



# The Northeast American Diocese of the Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church

2158 ROUTE 106 • MUTTONTOWN • NEW YORK 11791

---



By the Grace of God,  
Zachariah Mar Nicholovos,  
Diocesan Metropolitan

CK No. 10/2015

September 1, 2015

Blessings to the Vicars, Assistant Vicars, and faithful of the Northeast American Diocese, especially our students.

Dearly beloved,

The new school year begins in the shadow of various changes that have occurred in our society. Our country has also sought to redefine the sacred by making it fit into their own microcosm, or even attempting to rid our society of anything related to the sacred. In this day and age, it has been deemed “weird” or “not trendy” to be religious in school or work.

In the shadow of all this, or in the midst of this chaos, our children enter back into their classrooms to learn. They enter their classrooms to be molded as great leaders and thinkers of our society. However, dear children please also remember you enter into the classroom to be tested in your faith as well. The new school year should not be something we (clergy, parents, and children) should be fearful of. It should be seen as an opportunity to witness our faith by being a living reflection of them. Even if our society seeks to remove the Gospel of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ from the privacy of our own homes, the world/society should be able to read it very clearly in our lives.

Scripture reminds us: “Be strong and courageous. Do not fear or be in dread of them, for it is the Lord your God who goes with you. He will not leave you or forsake you” (Deuteronomy 31:6). We encourage our children, and echo the same counsel our beloved Vicars and Assistant Vicars have already offered to you: pray every morning before leaving to school, read the Holy Bible - a small portion every day, and lastly be sure to go to Church on the Lord's Day - Sunday. Incorporate these three acts of Divine Wisdom in your life to ensure that you are able to excel in your quest for knowledge.

May God, Who is the source of all Wisdom and knowledge, bless and sanctify each student as they begin this new academic year.

Yours in our Lord,

Zachariah Nicholovos, Metropolitan