

Dearly Beloved,

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

August 24, 2025, Second Sunday after the Feast of Assumption

Scriptural Readings:

OT: Genesis 6:3-12, 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 Evangelion, St Luke 11:9-20

⁹And I tell you, Ask, and it will be given you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. ¹⁰For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened. ¹¹What father among you, if his son asks for^[a] a fish, will instead of a fish give him a serpent; ¹²or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion? ¹³If 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!”

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

Reflections:

In the OT setting, God is perceived as the Mighty One seated on a throne with the highest authority and power. He is zealous, reciprocatively and noncompromising. His fury is like smoke that causes mountains to fume and shake. A God so strict who punishes people who disobey Him and who seeks vengeance. His laws are to abide by to the dot. Any deviation from instructions may not yield the desired results for healing, deliverance, miracle, refuge or provision. Seven rounds around the city of Jericho. Manna to be received fresh daily, not to be kept for the next day. The rock must be struck for sweet water to flow out. Measurements of the ark to be duly followed within which Noah and family would be safe. The passion of God that was loaded with compassion, love and tenderness was often perceived as aggression and harshness. While seeing the aggressive face, one might miss to see the compassionate tenderly loving and staying close companion in Him.

In the garden of Eden, He used to walk and talk with them almost as friends. By saving the life of Isaac, His care for the aged Abram and Sarai was obvious. ***He answered the prayers***

of his children. He walked with prophets and guided them to be instrumental in transforming societies by correcting their misdeeds. In the land of bondage, He heard their cries and sent Moses to liberate them. In the wilderness He miraculously provided for their hunger and thirst. Nobody else could love them like this. He raised humble ones to become kings and queens and healed those who humbled themselves. He heard the prayer of women like Hagar, Hannah, Elizabeth and the Canaanite. Though people feared Him, He proved that he was approachable and kind. Those who were proud and selfish could only see him as cruel.

The Son of God came to the world to reveal the forgotten or the missed face of God as compassionate and caring. After walking with Him, John took courage to define him as Love. He declared, God is Love. Mary in her praises pictured Him as One who is kind toward the lowly and indifferent toward the proud. Zachaeus found him as the most precious treasure causing him to leave behind everything. Nicodemus left his authority of knowledge and went after him fearlessly. Joseph of Arimathea found better use of his wealth and position for the embalming of the Lord than for any other purpose. Mary Magdalene was excited to break the precious alabaster jar to anoint her Lord. She devoted herself to His service. She was drawn to His tomb early in the morning thus breaking the social taboo and she found Him - risen.

The Son of Man was the bridge between the Father and his children to reveal His love with everyone, always, everywhere, all the time. He called them close to his Father and taught them to be in His presence. He asked them to feel free to access Him for their daily needs, small and big. He was connecting them with the Creator on closer terms. He wanted them to feel the Lord as their companion and provider for their daily needs. He commanded that without Him; nobody can do anything. He wanted us to look for His presence and always connect with Him. He wants us to look for Him before we look for anyone else. We ask for our daily needs and go to Him to give Him access to our life, both public and private.

Through an openness with Jesus the disciples lived a miraculous life. All saints and martyrs were able to bring blessings and graces to people through their complete reliance on him. Before we do anything, ask Him first. It is the faith and unfailing trust we need to have in Him. All the facilities and inventions we see in the world are by His revelation. Everything given to us is for us to use. However, before we do anything, we are to look for Him and ask for his intervention. Then all the facilities can seamlessly and miraculously fit into our usual life setting. We would live miraculously. Prayer is the relationship and closeness; the connection and free access we have with him. Hence it becomes tasty and enjoyable. Conversing with God could be the most exciting and joyful act in our life. Every moment can be wonderful, meaningful and fruitful. As the Spirit prompts us to pray, let us joyfully yield to it to reap the abundant harvest.

FEASTS AND REMEMBRANCES:

- **August 19, Feast of All Prophets**
- **August 19, St. Labbaeus the Apostle**
- **August 19, HG Joseph Mar Pachomios Metropolitan, 34th anniversary, entombed at Carmelkkunnu Pally, Mulakulam**
- **August 20, HG Zachariah Mar Anthonios Metropolitan, 2nd anniversary, entombed at Mount Horeb Asram, Sasthamcotta**
- **August 20, Feast of Prophet Samuel**
- **August 24, Feast of St Matthias the Apostle**
- **August 24, HG Thomas Mar Athanasius Metropolitan, 7th anniversary, entombed at St George Dayara, Othara**

From our previous updates:

Kanesh 2025 concluded: MGOCSM Kanesh 2025 has concluded with many blessings and plenty of takeaway for the future of our youngsters. Everybody enjoyed the camp, sessions, games, food and fellowship. Our parish had a good number of youngsters who participated. Most of the leaders are from our unit too. We thank the Diocese of Canada, leaders and resource persons for this fruitful camp. Thanks to all the organisers for their dedicated work and coordination. We look forward to the next in 2026!

Feast of Theotokos: We had conducted Holy Liturgy on the feast day of Mother Mary. Also, we had the previous weekend dedicated for her feast with Prayers, Intercession, Devotional Talk, Raza, Holy Liturgy and Nerchavilampu. We thank all the volunteers and participants. We pray that the intercession of Theotokos would be a shelter and fortress for all of us, especially for all our children.

HH Baselios Marthoma Paulose II Memorial Food Drive: It was extended until Sunday, Aug 17, organised by SG OCT MMVS. It will be handed over to a relevant organisation soon. We thank all our members for contributing towards this project.

UPCOMING IMPORTANT DATES AND EVENTS: Please note in your calendar

1. **Celebrating 1700th year of the Council of Nicaea:** Our parish will be organising an event including elocution competition connected to the theme and choir presentations involving the Malankara Orthodox Church parishes in Toronto

Region. Probably in the Fall season. Date, time and other details shall be announced soon.

2. **August 23, Saturday:** Parish Picnic
3. **September 01-08,** Ettunompu
4. **September 07, Sunday:** Onasadya
5. **September 07, Sunday:** Feast of Theotokos, Holy Qurbana, Intercessory Prayer, Nerchavilampu.
6. **September 14, Sunday:** Feast of the Cross. Morning prayer at 08.30 AM followed by Holy Qurbana and liturgy of the Cross.
7. **October 12, Sunday:** Parish Nite 2025
8. **October 19, Sunday:** Harvest Festival – 2025

AREA PRAYER MEETINGS:

Details of upcoming meetings shall be announced later.

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:

August 24, Sunday –

MGOCSM monthly meeting after refreshment

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

Holy Liturgical Text for this Sunday

We will be using the English Taksá of St John Chrysostom this Sunday.

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

Next Week

Aug 31, 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

Thomas John Achen

Email ID: fr.thomaspjohn@gmail.com

Mobile: (416) 570 5610

<https://www.sgocanada.org>