

Over 250 people from the New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, and Connecticut areas gathered together on Sunday September 18th, 2011 at St. Cecelia's Church in Iselin, NJ for the Mangalorean Catholic Association of the East Coast's (MCA-EC) Monti Fest 2011 celebration. Surrounded by coconuts, palm and banana trees, there was an overwhelming sense of being back home. As one attendee noted, he particularly liked "The ambiance!!" and "Felt as if I'm in my coastal hometown."



Father Arun Lobo, the organization's 2011-2012 spiritual director, presided over a traditional Konkani mass, with readings by various MCA-EC members and hymns sung by a Konkani children's and adult choir led by Vijai Furtado. Father Lobo kept his congregation's attention with a stirring homily that stressed the meaning of Monti Fest, along with the need for families to eat and pray together to strengthen unity.



The traditional mass concluded with over 50 children participating in a floral procession. Within minutes, the statue of Infant Mary was adorned by hundreds of petals of pink, red, orange and yellow roses, marigolds and lilies. The children took great delight in their involvement with the afternoon's colorful festivities.



Following a break for appetizers, incoming President Gladwin D'Souza delivered a speech to welcome the full house of Mangalorean attendees. Mr. D'Souza graciously thanked the previous board in a small ceremony, awarding each 2010-2011 board member with a trophy for their efforts in the previous year (Outgoing President Mark Lancy Mendonca, VP-Programs Vanitha Furtado, Secretary/Treasurer Marina Correa, Mentor Joesph Colaco, VP-Membership Christopher

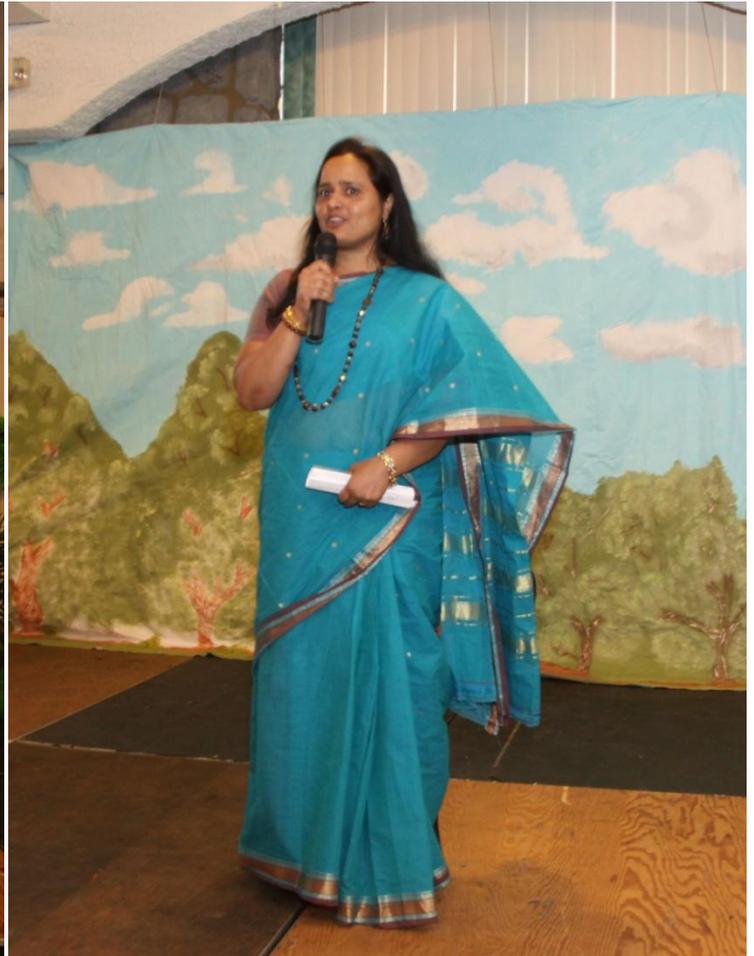
Monis, VP-Public Relations Bernie D'souza, Mentor Vivian Kamath, Webmaster Collin Lewis, and Founding President Manesh Aranha).



He then thanked his current board, Steven Aranha-VP of Programs, Jaison Banji-VP of Membership, John D'Souza-Treasurer, Diana Lewis-VP of Public Relations, Arine Aranha-Webmaster and Sharlet Misquith-Webmaster, for serving the needs of the MCA-EC community.

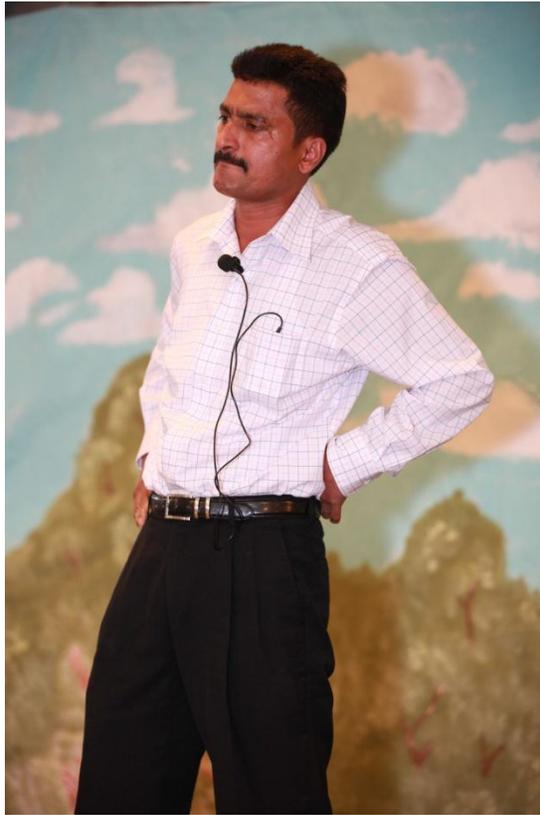


Master and Mistress of Ceremonies of Ernest D'Souza and Monti D'Cunha punctuated the afternoon's cultural programming segment with humorous anecdotes and one-liners.



The cultural programming proved to be the highlight of the afternoon, with drama, comedy, and music that had universal appeal. In fact, the organization’s post event survey indicated a 100% approval rating of the Monti Fest cultural segment. Photos of the afternoon’s cultural programming are below, along with titles and participants:

- ❖ Comedy Routine by John Herald “Harry” Pinto



- ❖ "Daina Bai," Adult Dance choreographed by Aldrin Rego, Featuring Michelle Fernandes, Vanitha Furtado, Merlin Mendonca , Premila Mendonca



- ❖ "Sathavonth Durbolo," Skit by Steven Aranha , Featuring Steven Aranha, Fr. Arun Lobo, Arun Menezes, and Sujata Pereira



- ❖ "Goan Mando" Children's Dance choreographed by Aldrin Rego, Featuring Nathan Duarte, Navin Duarte, Darrel D'Souza, Michelle D'Souza, Jiselle D'Souza, Susanna D'Souza, Amelia D'Souza, Venora Furtado, Vinuth Furtado, Annlynn Fernandes, Anika Fernandes, Meldon Mendonca, Melanie Mendonca, Orran Mendonca, Clayton Monis, Cleon Monis, Gerard Monteiro, Leann Rego



- ❖ "Classroom in Mangalore" Skit by Arine Aranha, Mithila Aranha, and Mark Mendonca, Featuring Manesh Aranha, Bernie D'Souza, Gladwin D'Souza, Ronald D'Souza, Simiana D'Souza, Antony Fernandes, Vanitha Furtado, Carolline Lobo, Mark Mendonca, Christopher Monis, Arine Aranha, Kenet Monteiro, Eva Pinto



❖ Lost in Translation by Antony Fernandes and Kenet Monteiro



The cultural programming concluded with an announcement of the organization's first annual Mangalorean Idol winners. Luke Menezes (Age 1-9 category <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3i6u1KhNd1Y&feature=related>), Vinuth Furtado (age 10-17 category <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=79bHYrKWGao>), Saritha Pinto (Adult Konkani category <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GmEet6JxwPI>), and Bernie D'Souza (English category http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jl_ZR0klybE) were each called to the stage to perform their winning YouTube songs, then awarded iPod Shuffles for their accomplishments.



The programming was capped by a delicious lunch, catered by Hoysala, with an odd number of vegetable entrees, as per Monti Fest tradition. Attendees feasted on White Pumpkin, Vegetable Korma, Tendli with Black Channa, Pineapple Gojju and Sautéed Okra , with a dessert of kesar pista, mango and falooda flavored ice cream, along with traditional vorn.





To emphasize the level of tradition, everyone was served on banana leaves, as is the custom in the villages of Mangalore.



VP of Programs, Steven Aranha concluded the festivities in Konkani, thanking every key contributor by name for all the hard work and commitment toward putting such a grand event together. Even with the event going into overtime, the organization's energy and enthusiasm was in full effect, as they danced the afternoon away to traditional Konkani bailas.