

Dearly Beloved,

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

August 23, 2026, Second Sunday after the Feast of Assumption

Scriptural Readings:

- OT: Genesis 3:1-12, Ecclesiastes 7:1-3, Psalm 12:1-9
- NT: 2 Peter 3:8-14, 1 Thessalonians 5:1-6, Holy Gospel St Luke 11:9-20

Holy Gospel: St Luke 11:9-20

⁹ And I tell you, Ask, and it will be given you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. ¹⁰ For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened. ¹¹ What father among you, if his son asks for ^[a] a fish, will instead of a fish give him a serpent; ¹² or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion? ¹³ If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!"

¹⁴ Now he was casting out a demon that was dumb; when the demon had gone out, the dumb man spoke, and the people marveled. ¹⁵ But some of them said, "He casts out demons by Be-el'zebul, the prince of demons"; ¹⁶ while others, to test him, sought from him a sign from heaven. ¹⁷ But he, knowing their thoughts, said to them, "Every kingdom divided against itself is laid waste, and a divided household falls. ¹⁸ And if Satan also is divided against himself, how will his kingdom stand? For you say that I cast out demons by Be-el'zebul. ¹⁹ And if I cast out demons by Be-el'zebul, by whom do your sons cast them out? Therefore, they shall be your judges. ²⁰ But if it is by the finger of God that I cast out demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you.

Reflections:

In an emergency, one tends to reach out to facilities and contacts such as close friends, emergency helplines, ambulances, fire, police, and so on. If such facilities or services are used without a valid notion of emergency, it may be counted as violation. If there are no emergency situations, there is no need to access such. Which means that we are meant to access these services only if a relevant situation arises.

Sometimes prayer, which is meant to be an all-day communication with the Lord, or a regular time of submission into His leading, may be seen as an emergency helpline to be sought after in times of crisis or helplessness. The Bible shows us different instances when people in need cried out to God, asking for them to be saved from disasters, and the miraculous hands of God intervened and redeemed them. Here in the gospel, Jesus was teaching His hearers about how to pray. Until then, they had known to pray in a different way. But now Jesus was showing them that prayer was not meant only for the synagogues, homes, or as an emergency helpline but prayer was meant to be an unceasing, never-ending, ongoing connection that one should have with God. Like breathing, prayer was to be done all through. It is a regular conversing with the loving Heavenly Father. It is not a one-time connecting only in the worst, needy situation. Jesus taught them that prayer was all about a continual searching, knocking and asking. Never stop. Never to be paused.

Here one would wonder if there were no need as such, then what is there to search, knock and ask for. Jesus revealed to the people about a loving God whose presence and provision is meant to help His children always. However, He was not intending to ask them to pray only when there is a need. It

is more than a 'need and attend' provision.

Psalm 14:2 says, 'The Lord looks down from heaven on all humankind to see if there are any wise who seek God'. Psalm 53:2 also says the same, '...if anyone is truly wise, if anyone seeks God'. What Jesus is saying about prayer is to be understood in the light of these Psalms. If one asks, what to search, knock and ask, it is God who we need to look for.

In the current busy high-tech all-safe world, we live in, where one nearly forgets God, it would be wise to look for Him. All generations look for Him in their own ages. God is present. He is here. He is with us. Omnipresent and eternally available. It is the human mindset that requires regular refreshing and optimizing. After each Sunday when we are filled with more joy and hope, we tend to experience Monday Blues or Monday Syndrome the next day. It is a low mood with a tone of gloom and lethargy connected to a transition from weekend rest back to structured work or school.

'Sunday Scariest', the scary thoughts one might develop towards Sunday late afternoon or evening about upcoming Monday tasks go ahead of it. It is a human tendency to find it uneasy to get to reconnect to anything after a break, long or short it could be.

God is our Father, our Creator, Provider, Sustainer, Protector, Redeemer and Perfector. Our relationship with God is not need oriented. It is more of familial as He is our loving heavenly Father. It is a parent-child relationship which is not to be occasional but permanent and very much alive. There is life in a relationship where emotions are involved. God's cry about His children forgetting Him is voiced out by Isaiah- "I reared children and brought them up, but they have rebelled against me. The ox knows its owner and the donkey its master's crib, but my children do not know, my people do not understand." (Is 1:2,3). Jesus also laments on the city and its people rejecting Him- "How often have I desired to gather your children together as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you were not willing." (Mt 23:37, Lk 13:34).

Christ had made the disciples His friends. "I no longer call you servants...I have called you friends, for everything I have learned from my Father I have made known to you." (Jn 15:15). The Lord wants us to be in a healthy, cordial, loving and friendly relationship with him. Our constant conversing with Him reveals to us the mind and will of the Heavenly Father. It is to be maintained as an unbroken connection. In this relationship, we are granted liberty to ask for our daily needs as well as urgent concerns. The promise is that His grace is sufficient for us and in His time, He will make it all perfect.

God wants us to love Him and enjoy His love while sharing that love with everyone. It is the true and never-ending joy of life that we experience with the Lord. Hence, keep searching, knocking and asking for Him, God our eternal joy!

FEASTS AND REMEMBRANCES:

- August 19, All Prophets
- August 19, Mar Labbaeus the Apostle
- August 19, HG Joseph Mar Pachomios Metropolitan, 35th anniversary, entombed at Mulakkulam Karmel Church
- August 20, Mar Samuel the Prophet
- August 20, HG Zachariah Mar Anthonios Metropolitan, 3rd anniversary, entombed at Mount Horeb Asram Chapel, Sasthamkottah

Upcoming Feasts & Events:

- August 27, Malankara Syrian Christian Association for Bishops Election at Mulanthuruthy. Please keep the event in prayer. Please pray that the Spirit of the Lord guide everyone in electing new shepherds and especially for the Diocese of Canada.
- **August 30, Sunday, Onam Celebrations, Onasadya.**

'Atham' was on August 16. Ten days from Atham will be Thiru Onam, on Aug 26th. Let us celebrate the festival. Please join the Onasadya. Please be part of the Sadya by either bringing the sadya items as signed up or making contributions towards it by reaching out to the parish office.

- **September 13**, Sunday School Reopening, PTA Meeting. All students are requested to complete their registration for 2026-27 academic year before Sep 13.
- **September 14**, Feast of the Cross (Sleebe Perunnal)
- **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**

MGOCSM Kanesh 2026 is on. Our children are at the camp. Please keep it in prayer.

HG Dr. Abraham Mar Seraphim Metropolitan and Rev Fr Teny are the main resource people. The organizing team has been working tirelessly for this event. We pray for the Lord to bless the camp through the Holy Spirit.

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 MEETING:

If any families are happy 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.

WEEKLY IN-PERSON MEETINGS:

August 23, Sunday – in-person meetings/Events

Meeting with Seraphim Thirumeni after refreshments. All are welcome to this informal interactive session

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

Holy Liturgical Text for this Sunday

We will be using the Taksa of Mar John Chrysostom this Sunday.

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

Next Week

August 30, Third Sunday after the Feast of Assumption

Scriptural Readings:

- OT: Exodus 24:12-17, 1 Samuel 3:16-21, Ezekiel 18:21-24
- NT: James 5:1-6, 2 Corinthians 10:1-7, Holy Gospel St Matthew 17:22-27

Yours in Christ

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