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

November 15, 2026, Annunciation to Zachariah
Scriptural Readings:
- OT: Genesis 17:15-22, Numbers 8:1-20, 1 Kings 8:13-20, Isaiah 41:8-16
- NT: 2 Peter 1:1-15, Romans 4:13-25, Holy Gospel St Luke 1:1-25

'Sumoro' of the Gospel reading:
'Then he speaks to his righteous in visions and He said: I have set helps for the mighty.' (Ps 89:19)
'I shall see your face in righteousness, and I will be satisfied when your faith wakes up.' (Ps 17:15)

Holy Gospel: St Luke 1:1-25
Inasmuch as many have undertaken to compile a narrative of the things which have been
accomplished among us, 2 just as they were delivered to us by those who from the beginning were
eyewitnesses and ministers of the word, 3 it seemed good to me also, having followed all things
closely[a] for some time past, to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus, 4 that
you may know the truth concerning the things of which you have been informed.
5 In the days of Herod, king of Judea, there was a priest named Zechariah, [b] of the division of Abijah;
and he had a wife of the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth. 6 And they were both
righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless.
7 But they had no child, because Elizabeth was barren, and both were advanced in years.
8 Now while he was serving as priest before God when his division was on duty, 9 according to the
custom of the priesthood, it fell to him by lot to enter the temple of the Lord and burn incense.
10 And the whole multitude of the people were praying outside at the hour of incense. 11 And there
appeared to him an angel of the Lord standing on the right side of the altar of incense. 12 And
Zechariah was troubled when he saw him, and fear fell upon him. 13 But the angel said to him, "Do
not be afraid, Zechariah, for your prayer is heard, and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and
you shall call his name John.
14 And you will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth; 15 for he will be great before
the Lord, and he shall drink no wine nor strong drink, and he will be filled with the Holy Spirit, even
from his mother's womb. 16 And he will turn many of the sons of Israel to the Lord their God, 17 and
he will go before him in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the
children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, to make ready for the Lord a people
prepared."
18 And Zechariah said to the angel, "How shall I know this? For I am an old man, and my wife is
advanced in years." 19 And the angel answered him, "I am Gabriel, who stand in the presence of
God; and I was sent to speak to you, and to bring you this good news. 20 And behold, you will be
silent and unable to speak until the day that these things come to pass, because you did not believe
my words, which will be fulfilled in their time." 21 And the people were waiting for Zechari'ah, and
they wondered at his delay in the temple. 22 And when he came out, he could not speak to them,
and they perceived that he had seen a vision in the temple; and he made signs to them and
remained dumb. 23 And when his time of service was ended, he went to his home.
24 After these days his wife Elizabeth conceived, and for five months she hid herself, saying, 25 "Thus

the Lord has done to me in the days when he looked on me, to take away my reproach among men."

Reflections:

The Gospel reading on the Sunday of Annunciation to Zechariah has the lectionary coordination with Old Testament texts to reveal the aspect of fulfilment of messianic promises. Teachers of faith affirm that OT is the shadow and NT is the fulfilment. For everything written in the Holy Scripture, the Messiah element could either be visible or hidden but connected.

The Book of Genesis begins with- 'In the beginning God created heaven and earth.' How did He do it? Through His word. He said, 'Let there be' and it all came to be. God commands and it happens. He sends his word and it actualizes. 'Let there be' is the consent word. It is 'Amen'. When God says Amen, it happens. In the worship, the faithful say Amen, anticipating it to happen. The response to 'Peace be unto you' is Amen. In the whole Bible, this is what happens. God says, let this happen, to which either individuals or people say Amen. Jonah did not say Amen and he went his way. He was about to be killed but for a final moment of mercy. Pharaoh did not yield to say Amen. It ended up in his destruction and the liberation of the people of God.

Here Zechariah gets a visitation of an Angel from heaven through whom God sends his word. Zechariah belongs to the OT Levitical priesthood. With the annunciation and by the conception of his wife Elizabeth, the couple bridges the Old and New Testaments. John the Baptist becomes the forerunner of the Messiah. This transition from OT to NT is seamlessly done by the visitation. Zechariah said Amen in response to the word of God despite his doubts about their physiological possibility of conception at such an old age. As the angel assured, Elizabeth conceived. Physical conception happens along with conception of faith in God. For the word to become actualized - spiritual, mental and physical yielding would be required. In faith it is accepted and believed which leads to psychological and physical acceptance.

In the Sunday lectionary there is the Genesis narration of Abraham and Sarai receiving three strangers who are the manifestation of the Holy Trinity. Like Zechariah and Elizabeth, they were also too old to conceive. When they accepted God in the three manifestations, they received the miraculous conception. This is what we should understand as 'theology'. Theology is not about an intellectual discussion, discourse or debate but it is about experiencing God in day-to-day living. It requires attention and response.

All the biblical characters experienced God when they were going through challenges and impossible situations. However, they all held their faith in God. They humbled themselves, accepted God's word and said Amen. God keeps His promises, sends aid to save His children, works mysteriously and miraculously in human life and makes the impossible possible. We keep ourselves alert and keen on His word that comes to us at various situations and needs. We humble ourselves to accept His will and experience His power and presence. He is 'Immanuel', 'God with us' - always!

FEASTS AND REMEMBRANCE:

- November 11, Remembrance Day

- November 12, Very Rev Philipose Ramban of Kayamkulam, titled Vedaratnam (Jewel of Holy Scripture), 214th anniversary, entombed at St Thomas Orthodox Cathedral, Kannamcodu, Adoor
- November 13, St John Chrysostom the Golden-tongued
- November 14, St Philip the Apostle

Sunday Morning Prayer starts at 08:30 am.
According to the semiannual GBM decision, morning prayer will start at 08:30 am on Sundays.

Remembrance Day- 11 November: Wear a Poppy, Revere the Veterans
Poppies are available at both church entrances, with collection boxes. Please pick one and wear it in honor of veterans. Please donate. We are here to support veterans and their families. There will be prayers offered on Sunday, 15th November in observance of Remembrance Day.

Perunnal of Parumala Thirumeni:
The feast of our patron saint Parumala Mar Gregorios was celebrated on Saturday, 07 & Sunday, 08 November. By God's abundant grace, all services went well. We thank God for the favorable weather. We sincerely thank:

- The parish Management Committee for their support.
- Rev Fr Gheevarghese Thampan and Rev Fr Liju M Varghese for blessing us by offering Holy Qurbana, for their devotional talks, and for their leadership.
- All the Altar Servers for their assistance.
- Parish Choir for evening hymns and for their assistance in the Holy Liturgy.
- Families who joined the pilgrimage from Bramalea to church on Saturday.
- The family who offered the decorated vehicle for procession.
- All our members participated in the evening prayer, procession and the Holy Trimass.
- Families who brought Nercha Payasam and Unniyappam, served food on Saturday and Sunday

May the intercession of Mar Gregorios be a fortress for us always.

UPCOMING FEASTS & EVENTS:

- November 14, Saturday, SDOF 1st annual get-together at 06:00 pm at SGOCT parish hall. All SDOF members are welcome
- November 21, Saturday, KCEF Carol at The Canadian Marthoma Church, Stouffville at 04:00 pm.

- November 22, Sunday, Parish Annual GBM, final eligibility will be posted on 15th Sunday. Please reach out to the parish office to see any payment due, Holy Confession validity for eligibility.

Pray for Peace in the Middle East and Gulf
The recent developments have caused more worries and fears about the long-lasting impact on life in the West Asia region. It has already affected thousands of people working there. Many have lost jobs, cost of living is going high with the oil price hike, companies are issuing termination letters, the situation is becoming scarier. We fervently pray for peace and cessation of attacks. Our prayers may work miracles through the Holy Spirit. May the Holy Spirit intervene and transform the minds of people in power.

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 MEETING:
If any family is willing to host prayer meetings, please reach out to the area coordinators or the parish office.

FOR OUR ATTENTION & TO NOTE:
Children, please occupy front benches during our Liturgical Services.

Kindly avoid crowding at the back of the church.
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 parents to attend to their children not to pull the alarm lever at the back wall.

WEEKLY IN-PERSON MEETINGS:
November 15, Sunday – in-person meetings/Events
*Sunday School
*MMVS practice for Diocesan Carol Service. All women members are earnestly requested to join the song practice.
*SDOF, OCYM monthly meeting, election of new office bearers.**LIVE streaming:** All services are Live Streamed and are available.

Holy Liturgical Text for this Sunday
We will be using the Taksa of St John Chrysostom this Sunday.

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

Next Week
November 22, Annunciation to Theotokos
Scriptural Readings:

- OT: Deuteronomy 26:16-27:10, Judges 13:2-14, Zachariah 2:10-13, 4:1-17, 8:3, Isaiah 63:15-64:5
- NT: 1 John 3:2-17, Hebrews 6:13-20, 7:1-10, Holy Gospel St Luke 1:26-38

'Sumoro' of the Gospel reading:
'May he descend like dew upon fleece, and like gentle showers that fall upon earth.' (Ps 72:6)
'He inclined heaven and came down and thick darkness is under his feet.' (Ps 18:9)

Yours in Christ
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