

St. Ignatious Sunday School Newsletter—Quarter 1 2019



Message from the Clergy

Do you have a nativity scene at home? It's exciting to have a nativity scene arranged at home during the Christmas time. The best thing about them is how they capture our imagination and help us think about the first Christmas when God sends his only son, Jesus, to be born in this world. Most of the nativity scene includes the infant Jesus in a manger, St. Mary, St. Joseph, shepherds, sheep, oxen; some may have extras the magi, angels, donkeys, and camels. Every year we do the same and see the same manger may be different in size and aesthetics. How about imagining a nativity scene without Jews, Arabs, Africans, marginalized, poor, homeless, and refugees? Who else will be there in that Manger? Just the sheep, oxen, donkeys, camels, and angels; baby Jesus will be gone.

We are living in a world where people don't care for each other, and hate one another based on ethnicity, color, religion, immigration status, economic status, gender identity, and so on. The reality of nativity is not that we are waiting for the birth of baby Jesus. The Christ Jesus is already here, but he is waiting for us to come. He is crying out to us with the voices of the poor, homeless, sick, immigrants, and displaced. He is calling us from the border and the streets. He is waiting for us to live out our faith by seeking justice, pursuing peace and disseminating love. The word nativity which comes from the Latin *nativus* means "arisen by birth." Another Christmas is here and yet another year ahead. Let's arise, let's go, and let's witness love, justice, and peace.

Fr. Eldho Paily
Fr. Dr. Renjan Mathew
Dn. Dr. Abin Puravathu

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A Note from your HM

One of the major aspects that we have been focusing on in Sunday School is Christ-centered formation. This includes in addition to the lessons that you learned, daily personal Bible readings at home, prayer before and after meals, family prayers, attending Mass focused and on time, confession, giving thanks during joyful times and relying and trusting God during rough times. Even though we have been doing the Bible reading for a past few years, we recently introduced a formal Bible reading plan which breaks the reading into 7 parts where each day you will be reading a different section that you repeat on the same day every week. An example will be reading the Epistles on Sunday, Psalms on Wednesdays and Gospel on Saturdays. Everyone should have received the plans to follow this and will be followed up weekly by your teachers. This will not only get you to get familiar with the different parts of the Bible, but also set you on a path to completing the whole Holy Bible in 1 to 2 years maximum. Again as a reminder all of these are crucial for your proper formation so that you will graduate Sunday School Christ centered and be able to contribute back to our church and the next generation.

In the blink of an eye 2018 became but a memory. 2019 looks promising with upcoming retreats, charity events such as Tango Tab where we look forward to buying and putting together meals for the needy, going to North Texas Food Bank and this year the Arch Diocese Family conference which will be hosted here in Dallas July 25 to July 28th where you will get to meet a lot of new friends as well as old ones from around the United States and Canada.

With all these opportunities coming up a key thing to do when you start the year is to take a minute to thank your Sunday School teachers for all the efforts they are putting for your spiritual growth. A quick thank you from your heart will truly make their day!

Sincerely,
Jeeth Thomas

10th Grade Diocese National Exam—2017



Congratulations to Tanya Jagan who ranked #1 in the Diocese as well as made history by getting a perfect 100%. We are so proud of you Tanya!



Congratulations to Joshua Thomas who ranked #3 in the Diocese. We are so proud of you Joshua!

Congratulations to all the 10 students who took the exam and every single one of them passed. We are so proud of each one of you!



10th Grade Diocese National Exam—2018



Congratulations to Alexia Thomas for passing the 10th Grade exam with Distinction which is the highest honor in the Diocese Exam. We are so proud of you!

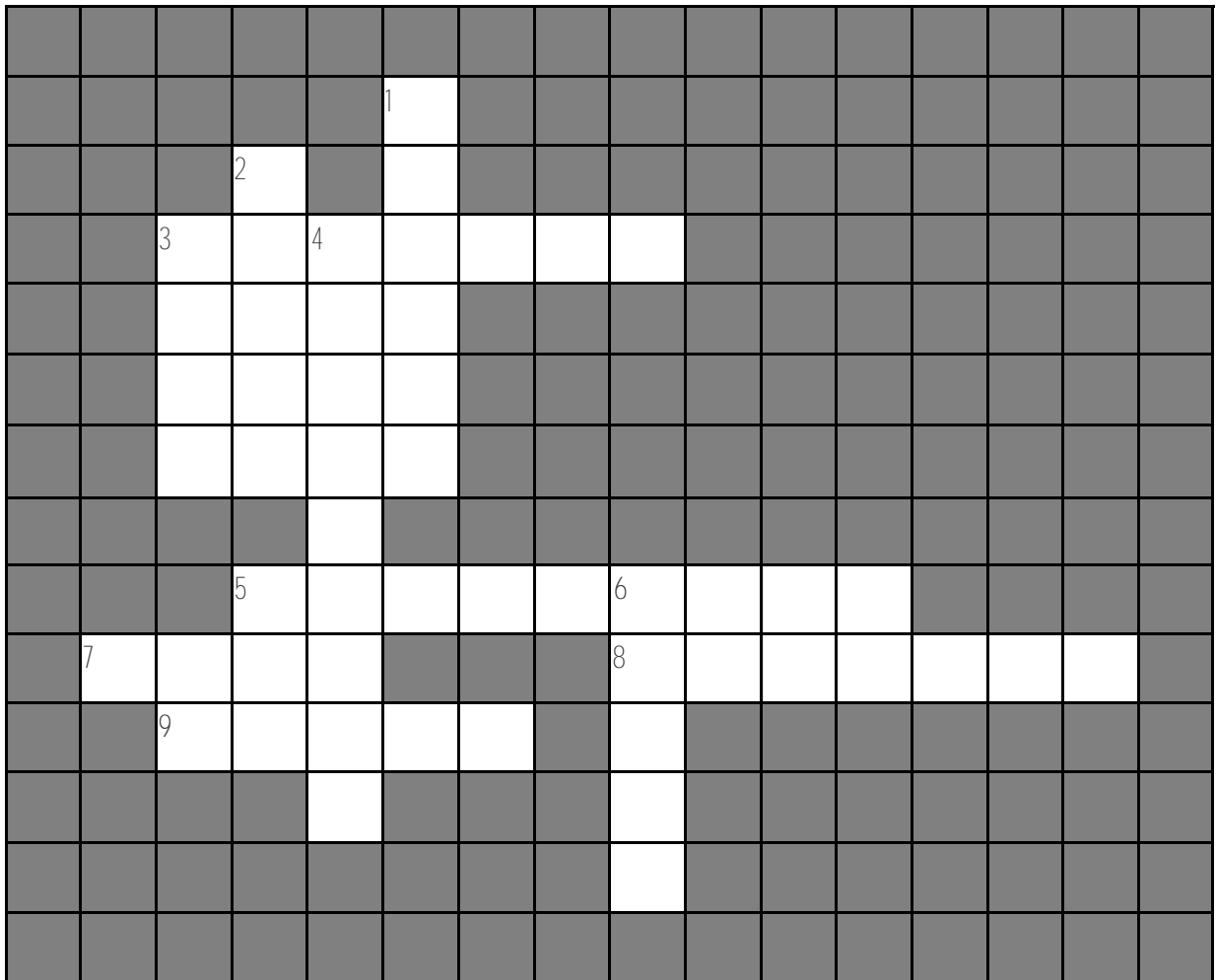
Congratulations to Gabriel Skariah for passing the 10th Grade exam with Distinction which is the highest honor in the Diocese Exam. We are so proud of you!



Congratulations to all 4 of our students from St. Ignatious who took the exam as well as each of them passed. We are so proud of each one of you!

CHRISTMAS CROSSWORD

Naithan Thommi Mathew, Grade 4



DOWN

- 1 In whose dream did the angel appear?
- 2 Who was the king that tried to kill baby Jesus?
- 3 Who is the mother of God?
- 4 Who visited baby Jesus first?
- 6 Which country did Joseph and his family flee?

ACROSS

- 3 What did the wise-men call baby Jesus?
- 5 Where was Jesus born?
- 7 What appeared in the sky when Jesus was born?
- 8 Who said the good-news to Mary and Joseph?
- 9 Which tribe did Joseph belong?



VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL 2018



Church Anniversary



2
0
1
8



2
0
1
8



Church Anniversary



2
0
1
8

2
0
1
8



THANKSGIVING

The Annual Sunday School Teachers' get together was held on Nov 17th, 2018 at Reji and Asha's home. There were fun games for the teachers followed by a delicious Thanksgiving dinner.



Happy Thanksgiving



Happy Thanksgiving



FOOTPRINTS

Noel Alias Aramath, Grade 4

“Footprints in the sand”, a beautiful poem written by Mary Fishback.

It starts off with a person walking on the beach with the Lord. He sees scenes of his life in the sky. He also sees footprints in the sand. When there were bad times there were only one set of footprints. He asks the Lord, why there was only one set of footprints in the sand. The Lord said that was the time when the Lord was carrying him. This poem is on my bedroom wall. At first, it was just a picture on my wall. But now when I read it with all my mind, I really feel very encouraged. We do not notice it, not even me, but at bad times when you think no one is with you, God is with you. That is why after something bad happens often something good follows. Think of it like a storm. After the storm goes away good weather usually comes.

This wonderful poem teaches us that we should not walk by sight but by faith with the Lord because he will never leave us or forsake us. We often forget this, and get desperate during bad times. Let us keep a joyful outlook and always understand that everything works out for the best. Thank God for all the small blessings that he is showering upon us daily even without us noticing it, like the footprints in the sand poem. To God, to God alone due all praise, honor, and worship. Thank you, and wish you a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to you and your families.



CHARITY

Riya Thomas, Grade 8

Every third Saturday of the month, my mom and I go to the Fort Worth Women and Children center to serve dinner to all of the people who are staying there for the night. Often times when I see the condition in which these people are living I feel extremely thankful for what I have. I realize that even the simple things that I take for granted such as a roof over my head, plenty of food to eat every night, and a loving family are actually huge blessings that everyone is not lucky enough to have. Isn't it crazy that seeing people who don't have what I have is what makes me grateful for what I do have?

Especially during this holiday season, we tend to not appreciate everything that is given to us since we are just accustomed to getting presents, or traveling every year. So that is why I am encouraging each and every one of you to say thank you to your mom and dad for always providing for you, or to just start each day by thinking of three things which you are thankful for. It really puts you in a grateful mood, and helps you see life from a different point of view.

CHARITY AND VOLUNTEER WORK

St. Ignatius Youth Association was blessed to volunteer with the non-profit **Feed My Starving Children** on December 15, 2018. Along with the other volunteers, they were able to package 107 boxes of meals, which includes roughly 23,000 servings and will feed 63 children in Uganda a meal a day for an entire year!



Sunday school CHARITY AND VOLUNTEER WORK

St Ignatius 8th Graders went as part of Tango Tab organization in Grapevine where they had purchased, packed sandwich bags for the homeless in November 2018. They were able to pack over 456 sandwich kits. Sunday School will be teaming up with Tango Tab again this year to do similar tasks.





Meet Our Clergy



The Sunday School staff and students are served under the guidance of our Vicar, Rev. Fr. Eldho Paily. Eldho Achen was born and brought up in Elanad, Thrissur, Kerala, and is married to Sajini Eldho. Achen has two children, a daughter, Sherin Merin Eldho who is in her second year degree, and a son, Ignatius Paul Eldho who is in class 6. Achen was ordained as a priest in 1998, and has served in nine churches in Kerala and out of Kerala, as well as outside of India. He was the Youth Coordinator from 1999-2022 outside the Kerala Diocese. He was also the Coordinator for premarital counseling in the Thrissur Diocese from 2009-2015. He taught liturgical music in the MSOTS as a prefect from 1990-1994. The Sunday School staff and students look forward to growing and working under the leadership of Eldho Achen!



Rev. Fr. Dr. Renjan Mathew is serving as our Associate Vicar and leading the English Chapel services. He was ordained as a priest on January 4, 2015. He has extensive work experience with various church and ecumenical organizations. Currently he is serving as the Joint Secretary of the Malankara Archdiocese. Many journal articles both in secular and religious publications are attributed to him. He was instrumental in the translation and compilation of many liturgical books into English. He has a Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology and completed a Post-graduate Diploma in Theology. By profession, he is a practicing Clinical Neuropsychologist. Fr. Mathew is married to Mrs. Nisha Mathew, and the couple are blessed with two children—Naithan and Rebecca.

The Sunday School students and staff look forward to continuing our faith journey under the guidance of our Renjan Achen!



My name is **Nisha Elizabeth Mathew**. I am a seventh-grade secondary teacher and this is my second year teaching the Sunday School. I am married to Fr. Dr. Renjan Mathew and we are blessed with two kids, Naitan and Rebecca. We live in Irving. I work as a QA Engineer Lead in Exeter Finance and hold an engineering degree in Electronics and Communication. I am the oldest child to my parents and I have a younger brother. We moved from Kerala to Dallas in 2010 and I am fortunate to be part of St. Ignatious Cathedral since then.

As a parent, I witness how my kids enjoy the church and Sunday School, and the impact it has on their perspectives and choices. My goal as a teacher is to positively intervene in the life of my students by helping them to understand the beauty of the "Orthodox way" not just the rich tradition but the worship, culture, theology, and values.



My name is **Belma Robin Zachariah**. I work as a nurse and blessed with two children, Ryan and Jake. This is my first year of teaching in Sunday school and I am teaching in first grade with Shirley.

I believe that teaching children about God is a privilege as well as an important responsibility. I thank God almighty for giving me this opportunity and I enjoy spending time with little angels of God, young children.



Hi, I am **Janet Jose** and some do fondly call me Jane. I am married to Aji Varghese and we are blessed with two boys-Jeremy and Alfie. We moved to Dallas from Bangalore, India in the year 2014. I must say US is different and an exciting place and we call this our home now. I am a former Software Engineer and now a freelance Editor still trying to figure out the way I want to move forward.

I went to Sunday School as a child and completed 10th grade. The memories of Sunday school are singing praise and worship songs, my friends, and not to forget the delicious sweet creamed buns. I did briefly teach Kinder students after marriage and here I am again teaching as a substitute for 4th grade.

We are life-long learners and the spiritual growth is similar. I believe in prayer and the power of praying. It gets you closer to the Almighty and makes you humble. I want to do my part in bringing children closer and experiencing the love of the Lord.



After taking a few years off, I, **George Aramath**, am excited to return back to Sunday School as a teacher for our 12th graders this year. Our Orthodox faith has often been seen as a hidden pearl. I believe that our calling as Sunday School teachers is to make sure that this pearl does not remain hidden. Our children should know how blessed they are to grow up in the Orthodox faith so that it is no longer the faith of their parents but their own faith as well. My classroom vision and mission, with the help of God Almighty, is to instill in our children an appreciation and love for our Orthodox Church.

There's a saying: "The truly educated never graduate." It has been a blessing to be able to continually push my own learning in the fields of finance, theology and education. Beyond my educational background, my wife Sherley and I have been blessed with two daughters, Abigail and Chloe.

Sunday School Staff

<u>President</u>	<u>Headmaster</u>	<u>Assistant HM's</u>	<u>Adviser</u>	<u>Secretary</u>	<u>Charity Coordinators</u>
Rev Fr. Eldho Paily	Jeeth Thomas	Mini Mammen & Binoi Skaria	Rev Fr. Dr. Renjan Mathew	Ashley Mathew	Binoi Skaria, Leena Varkey

<u>Pre-K</u>	<u>Kindergarten</u>	<u>1st</u>	<u>2nd</u>	<u>3rd</u>	<u>4th</u>	<u>5th</u>
Jaimie Thomas	Nina Abraham	Dr Sherley Aramath	Ciney Skariah	Seena Abraham	Anu Abraham	Sini Paul
Ashley Chacko	Babitha Mar- kose	Belma Zachariaiah	Deepthy Zachariah	Ruby Kurian	Janet Jose	Asha Reji

<u>6th</u>	<u>7th</u>	<u>8th</u>	<u>9th</u>	<u>10th</u>	<u>11th</u>	<u>12</u>
Shiji Jacob	Ramya Aramath	Simi George	Binoi Skariah	Jessy Kuruvilla	Reji Paul	Dr. George Aramath
Mariam Kurian	Nisha Mathew	Priya Varghese	Jacob Thomas	Leena Varkey Akash Paulose	Dr. Asha Thomas	Mini Mammen

Substitute Teachers:

Johnsy Varghese, Stacey Ninan, Dona Padanilam, Swapna Vijay



UPCOMING EVENTS

2019

January 2019

- ◆ 1/20: Midterm Exam for 1 to 8th Grade
- ◆ 1/27: Midterm Exam for 9 to 12th Grade

February 2019

- ◆ Sunday School Picture Day
- ◆ Sunday School Charity Work

March 2019

- ◆ Sunday School Retreat/Confession

April 2019

- ◆ April 14: Palm Sunday– May Have Shorter Sunday School
- ◆ April 21: Easter– No S.S.
- ◆ April 28: Church Camping Trip – No S.S.

May 2019

- ◆ May 5: Final Exam
- ◆ **May 12 : Mother's Day/Dessert Day**
- ◆ May 19: Sunday School Graduation



We're on the web!

www.stignatious.com/sundayschool.php

Check out our Blogs which include Sunday
Lectons (Bible Reading & Devotional)

<http://stignatious.com/blogs/category/sschool/>

*Have any questions or concerns, please email
St.Ignatious.sundayschool@gmail.com
or reach out to any of the Sunday School Staff*

