



REV. ASHISH THOMAS



Vicar's Message to the Parish

Dearly Beloved in Christ,

Greetings to you all in the matchless name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

As we enter the month of **August**, let us pause to thank God for His unfailing love, abundant blessings, and faithful guidance throughout our lives. Every new month is a reminder of God's sustaining grace and a fresh invitation to walk with Him in faith, hope, and faithful witness. May our lives continue to reflect His love and become instruments of His peace wherever He has planted us.

A Call to Prayer for the World

Our hearts continue to be burdened by the ongoing conflicts in **Iran, the wider West Asia, Ukraine, and other war-torn regions.** Let us fervently pray that God may comfort those who suffer, protect the innocent, and grant wisdom to world leaders to pursue justice, reconciliation, and lasting peace. As followers of Christ, let us remain ambassadors of His peace in a divided world.

Praying for the Church

Let us uphold in prayer the **Sabha Prathinidhi Mandalam** meeting this month. May the Holy Spirit guide every discussion and every decision so that all may be done for the glory of God and the strengthening of His Church. Let us remember our bishops, clergy, delegates, and all who participate, praying that they may be filled with wisdom, humility, and discernment.

Space for the Future – Now Is the Time

With grateful hearts, we praise God for granting us the necessary **City approval** for our "**Space for the Future**" project. This is a significant milestone in the life of our parish.

Now is the time to rise and build.

Like Nehemiah, who rallied God's people to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem, we too are invited into a sacred calling. This project is not merely about constructing a building; it is about building a future for generations to come—a place where children will learn God's Word, young people will discover their calling, families will worship together, and lives will be transformed by the Gospel.

I encourage every member of our parish to prayerfully participate through your prayers, your talents, your time, and your generous stewardship. Together, let us build for God's glory.

Nurturing the Next Generation

Please remember in your prayers:

- Our children preparing for the **third module of the Altar Boys and Covenant Girls program.**
- Those prayerfully preparing to receive **First Holy Communion.**
- All our students as they begin a new academic year, especially those entering colleges and universities. May the Lord grant them wisdom, strength, discernment, and a steadfast faith as they navigate new opportunities and challenges.
- The reopening of our **Sunday School**, that every child may grow in the knowledge and love of Christ and become firmly rooted in His Word.

Celebrating God's Faithfulness

We rejoice with **Mr. Rubin Thomas Varghese and Mrs. Jeeba Thomas**, who entered into the holy covenant of marriage last month. May the Lord bless their family life and make their home a witness to His love.

We also thank God for the baptism of **Baby Samuel**, son of Dr. Ryan Abraham Mathew and Dr. Cynthia Mary Francis. May the Lord continue to guide and protect him, and may his family faithfully nurture him in the Christian faith.

Let us also remember in prayer all those who will be married, baptized, and confirmed in the coming months.

Harvest Festival – "Nizhal"

Our annual Harvest Festival is approaching with the beautiful theme **"Nizhal" (Reflection)**. Just as a shadow offers comfort and shelter, may each one of us become a reflection of God's loving presence in the lives of others.

This year's Harvest offerings will support both our **Home for the Homeless** ministry and the **Space for the Future** project. I encourage every family to participate joyfully through prayer, service, and generous giving, so that together we may continue Christ's ministry of compassion and hope.

Conferences and Ministries

Let us also uphold in prayer the upcoming **Yuvajana Sakhyam, Sevika Sangham, and MTVEA Diocesan Conferences**, asking God to renew His people, strengthen His Church, and inspire many to serve Him with renewed commitment.

Conclusion

As we journey through this month, may we continue to grow as a worshipping, witnessing, and serving community.

Let us keep our eyes fixed on Christ, encourage one another in faith, and faithfully use every opportunity God gives us to build His Kingdom.

May the Lord bless you and your families with His peace, good health, wisdom, and abundant grace. Let us continue to walk together in faith, trusting that **"He who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus"** (Philippians 1:6).

With love, prayers, and every blessing,

Rev. Ashish Thomas

Vicar, Chicago Mar Thoma Church

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