

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Applications Open for Fr. C.O. Vargis Scholarship

The Malankara Orthodox Church in the US has grown from the initial days of recreating what was done in Kerala to creating its own identity in the new millennium. Building the community around the church, training the new generation with Sunday school classes, slowly shifting from solely Malayalam Qurbana to a mix of Malayalam, Syriac and now English are all signs of the growth of the American Diocese. The original pioneers of the diocese have passed on the church to a new group of respected bishops, priests and managing members. Their contributions have been valuable, irreplaceable and the foundation of today's Malankara Church in the US.

Rev. Fr. C.O. Vargis of Houston, with the vision of using education to improve lives, asked that the gifts at his retirement were passed on to create a scholarship for students in India. His request was that the scholarship amounts are set aside to those who are below the poverty level but still have the merit to do well in studies. While personal donations have funded education for countless families in the past 30 years of the church in the US, Fr. Vargis requested that a scholarship committee be set aside to provide structure for the scholarship fund, transparency to donors, set criteria for scholarship recipients and to carry on the scholarship for years to come. The ability to set up the structure is progress from the initial years of just sending money to organizing the scholarship so that every dollar and rupee can be accounted to meet the objective of changing lives, changing communities.

In 2015, the Fr. Vargis Scholarship Fund, was set up as a non-profit, with by-laws, criteria for funding, and methods of keeping records transparent to all donors by a team of volunteer board members from diverse professions. Financial need with below poverty family income, educational merit and character references are the requirements for potential scholarship recipients. Applications are now being accepted from potential scholars. Please review the application at (<http://www.frcovargisfund.org/for-scholars.html>).