. Joseph, St. Thomas Church, Bangalore East  
 II : Ashwin Mathew, Mar Gregorios Church, Hebbal  
 III : Christine Elizabeth Mathew, St. Mary's Valiyapally, Jalahalli

#### SENIOR Group

- I : Nikita Biju, St. Thomas Church, Bangalore East  
 II : Mariam George, St. Thomas Church, Bangalore East,  
 Ashin Paul, St. Mary's Valiyapally, Jalahalli

### SOLO SINGING (Region-2)

#### SUB-JUNIOR Group

- A+: Jonah Abraham, St. Gregorios Church, Mathikere,  
 Benita Biju, Mar Gregorios Church, Hebbal,  
 Manna Abraham, St. Gregorios Church, Mathikere,  
 Alji C. Viju, St. Thomas Church, Bangalore East,  
 Shella Mary Raju, St. Gregorios Church, Tumkur,  
 Renu Abraham, St. Mary's Valiyapally, Jalahalli  
 A : Ashin K. Shaji, St. Gregorios Church, Tumkur,  
 Sharon Elizabeth Thomas, St. Thomas, Bangalore East,  
 Jincy Job, St. Dionysius Church, Dasarahalli,  
 Nikitha Moncy, Mar Gregorios Church, Hebbal,  
 Tiara S. Kurian, St. Mary's Valiyapally, Jalahalli,  
 Jessy Abraham, St. Dionysius Church, Dasarahalli

#### JUNIOR Group (Boys)

- I : Abraham Jibi John, St. Gregorios Church, Mathikere  
 II : Ryan Jacob, St. Mary's Valiyapally, Jalahalli  
 III : Abraham George, St. Thomas, Bangalore East

#### JUNIOR Group (Girls)

- I : Tanya Ann Thomas, Mar Gregorios Church, Hebbal  
 : Ashley K. Shaji, St. Gregorios Church, Tumkur  
 II : Sarah Mary Joseph, St. Thomas, Bangalore East

#### INTERMEDIATE Group (Boys)

- I : Arthik Alexander, St. Gregorios Church, Mathikere  
 II : Ashin Babu, St. Mary's Valiyapally, Jalahalli  
 III : Rohit Mathew, St. Thomas Church, Bangalore East

#### INTERMEDIATE Group (Girls)

- I : Rose Joy, St. Thomas Church, Bangalore East  
 II : Sherina Sara Jaison, St. Mary's Valiyapally, Jalahalli  
 III : Jesmi K. Jose, St. Mary's Valiyapally, Jalahalli

#### SENIOR Group (Boys)

- I : Anand C. Mathew, St. Thomas, Bangalore East  
 II : Akash C. Mathew, St. Thomas, Bangalore East  
 III : Shijo E. Varghese, St. Mary's Valiyapally, Jalahalli

#### SENIOR Group (Girls)

- I : Alina Susan, St. Mary's Valiyapally, Jalahalli  
 II : Premi Ninan, St. Mary's Valiyapally, Jalahalli  
 III : Ria Mariam Thomas, Mar Gregorios Church, Hebbal

#### SECONDARY Group

- I : Rincy Grace Xavier, St. Mary's Valiyapally, Jalahalli  
 II : Rahul Varghese, St. Mary's Valiyapally, Jalahalli

### GROUP SONG (Region-2)

- I : Premi Ninan & Group,  
 St. Mary's Valiyapally, Jalahalli  
 II : Mary Mathews & Group,  
 St. Thomas Church, Bangalore East  
 III : Sam Abraham & Group,  
 St. Gregorios Church, Mathikere

### QUIZ COMPETITION

- I : Mariam George & Rahul R. Abraham,  
 St. Thomas Church, Bangalore East  
 I : Nikhil Johnson & Ann Susan Mathew,  
 Mar Gregorios Church, Hebbal  
 I : Neethu Sara Alex & Deepthi M. George,  
 St. George Church, Indiranagar

## KiDz KoRnEr



Identify the biblical situation.

---



---

Colour this picture.

## Biblical Humour

1) What kind of man was Boaz before he married Ruth?

*Ans. Ruthless.*

2) Who was the greatest financier in the Bible?

*Ans. Noah. He was floating his stock while everyone else was in liquidation.*

3) Who was the greatest female financier in the Bible?

*Ans. Pharaoh's daughter. She went down to the Bank of the Nile and drew out a little prophet.*

4) Who was the greatest comedian in the Bible?

*Ans. Samson. He brought the house down.*

5) Which servant of God was the most flagrant lawbreaker in the Bible?

*Ans. Moses. He broke all 10 commandments at once.*

6) Which area of the Land of Israel was especially wealthy?

*Ans. The area around Jordan, where the banks were always overflowing.*

7) Who is the greatest babysitter mentioned in the Bible?

*Ans. David. He rocked Goliath to a very deep sleep.*

8) Why didn't they play cards on the Ark?

*Ans. Because Noah was standing on the deck.*

## Charity Project

Are you interested in being part of a charity project? If so, wait for your Piggy Boxes. This year, we are starting an exclusive Charity program by distributing Piggy boxes to all our students. The fund collected will be used to make a charity welfare program on behalf of Bangalore Sunday Schools.

## Can you find Sixteen (16) books of the Bible in the following paragraph?

I once made a remark about the hidden books of the Bible (merely by a fluke). It kept people looking so hard for the facts and for others it was a revelation. Some were in a jam, especially since the name of the books were not capitalized, but the truth finally struck home to numbers of readers. To others it was a real job. We want it to be a most fascinating few moments for you. Yes, there will be some really easy ones to spot. Others may require judges to help them. I will quickly admit it usually takes a minister to find one of them, and there will be loud lamentations when it is found. A little lady says she brews a cup of tea so she can concentrate better. See how well you can compete. Relax now. There really are sixteen names of books in this story.

*(Refer page # 27 for the Answer)*

## I am the Way, Truth and Life.

(St. John 14:6)

Since the truth is Christ himself, the definition of knowing the truth is also different because we cannot know Christ just like we do in knowing some situation. "Knowing about Christ" and "knowing Christ" are totally different things. To know Christ means a personal relationship with him – a personal communication with him. In other words, it is "to believe in him," "to love him," and "to worship him." Even as we see St Thomas depicted as a skeptical figure, in the end he comes out as a person who knew Christ in the truest sense. It was he who turned to the risen Christ and said, "My Lord, my God". That's exactly what it means to know Christ and to know the truth.

The Lord went on to say that "I am the life." "The life" of which he is speaking about here does not mean mere energy and life force because even a person flowing over with vitality will eventually die. Thus, in order for "life" to be declared in any real sense, death must be conquered. The Lord said, "I am life." There is a perfect conquest of death in him. Where ever Christ is, death can no longer have any power. That's because Christ is the one who is preparing a place with the father and he himself is

"the way" for us to go to the father. Since Christ is preparing a place for us, we are no longer beings who just go on to death. We're walking on to be with the father.

Jesus' goal, made clear in word and deed, day after day during his three years of public ministry – was not to constrict but rather to expand the dimensions of who could be welcomed into the Kingdom of God. The way, as personified by Christ, is a way of suffering and of triumph through humiliation. Jesus is not just the guide to salvation, but he is the source of life and truth. I believe Jesus primarily came not to proclaim a way out of hell for some after death, but rather a way into a better life for all before death.

We seek to live lives that will help us to explore and wonder about the things that Jesus most cared about. I am convinced that the Kingdom of God is at the heart of Jesus' teaching and ministry – it's what he cares about. And it's clear to me that the Kingdom of God he's talking about is not just a promise or a dream, but something that has been planted in this world and is growing right in our midst. We can experience the Kingdom of God – notice it in surprising places and get involved and invested in it. That's an experience churches can help people have, especially when we are rooted in the practices that were central to

Jesus' life and ministry: sitting at tables with people who are "outsiders" in our culture, reaching out to those who are sick or hurting, fighting against injustice, taking time to step back and pray in silence.

When our congregations are rooted in the language and the experience of the Kingdom, we stop seeing ourselves as guards and gatekeepers and start seeing ourselves as roving gardeners. We're propelled to notice the tender shoots of God's Kingdom wherever they are growing. We devote ourselves to tending, weeding and watering those sprouts in ourselves, in our church community, and in the wider world, and we point them out to others so they don't get stamped on.

Jesus showed us a relationship full of love and trust for God the Father while on this earth. Christ showed us real life indeed in his relationship with God the Father. Christ, who said, "I am the life," invites us to a relationship of life with the father. As we've already seen, all of our salvation lies right there in Him. Christ has met with us. We want to know Him even more deeply and we want to remain in a living relationship with Christ.

Christian life is complete only when we follow God's will. It is the duty of every Christian to follow Christ, the way and the guide.

"The word to be told is Christ,  
The way to be walked is Christ,

The light to be lighted is Christ,  
The site to be lived is Christ,  
The love to be loved is Christ"

The above words of Mother Teresa are very relevant. Let us travel the true path along with Christ. Let us lead every one along the true path ■

– *Neethu Sara Alex*

*St. George Church, Indiranagar*

First Prize winning essay  
in Senior section.

### Answer: Sixteen books of the Bible:

I once made a remark about the hidden books of the Bible (merely by a fluke). It kept people looking so hard for the facts and for others it was a revelation. Some were in a jam, especially since the name of the books were not capitalized, but the truth finally struck home to numbers of readers. To others it was a real job. We want it to be a most fascinating few moments for you. Yes, there will be some really easy ones to spot. Others may require judges to help them. I will quickly admit it usually takes a minister to find one of them, and there will be loud lamentations when it is found. A little lady says she brews a cup of tea so she can concentrate better. See how well you can compete. Relax now. There really are sixteen names of books in this story.

## Story of St. Stephen the First Christian Martyr

"For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich."

2 Corinthians 8:9

St. Stephen was one of the great men of faith in the early church. Though he was not an apostle, he holds a special place in scripture because he was chosen to minister to the widows who were being cared for in Jerusalem. Stephen and six other men who were "full of faith and the holy spirit", were chosen to take care of them. He also was the first Christian martyr. A martyr is a person who holds to a belief so strongly that he/she is willing to die for it. That was the faith that Stephen had in Jesus Christ.

Stephen was able to work miracles among the people. He began to preach and the Jews would argue with him about his beliefs. They persuaded some men to say that Stephen was speaking against Moses and even against God! This wasn't true, but many people got upset about it because they believed it was true.

They took hold of Stephen and brought him before the Sanhedrin, the Jewish rulers.



In the picture you can see him appearing before the group. In front of him is the high priest with the beautiful breastplate on the front of his garment. It contained gold and twelve different precious gems. On each stone was written the name of the tribes of Israel.

These were powerful men who were able to make life and death decisions, but Stephen was not afraid to speak the truth. As he stood before them, they saw that his face was like the face of an angel.

He began to speak to them. He told about the whole history of the Jewish people beginning with Abraham. Then he accused them, of hurting and killing the

prophets, and even of killing the righteous one, Jesus.

The rulers became very angry with him, but Stephen looking up to heaven, saw the glory of God, and he saw Jesus standing at the right hand of God. He told the men what he was seeing.

They put their hands over their ears because they didn't want to listen to him. They yelled at the top of their voices. They rushed at him, dragged him out of the city and began to stone him to death.

While they were throwing stones at him, Stephen prayed, "Lord Jesus receive my spirit," and "Lord do not hold this sin against them." Then he fell asleep (died).

He had the same forgiving spirit that Jesus had when he said the same words when He was on the cross.

The young man who was consenting to Stephen's death was Saul of Tarsus ■



Send your feedbacks to:

e-mail: [bodhi@gmail.com](mailto:bodhi@gmail.com)

<http://bangalore.ossae-okn.org>

## OVBS-2010 CDs



The OVBS song and dance CD was brought out by St. Gregorios Orthodox Cathedral. Under the direction of Rev Fr. Kurian Thomas from Nagpur, there were 52 children involved in creating 12 dance sequences for 12 action songs of the OVBS for the year 2010. Four teachers who worked very hard to get the little ones to perform these dances. They were Mrs. Mala Denny, Mrs. Miriam George, Mrs. Geetha Jacob and Mrs. Binu Philip. The initiative was taken by the Headmaster Mr. M. K. Uthup.

## Editorial Board



Fr. V. P. Idichandy  
(Vice President)



Thomas George  
Chempakasseril  
(Chief Editor)



George  
Panackamattom  
(Editor)



Biji John  
(Secretary)



Dr. Jacob N. Abraham  
(Editor)



Shalin Susan  
Varghese  
(Student Editor)

## Bangalore District: Overall Champion and SSFC/ Class XII Toppers

Year 2008



**Sonu Mary Alex**  
Overall Champion - 2008  
St. George Church, Indiranagar



**Rahul Cherian**  
SSFC, 1st Prize  
(III Rank at OKR level)  
St. Mary's Valiyapally, Jalahalli



**Shamily Elizabeth Varghese**  
SSFC, 2nd Prize  
(V Rank at OKR level)  
St. Mary's Valiyapally, Jalahalli



**Meera Elsa Mathew**  
SSFC, 3rd Prize  
(VII Rank at OKR level)  
St. George Church, Indiranagar

Year 2009



**Neethu Sara Alex**  
Overall Champion - 2009  
St. George Church, Indiranagar



**Neethu Sara Alex**  
SSFC, 1st Prize  
(II Rank at OKR level)  
St. George Church, Indiranagar



**Deepthi M. George**  
SSFC, 2nd Prize  
(IV Rank at OKR level)  
St. George Church, Indiranagar



**Jiss Joy**  
SSFC, 3rd Prize  
(VIII Rank at OKR level)  
St. Gregorios Cathedral, Hosur Rd.



**Annie Kuriakose**  
XII, 1st Prize  
St. Mary's Valiyapally, Jalahalli



**Rincy Grace Xavier**  
XII, 2nd Prize  
St. Mary's Valiyapally, Jalahalli



**Roshan George**  
XII, 3rd Prize  
St. George Church, Indiranagar



Megha S. Mathew

## REMEMBRANCE

Megha S. Mathew who was studying in Class III of St. Gregorios Cathedral Sunday School was called by the Lord on 18th October, 2008 at the age of 9. May Almighty God grant her soul eternal peace.



**STUDENTS CAMP - 2009**