

## **MAC Monthi Fest - 2009**

### **Events**

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Monthi Fest, a unique Mangalorean tradition, is a time to celebrate the birthday of our Lady and give thanksgiving for a bountiful harvest. Kernels of grain from the new crop are blessed and prayed over and fruits, vegetables and flowers are offered first in church. An assortment of odd numbered vegetable dishes are prepared and served in catholic homes.

The Mangalorean Association of Canada celebrated the Nativity and the harvest festival with devotion, pride and splendour in the midst of approximately 450 Catholics on September 6, 2009 at the John Paul II Polish Cultural Centre in Mississauga. Young and older angelic children, dressed in their finery, placed flowers in honour of Mother Mary to the accompaniment of 'Sokkod Sangatha Melhyan' and 'Moriyek Hogolhsian'. The flower throwing ceremony and the blessing of the Novem was conducted by Gerry D'Mello. After the blessing of the sheaves of grain, the congregation walked eagerly in a procession to the St. Maximilian Kolbe Parish for a Konkani mass. The main celebrant of the mass was Rev. Fr. Edwin D'Souza. The Most Reverend John A. Boissonneau, Auxiliary Bishop of Toronto who is responsible for 67 parishes in the western part of the City of Toronto, sat at the altar and addressed the congregation in the church. The con-celebrants were Rev. Fr. Andrew Lewis, Rev. Fr. Henry Alva, Rev. Fr. Henry Menezes, Rev. Fr. Aloysius Noronha, and Rev. Fr. Santosh Mondol. Spiritual guidance was also provided by Sr. Ferdinanda. The melodious Konkani choir was led by Merlyn Rodrigues.

The cultural program commenced in the John Paul II Polish Cultural Centre with a tribute dance to Mother Mary, a light snack and a welcome note by emcee Neville D'Souza. The President of the Mangalorean Association of Canada welcomed our chief guest, Bishop of Toronto, the spiritual leaders gathered in the hall, the guests and provided a synopsis of past achievements and forthcoming events. The highlight of the cultural program was a rib-tickling comedy drama, 'Maglem Ek Melhem Dhon', written by Percy D'Souza of Mangalore and directed by our very own, Oswald Sequeira. A Konkani folk dance and a village folk dance were enthusiastically welcomed by all the audience while small comedy skits enactments had the audience laughing merrily. Group songs and solo trumpet music provided the variety for the cultural program.

Each participating artiste invested time and energy into his/her performance and it was gratifying to note so many young children and adults on stage. MAC is deeply appreciative of everyone's efforts whether they performed in a play, skit, dance, singing or instrumental music. A raffle was collected for charitable causes and the beneficiary of this year's collection was the Society of St. Vincent de Paul. The Vote of Thanks was given by the MAC Cultural Secretary, Mr. Leo Rego.

Konkan Delite catered a traditional all-vegetarian meal with the highlight of the meal being the delicious 'Pathravade' and the sumptuous dessert, 'Vorn'. The guests commended the quality and taste of the authentic meal. Joyson D'Souza provided great support with his excellent deejay skills

and music. MAC applauds the generosity and sincere contribution of the sponsors for the Monthi Fest. Without their guidance and strong ties to the community and association, the function would not enjoy the tremendous success and popularity. MAC appreciates the participation and help of all the volunteers and the dedication and commitment of its members who ensured the astounding success of Monthi Fest.

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