

Dearly Beloved,

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

July 26, 2026, Ninth Sunday after the Feast of Pentecost

Scriptural Readings:

- OT: Deuteronomy 4:1-6, Job 23:1-7, Proverbs 13:1-7, Isaiah 24:1-5
- NT: Acts 28:11-22, 1 Corinthians 6:1-11, Holy Gospel St Luke 14:7-11

Holy Gospel: St Luke 14:7-11

⁷ Now he told a parable to those who were invited, when he marked how they chose the places of honor, saying to them, ⁸ “When you are invited by anyone to a marriage feast, do not sit down in a place of honor, lest a more eminent man than you be invited by him; ⁹ and he who invited you both will come and say to you, ‘Give place to this man,’ and then you will begin with shame to take the lowest place. ¹⁰ But when you are invited, go and sit in the lowest place, so that when your host comes, he may say to you, ‘Friend, go up higher’; then you will be honoured in the presence of all who sit at table with you. ¹¹ For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.”

Reflections:

‘Be not afraid of greatness: some are born great, some achieve greatness, and some have greatness thrust upon ‘em.’ (Act II, scene V of the play ‘Twelfth Night’ by Shakespeare).

Jesus was talking to the disciples about how to behave in public. He knew, how the people treat Him and his disciples because of his miracles and authority. They were invited to events and gatherings. While ordinary people respected them, religious leaders took every chance to belittle and reject. He was warning them to be careful about looking for seats or positions. For them, nothing was assured regarding acceptance. This was proved later. He was rejected and crucified, the disciples were also got killed. It would be wise not to rely more on the way the world treats, if respected once, it may reject another time. A good comment can change anytime. Opinions may alter any moment. Today’s friend can become tomorrow’s foe. Christ wanted them to develop resilience and spiritual strength than depending on how others accept or reject. They had a mission to accomplish. It was not to be influenced or affected by responses or moods. It is human tendency to be concerned about what others would think or say. Life is not to please the world. One would go silent if there is more worry about how others feel about, even if the person him/herself endures suffering from injustice or exploitation, or witnessing a fellow being getting into such. Being the apostles of the Kingdom of God, they were expected to voice for the voiceless and talk on behalf of God without fear. Positions, reverence, respect, gifts, rewards, anything of honor would have strayed them away from their calling. Jesus was the greatest ever born. He was God. He deserved all honor and respect. He held the highest seat. He left everything to become human. How could he be looking for prime chairs in a tiny world?! He was bigger than the universe. Or he was holding the universe within him. The one who left all the glories to redeem the fallen world could not yearn for any glories it would bring. Looking for worldly glories is also a sign of fallenness. If one feels dignity within, there will not be any desire for external glories. Glory and light should emerge from within. What is there for us to look outside other than being aware of the highest dignity of carrying the Image and Likeness of the Creator God?! Disciples had some early fights and disputes about greatness and positions. Eventually they recognized who they were and what they were called for.

Since then, they never ever looked for worldly gains. St Paul beautifully says how he found the greatest worth in Christ and that he counts all worldly glories as trash. 'Yet, indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as 'rubbish', that I may gain Christ (Philippians 3:8). Finding the real and true worth of being a human with Christ as the greatest treasure is what we all would need. There lies the true glory of life. Everything else we earn or claim may change or vanish. Or we may feel different about such in a later phase. Christ never change or vanish. If we find His bosom as our place to lean on and rest, we won't need anything else. No chairs, positions or achievements can surpass the joy of having Christ in us. He is our King, Lord and Master, The Lord of Glory. We pray that he gives heed to our prayers and supplications and be on our guard always as we progress in His Mission for the Kingdom of God.

FEASTS AND REMEMBRANCES:

- July 20, St. Elijah
- July 22, St. Mary Magdalene
- July 23, H.G. Geevarghese Mar Dioscoros Metropolitan, 27th anniversary, entombed at Holy Trinity Asram, Ranny
- July 25, Mar Epiphanius of Cyprus

Upcoming Feasts & Events:

- August 01-15, Lent of Theotokos and Feast of Dormition
- August 14, Friday, 06:30 pm Evening Prayer, 07:30 pm Devotional Address, 07:45 Benediction & Nerchavilampu
- August 15, Saturday, 09:00 am Morning Prayer followed by Holy Qurbana, Intercessory Prayer, Holy Procession, Benediction and Nerchavilampu
- August 15, India Independence
- August 30, Sunday, Onam Celebrations, Onasadya
- September 13, Sunday, Parish Semi Annual GBM
- September 27, Sunday, Harvest Festival & Auction
- October 11, Sunday, Parish Night
- October 24, Saturday, OCYM Fest -Thaalam 2026
- November 07 Saturday & 08 Sunday, Feast of St. Gregorios

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 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:

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 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

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.

July 26, Sunday – in-person meetings/Events

. SDOF Monthly Meeting after refreshments

. MGOCSM Monthly Meeting after refreshments

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

Holy Liturgical Text for this Sunday

We will be using the English Taksā of Mar Abraham this Sunday.

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

Next Week

August 03, 10th Sunday after the Feast of Pentecost

Scriptural Readings:

- OT: Exodus 15:23-27, Job 42:9-17, Psalms 112:1-10
- NT: Acts 28:23-30, Romans 10:5-21, Holy Gospel St Matthew 18:1-14

Yours in Christ

Thomas John Achen

Email ID: fr.thomaspjohn@gmail.com

Mobile: (416) 570 5610