

Dearly Beloved,

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

March 01, 2026, 'Msariyo' – Healing of the Paralyzed (Great Lent Season)

Scriptural Readings:

- OT: Ezekiel 33:23-34:12, Amos 4:9-5:4, 2 Chronicles 1:12-17, Micah 2:1-8, Deuteronomy 31:19-30, Isaiah 5:20-25
- NT: Acts 28:17-28, Romans 5:1-11, Holy Gospel St Mark 2:1-12

Holy Gospel: St Mark 2:1-12

2 And when he returned to Caper'na-um after some days, it was reported that he was at home. **2** And many were gathered, so that there was no longer room for them, not even about the door; and he was preaching the word to them. **3** And they came, bringing to him a paralytic carried by four men. **4** And when they could not get near him because of the crowd, they removed the roof above him; and when they had made an opening, they let down the pallet on which the paralytic lay. **5** And when Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, "My son, your sins are forgiven." **6** Now some of the scribes were sitting there, questioning in their hearts, **7** "Why does this man speak thus? It is blasphemy! Who can forgive sins but God alone?" **8** And immediately Jesus, perceiving in his spirit that they thus questioned within themselves, said to them, "Why do you question thus in your hearts? **9** Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Rise, take up your pallet and walk?' **10** But that you may know that the Son of man has authority on earth to forgive sins"—he said to the paralytic— **11** "I say to you, rise, take up your pallet and go home." **12** And he rose, and immediately took up the pallet and went out before them all; so that they were all amazed and glorified God, saying, "We never saw anything like this!"

Reflections:

Why did Jesus come to the world? To redeem the fallen human race and liberate the whole creation that was impacted by sin. St Paul revealed this salvation plan in his letter to the church in Rome (Romans 8:22-24), *'22 We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. 23 Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption to sonship, the redemption of our bodies. 24 For in this hope we were saved.'*

From what state did the fall happen? From the liberty of calling God 'Abba Father' where they could access Him freely in their space called 'Paradise'. They had the God given veil of Glory, with His Image and Likeness. After sinning, the image got distorted, death started creeping in and the divine status got impacted. Before this, they were sinless, had the creative ability of God and were given authority over everything. They were given the command (Gen 1:28- *to till the earth, subdue it, and have authority over everything*).

Cain, after killing his brother Abel, was fearful about his free movement as he could be harmed by others. (Gen 4:14, 15) *'... anyone who meets me may kill me.... The Lord put a mark on Cain to safeguard him. The veil of protection seemed to be missing in his case. The same consequences the whole creation had to bear. It was not the veil of glory, but a sign given to him like a royal stamp. Because death came to creation, sickness and ailments came to make way to the dying. Death*

could be both-physical and spiritual. To this possibility of sickness and death, Jesus commanded the paralytic that his sins were forgiven. From where he was healed and liberated through the Lord's command? It was from the fallenness that happened in Eden. This was not a total reinstatement into the original status, but a sign of God's redemptive potential and possibility. He commanded the thief on the cross that he would be with Him in Paradise. (St Luke 23:43- "Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise."). It was given then and there by saying, 'today'. This complete reinstatement was made possible through the son's suffering, cross, death and resurrection.

When the Lord forgave the sins of the paralytic, people were embarrassed and startled, wondering how a human could forgive sins. It was believed that only God could forgive sins. Primarily as they saw Jesus as a human, they could not accept or believe that He was the Son of God, the Messiah for whom they all were looking for. The Son came to reinstate the fallen race to its original status. The Lord had the authority to forgive sins. Was it completely and only vested on God? When Jesus commanded and gave the authority to the disciples to forgive sins by saying: "If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you withhold forgiveness from any, it is withheld." (St John 20:23). "Truly, I say to you, whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." (Matthew 18:18), it could be assumed that this authority was with them when they were in Paradise before sinning. They were originally put in place in between God and the rest of creation to be intercessors, mediators and reconcilers.

While we are in the Great Lent and are asked by the church to seek forgiveness and forgive others, it is about our going back to Paradise enjoying all the authority and privileges Adam and Eve had enjoyed, before the fall. We should feel thrilled when we are forgiven and we forgive.

Reconciliation is a Paradise act! We heal each other by reconciling. Our community will be a heavenly hospital where all are healed by Divine Grace. It would only happen when we yield to obey His command to seek forgiveness and to forgive the sins of our fellow beings. Let us not wait or waste our time. May the Lord have mercy on us!

FEASTS AND REMEMBRANCES:

- February 23, St Polycarpose of Smyrna
- February 23, Commemoration of St Geevarghese Mar Dionysius Vattasseril Metropolitan, 'Malankara Sabha Bhasuran', 92nd anniversary, entombed at Devalokam Catholicate Aramana Chapel
- February 23, HG Thomas Mar Makarios Metropolitan, 18th anniversary, entombed at Devalokam Catholicate Aramana Chapel
- February 24, St Mathew the Apostle

Obituary Notice

Our deepest condolences to the family of Manoj Mammen and Reegi Mathai Kureekade (M10) on the passing of Reegi's beloved mother, Mrs. Saramma Thomas (86), on Friday, February 27 at 2:00 PM (IST).

She was the loving wife of the late Mr. Mathai Thomas, cherished mother of Reegi, dear mother-in-

law of Manoj, and beloved grandmother of Rishi and Riffi.

May her soul rest in eternal peace. We keep the grieving family in our prayers and ask the Almighty to grant them comfort, peace, and strength to overcome this difficult time.

MMVS Canada Central Region - Lenten Retreat on Saturday February 28 at SGOCT – 10:00 am - 01:00 pm

All our MMVS members are requested to join the Lenten Retreat at SGOCT on Saturday Feb 28 at 10:00 am. The retreat will be led by Rev Fr Mathew Thomas, Vice President, MMVS Canada. We may require assistance to arrange seating and for serving food. Whoever finding it convenient, please join to support. May we be there to welcome MMVS members from other parishes. Please keep the event in prayer and offer all support possible.

UPCOMING IMPORTANT DATES AND EVENTS: Please note in your calendar

1. Great Lent: Feb 16- April 04
2. Daily Lenten Noon Prayer 12:00 noon -12:30pm online
3. Daily Lenten Evening Prayer @ 06:30 pm followed by Devotional Talk
4. March 08 Sunday, Day Light Saving Time Change
5. Mid Lent: Mar 11, Wednesday- Holy Liturgy on Mar 10 Tuesday, Evening Prayer at 06:30 pm followed by Holy Liturgy and installation of the Cross
6. **Orthodox Vacation Bible School (OVBS) March 18- 22, Theme: Walk in Purity**
The link for the sign-up for registration, teachers signup and volunteer signup were sent on Friday, January 30. Please respond to the request at your earliest.
 7. March 25, Feast of Annunciation to St Mary, Holy Liturgy on March 24 Tuesday - Evening Prayer at 06:30 pm followed by Holy Qurbana
8. March 27, 40th Friday- Holy Liturgy on Mar 26, Evening Prayer at 06:30 pm followed by Holy Liturgy
10 March 27, Consecration of Holy Mooron at Devalokam Aramana Chapel, Kottayam
9. March 28, Lazarus Saturday
10. **March 29:** Palm Sunday
11. **April 02:** Passover, Holy Liturgy on April 01 Wed, Evening Prayer at 06:30 pm followed by Holy Liturgy
12. **April 03:** Great Friday, Morning Prayer at 08:30 am
13. **April 04:** Gospel Saturday, Morning Prayer at 09:00 am followed by Holy Liturgy
14. **April 05: Easter, Sunday**

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.

- Due to safety concerns and for assuring an 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 would be a bit difficult for our volunteers to suggest moving to the front during the service as it would cause distraction and noise. We need to avoid crowding at the entrance and stair areas as this has raised safety concerns.
- Please be considerate to 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 our children not to pull the alarm lever at the back wall.

Hand Waving Machine & Common Absolution Prayer for all communicants

The hand waving machine has been installed at the church entrance for taking count of the communicants. Whoever wishes to take Holy Communion, upon entering the temple, please wave your hand once at the machine. Please be aware that after the Nicene Creed, the machine shall be disabled. Absolution shall be done during the morning prayer.

WEEKLY IN-PERSON MEETINGS:

March 01, Sunday – in-person monthly meetings after refreshment

- Sunday School
- SGOCT Choir monthly meeting after refreshments

LIVE streaming has been reactivated: All services' Live Streaming is now available.

Holy Liturgical Text for this Sunday

We will be using the Taksá of Mar Abraham Nahsirthono this Sunday.
May the Gracious Lord keep us from all evil and heal the entire world.

Next Week

March 08, Fourth Sunday of the Great Lent, 'Knanaito', Healing of the daughter of the Canaanite Woman

Scriptural Readings:

- **OT: 1 Samuel 7:10-17, Haggai 1:7-11, Isaiah 56:2-5**
- **NT: Acts 20:22-32, Romans 7:14-25, Holy Gospel St Matthew 15:21-31**

Yours in Christ
Thomas John Achen

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