

Dearly Beloved,

Greetings to you in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ!

July 12, 2026, Seventh Sunday after the Feast of Pentecost

Scriptural Readings:

- OT: Leviticus 16:29-34, 1 Samuel 4:18-22, Hosea 5:1-5, Isaiah 57:15-19
- NT: Acts 4:24-31, Ephesians 2:11-18, Holy Gospel St Mark 3:20-30

Holy Gospel: St Mark 3:20-30

²⁰ and the crowd came together again, so that they could not even eat. ²¹ And when his family heard it, they went out to seize him, for people were saying, “He is beside himself.” ²² And the scribes who came down from Jerusalem said, “He is possessed by Be-el'zebul, and by the prince of demons he casts out the demons.” ²³ And he called them to him, and said to them in parables, “How can Satan cast out Satan? ²⁴ If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. ²⁵ And if a house is divided against itself, that house will not be able to stand. ²⁶ And if Satan has risen up against himself and is divided, he cannot stand but is coming to an end. ²⁷ But no one can enter a strong man’s house and plunder his goods, unless he first binds the strong man; then indeed he may plunder his house.

²⁸ “Truly, I say to you, all sins will be forgiven the sons of men, and whatever blasphemies they utter; ²⁹ but whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit never has forgiveness but is guilty of an eternal sin” — ³⁰ for they had said, “He has an unclean spirit.”

Reflections:

Church is the body of Christ. Being the Only Begotten Son, Christ is in eternal union with the Father and the Holy Spirit. Because Church is the mystical body of Christ, it cannot exist or operate without Holy Spirit. In the gospel narrative, some people asked about Christ, whether he was doing the miracles with the assistance of Satan, Jesus called it as blasphemy. If one asks whether the church is carrying out the ministry with evil powers, it should also be counted as blasphemy. Apostles and the early church were fully guided by the Holy Spirit. They did only what the Spirit prompted them to say and to do. In later years, as it grew with the royal approval, there might have been political intentions which made the church spread and dominate the world. Though Christ commanded the disciples to go till the end of the world to preach the gospel and make everyone disciples, colonization and invasion were not intended. It was not meant to use political power to spread the Kingdom of God. As the church was politicized by kings and leaders, there were possibilities of fights, oppression, suppression and exploitation. Martyrs were due to such brutalities in the name of faith. In the pre-Constantine period, church had to go through severe persecutions. Church and faith were crushed under invaders and foreign rulers. Then there came the flourishing time for the church globally. Not everywhere church grew with political power. In India, faith in Christ grew because the land was open to all faith. The kings were generous to support Christian missionaries and communities. There were no persecutions in India. India as a nation allows coexistence of all religious faith. Church was able to integrate with the local life and contribute enormously to the general growth and development of the country. Though Christianity is a minority, churches have various projects and mission activities that play vital role in transforming the life of people in the land. Holy Spirit has been guiding all denominations in serving God’s children all these years since the arrival of St Thomas the Apostle.

Though the church grew globally, at present, faith is crushed in many lands, systematically executed. Wherever true devotion and piety give way to political and worldly interests, values and morals would perish. Cruelty would dominate. By seeing evil in the world and within the faith communities, one might tend to negate the presence of Holy Spirit within religion and in the church. When it comes to parishes, if the decisions and actions are made for power and worldly benefits, the same question could emerge, whether the church is guided by Holy Spirit or by other influences.

Recognizing the divine presence is the responsibility of every individual as they are made by God, in His Image and likeness. Because of bad things happening in the world, it should not be a reason for negation of God or ruling out the need of faith. Prophets were called to tell the world about the will of God in a world that goes in wrong direction with all kinds of evil. Christ came to this world to reveal God the Father through his love, care and compassion. If the whole world fails to reveal divine virtues, individuals can bring it as the Lord did. Apostles were appointed to preach the love of God that beats for the fallen world and for the broken souls. It was through giving comfort and hope, alerting about evil practices, and by bringing healing to the sick and needy, they taught the world about a living God who gave his life as a sacrifice for his creation.

Whatever the world teaches, every human has the duty and responsibility to submit to God's will and to yield to the guidance of Holy Spirit. In various cultures, the term Holy Spirit could be interpreted and identified in their own contextual ways. However, the Spirit factor will be there for everyone to recognize and identify. In family space also, this is the norm- to take effort to identify the will of God and to follow the guidance of the Spirit. By doing so, individuals, communities and societies will be reflecting the Kingdom of God. This is the prayer the Lord has taught us; Our Father, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.' Nobody would need to ask whether there is Holy Spirit. Joel's prophesy is about overflowing of Spirit. In the post Pentecost season, we see and experience the mysterious pouring of Holy Spirit on us, in the church, among the nations, and in the whole world!

FEASTS AND REMEMBRANCES:

- **July 07, HG Zachariah Mar Dionysius Metropolitan, 29th anniversary, entombed at Mount Tabore Dayara Chapel, Pathanapuram**
- **July 10, HG Yuhanon Mar Gregorios Metropolitan, 253rd anniversary, entombed at Mulanthuruthy Church**
- **July 11, Pulikkottil Joseph Mar Dionysius Metropolitan, founder of the Old Seminary Kottayam, entombed at Pazhaya Seminary Chapel, Kpttayam**
- **July 12, HH Baselios Marthoma Paulose II, 5th anniversary, entombed at Catholicate Aramana Chapel, Devalokam, Kottayam**

Upcoming Feasts & Events:

Saturday July 11, Parish Picnic

Saturday July 18, KCEF Ecumenical Celebration of St Thomas Day

August 01-15, Lent of Theotokos and Feast of Dormition

H G Zachariah Mar Nicholovos Metropolitan's visit to our Parish

Our Thirumeni visited us on July 05, Sunday. It was a great blessing for all of us. His Grace celebrated Holy Liturgy and elevated our minds and souls with the Word of God. We keep Thirumeni in our daily prayers. We express our gratitude to our shepherd and spiritual father.

Pray for Peace in the Middle East and Gulf

We are glad to hear about the peace agreement. We hope for peace and continue praying for peace and concord. Our prayers may work miracles through the Holy Spirit. May the governments and leaders join hands to reconcile and to bring an end to the war.

Attention Please:

Parking: Please be considerate while parking our vehicles, only park at designated space. Leave reserved lots for the intended and kindly park within lines and markings leaving enough space for others to open their doors without scratching or hitting nearby parked vehicles.

AREA PRAYER MEETINGS: Upcoming Prayer meeting schedules shall be updated soon.

FOR OUR ATTENTION & TO NOTE:

Children, please occupy front benches during our Liturgical Services.

Kindly avoid crowding at the back of the church.

A few concerns:

For assuring safety and undistracted worship space, we request all our members to proceed to the front rows except those that are reserved for children when we enter the temple. It could be uneasy for our volunteers to guide them to the front during the service as it might cause distraction and noise. We avoid crowding at the entrance and stair areas due to safety concerns.

Please be considerate of our senior members to help them find seats or while they try to access the washroom. A slip or a hit should be avoided in any circumstance.

Please be watchful at the shoe rack area, which is also the entrance to both washrooms.

We request our parents to attend to our children not to pull the alarm lever at the back wall.

Hand Waving Machine & Common Absolution Prayer for all communicants

A hand-waving machine has been installed at the church entrance to record the number of communicants. Those who wish to receive the Holy Communion are requested to wave their hand once at the machine upon entering the church.

Please note that the machine will be deactivated after the recitation of the Nicene Creed.

Absolution will be administered during the morning prayer.

WEEKLY IN-PERSON MEETINGS:

July 12, Sunday – in-person meetings/Events

. MMVS Monthly Meeting after refreshments

LIVE streaming: All services are Live Streamed and are available.

Holy Liturgical Text for this Sunday

We will be using the Taksa of Mar Abraham this Sunday.

May the Gracious Lord keep us from all evil and heal the entire world.

Next Week

July 19, 8th Sunday after the Feast of Pentecost

Scriptural Readings:

- OT: Exodus 3:9-15, Job 23:1-7, Jeremiah 7:21-25, Isaiah 52:1-8
- NT: 1 Peter 2:6-10, Hebrews 4:14-5:5, Holy Gospel St Mark 4:1-20

Yours in Christ

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