



St. Mary, Queen of Peace Syro-Malankara Catholic Eparchy in the USA and Canada

Dr. Philipos Mar Stephanos Thottathil
Bishop of the Syro-Malankara Catholic Eparchy of the USA and Canada

“Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men”. Luke 2:14.

Circular-Christmas 2018

Dear Rev. Fathers, Rev. Sisters and Brothers and Sisters in Christ,
We are in the Season of Christmas and New Year and we experience the reverberations of their festivities in manifold ways. On this occasion let us keep in mind and affirm the most fundamental thrust of all our celebrations, namely, *God became human to save the humankind*. “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life”. (John 3:16). I wish and pray that the blessings of Christmas be with you in every dimension of your existence and thereby enjoy peace and happiness in your personal life and enable you to communicate the same to your family, church and society.

As we come close the year 2018 let us raise our hearts and minds to Almighty God in profound gratitude and express our grateful sentiments to one another. Our faith in God demands us to wish all people of good will a blessed and bright new year 2019. We pray that the Emmanuel- “God be with us”, be our existential experience though out our journey of life.

I wish to share certain communications and updates:

1. I will be in Houston for Christmas celebration both in our parish and the ecumenical fellowship there.
2. During Christmas week I will be in Edmonton, Canada.
3. In the new year, from January 2-8, I will be attending a special retreat for US bishops to be held in Chicago. This retreat is proposed by Holy Father Pope Francis and the famous papal chaplain Fr. R. Candalamessa is the preacher. Please pray for me and for all the bishops that the Holy Spirit may renew the entire Church in USA.
4. Kindly send the list of the newly elected members of the parish council and pastoral council to the Chancery along with the parish report and financial accounts. Also, I kindly request you to make all the due payments from the parishes to the Eparchy.
5. Next pastoral council will be held on Saturday 26th January 2019 in our Chancery, Elmont, NY. Detailed program will be sent to the concerned persons.
6. We intent to conduct the follow-up programs of our last convention focusing on the Youth of Eparchy. Fr. Jerry Mathew has kindly consented to animate such follow-ups during his Summer vacation (July, August, September). I invite our MCYM Director, Eparchial Board and

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parish units to prepare a viable masterplan in this regard. Kindly encourage and support the forthcoming MCYM Leadership Retreat.

7. Please ensure that the Catechism-Faith Formation program is well conducted in every parish and to start the MCCL.
8. The apostolate of Family is very important and therefore keep in mind to conduct meaningful program in our parishes and regions. Next marriage preparation course will be held in February 23-24, 2019 in our Chancery, New York. Kindly encourage our young people to attend this course and communicate to Fr. Mathai Mannoovadakkethil their details.
9. Up-dated pre-nuptial Inquiry forms and other church documentation forms and records are available in our Chance
10. Annual gathering and retreat of priests will be held during August 5-8, 2019. All our priests are obliged to attend the retreat.
11. I will be in India in the month of March to attend the annual ecclesial meetings and Synod of our Bishops.

Rev. Fathers are requested to communicate the significant part of this circular to the parish community.

Wishing you the choicest blessing of the Holy Christmas and Happy Near,

Yours in Jesus Christ,

+ Philipos Mar Stephanos

Dated December 20, 2018.

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