

ST. JOHN'S MALANKARA ORTHODOX SYRIAN CHURCH, HAMILTON



# THEORIA



A CONTEMPLATION



## MOTHERHOOD



INAUGURAL ISSUE  
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# A Message from Diocesan Metropolitan

## Blessings to the Vicar and faithful of our Saint John’s Orthodox Church of Hamilton, Canada!



our mothers who have taught us the faith through their witness. We pray that it inspires young mothers to follow in the example of holiness as beautifully lived by the Holy Theotokos which the church celebrates even today. May our corporate example of holiness and devotion to Christ, strengthen each of you, and your loved ones as we seek to build this parish community as a true beacon of salvation in Canada.

May the blessings and mercies of God Almighty be showered upon us.

Yours in our Lord,

Metropolitan Zachariah Mar Nicholovos



## Acknowledgements

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With warm regards,  
St. John’s MMVS  
and Editorial Board

Honour her  
for all that her  
hands have  
done and let her  
works bring  
her praise.

Proverbs 31:31

# A Message from The Vicar

By Rev. Fr. Vineeth V. Kurian



With immense joy and gratitude, I extend my heartfelt wishes and blessings to the initiation of this new spiritual endeavor, “Theoria: A Contemplation.” The name “Theoria” originates from the Greek word for “contemplation,” encapsulating the essence of seeking profound understanding and insights into spiritual matters. In the context of our journal, this name holds profound significance, emphasizing our commitment to engaging in contemplation of our Orthodox faith, leading to moments of enlightenment and spiritual nourishment.

In adherence to Indian culture, the initiation of every endeavor is graced by the blessings of the mother, emphasizing the profound significance of contemplating the sacred theme of motherhood in this inaugural edition of our journal.

## Motherhood: Embracing God’s Unconditional Love and Spiritual Legacy

Motherhood holds a sacred and irreplaceable role in Christian parenting. Our spiritual fathers teach us that a mother’s love reflects God’s unconditional love for us, and her influence on her child’s heart is extraordinary. From the warmth of her embrace, the child experiences love before fully comprehending the concept. A mother’s guidance lays the foundation for a child’s beliefs and moral values. Notably, St. Basil the Great expressed the profound impact of his blessed mother’s faith on his own spiritual journey. Her teachings became the foundation of his beliefs, guiding him toward completeness in the spiritual legacy she bestowed upon him.

When contemplating motherhood, we cannot help but envision all the mothers, grandmothers, godmothers, and spiritual mothers who have graced our lives, with a special place of honor reserved for St. Mary, the Mother of God (Theotokos). As the mother of the Church and our spiritual mother, the St. Mary, the God-Bearer, stands as a symbol of complete surrender to God and an exemplar of discipleship, holding the foremost position among her Divine Son’s followers. In the ecstatic delight of Mary’s motherhood, St. Ephraim eloquently wrote: “Come, let us wonder at the virgin most pure, wondrous in herself, unique in creation, she gave birth, yet knew no man; her pure soul with wonder was filled, daily her mind gave praise in joy at the twofold wonder: her virginity preserved,

her child most dear. Blessed is He who shone forth from her!”

The Church, our spiritual mother and the beloved bride of Christ, joins us in paying homage and acknowledging the invaluable role of all earthly mothers, especially those devoted Christian mothers who wholeheartedly nurture every aspect of their children’s lives, with a particular focus on fostering their Christian journey in both the present and the eternal.

In the Scriptures, not every woman (or man) is depicted as a flawless example of Godly virtue; many of them bear significant flaws. However, what sets them apart is their faith, or in some cases, their lack thereof. While most of these women are mothers through the act of giving birth, a select few exemplify motherhood through their behavior and actions. Some patiently waited for years, longing for children granted by our heavenly Father. Among them, certain women raised children of great faith, while others faced disappointment. Though unnamed, certain exceptional mothers are undeniably recognized for their virtuous character. Each of these women imparts valuable lessons about what truly defines a woman, especially a mother, as extraordinary and devoted disciples of the Lord, something we can learn from and aspire to in our lives and the lives of future generations.

The name “Theoria” originates from the Greek word for “contemplation,” encapsulating the essence of seeking profound understanding and insights into spiritual matters.

Mothers have a profound influence on their children’s religious upbringing. Their hearts embody the divine presence, and the wisdom they impart serves as a guiding light. Being a godly mother represents one of life’s greatest blessings, and through their godly presence, children find God and embrace moral values. Often, if we trace the origins of the greatest men of God, we will find a mother on her knees in prayer.■



# The holy Virgin Mary as the maternal symbol of the Church and the created world

By Rev Fr Dr K.M George



Orthodox liturgy and belief rely heavily on symbols, metaphors, and similes to comprehend divine mysteries in a spiritual sense rather than taking them literally. Those who fail to grasp this symbolic approach cannot fully grasp the essence of the Orthodox faith.

The Reformation tradition is generally has a low view of symbolism and its approach to biblical interpretation is more verbal, historical and rationally analytical. Attempting to analyze and understand all aspects of creation and the Creator solely through human logic can lead to a very restricted perspective. The richness of oral tradition, storytelling and experience can be missing.

Another feature of the Reformation tradition is its tendency to isolate biblical characters from their larger setting. An individual becomes a person only in innumerable relationships and modes of existence connected to whole space and time. Understanding Christ, the Son of Man, requires recognizing the relationship between everything from the beginning to the end of God’s creation. The holy Virgin Mary holds a crucial position in this holistic understanding. Christ’s birth from a woman signifies his full humanity, while being born of the

Holy Spirit denotes his divinity. It is essential to avoid considering Christ in isolation; instead, we should acknowledge the oneness of humanity and God formed in the womb of a human female, representing the unity with all of God’s creation.

The honor given to Mary as the Mother of the Lord mirrors the respect God bestows on His creation. Recognizing the maternal nature of creation is crucial to comprehending St. Paul’s words in Rom. 8:21, emphasizing how all creation eagerly awaits the revelation of the Sons of God and attains the glorious freedom. Mary’s femininity and motherhood enrich our spirituality, and her presence is seen as nurturing and vital. Understanding her role as the symbol of all God’s creation helps us appreciate the profound interconnectedness of humanity with the Earth and the universe.

In the Syriac tradition, there two feasts in honor of the Mother of God celebrated for the sake of seeds, and for the harvests that sustain human life. This perspective encourages a new awareness of the earth and its climate, especially in the face of the significant environmental challenges. Embracing this perspective may lead to a better future and overall well-being for our planet. The Holy Virgin Mother symbolizes the protection of all life, and the loving care we take to nurture God’s creation.■

*Rev. Fr. Dr. K. M. George is a theologian, thinker, classic painter and a poet. He is the Former Principal & Professor Emeritus: Orthodox Theological Seminary, Kottayam, Kerala.*

## St. John’s MMVS



Left: Visit by the Vicar and St. John’s MMVS members to De Mazenod Door, Hamilton for handing over our 2022 donations; Right: St. John’s MMVS members attended the 8<sup>th</sup> Regional Conference ‘Sunergoi’ held by St. Mary’s Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church, Ajax on 3rd June, 2023



# St. Mary the New Ark of the Covenant

By Rev. Fr. Dr. Thomas George,  
Vicar, St. Thomas Orthodox Church, Toronto



“Peace to you, Mary  
Ark of Mysteries,  
Which Moses fashioned...  
God came forth from your  
holy womb”

*A golo in veneration of the mother  
of God, used in our 6<sup>th</sup> hour prayers  
of ‘Sleebo’ and Wednesday*

Our holy Church and Catholic Church all over the globe celebrate the assumption of the mother of God on August 15. It is not a doctrinal teaching, rather it is taught as a tradition, as good as that of a doctrinal teaching. A special fasting for 15 days is observed as a preparation for the feast of assumption, shows importance of the feast in our tradition. Our holy liturgy begins with the commemoration of St. Mary and St. John the Baptist (Mary who brought You forth and John who baptized You, shall be supplicants to You on our behalf. Have mercy upon us O Lord).

She is called as ‘second Eve’ or new Eve (the first Eve said “no” to God’s will and brought about the sin on human kind whereas second Eve wholeheartedly said “yes” to the will of God and played a key role in bringing redemption). She is also called as the ‘second heaven’ (heaven is the abode of God. God abided in her during her pregnancy). She is depicted with so many symbols of Old Testament. .

The Queen who is by the Right Side of The King: (Ps. 45:9) in the quqlion of ‘Theotokos’ we sing the same: “The King’s daughter stands in glory halleluiah w halleluiah and the queen at your right hand”.

The Ladder of Jacob: That ladder which “was set up on the earth, and its top reached to heaven” (Gen. 28:12)

The Burning Bush (Exodus 3:2). The bush which the prophet Moses saw in the desert: She has carried the fire of divinity in her womb, without being touched by any harm.

The Pot of the Manna: The Manna was a symbol of the Christ our Lord, as being the Bread of Life who came down from heaven.

The rod of Aaron which budded (Num.17:6 -8): She miraculously sprouted and carried the buds of life; although a rod has of course no life in it that can produce blossoms and yield fruit. This symbolizes the virginity of The Virgin.

The Eastern Gate of the holy Temple: That which the

prophet Ezekiel saw, and of which the Lord said: “This gate shall be shut, it shall not be opened, and no man shall enter by it, because the Lord God of Israel has entered by it; therefore it shall be shut” (Ez. 44: 1 -2).

### The Ark of the Covenant:

This ark was made of acacia wood that cannot decay and was covered with gold from inside and outside (Ex. 25:10- 22), as a symbol of the purity and the greatness of The Virgin. It also symbolized the things which were inside the ark that were a symbol of the Christ our Lord. There was kept “the golden pot that had the manna –the bread of life, Aaron’s rod that budded-He is the eternal priest in the order of Melkizadek, and the tablets of the covenant-He are the word of the Father (as a symbol of the incarnated Word of God).

Let us examine some of the parallels of the Old Ark of the Covenant and the Ark of the new Covenant, the mother of God.

### 1. The old Ark and new Ark were covered with glory of God.

1 Kings 8:6-11 Then the priests brought the ark of the covenant of the LORD to its place, in the inner sanctuary of the house, in the most holy place, underneath the wings of the cherubim. For the cherubim spread out their wings over the place of the ark, so that the cherubim made a covering above the ark and its poles. And the poles were so long that the ends of the poles were seen from the holy place before the inner sanctuary; but they could not be seen from outside; and they are there to this day. There was nothing in the ark except the two tables of stone which Moses put there at Horeb, where the LORD made a covenant with the people of Israel, when they came out of the land of Egypt. **And when the priests came out of the holy place, a cloud filled the house of the LORD, so that the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud; for the glory of the LORD filled the house of the LORD.**

Luke 1:35 (RSV) And the angel said to her, “**The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy, the Son of God.**”

### 2. Two journeys

David’s journey with Ark from Baale-Judah to David’s city and St. Mary’s journey to the house of Zachariah and Elizabeth.

David again gathered all the chosen men of Israel, thirty



thousand. <sup>2</sup> David and all the people with him set out and went from Baale-judah to bring up from there the ark of God, which is called by the name of the Lord of hosts who is enthroned on the cherubim. <sup>3</sup> They carried the ark of God on a new cart and brought it out of the house of Abinadab, which was on the hill. Uzzah and Ahio,[a] the sons of Abinadab, were driving the new cart <sup>4</sup> with the ark of God,[b] and Ahio[c] went in front of the ark. <sup>5</sup> David and all the house of Israel were dancing before the Lord with all their might, with songs[d] and lyres and harps and tambourines and castanets and cymbals. II Sam.6:1-5

“In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, where entered the house of Zachariah and greeted Elizabeth”. Lk.1:39

5. Two questions

The question of David in front of the old Ark and the question of Elizabeth before the new Ark of the Covenant (Mother of God).  
1. “How can the ark of the Lord come to me?” 2 SAMUEL 6:9  
2. “And why is this granted to me that the mother of my Lord should come to me?” LUKE 1:43

4. Three months of stay

Then according to scripture, the Ark remained for three months. And the ark of the Lord remained in the house of Obed-edom the Gittite three months, and the Lord blessed Obed-edom and all his household. 2 SAMUEL 6:11  
We see that Mary also remained for three months. LUKE 1:56

5. Two joy filled dances.

And David danced before the Lord with all his might. And David was wearing a linen ephod. 2 SAMUEL 6:14  
And what happens when Mary is brought before Elizabeth? And when Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, the baby leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. Then she spoke out with a loud voice and said, “Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb! LUKE 1:41-42

As the presence of the Ark gave joy to David, St. Mary the new Ark’s visit gave greater joy to Elizabeth and her household. Let me conclude this small discussion with the famous quote of St. Athanasius of Alexandria in this context.

St. Athanasius of Alexandria (c. 296-373; the main defender of the Trinity and the deity of Christ against the 2nd century Arian heretics.) very clearly said about it: “O noble Virgin, truly you are greater than any other greatness. For who is your equal in greatness, O dwelling place of God the Word? To whom among all creatures shall I compare you, O Virgin? You are greater than them all O (Ark of the) Covenant, clothed with purity instead of gold! You are the Ark in which is found the golden vessel containing the true manna, that is, the flesh in which Divinity resides.” Homily of the Papyrus of Turin.

May the peace and joy of our Lord abide in us, through the blessed intercession of Mother of God. ■

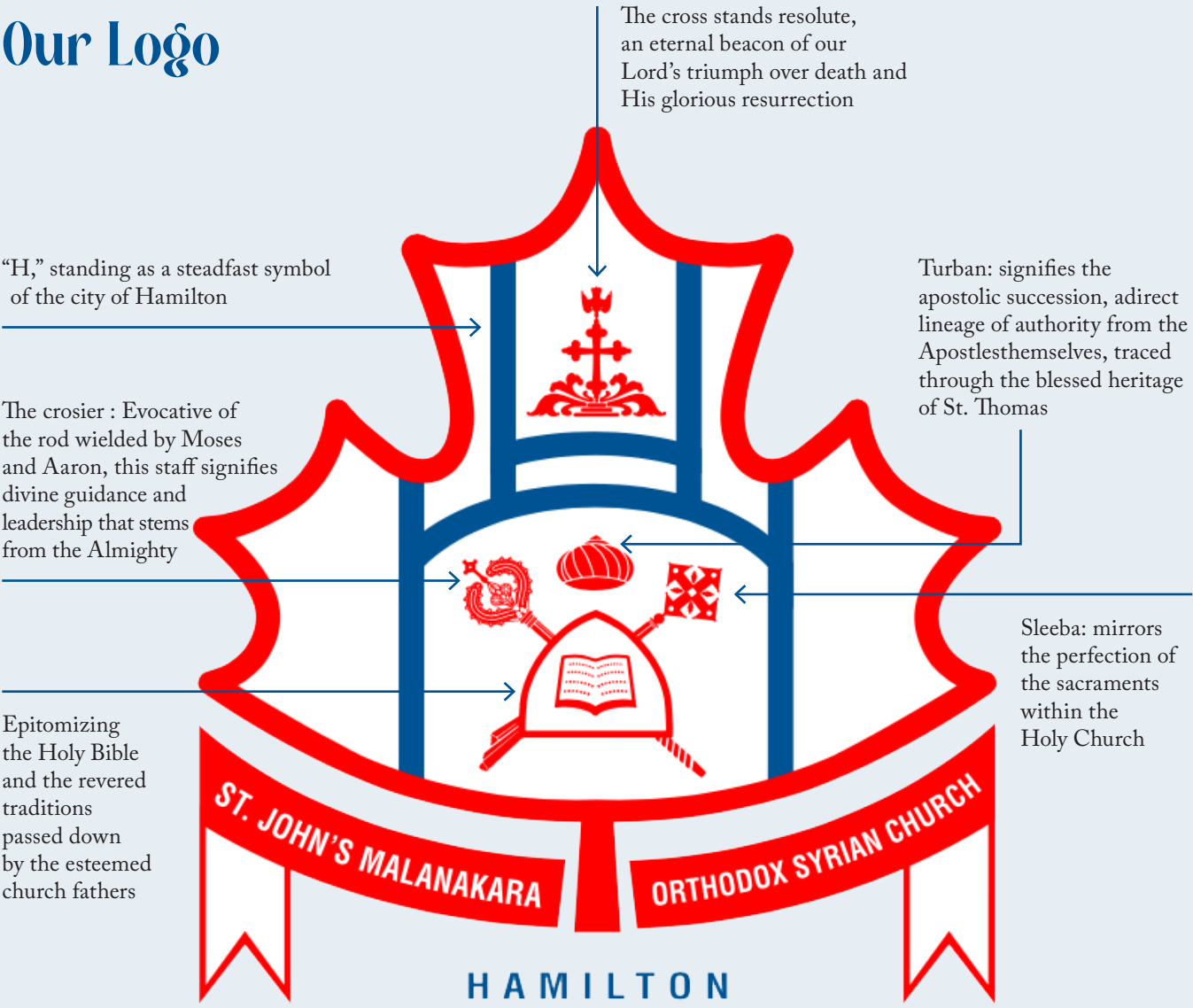
St. John’s OCYM



Clockwise from Top Left: *Members of St. John’s Youth Movement attended the annual one-day conference held at St.Thomas Orthodox Church, Etobicoke on 8<sup>th</sup> July, 2023; A one-day hiking and bowling trip was arranged to Niagara Glen Hiking Trail and Splitsville Bowling Alley, Burlington respectively by the St. John’s MOSC Youth Committee 17th June, 2023; Game Night ‘Kalikalam 2023’ held at St. John’s MOSC, Hamilton on 4<sup>th</sup> Feb, 2023*



Our Logo



The emblem of St. John’s Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church, nestled in the vibrant city of Hamilton, Canada, is a profound representation of the church’s rich heritage, devout faith, and unwavering commitment to the teachings of Christ. This emblem encompasses a tapestry of symbolism that weaves together the essence of the church’s existence and purpose.

At its core, the emblem is graced by the majestic letter “H,” “ standing as a steadfast symbol of the city of Hamilton, a place where the church flourishes and extends its spiritual embrace. Beyond the city’s bounds, the emblem embraces the outer maple leaf, an iconic emblem of Canada, uniting the church with the nation it calls home. At the heart of the emblem, the cross stands resolute, an eternal beacon of our Lord’s triumph over death and His glorious resurrection. This profound symbol radiates the promise of eternal life in Christ, calling upon all who believe and follow the Gospels to take up their own crosses, relinquish worldly temptations, and faithfully tread the path of our Savior.

Crowning the emblem is the dignified turban, an emblematic testament to the church’s highest authority, the Catholicose and Malankara Metropolitan. This resplendent headpiece signifies the apostolic succession, a direct lineage of authority from the Apostles themselves, traced through the blessed heritage of St. Thomas.

The cross, known as “Sleebea,” etched within the emblem, mirrors the perfection of the sacraments within the Holy Church. Just as those who gaze upon it are illuminated, so too shall the faithful be fortified, adversaries thwarted, and challenges conquered through the strength derived from this enduring symbol.

A sacred staff, the crosier, gracefully held by the Catholicose of the East, powerfully conveys the authority vested in him as the shepherd of his flock. Evocative of the rod wielded by Moses and Aaron, this staff signifies divine guidance and leadership that stems from the Almighty.

Among these profound symbols, the open book takes its place, epitomizing the holy Bible and the revered traditions passed down by the esteemed church fathers. It is a testament to the church’s unwavering commitment to the teachings of Christ and its reverence for the sacred scriptures.

In its entirety, the emblem encapsulates the spirit and identity of St. John’s Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church, where its faithful congregants in the heart of Hamilton seek solace, guidance, and spiritual growth. Rooted in the Holy See of the Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church, this emblem stands as a radiant embodiment of the church’s steadfast faith, apostolic heritage, and enduring devotion.



Three Maternal Figures in Our Lives

By Thomas Abraham

In the well-known Christian devotional hymn ‘Ninte Thakarchayil Aswasamekan’ addressed to St. Mary-The God Bearer, the words of the chorus ‘Ithaa...Ithaa..ninte amma’ stand out. ‘Here...here is your mother’ were the very words uttered by Christ from the Cross as He instructed the beloved disciple, our patron saint to care for His mother. As we reflect upon the theme of motherhood, let us reflect upon three *mothers* and the important role they have in each one of our lives.

The first being St. Mary-The God Bearer. In her complete obedience to the Father, St. Mary gave birth to Jesus Christ. Her maternal love for her Son was always present. It was her maternal love for Jesus which led her to anxiously search for Him as He was teaching as a young child in the temple. It was her maternal love for Him that led her to actively participate in His ministry. And, it was her maternal love for Him that led her to watch as her Son endured His salvific passion for creation. It is this mother whom her relative Elizabeth exalted and it is this mother whom we continuously ask to intercede to God on our behalf.

The second maternal figure is The Holy Church. The church is often referred to as the bride of Christ in the epistles of St. Paul and is given a maternal role within our prayers and hymns. As a mother cares for her children by nourishing and teaching them, the Church too through her sacraments and various ministries aids in the growth of her children. Through baptism her children have been reborn. Through confession her children have been released from the bondage of sin and through Holy Qurbana her children have been joined into the body of her Bridegroom, Christ.



Article sent by Jerry M. Rajan

നിന്റെ തകർച്ചയിൽ ആശ്വാസമേകാൻ	<i>Ninte thakarchayil aaswaasamekaan</i>	<i>To comfort you in your brokenness</i>
നിന്റെ തളർച്ചയിൽ ഒന്നുചേരാൻ	<i>Ninte thalarchayil onnu cheraan</i>	<i>To join in your exhaustion</i>
നിന്നെ താരാട്ടുപാടി ഉറക്കാൻ	<i>Ninte thaaraatu paadaiyurakkaan</i>	<i>To sing you a lullaby to sleep</i>
ഇതാ ഇതാ നിന്റെ അമ്മ	<i>Itbaa, Itbaa ninte Amma</i>	<i>Here, Here is your mother</i>
<b>Ninte Thakarchayil Aswasamekan</b>		

Finally our own mothers, each a gift from God. Unfortunately, many of us forget to appreciate our mothers and the vast contributions they have made in our lives. Personally, I could show appreciation for the clean clothes I have every week, the vast amount of food I have or one of the many other things my mother does for me that I take for granted every day. Above all these I must recognize and appreciate her continuous prayers for me. As children we must recognize that our mothers have put aside their own needs to pray for the wellbeing of their children. It is the prayers of our parents we can thank for where we stand today and where we will stand in the future. Every year I am reminded by my mom on my birthday that all she wants of me is to grow and become a good Christian boy. Physically, unfortunately I think I have grown to my peak, but spiritually there is always room to grow and that is our parent’s continuous prayer for us. We may become great athletes, wealthy or even touch the face of the moon, but we cannot forget the care and love our parents had and continue to have for each one of us.

As we reflect upon the theme of motherhood let us remember the words of Christ, “Ithaa ninte amma.” Whether that amma is His mother St. Mary, His Bride the Church or our own individual mothers, they have each been given to us as a gifts, to nurture, care and bring us their children closer to God.■



Thomas Abraham is presently working in Caterpillar Financial Services Limited. He is also studying Master of Divinity, The Orthodox School of Theology, University of Toronto.

“സ്ത്രീകളുടെ പഠിപ്പിക്കൽ ശുശ്രൂഷ നഷ്ടപ്പെട്ടു പോയാൽ പൗരസ്ത്യസഭകളെ സംബന്ധിച്ചിടത്തോളം അവയുടെ ജീവൻ നഷ്ടപ്പെടും. പൗരസ്ത്യ സഭകളെ സംബന്ധിച്ചിടത്തോളം നിലനില്പിന്റെ അടിസ്ഥാനം തന്നെ സ്ത്രീകളുടെ പഠിപ്പിക്കൽ ശുശ്രൂഷയാണ്. ഞാൻ പലപ്പോഴും ആലോചിച്ചിട്ടുണ്ട്, എന്നിൽ വിശ്വാസത്തിന്റെ അടിത്തറ പാകിത്തന്നത് ആരാണെന്ന്. അത് എന്റെ പള്ളിയിലെ അച്ഛൻ ആയിരുന്നില്ല. ഏതെങ്കിലും മെത്രാപ്പോലീത്താമാരുമല്ലായിരുന്നു; എന്റെ അമ്മയാണ് എന്നെ വിശ്വാസത്തിന്റെ ബാലപാഠം പഠിപ്പിച്ചത്. അവുടെ നിന്നാണ് എനിക്കു കിട്ടിയിട്ടുള്ള വിശ്വാസം.

ഇപ്പോഴും ദൈവശാസ്ത്രത്തിൽ പറയും മെത്രാന്മാർ അടുത്ത മെത്രാന്മാർക്കു വിശ്വാസം കൈയേൽപ്പിച്ചു കൊടുക്കുന്നുവെന്ന്. എന്നെ മെത്രാ നച്ചനെന്നുമല്ല കൈയേല്പിച്ചത്. എന്റെ അമ്മയാണ്. എന്റെ അപ്പാസ്തലിക പിന്തുടർച്ച വരുന്നതും എന്റെ അമ്മയിൽ നിന്നാണ്. വിശ്വാസത്തെ സംബന്ധിച്ചിടത്തോളം ഇതാണു നമ്മുടെ സഭയുടെ വലിയ ശക്തി. വിശ്വാസം മക്കൾക്കു കൈമാറുന്നതിനുള്ള സ്വഭാവശുദ്ധിയും വിലഞാനവും നമ്മുടെ സ്ത്രീകൾക്കുണ്ടെങ്കിൽ അതാണു വാസ്തവത്തിലുള്ള കരുത്ത്.”

- ഡോ. പൗലോസ് മാർ ഗ്രീഗോറിയോസ്

Motherhood

By Pushpa Mathew

The picture is of a woman holding a child who is obviously hers. The expression on her face is one of unqualified love and devotion. The child looks up at her with total trust and confidence. This is a visualization of the concept of Motherhood in the minds of most of us. This concept is as old as the evolution of Man on this planet.

Even after the umbilical cord is cut and the child is grown, the physical connection between the mother and her offspring remains till death do them part.

Historically, culturally and sociologically Motherhood has been the epitome of the best that human beings represent. But at the same time, Motherhood can also be arduous and challenging. It calls upon the mother to delve into her inner being and find strengths that she never knew she had. It is an expansion of her heart to include another human being who is totally dependent on her. It is defined by sacrifices, unconditional love and endless hours of nurturing. It calls on her to be teacher, doctor, chef, advisor, chauffeur, housekeeper, psychiatrist, as well as mother, for much of which she has had no formal training! There are indeed rewards for taking on this daunting task. The foremost of these is being pleasantly surprised to discover positive aspects of herself that she never knew existed. It is the unexpected joy that suffuses her when her child reaches the potential that she knew he or she was capable of and which she fostered and nourished.

It would be erroneous to think that the definition of Motherhood and mothering are one and the same. In this day and age when gender roles are interchangeable and single parent households are on the rise, the role of a mother can be played by the father or the grand parent, the caregiver or Day Care institutions. These “substitute” mothers feed, clothe, entertain, teach, guide and even love the child. It can be argued that “mother knows best” and no one can replace her. But the fact remains that the grueling pace of modern life is constantly morphing traditional beliefs into unrecognizable tenets.

It has been rather irreverently stated, “God could not be everywhere, so He created mothers.”So, no matter what changes are taking place in the world in which we live, we can only hope that certain time honoured institutions like Motherhood will continue to remain on the pedestal of our collective consciousness.■



After earning a Master's Degree in History from the University of Kerala, Pushpa Mathew emigrated to Canada in 1975. She is the mother of three children and is married to Dr. M. Thomas Mathew.



Paintings by: Ajish Samuel. Ajish hails from Niranam, Thiruvalla and has spent most of his life in Gujarat. A graduate in Manufacturing engineering, he moved to Canada 6 years ago and lives and works in Hamilton, Ontario.



# Motherhood—Challenges and Expectations

By Tisha Anna Simon



Drawing by Johan Shine,  
Grade 6, Sunday School Student

One of the most demanding and rewarding experiences a woman can have is becoming a mother. Motherhood is both a great privilege and a significant responsibility. From managing busy schedules to dealing with outside influences, mothers have their hands full these days.

Let us consider the example of three mothers we come across in the Bible and also in our lives and learn from them.

Eve is the mother of humankind. Eve was the first woman, first wife and first mother.

*“And Adam was not the one deceived; it was the woman who was deceived and became a sinner” 1 Timothy 2:14(NIV).* Just as Eve was deceived by Satan, unfortunately many mothers today have also yielded to temptations and worldly desires. The life story of Eve teaches us that God wants us to choose him freely,

and to follow and obey him out of love. Likewise, it does not benefit us to blame others for our own failings. We must accept personal responsibility for our actions and choices.

The life of Mother Mary is an exemplary example of Motherhood. Her faith is evident from the time ‘Angel Gabriel’ informed her of her immaculate conception of Jesus Christ throughout her life. *“so that the thoughts of many hearts will be revealed. And a sword will pierce your own soul too” Luke 2:35.* Here, Simeon notes that Mary will suffer intense personal pain as part of her role in Jesus’ life. Some of that will come in the form of confusion and uncertainty (Mark 3:21, 31). Mostly, it will involve the horror of watching her Son’s torture, crucifixion, and death (John 19:25–27).

Life is full of challenges, and as a mother, we not only have

our own challenges to face, but those of our children as well. In walking the way of the cross with Jesus, Mother Mary tells us as mothers not to give up during struggles, trials and temptations. No matter what you’re going through, there’s a light at the end of the tunnel and it may seem hard to get to it but you can do it and just keep working towards it. Keep trusting in God and have faith in him.

What we are today is because of the women in our lives be it your — mother, grandmothers, aunts, sisters, colleagues, friends and so on .... Mothers are a gift to all humanity because they show us what God is like. In a loving mother, we see Christ, who longs to gather his people like a mother hen would gather her chicks under her wings (Mathew 23:37). They play an essential role in critical development over time. They fed us, helped us learn essential skills, and continued supporting us long after you left home and became an independent adult.

I have the greatest example of motherhood in my own amazing mom. My mom is one of my greatest heroes and I am eternally grateful for her kindness, devotion, love and wisdom. To me, being a mother means getting to see all the possibility in the world through your child’s eyes, to be a positive role model, to be a continuous cheerleader for every milestone my children will experience, to demonstrate the abundance of unconditional love that has no end and to cherish the countless memories that is truly priceless.”

Napoleon stated “The destiny of a child is the work of their mother”. Motherhood comprises more than simply giving birth to a child; it also means raising that child in the faith and teaching him or her about God’s love and purpose for their life as today’s children are tomorrow’s future. As the old adage goes, the hand that rocks the cradle still rules the world. ■



Tisha Anna Simon is a Registered Nurse working at Mc Master Children’s Hospital, Hamilton. She graduated from CMC Vellore, India and worked in Abu Dhabi, UAE before moving to Canada. Aside from her passion for her work i.e. caring for newborn babies, her favourite pastimes are reading and embroidery.



Painting by  
Ajish Samuel

# My Mother—An Endless Chapter of Love

As I look back to the years that flew by me,  
I understand how important you are to me,  
A day without your voice makes me feel void,  
A day without your picture, I can never imagine.

When I turn the pages of my old albums,  
And see me tiny and small,  
I miss your gentle hands and tender care,  
And the days I could run to you in despair.

Your five fingers I always love to hold,  
How much ever I grow old,  
I still remember when I had to let them go,  
And fly away to get my career on the go.

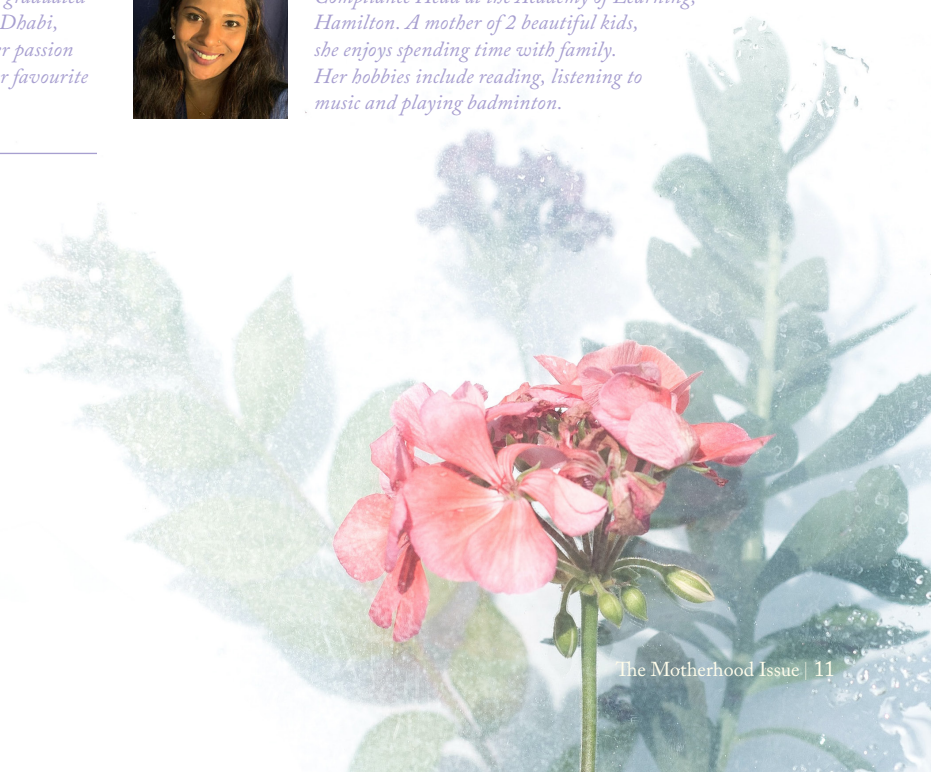
Today when I stand alone without you,  
And I know I am miles away from you,  
Days and years without meeting each other,  
Yet I feel your warm kiss every morning I wake up.

Your love is my timeless treasure,  
A bond beyond all earthly measure,  
With gratitude, I humbly say,  
Thank you, dear mother, every day.

Sherin Jacob



Sherin Jacob is an Assistant Manager and Compliance Head at the Academy of Learning, Hamilton. A mother of 2 beautiful kids, she enjoys spending time with family. Her hobbies include reading, listening to music and playing badminton.





# The Unmatched Intuition of a Mother

By Ria Thomas

As I engaged in a routine phone call with my mom, little did I realize that she could sense my melancholy, even through the virtual distance between us. Just before ending the call, she casually inquired, “Is everything alright? You seem a little down.” It amazed me how my attempts to conceal my sadness were instantly unraveled by her intuition. This was not the first time she had effortlessly detected my hidden emotions, leaving me in awe of the profound connection shared between a mother and child.

Pondering the mystery of my mother’s insight, I couldn’t help but ask her how she always knows. Her response resonated deeply within me: “Well, I am your mother. I can always figure when something’s off with you.” It’s as if an invisible bond exists, transcending physical and emotional barriers, enabling mothers to perceive their children’s innermost struggles.

In the bustling chaos of life, there’s one person who has an uncanny ability to see through our façades and sense when something is amiss. That person is none other than our mothers. Reflecting on the essence of motherhood, a particular

scripture from the Bible comes to mind – Corinthians 13:4-8. These verses, often recited at weddings, speak of love’s virtues: kindness and patience. While they may seem cliché, they encapsulate the profound depth of a mother’s love. For me, they serve as a reminder that mothers embody these beautiful qualities in their daily lives.

Love is patient; love is kind. From the tender moments of cradling us as infants to the unwavering support throughout our lives, mothers exhibit an enduring patience and a kindness that knows no bounds. Their love comforts, encourages, and nurtures us, even when we attempt to conceal our struggles.

In the tapestry of life, mothers hold a unique place. Their unparalleled intuition and unwavering love shine a light on our darkest days. Like a living embodiment of Corinthians 13:4-8, they exemplify the virtues of kindness and patience. As we navigate our journey, let us never underestimate the power of a mother’s love, for it is an extraordinary gift that enriches our lives in immeasurable ways.■

# Words of Faith

By Ria Thomas

A few verses from Bible to remember at times of doubt and uncertainty.

- “Fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.” –*Isaiah 41:10*
- “Cast your burden on the Lord, and he will sustain you; he will never permit the righteous to be moved.” –*Psalms 55:22*
- “I can do all things through him who strengthens me.” –*Philippians 4:13*
- “The Lord is a stronghold for the oppressed, a stronghold in times of trouble.” –*Psalms 9:9*
- “Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” –*Matthew 11:28*
- “Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths.” –*Proverbs 3:5-6*
- “And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose.” –*Romans 8:28*
- “The Lord is near to the brokenhearted and saves the crushed in spirit.” –*Psalms 34:18*
- “He gives strength to the weary and increases the power of the weak.” –*Isaiah 40:29*
- “But he said to me, ‘My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.’ Therefore, I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me.” –*2 Corinthians 12:9*



Ria Thomas, originally from Ernakulam, Kerala, is born and raised in Chhattisgarh. She is a software engineer who lived in Vancouver, BC for 4 years and has recently relocated to Hamilton, ON

# Church Activities



Top Row: H. G. Dr. Abraham Mar Seraphim's visit to St. John's MOSC, Hamilton on 14th April, 2023; Second Row (L to R): H. G. Geevarghese Mar Coorilos visited our parish during the feast of St. Peter and St. Paul; St. John's MOSC Annual Picnic at Pinehurst Lake Conservation Area; Bottom Row (L to R): Ecumenical Choir at Canadian Mar Thoma Church Toronto; Christmas Carols 2022

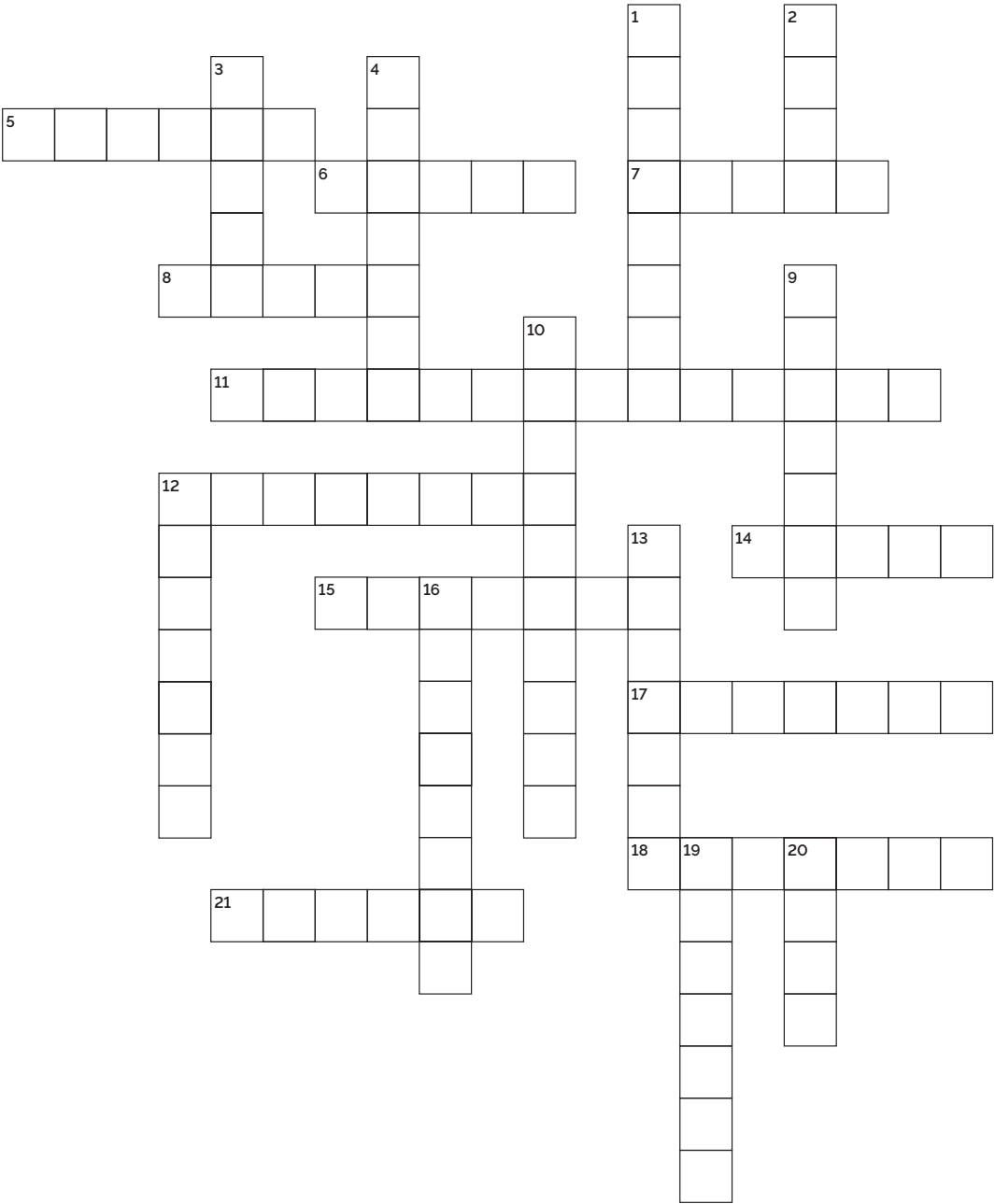


St. John's Sunday School



Above: OVBS 2023 was conducted for all the Sunday School students on 6th May, 2023;  
Left: A wonderful performance of the song 'Go, tell it on the mountain' by our Sunday School students on Christmas

Crossword



Down

- 1. Wife of Ananias (8)
- 2. Number of foolish bridesmaids (4)
- 3. Number of statements made by Jesus on the cross (5)
- 4. Was stoned to death (4)
- 9. Sign of the covenant given to Noah that God would not destroy the earth with flood again (7)
- 10. Place where Jesus went to prayer before crucifixion (10)
- 12. Father of James and John (7)
- 13. Abraham and Hagar's son (7)
- 16. Person who replaced Judas Iscariot (8)
- 19. Disciple in Damascus who cured Saul (7)
- 20. Prophetess present when Jesus was presented to the temple (4)

Across

- 5. Number of disciples who witnessed Christ's Ascension (6)
- 6. Name of the king who wanted to kill Jesus when he was an infant (5)
- 7. Struck the ear of the high priest's servant (5)
- 8. Son of Cain (5)
- 11. Forerunner of Christ (4, 3, 7)
- 12. Wife of Moses (8)
- 14. Mountain on which God appeared to Moses (5)
- 15. Fourth book of the Bible (7)
- 17. Book written by a disciple who was a tax-collector (7)
- 18. Name of the beggar who was taken to Abraham's right side after his death (7)
- 21. Sister of Moses and Aaron (6)

Answers  
1. Sapphira; 2. Five; 3. Seven; 4. Stephen; 5. Eleven; 6. Herod; 7. Peter; 8. Enoch; 9. Rainbow; 10. Gethsemane; 11. John, The, Baptist; 12. Zipporah; 13. Ishmael; 14. Horeb; 15. Numbers; 16. Matthias; 17. Matthew; 18. Lazarus; 19. Ananias; 20. Anna; 21. Miriam



**Come to Me, all who are weary and  
heavy-laden, and I will give you rest.**

*Mathews 11:28*



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