



Anniversary Special News Letter

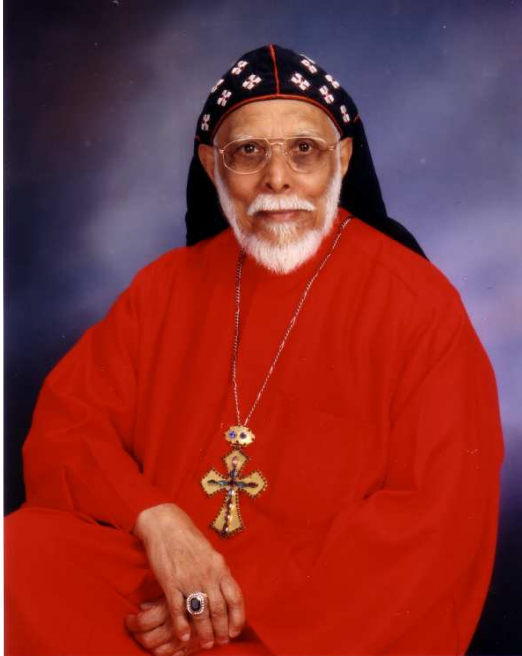
SUNDERLAND ST. THOMAS INDIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH PUBLICATION

News Letter No. III

Month : March

Month Year : 2009

A LOVING MEMORY OF OUR GREAT BISHOP H.G LATE DR. THOMAS MAR MAKARIOS



Last year our Bishop His Grace Late Dr. Thomas Mar Makarios elevated Sunderland congregation as a parish of the Indian Orthodox Church on 5th January 2008.

On the same day tragedy struck. Our beloved Bishop was involved in a road accident and he was admitted in Newcastle General Hospital with serious injuries. In spite of all our prayers and the skill of the staff at the ITU at the hospital Bishop Makarios sadly passed away on 23rd February 2008. During that turbulent period God helped all of us by giving us strength to withstand all the trials and trepidations of that time. We are grateful to all of you and your church who supported us during those difficult days.

A Profile On Metropolitan H.G. Late Dr. Thomas Mar Makarios

(Ex. Metropolitan of Canada, UK and Europe)

His Grace Dr.Thomas Mar Makarios, the founder Metropolitan of America and Metropolitan of Canada, UK and Europe, a native of Kerala, India, was born on May 26, 1926, the son of Mr.Chacko and Mrs. Mariamma Kuttikandathil. After attending schools and colleges, he completed theological studies at the Orthodox Theological Seminary at Kottayam. He was ordained a priest in 1952 by His Holiness Catholicose GeeVarghese Baselios II. He was sent to New Delhi, the capital city of India, and to organize congregations in North Indian cities. He became the first vicar of Orthodox Church in New Delhi.

It was during the time of the litigation of the Church that Mar Makarios showed his ingenuity as leader and scholar in Church History. He helped the lawyers of the church understand the history, traditions and Canons of the Church. This was instrumental in seeking an historic verdict by the Supreme Court of India in favor of the Church in 1958. Mar Makarios has studied in various religious institutions in England, Germany, Switzerland and France. He has been in the U.S since 1963 and earned a Bachelor of Divinity degree from Nashota House in Wisconsin, a Master's of Sacred Theology from Virginia Theological Seminary, and a Doctorate in Theology from Union Theological Seminary in Richmond. He returned back to India and worked as a professor of Church History at Orthodox Theological Seminary in India for many years. In 1975, Mar Makarios was consecrated as a Metropolitan by His Holiness Catholicos Eugen I. In the same year The Catholicos appointed Mar Makarios the first metropolitan of Diocese of Bombay.

In 1979 Mar Makarios was installed as the first metropolitan of the Diocese of America of Indian Orthodox Church. Since 1985, Mar Makarios has been teaching religion at Alma College in Michigan. In recognition of Makarios's achievements and contributions to church and society, the college awarded him the degree of Doctor of Divinity Honorees Causa in 1990. In 1994 Mar Makarios was appointed as the first metropolitan of the newly created Diocese of Canada and Europe. Mar Makarios is a great teacher and defender of Orthodox faith. In guiding the Church in the western world into the third millennium, Mar Makarios has superbly evincing a rare and high order of vision, courage and foresight.

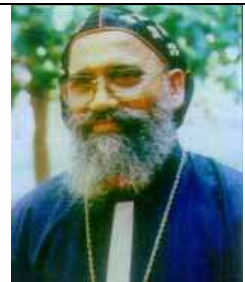
LOVING MEMORIES OF OUR GREAT BISHOPS



H. G. Late Mathews Mar Epiphanius



His Grace Late Dr. Thomas Mar Makarios



H G Late Philipose Mar Eusebios





Vicar & President
(Rev. Fr. Happy Jacob)

As you all know that we are going through the days of great lent. I am inviting your attention in three matters. Firstly the Observance of Lent. Fasting and praying are the two wings that helps us during this period. Reading the Word of God and meditating on it will surely enrich our spiritual life. Secondly the Memorial Service of our beloved Thirumeni. We celebrate our Parish day and the Memorial service together. Our respected priests and the faithful believers from all part of UK are willing to participate in this service. Thirdly we got a new bishop for our diocese. The details about the bishop is attached at the end of this news letter. Please pray for our Church and all its activities.

May God Bless you all, **Rev. Happy Jacob**



Secretary
(Reji Thomas Kottarakara)

Sunderland Orthodox fellowship was formed in the month of August 2004. The first meeting was held in the City Hospital's chapel on 7th August 2004. The day was blessed with the presence of **Angamali Metropolitan Abraham Mar Saverious** who inaugurated the gathering. Since then we are having Malayalam mass every 1st Saturday of the month. The Vicar of St. Joseph's RC Church, Millfield **Rev. Fr. Gordon Ryan** gave us permission to worship in the church. In the beginning we had 15 families in and around Sunderland and Newcastle. As the days went on, our fellowship started to grow. On the 22nd January 2004, we unanimously selected "**St. Thomas**" as the name for our fellowship. On the 4th of December 2005 our Metropolitan **H.G. Late Dr. Thomas Mar Makarios** conducted the holy mass, and on 5th Feb 2005 Thumpamon Diocesan Metropolitan **H.G. Late Philipose Mar Eusebios** conducted the mass, and we were really blessed to have two of our Metropolitan.

We also run a Sunday School programme which also is carried on the first Saturday after the mass. Some of the other programmes that every year our church is conducting is Harvest Festival, Church Anniversary, OVBS, Parumala Thirumani's memorial service, Christmas, Onam Festival, Parish Day, Holy Week. Our church was officially declared as one of the Indian orthodox church in UK on the 5th of January 2008 by our late Metropolitan H.G. Mar Thomas Makarios, who also published our church souvenir. We have a official website for our church which can be accessed at www.sunderlandorthodoxchurch.com which gives you more information about the church activities. It was a great achievement for us last month, when our church was registered under UK Charity Council. To add on to our achievements we have introduced a three monthly news letter.

This news letter is a special edition in memory of our late bishop HG Dr. Thomas Mar Makrios and to celebrate our church anniversary. More over, It also includes information about our seven new bishops, the UK Dioceses newly appointed, young and enthusiastic bishop, and also about the newly selected management committee members for this year.

The members who are attending the mass are mainly from Sunderland, Newcastle, South Shields, Darlington, North Shield, Middlesbrough and Harrowgate. At an average of 70-100 members are attending the holy mass every month. We are also conducting regular prayer meetings on the first Friday of every month and it is held in the church members houses which also encourages socialising both for the parents as well as the children.

We would like to express our sincere thanks on behalf of our church managing committee members to every one who are supporting in all the activities. We hope to get your continued support and active participation in all our future activities. Please remember us in your prayers.

Secretary
Reji Thomas Kottarakara



Our Church's New Address
St. Thomas Indian Orthodox Church,
P.O. Box:1272,
Sunderland, SR5 9HJ
Church Charity Registration No. 1127767

Farewell

Our Church member Mr. Noby and Family is leaving to Australia on March 2009. We wish him and his family all the best and good wishes for the future. We will miss you all.



114th Asia's biggest Christian convention begins from 15th Feb to 22nd Feb 2009





Maramon (Kerala), Feb 15 : The Maramon convention, which is billed as the largest congregation of Christians in Asia, organised by Syrian Mar Thoma church of Kerala opened here Sunday. The 114th Maramon convention was inaugurated by the head of Mar Thoma church, Joseph Marthoma Metropolitan. The church is headquartered at Thiruvalla, about 130 km from Thiruvananthapuram. Maramon is situated on the banks of the Pampa river, about 20 km from Thiruvalla. The week-long convention will have a series of prayer and devotional music sessions. The convention sees a mad rush of politicians from various parties trying to make their presence felt among the electorate. The Syrian Mar Thoma church has over one million members in Kerala. Nearly three million Christians are expected to attend the convention that will end Feb 22. Bishop Muame Damdala (South Africa), Reverend Martin Lundae (South Africa) and Bishop Daniel Thygaraj are the main speakers at the convention this year.



13th Bishop of Hexham and Newcastle of Roman Catholic Church

Pope Benedict XVI has appointed Canon Seamus Cunningham, at present Administrator of the vacant Diocese, to become the 13th Bishop of Hexham and Newcastle. He will be ordained bishop and installed in St Mary's Cathedral Church, Newcastle at 12 noon on Friday 20th March 2009, the feast of St Cuthbert, patron of the diocese.

HOLY WEEK PROGRAMME & REV. FR. JOSE JOHN'S VISITING PROGRAMME

Date	Time	Programme	Co-Ordinator
31/04	10pm	Rev. Fr. Jose John arrival and stay in Mr. Reji Thomas Ktra's resi.	Mr. Reji Thomas Kottarakara
01/05		Stay in Mr. Reji Thomas Ktra's resi.	Mr. Reji Thomas Kottarakara
02/05		Stay in Mr. Reji Thomas Ktra's resi.	Mr. Reji Thoms Kottarakara
03/05	7.30pm	Prayer Meeting and stay in Mr. Saji Abraham Newcastle Resi.	Mr. Reji Thomas Kottarakara
04/05	9.30am	 Hosana service at St. Joseph RC Church and stay at Mr. Mathew Thomas resi.	Mr. Mathew Thomas
05/05	7.30pm	Prayer Meeting at Mathew Thomas resi. and stay in Mr. Paulose Ninans house.	Mr. Paulose Ninan
06/05	7.30pm	Prayer Meeting at Mr. Paulose Ninan's resi. and stay at Mr. Philip Kurian's resi.	Mr. Reji Thomas Kottarakara
07/05	7.30pm	Prayer Meeting and stay at Mr. Philip Kurian's Resi. Sunderland	Mr. Philip Kurian
08/05	5.30pm	 Peshaha service at St. Joseph RC Church and stay at Mr. Raji Thomas Sunderland	Mr. Raji Thomas Sunderland
09/05	7.30pm	Prayer Meeting and stay at Mr. Raji Thomas's Resi.	Mr. Raji Thomas Sunderland
10/05	10am	 Good Friday at St. Joseph RC Church, and stay at Mr. Mathew Thomas's resi. Sunderland	Mr. Mathew Thomas
11/05	10am	Good Saturday at St. Joseph RC Church, Sunderland and stay at Mr. Mathew Thomas's resi.	Mr. Mathew Thomas
12/05	10am	 Easter Sunday at St. Joseph RC Church, and stay at Dr. Mohan George's resi. Sunderland	Dr. Mohan George
13/05	9.10am	Going back to Kerala	Mr. Reji Thomas Kottarakara, Dr. Abraham Samuel, Dr. Mohan Gerge & Mr. Varghese Cherian

Holy Consecration of Bishops





നവാഭിഷിക്തരാകുന്ന മെത്രാപ്പോലീത്തമാർക്ക് ആശംസകൾ



Following a meeting of the Sabha Managing Committee in Kottayam, Kerala on 24th February, the Church's public relations officer has issued a press release detailing the recommendations of the managing committee regarding the allotment of dioceses to the new bishops. The recommendations are as follows:

HG Mathews Mar Thimotheos UK, Europe, Africa 	HG Alexios Mar Eusebius Southwest US (New Diocese) 	HG Abraham Mar Epiphanius Sultan's Battery 	HG Youhanon Mar Dioscoros Chennai 
HG Youhanon Mar Polycarpus Angamaly 	HG Joseph Mar Dionysius Kolkata 	HG Mathews Mar Theodosius Idukki 	

There are also three transfer recommendations:

HG Yakub Mar Irenaios from Chennai to Kochi	HG Kuriakose Mar Clemis from Sultan's Battery to Thumpamon	HG Zachariah Mar Anthonius from Kochi to Kollam
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Recommendations for additional charges:

HG Geevarghese Mar Coorilos is set to have additional charge of the new Ahmedabad Diocese as assistant to the Catholics.	HG Abraham Mar Epiphanius is set to have additional charge of the new Bangalore diocese as assistant to the Catholics.
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NEW BISHOP FOR UK, EUROPE & AFRICA DIOCESE

H.G. Mathews Mar Themothios

(Interview with H.G Mathews Mar Themothios with ICON)

H.G. Mathews Mar Themothios, 45, belongs to Painuvilla Puthenveedu House, Mavelikara Diocese, and is the son of P J Baby and Thankamma Baby. His home parish is St.Mary's Orthodox Cathedral, Puthiyacavu, Mavelikara. He took his B. Sc Degree from Bishop Moor College, Mavelikara, G.S.T. from Orthodox Seminary, Kottayam, and B.D and M Th from Serampore College, Kolkata. He took his licentiate in Sacred Scripture from the Pontifical

ICON: Congratulations on being elected to the Episcopal office. Whom do you credit your success with?

H.G. Mathews Mar Themothios: Firstly, I give thanks to God and to my Church.

ICON: What will be your message for aspirants who missed the bus at the association, as well as at various stages of the process?

H.G. Mathews Mar Themothios: This is not the last bus. By the Grace of God, the next bus will come very soon and everybody will get seats in that bus.

ICON: His Holiness the Patriarch of Antioch is now visiting Malankara. If given an opportunity for an audience with him, what will be your one message?

H.G. Mathews Mar Themothios: I would ask him to take the initiative to settle the disputes between the two sections of the Church.

ICON: The relations between the two factions in the church seem to be at their nadir. Do you see the prospect for a reunion, ever?

H.G. Mathews Mar Themothios: I hope that the churches can settle the disputes with the guidance of the Holy Spirit in appointed time. The leaders of the church should take initiative for the settlement of issues as early as possible. Both sections share a common faith tradition and history. So, in the interest of the Indian context, it will be beneficial if the two sides unite.

ICON: Can you suggest some unilateral confidence building measures from the Orthodox Church that will help in lowering the temperature and help facilitate a meeting of minds?

H.G. Mathews Mar Themothios:

a. To develop a communicative strategy from the

Biblical Institute, Rome, and his doctoral degree from the Pontificia Studiorum Universitas, Rome. he also took a diploma in Biblical Archeology from the Pontifical Institute, Jerusalem. This multilingual scholar is currently faculty member and registrar at the Orthodox Theological Seminary, Kottayam. Noteworthy among his works is an exegetical study of Psalm 24, which was published in Rome.

grassroots level.

b. To train and equip lay activists to facilitate the reunion process.

c. To facilitate and ensure the participation of the women flock in the reunion process.

ICON: The Malankara Orthodox church seems to be always in the news for the wrong reasons. Is this because we are not presenting ourselves well, or do you think there's room for introspection?

H.G. Mathews Mar Themothios: The media is always creating news on the basis of their ideology. It is a propaganda machine for the marketing of the media. In this context the church should concentrate on and develop more media-friendly strategies.

ICON: The Catholicate will be celebrating its 100th anniversary of relocation in 2012. Where do you see the Catholicate in the next 100 years?

H.G. Mathews Mar Themothios: The office of the Catholicate is more relevant today in the context of the Indian church. Therefore, we should redefine the function of the Catholicate and facilitate the natural development of the office with a more indigenous identity.

ICON: Non-Christians in Kerala, especially those in the media, are confused in making sense of three Christian high priests claiming the title of Catholicos. How will you make them distinguish the genuine article from the spurious?

H.G. Mathews Mar Themothios: The uniqueness of our Catholicate is rooted in three principles: it is National, Independent, and Democratic. The other two Catholicoi are dignitaries under the supervision of either the Roman or Syrian Pontiff.

ICON: The Old Seminary will be celebrating its 200th anniversary in 2015. Isn't it a shame that such an ancient institution of learning appears content to

conduct examinations for its aspiring Orthodox priests based on the syllabus prescribed by the Protestant Serampore University? What will be your remedy?

H.G. Mathews Mar Themothios: As the Registrar of the Orthodox Theological Seminary, I can assure you that the Serampore University is giving the affiliated colleges enough freedom to conduct their own subjects. The BD (Bachelor of Divinity) course offering includes 28 papers of which 12 are controlled by the Senate of Serampore while the rest are conducted and controlled by the respective colleges. However, in the future, we can develop this institution as an Orthodox University for the enrichment of through the Orthodox faith and practices.

ICON: Where do you see our seminaries in the next 100 years?

H.G. Mathews Mar Themothios: The seminaries should develop into excellent international theological institutions with extraordinary infrastructure and faculty where national and international students will peruse their study in Orthodox faith and traditions.

ICON: One or more of you stand the chance of being appointed to North America. The Orthodox Church in North America is blessed in having a sizeable number of US-born youngsters who have heeded the call of God's ministry. Yet many of them, after completion of their courses, are forced to stand in the sidelines because the church is unable to appoint them to an office. How will you reach out to them?

H.G. Mathews Mar Themothios: Create a centre where such Orthodox members can receive training to take up the future leadership of our parishes. This will include language skills, conducting services, and pastoral ministry. I am very proud of their commitment and loyalty to the church, ministry, and Orthodox faith.

ICON: There exists a cultural rift in North America between India-born and US-born members. The former are on a nostalgia trip and cling on to traditions (including the language of divine service) for their moorings. The latter are drifting day by day away from the church, unable to make the connection. How will you handle the situation?

H.G. Mathews Mar Themothios: Even though there exists a cultural disparity, we have to train them to adjust to modern situations without sacrificing the ancient traditions of the Church. The general principle is that the language of religion is always mystical and its meanings are not fully understandable in any language. Even the Malayalee does not fully understand the Malayalam liturgy. What we need is involvement in the spirit of the liturgy.

ICON: The church has been unable to implement a salary and transfer system for priests in North America. Many priests are almost functioning as

idavakapattakkar for decades together. On the other hand, a sizeable section of the clergy pursues secular employment since the church is unable to support them with a proper salary. The church is suffering spiritually because of this. Any thoughts?

H.G. Mathews Mar Themothios: Most of the priests migrate to the USA in connection with their own arrangements. In this process the Church has no control over them. However, many of them render their valuable services for the establishment of our parishes in the USA without receiving any proper salary'. In the future, we have to develop a proper and functioning overall setup in the ministry of the clergy.

ICON: Continuing this chain of thought, are you in favour of prescribing a retirement age for bishops? If so, what would be the ideal age for retirement? How will the church utilize the services of its bishops, post-retirement?

H.G. Mathews Mar Themothios: I understand that our church has already formulated the rules and regulations concerning the retirement of Bishops. If a Bishop is not physically fit for administration he can take voluntary retirement. During the post retirement period the church should take care of the Bishops and they can continue to provide spiritual guidance

ICON: There's a perception among the laity that our bishops lack financial transparency. How will you remedy this perception?

H.G. Mathews Mar Themothios: I think this is an incorrect perception. However, Bishops should maintain financial transactions in a transparent way.

ICON: One or more of you will be appointed to dioceses with control over churches in the Gulf. The faithful in the Gulf are seething at the endless stream of donation-seekers thronging their churches at any given moment. How will you address their grievance that the church is exploiting them solely as a source of funding with little or no concern for their spiritual welfare?

H.G. Mathews Mar Themothios: In the Gulf region the collection campaigns should be restricted and limited by the diocesan Bishop. The details of the collection should be published. Moreover, the funds should be utilized for the benefit of the whole church.

ICON: In the Gulf too, there exists a cultural rift between India-born and native-born members. The latter seems to be more comfortable in the milieu of a personalised Christianity characterized by prayer meetings and witnessing. How will you reach out to such lost sheep?

H.G. Mathews Mar Themothios: In the Gulf context we need a paradigm shift in religious practices. We have

to understand the needs of the youngsters who are born and brought up in the Gulf from their own perspective and develop new strategies to bring them into the mainstream life of the church.

ICON: Coming to Indian dioceses outside Kerala, with religious fundamentalism on the boil, how will you drive home the message that ours is the original and ancient church of India with its cultural moorings intact?

H.G. Mathews Mar Themothios: In our St Thomas tradition we always maintain religious tolerances and cultural identity. We never promote idea such as forced conversion and Christian fundamentalism.

ICON: Do you think the tradition of a monastic life has died down in the church? How do we revive it and offer laymen a chance to recharge their spiritual batteries through access to monasteries?

H.G. Mathews Mar Themothios: I don't think so. Our monastic tradition has not completely died out. There are certain golden strings in the church. However, we

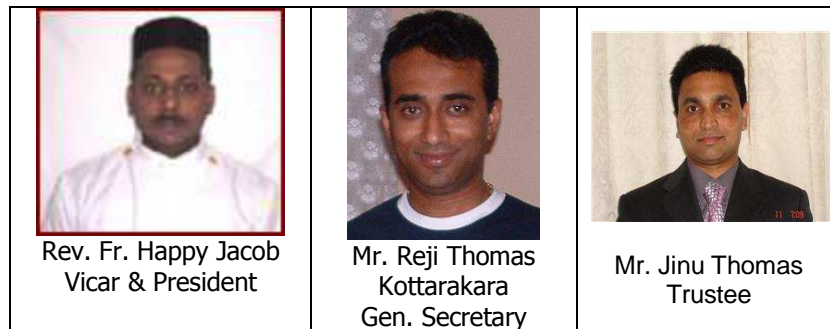
must revitalize the existing patterns of the monastic system. The monastic communities have a vital role in upholding the traditions and practices of the church.

ICON: Our understanding is that there are no theological or Biblical restrictions against women having voting privileges at the parish, diocesan and Malankara Association levels. What measures will you take to help revise our constitution and provide equal status to women?

H.G. Mathews Mar Themothios: In principle I agree with your statements. Our church is in the process of revising the constitution. The church currently allows women to participate in the general body meetings of the parish. I hope that in the near future women will get voting rights in all spheres of the administrative bodies of the Church.

ICON: Thank you His Grace for taking time to explain your views and vision to ICON members. We are grateful to you and our prayers are with you as you re-dedicate yourself to assume this most important responsibility.

NEW MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEMBERS OF THE CHURCH 2009-10





Parish Anniversary & Memorial Service of H.G. Late Dr. Thomas Mar Makarios

PROGRAMME

Prayer Meeting

Date : 6th March 2009 & Time : 7pm

Venue : St. Mary Magdalene's Church, Wilson Street, Millfield, Sunderland

Munnimmel Qurbana (Mass)

Date : 7th March 2009

Time : 9pm

Venue : Deptford and Millfield Community Association, Near Steels Club, 270
Hylton Road, Havelock Building, Sunderland, SR4 7XJ

Public Meeting

Time : 12Noon

Prayer : Rev. Fr. Varghese Mathew

Welcome Speech : Rev. Fr. Happy Jacob

Presidential Speech : Rev. Fr. Abraham Thomas

Inauguration : Hon. Mayors Mary Smith

Speech : Rev. Fr. Chris Jackson
: Rev. Fr. Gordon Rayon
: Rev. Fr. B. Skelton
: Hon Cllr Kevin Peter O'Connor
: Hon Cllr Peter Maddison
: Hon Cllr Paul Dixon
: Rev. Fr. Saji Thottathil

Vote of Thanks : Mr. Reji Thomas Kottarakara

Prayer & Love Feast



ST. THOMAS INDIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH
P.O. Box: 1272, Sunderland, SR5 9HJ,
United Kingdom

Charity Registration No. 1127767

Web : www.sunderlandorthodoxchurch.com
Email: stthomaschurchuk@yahoo.co.uk

Holy Qurbana : Every month 1st Saturday at 10am
Prayer Meeting : Every Month 1st Friday at 7pm

Worship at : St. Joseph RC Church, Millfield, Sunderland, SR4 6HP

Vicar & President : Rev. Fr. Happy Jaocb & Telephone : 07863562907

General Secretary : Mr. Reji Thomas Kottarakara & Telephone : 07962200998

Trustee : Mr. Jinu Thomas & Telephone : 07886506456

Suffering, Death and Resurrection of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.



This Lent.....

Give up *complaining*.....focus on gratitude. Give up *pessimism*...become an optimist.

Give up harsh *judgements*...think kindly thoughts. Give up *worry*.....trust Divine Providence.

Give up *discouragement*.....be full of hope. Give up *bitterness*.....turn to forgiveness.

Give up *hatred*.....return good for evil. Give up *negativism*.....be a positive.

Give up *anger*.....be more patient. Give up *pettiness*.....become more mature.

Give up *gloom*.....enjoy the beauty that is all around you. Give up *jealousy*....pray for trust.

Give up *gossiping*....control your tongue. Give up *sin*.....turn to virtue.

Give up *giving up*....hang in there !!!!!

Wishing you a prayerful and Reflective Lentin Season.

