



Lighthouse

MAY 2018

A monthly reflection of Horeb Mar Thoma Church, Los Angeles
12741 Main Street, Garden Grove, CA 92840



VICAR'S MESSAGE Rev. Binu P. Thomas

Dear Horeb,

The story of Jesus begins with an over-booked Bethlehem. Mary and Joseph tirelessly search for a place to stay, but not a single place has a room to spare.

You know how the story goes: Mary gives birth to Jesus in a humble stable, surrounded by all sorts of animals.

We live in a world where resources are often limited. Hotels only have a certain number of rooms, trains and airplanes only have a specific number of seats, and food, water and natural resources are constrained. Even our own life on this earth is limited. This can be a huge source of stress or even conflict. Wars have been fought over the limitation of resources. It is the way of the world.

But God's kingdom works differently: "In my Father's house, there are many dwelling places." This is what Jesus teaches his disciples as he prepares for His death. God's love is limitless. It is never-ending and unfailing. It is a grace that goes on forever. God is boundless, and so too is God's compassion.

We witnessed the loss of an iconic servant leader in Rt. Rev. Geevarghese Mar Athanasius Suffragan Metropolitan. God is ever faithful and we believe He will chart our ways.

The story of Jesus begins with human limitation (an over-booked inn), but it ends with Christ's infinite love. In fact, Christ's story will never truly end! God's grace is with you now and forever. So, as Jesus reminds us, do not let your hearts be troubled. God has prepared a place for you and me.

God Bless,
Binu Achen, Elizabeth, Angelina, and Agnes

**"BE STRONG
AND COURAGEOUS.
DO NOT BE AFRAID
OR TERRIFIED
BECAUSE OF THEM,
FOR THE LORD
YOUR GOD
GOES WITH YOU;
HE WILL NEVER LEAVE
YOU NOR FORSAKE YOU."**

Deuteronomy 31:6

MAJOR EVENTS

Sunday, May 13

Mother's Day
Last Day of Sunday School
Youth Fellowship Bake Sale

Sunday, May 20

8:30am - 11:00am: Diocesan Exam
9:30am - 10:30am: Pentecost Service
(GGUMC combined)
Holy Communion Service at 3pm - CANCELED



By Ashlyn Chacko

As a current high school student, there is a multitude of things I have to go through that cause fear. For example, there are more academic and social pressures I must adapt to in a short time span to be college ready. From this, it causes a fear of failing the added responsibilities, or not being good enough for colleges in general. Also, high schoolers feel obligated to make a decision on what path they want to take, both college and career wise. However, if they do not have everything planned out when the time comes, the stress about the uncertainty of the future begins to grow even more than it was before. All of these stresses could be avoided by getting rid of the blanket of pride we have over us. Many people, including myself at times, believe that it is best if they work things out on their own and not ask for help from either God or their parents. However, we must come to a realization that God has a plan for each and every one of us. This may mean that making a few errors along the way may be a part of what He has in store for us. Naturally, human beings have a desire to be glorified for others to see, especially for selfish reasons. However, God will exalt us when it is our time to do so. Instead, by using our humility we will know that it is our want to serve for God that counts in the end. By this, take the fears that you have and submit it to God. This may not mean that He will automatically fix everything, but He will receive them and handle them with care. If we do not throw our anxiety to God, the devil will use them to tempt us to believe that God is not necessary in our lives to fix problems we face. By standing firm in our fate we can fight against the devil's working, but instead get closer to God.

My inspiration came from 1 Peter 5:5-9:

5 In the same way, you who are younger, submit yourselves to your elders. All of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, because, "God opposes the proud but shows favor to the humble." 6 Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time. 7 Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you. 8 Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that the family of believers throughout the world is undergoing the same kind of sufferings."

To contribute content, please contact:

Editorial Team: Anjali John & Saji Abraham

Photography: Saji Abraham & Saji Baby



THE THREE TREES

Folktale provided by Moni Varghese



Once upon a mountain top, three little trees stood and dreamed of what they wanted to become when they grew up. The first little tree looked up at the stars and said: "I want to be covered with gold and filled with precious stones. I'll be the most beautiful treasure chest in the world!"

The second little tree looked out at the small stream trickling by on its way to the ocean. "I want to be traveling mighty waters and carrying powerful kings. I'll be the strongest ship in the world!"

The third little tree looked down into the valley below. "I want to grow so tall that when people stop to look at me, they'll raise their eyes to heaven and think of God. I will be the tallest tree in the world!"

Years passed. The rain came, the sun shone, and the little trees grew tall. One day, three woodcutters climbed the mountain and cut the trees.

The first tree rejoiced when the woodcutter brought her to a carpenter's shop. But the carpenter fashioned the tree into a feedbox for animals. The once beautiful tree was not covered with gold or treasure. She was coated with sawdust and filled with hay for hungry farm animals.

The second tree smiled when the woodcutter took her to a shipyard. The once strong tree was hammered and sawed into a simple fishing boat and she was taken to a little lake.

The third tree was confused when the woodcutter cut her into strong beams and left her in a lumberyard. Many days and nights passed. The three trees nearly forgot their dreams.

But one night, golden starlight poured over the first tree as a young woman placed her newborn baby in the feedbox. "I wish I could make a cradle for him," her husband whispered. The mother squeezed his hand and smiled as the starlight shone on the smooth and the sturdy wood. "This manger is beautiful," she said. And suddenly the first tree knew he was holding the greatest treasure in the world.

One evening a tired traveler and his friends crowded into the old fishing boat. The traveler fell asleep as the second tree quietly sailed out into the lake. Soon, a thundering storm arose. The little tree shuddered. She knew she did not have the strength to carry out so many passengers safely through the wind and the rain. The tired man awakened. He stood up, stretched out his hand, and said, "Peace." The storm stopped as quickly as it had begun. And suddenly the second tree knew he was carrying the King of the heaven and earth.

One Friday morning, the third tree was startled when her beams were pulled out from the forgotten woodpile. She flinched as she was carried through an angry jeering crowd. She shuddered when soldiers nailed a man's hands to her. But on a Sunday morning, when the sun rose and the earth trembled with joy beneath her, the third tree knew that God's love had changed everything. And every time people thought of the third tree, they would think of God.

The next time you feel down because you didn't get what you want, sit tight and be happy because God is thinking of something better to give you. God's plans are always better than ours.

May God bless you all.

MAY CALENDAR

Sat May 5	6:00pm - 8:30pm	South Area Prayer - Remya & Anil Mathew, Irvine
Sun May 6	3:00pm - 5:00pm	Holy Communion Service (English) - GGUMC
Tue May 8	7:00pm - 9:00pm	Parish Mission Bible Study - Ann & Isaac George, Buena Park
Wed May 9	8:00pm - 9:00pm	Western Regional Tele-prayer Conference - 515-603-3108; 638599#
Sat May 12	9:00am - 11:00am	Youth Fellowship Outreach - Huntington State Beach
Sat May 12	6:00pm - 8:00pm	West Area Prayer - Roby & Swapna Chacko, Held at Cypress
Sun May 13	3:00pm - 5:00pm	Holy Communion Service (Malayalam) - GGUMC; Mother's Day; YF Bake Sale
Sat May 19	6:00pm - 8:00pm	East Area Prayer @TBD
Sun May 20	9:30am - 10:30am	Pentecost Service (GGUMC combined); <u>Holy Communion Service at 3pm Canceled</u>
Sun May 20	8:30am - 11:00am	Sunday School Diocesan Exam
Tue May 22	7:00pm - 9:00pm	Parish Mission Bible Study - Annamma & Mathew Koshy, Cerritos
Wed May 23	8:00pm - 9:00pm	MTVEA Western Regional Bible Study - 515-603-3108; 638599#
Sun May 27	3:00pm - 5:00pm	Holy Communion Service (English) - GGUMC
Sun May 27	5:15pm - 5:45pm	Sevika Sangham Mary's Kitchen Outreach - GGUMC, Room 20
Sun May 27	5:00pm - 6:00pm	Youth Fellowship Meeting - GGUMC

WESTERN REGION SEVIKA SANGHAM CONFERENCE



Horeb attendees at the Western Region Sevika Sangham Conference, held on April 7, 2018 at St. Andrews Mar Thoma Church, Los Angeles. Photo by Mathew Philip.



Happy Mother's Day to all the wonderful mothers at Horeb. Thank you for everything that you do! May God bless you.