

Dearly Beloved,

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

September 20, 2026, First Sunday after the Feast of the Cross

Scriptural Readings:

- OT: Genesis 42:1-8, Hosea 5:1-5, Daniel 4:4-9, Isaiah 57:14-20
- NT: Acts 3:22-36, 1 Corinthians 2:10-13, Holy Gospel St Mark 13:30-37

Holy Gospel: St Mark 13:30-37

³⁰Truly, I say to you, this generation will not pass away before all these things take place. ³¹Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

³²“But of that day or that hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. ³³Take heed, watch; ³⁴for you do not know when the time will come. ³⁴It is like a man going on a journey, when he leaves home and puts his servants in charge, each with his work, and commands the doorkeeper to be on the watch. ³⁵Watch therefore—for you do not know when the master of the house will come, in the evening, or at midnight, or at cockcrow, or in the morning—³⁶lest he come suddenly and find you asleep. ³⁷And what I say to you I say to all: Watch.”

Reflections:

In the new liturgical season of the Cross, the church intends to ponder more on the end of the current age and hope for the new age. With the earthly ministry of Christ, the old age had passed, and a new age had begun. Old age of sin and death had to give way to the new age of liberation, victory, reconciliation and regeneration. The purpose of incarnation was to resolve issues of disobedience, sin and death. Christ voluntarily accepted human life in all situations, through suffering and death and He defeated death through resurrection. With His acts of healing, transformation, exorcism, reconciliation, identifying with the poor and marginalized, and resurrection it was revealed that the Kingdom of Heaven was at hand.

Healing and reconciliation are signs of the Kingdom of God. Human selfishness tends to keep God away. In the new age, children of God with a reconciled and transformed self would always invite and invoke God to be with them. They would choose to walk and cooperate with the Lord. They would prioritize the will of God and obey the guidance of the Spirit of Truth.

When God created everything including humans, things were in a nascent stage. God found everything good. Evil was yet to get its access to tarnish the goodness. Free-will was gifted only to humans among all creations. Free-will was given to choose between good or evil. Human choice permitted Satan to enter the free, open, clear space created by God which resulted in disobedience and distortion. An era of free access thus ended with Adamic disobedience wherein the self and Satan replaced God. There began a new age with suffering, inequality, sorrows, injustice, death and decay. Only the Messiah could cleanse and solve it. Hence prophets started receiving revelations from God about the coming of the Messiah. The world had to be prepared for it.

In the fullness of time, Messiah arrived through Mary. A new age of healing, reconciliation and rebirth about which John the Baptist and the Lord preached, was beginning to form. They asked the people to change their mind and avail the Kingdom as it was just an arm's length away. A change of mind could result in a change of thought, word, and action. Hence it was said that the kingdom of

God is at hand as hand represents actions. However just as Adam had disobeyed God when he had full and free access to God, people rejected the Lord when He was walking among them. They preferred to act out of their own will, and they chose to kill the Messiah. They used their free-will and authority given by God to act against Him. Though they were waiting for the Kingdom and for the Messiah, their minds were inclined to evil as in the time of Noah. They flooded the world with acts of injustice. With the death of the Lord, a new humanity emerged. Since then, whenever and wherever humans as individuals or communities opted God's will, it brought about the Kingdom of God into their midst. When they opted out God's will, it brought hell too.

In the season of the cross, we meditate more on the temporality and shortness of earthly life so that we may equip ourselves to rightly choose the will of God. Every person's act of faith must bring heaven to the world through their choices and actions. Because His words will never pass. It will be actualized in the world through the lives of his disciples and friends. We are to assure this to happen at present, before we disappear.

FEASTS AND REMEMBRANCES:

September 15, 114th anniversary of the establishment of Catholicate in Malankara

A Blessed New Arrival

With hearts filled with joy and gratitude, we are pleased to announce the birth of baby girl Elizah Anson George, born on September 11, 2026, to Monisha Anson and Anson Kunjumon George (Directory A-27).

By the abundant grace and mercy of Almighty God, both mother and baby are doing well. 🙏

We give thanks to God for this beautiful gift of new life and for His loving care over mother and child. We kindly ask all our parish members to keep baby Elizah and her family in your prayers.

May our Lord bless little Elizah, guide her steps throughout her life, and fill her with His love, peace, grace, and abundant blessings.

To God be all glory and praise! 🙏

Clergy Demises:

- **Very Rev Behanan Cor Episcopa**, aged 93 years, a senior priest who served the dioceses of Kandanad, Angamaly and Kottayam has been taken to heavenly abode on Sunday Sep 13. Achen has also served as a teacher at St Peter's School, Kolenchery
- **Rev Fr Geevarghese Abraham Thirumanasseril**, a retired senior priest, the first vicar of St Mary's Orthodox Church, St Louis US entered eternal rest on September 17. Achen began his ministry in North Indian parishes and later migrated to the US.
- **Rev Dn Asher Shaji, S/O Rev Fr Dr Shaji P John (Professor at Orthodox Theological Seminary, Kottayam)**, has been taken to heavenly abode on Friday after meeting with an accident at Mavelikara. Semmasan was the only son of Shaji Achen. His beloved mother,

Shaji Achen's Kochamma, had passed away two years ago. The funeral service shall be conducted on Monday Sept 21st at St George Orthodox Church, Arathil, Pandalam.

We pray for the departed souls and their families. Especially we pray for Shaji Achen as he is left alone now. May the Lord comfort and strengthen everyone.

UPCOMING FEASTS & EVENTS:

- September 19, Saturday, MMVS Regional Conference at St Gregorios OC Norvel, 09:30 am – 04:00 pm, Guest Speaker – HG Zachariah Mar Severios Metropolitan
- September 19, Saturday, KCEF Annual Bible Quiz Competition at SGOCT, 02:00 pm – 04:30 pm
- September 20, Parish Semi Annual GBM
- September 27, Sunday, Harvest Festival & Auction
- October 11, Sunday, Parish Night. All organizations are requested to start preparations and practice for their presentations ASAP.
- October 24, Saturday, OCYM Fest -Thaalam 2026. Please look for updates.
- November 07 Saturday & 08 Sunday, Feast of St Gregorios

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.

REA 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.

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.

September 20, Sunday – in-person meetings/Events

Sunday School

Semi Annual GBM after refreshment

All Spiritual Organizations to meet after the GBM to practice for the Parish Night 2026 **LIVE streaming**: All services are Live Streamed and are available.

Holy Liturgical Text for this Sunday

We will be using the Taksā of Mar Mathai Royo this Sunday.

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

Next Week

September 27, Second Sunday after the Feast of the Cross

Scriptural Readings:

- OT: Genesis 42:9-17, 1 Kings 3:5-9, Wisdom of Solomon 6:1-9, Isaiah 48:12-16
- NT: Acts 5:33-42, 1 Corinthians 2:14-3:3, Holy Gospel St Matthew 16:5-12

Yours in Christ

Thomas John Achen

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