

Dearly Beloved,

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

May 24, 2026, Sunday of the Feast of Pentecost

Scriptural Readings:

- **OT:** Exodus 19:1-11, Numbers 11:16-17, 24-29, Joshua 18:1-7, Proverbs, 4:18-5:2, 2 Kings 2:13-17, Daniel 5:7-19, Ezekiel 11:17-20, Isaiah 42:6-16
- **NT:** Acts 2:1-11, 1 Corinthians 12:1-11, 2 Corinthians 13:11-13, Holy Gospel St John 16:5-15

Holy Gospel: St John 16:5-15

“I did not say these things to you from the beginning, because I was with you. 5 But now I am going to him who sent me; yet none of you asks me, ‘Where are you going?’ 6 But because I have said these things to you, sorrow has filled your hearts. 7 Nevertheless I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Counselor will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you. 8 And when he comes, he will convince^[a] the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment: 9 concerning sin, because they do not believe in me; 10 concerning righteousness, because I go to the Father, and you will see me no more; 11 concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged.

12 “I have yet many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. 13 When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth; for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come. 14 He will glorify me, for he will take what is mine and declare it to you. 15 All that the father has is mine; therefore, I said that he will take what is mine and declare it to you.

Also Read Jn 4:13-23, 14:13-27

Reflections:

Jesus refers to the Holy Spirit as Counselor. He promised to send the counselor Spirit to everyone to rely on. The Spirit would continue the ministry of Jesus and would remain in the world for ever as the continuing presence of the Lord. Even those who had not accepted Jesus would be able to recognize the counsellor and receive guidance. In a world of too many choices and fake identities, the Spirit would reveal the truth to everyone.

In the book of Exodus God commanded Moses to convey to the people, “Indeed, the whole earth is mine, but you shall be for me a priestly kingdom and a holy nation.” This is reaffirmed in the epistle of Peter (1 Pet 2:9). When we take part in the Feast of Pentecost, we bear this command in our hearts. We are a priestly and holy people meant to proclaim the salvation of God in the world. All the sacraments and practices of the church are to be viewed, understood and observed in the light of this command. If God cannot be changed, His commands can also never be changed. We observe them not because they are non-challengeable but because they are given for our best. Diverting from them only brings destruction. Nowhere in the scripture would we see that obeying the Lord’s commands has ever failed the people.

The feast of Pentecost can feel long if we see it only as a sequence of prayers and rituals. Why? According to the book of Genesis, God created heaven and earth and everything in it in six days. On the seventh day everything was meant to rest in God. It was not a day of inactivity or laziness but a day to celebrate the completion, communion and care for by resting in God’s love. So, when as a message of condolence, we say ‘Rest in Peace’ or ‘RIP’ it is meant to carry the meaning of a divine

rest, and not as the end of life on earth. It is a message that soothes with the assurance that God's peace within us is beyond the world's pain and suffering. And in this peace, we shall remain until we hear the Trumpets wake us up to resurrection and to new life.

St. Paul declared, He is our peace (Eph 2:14). The most loved hymn by Nagel, the German missionary to the Malabar coast during 1893-1914, *Samayamaam Rathathil*, has its lyrics as: *Raathriyil njaan Daivathinte kaikalilurangunnu* (At night I sleep in the hands of God). Sleep is a temporary rest meant to result in us waking up to feel refreshed and energized. Rest on the day of Sabbath was instated for us to feel rejuvenated and restored in the loving hands of the Lord. Thus, all Sabbatical worship is meant to rejuvenate and refresh us in God's love without feeling time bound.

As His priestly community, we look to every Sabbath to renew our spirits through the remembrance of Christ's atoning sacrifice in the Holy Eucharistic service, as He commanded us to observe until His second coming. The time we spend in such worship is thus about allowing ourselves to rest in the hands of our Creator so that we will rejoice more in His wonders than in our worries, more in His provision than in our problems, and more in His hope than in our fears.

Before ascending to His Father, Christ told His disciples, 'You cannot come to where I will be. As I go, I will come back. Till then you observe my commands, live in me, work for the Kingdom by being guided and empowered by the Counselor, the Holy Spirit'. This is the life to which we are called.

Through obeying His commands and dedicating everything we have, we do everything for the glory of the Lord and live our life witnessing the Lord. In this manner, we continue to live as His disciples until our last breath. Our purpose is to grow to the fullness of the image and likeness of God no matter what our jobs are, no matter what our circumstances are.

Our calling is to serve the Lord. We pray for renewal in the Holy Spirit and for healing through His indwelling within us. As Christ commanded, we remain together and love one another. We are all individuals with incredible potential and unique talents. We live our life individually, yet collectively we live as the Body of Christ, the church of the faithful. May the Holy Spirit inspire, motivate and empower us. Come Holy Spirit, Renew Thy creation!

FEASTS AND REMEMBRANCES:

- May 19, Mar Dionysius III, Punnathra, 201st anniversary, entombed at Cheriyaapally
- May 20, Commemoration of Emperor Constantine and his mother Queen Helene
- May 20, Four Evangelists, Fathers of three Holy Synods
- May 14-24, Days of Waiting prior to Pentecost
- May 29, Golden Friday (Acts 3:1-10)

- **May 24 Sunday, The Feast of Pentecost:** 08:30 am- Morning Prayer, 09:30 am - Holy Qurbana, 10:30 am - Order of Kneeling (Pentecost), 11:45 am - HQ to Resume. Holy Qurbana will be in Malayalam, Liturgy of Pentecost will be in both Malayalam and English.
- **Clergy Demise:** Rev Fr C Koshy, senior priest of the Diocese of Mavelikara, passed away on Sunday, May 17. Achen had also served the Diocese of Trivandrum before moving to Mavelikara. The funeral service was conducted on Friday May 22, at 11 am at Kadeesa OSC

Kayamkulam. We thank God for Achen's life and ministry. May the Lord comfort his soul.

- **Paul Cineraj Muhammed passes away:** Paul Cineraj Muhammed, 72 years, an acclaimed missionary of the Malankara Orthodox Church passed away on Wednesday. The funeral service was conducted on Thursday, May 21st at Ebenezer Orthodox Church, Manganam, Kottayam.

Paul had accepted Christ after a life of personal enquiry and research that led him to get baptized. Since then, he was fully engaged in the gospel ministry. He worked among youth and families to bring them closer to the Lord. We thank the Lord for his wonderful ministry that illumined many souls. We acknowledge the many challenges he had to face for his faith and practice. May his life of witness inspire the faithful of the church to get more engaged in the gospel ministry. May the Lord reward him with the crown of victory.

Sunday School Food Fest: Bites & Blessings, Thanks to All

The food fest organized by SGOCT Sunday School was a success, though we had a less turnout of members due to the long weekend as many families were away and traveling. However, the SS team enthusiastically cooked delicious food like Mediterranean rice bowl and poutine and they prepared smoothies and soft drinks. It was well arranged and well served.

We thank the SS Principal, teachers, students, parents and all the volunteers for their hard work and dedication. We thank our members for placing pre-orders, buying on the spot and for their generous contributions.

- **CCC AGBM in Winnipeg**

The Canadian Council of Churches meets in Winnipeg on 20-22 May.

CCC convenes AGBM twice a year, one in Mississauga and the second meeting in spring season will be held in various cities. This year it was conducted in Winnipeg. We heard stories from indigenous communities, about their life struggles and their faith and practice. We could see how the Holy Spirit is working through communities and individuals in widening his kingdom. When we meet as churches, it becomes clearer as to how the gospel is spreading throughout the world in many mysterious ways.

- **MGOCSM Canadian Diocese Five Kilometre Fundraiser Run on June 13, 2026, beginning at 11:00 AM.**

Details will announce it later. We already forwarded the poster for your information and registration. Please mark it in your calendar. The officials will do a presentation about the event as well as the Kanesh Program in the next couple of weeks.

- **Food & Clothe Donation Drive**

This year our church will join hands with the Coptic Orthodox Church to reach out to the needy. We request all our members to support this initiative by donating gently used clothes in good condition along with nonperishable food items.

The drive will be kept open throughout the month of May. We may be able to visit our

brethren in Toronto on the first Saturday in June. All are welcome to join us when we will distribute the donated items. Details shall be announced soon. Please keep the drive in prayer.

Global Clergy Conference at Parumala: May 19-21

The Global Clergy Conference of the Malankara Orthodox Church was held at Parumala from May 19-21. HH Baselios Marthoma Mathews III inaugurated the meeting. Based on the theme 'Guardians of the Apostolic Flame- Priestly Witnessing in a Changing World', there were talks and sessions led by various resource persons. About a thousand clergies from 32 dioceses across the world participated in the conference.

1st Diocesan Family & Youth Conference of Canada: Thursday, July 02-Saturday, July 04

Preparations for the first Diocesan Family & Youth Conference of Canada, scheduled to be held at Georgian College, Barrie from July 02-04, 2026, are progressing well. The organizing team including the clergy, diocesan council members, spiritual organizations' leaders are working hard to make the event fruitful, beneficial and memorable.

Registration is open, its link has been sent to our members.

HG Zachariah Mar Nicholovos Metropolitan, Rev Fr Dr Timothy (Tenny) Thomas and Rev Fr Dr Abraham (Abey) George will be the main resource persons. Our families are encouraged to please assure full-time participation in the event. A registration campaign was held at our church last Sunday. Rev Fr. Dr. Thomas George and the team members visited us, made a presentation and invited all of us to the conference.

For any enquiries, kindly reach out to Diocesan Council Members Manu Abraham and Vivin Thomas Vettiyil.

- **Pray for Peace in the Middle East and Gulf**

We continue praying for re-establishing peace and concord in the war affected lands and regions. 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.

- **UPCOMING IMPORTANT DATES AND EVENTS: Please note in your calendar**

1. May 14-May 24: Days of Waiting
2. May 24, Sunday: The Feast of Pentecost
3. June 16-29, Feast of the Apostles

- **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 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 our parents to attend to 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 to record the number of communicants. Those wishing to receive 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:**

May 24, Sunday – in-person meetings

- **Sunday School**

- **MGOCSM Monthly Meeting**

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

Holy Liturgical Text for this Sunday

We will be using the Taksa of 12 Apostles this Sunday.

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

- **Next Week**

May 31, Sunday after the Feast of Pentecost

Scriptural Readings:

- OT: Genesis 41:38-49, Exodus 12:31-40, Joshua 5:9-12, Micah 3:8-10, 4:4-5, Jeremiah 29:10-16

- NT: Acts 17:10-15, 2 Corinthians 5:14-6:9, Holy Gospel St Luke 7:27-35

Yours in Christ

Thomas John Achen

Email ID: fr.thomaspijohn@gmail.com

Mobile: (416) 570 5610