

Dearly Beloved,

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

September 27, 2026, 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

Holy Gospel: St Matthew 16:5-12

⁵When the disciples reached the other side, they had forgotten to bring any bread. ⁶Jesus said to them, "Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sad'ducees." ⁷And they discussed it among themselves, saying, "We brought no bread." ⁸But Jesus, aware of this, said, "O men of little faith, why do you discuss among yourselves the fact that you have no bread? ⁹Do you not yet perceive? Do you not remember the five loaves of the five thousand, and how many baskets you gathered? ¹⁰Or the seven loaves of the four thousand, and how many baskets you gathered? ¹¹How is it that you fail to perceive that I did not speak about bread? Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sad'ducees." ¹²Then they understood that he did not tell them to beware of the leaven of bread, but of the teaching of the Pharisees and Sad'ducees.

Reflections:

The Nicene Creed, the expression of faith of every believer adhering to the first three Synods of the early church, ends with hope in the resurrection and the new life to come. Being a beautiful ending to the most precise and concise document of faith, it also serves as the goal of every believer, every child of God. Church is a community with a goal which is shared by every faithful member. When a goal is set, there is no need to look back. Goal takes one to the plough and to the work in the vineyard of the Lord. We are in the age of millions of choices and diversions. Life would not be enough to scroll through the choices. Tests and trials would only cause spending away potential time with no gain. It would be necessary when something is researched and experimented. For the church which is the visible body of invisible Christ, it has experimented and proved faith and practice which would take to the exact destination and completion. Once the journey of faith starts, it would require consistent progress. Deviations for convenience or for skipping the cross of mission may cause only delays and taking back. This is what Jonah experienced. He had to restart after suffering many things.

Christ is asking us to be careful about yielding to diverting influences or messages even if that comes from prominent leaders, celebrities, establishments or popular systems. Focus is what is required in a faith journey. Especially when get weak due to various reasons - sickness, worries and anxieties, losses, missing something or someone, accidents, mishaps, pressure- we may tend to listen to messages which we may usually avoid and yield to such. With a wavering mind, we may not be able to discern what is good or bad and what is wise or unwise. When mind is controlled by other forces or conditions like addiction, delusion, suspicion, depression, we may get to try many things in a row without being able to see the result or checking what it is bringing. Lack of faith can cause us to get weaker. Like someone taking trials of many medications and various systems of healing at the same time due to fear and anxiety, everything would only turn out to be disastrous. It can only be counterproductive to healing. We have a God walking with us always, never

abandoning, left his glory behind and reached out to us to save us from falling. He has revealed to us the way of life through believing in Him. He is the Word, Alpha and Omega, beginning and end, starting and perfection. He knows everything. He has given us free access to God the Father Almighty, the Maker of heaven and earth, author and owner of our life. What Christ has commended is our guideline to follow in this world. It is the most perfect navigator, which had led the people of God from bondage to liberation, to the promised land. The same guidance is what we have which will take us through any situation and make us reach the destination. The Spirit of God would be helping us in everything. He is the healing, guiding, empowering and protecting steward of God the Father, the one Christ has promised to send. He is with us. Let us be focused on the Cross of our Lord, carry it and move forward. We will be successful and victorious.

FEASTS AND REMEMBRANCES:

- September 23, HG Antonio Francesco Xavier Alwaris Mar Yulios Metropolitan, 103rd anniversary, entombed at St Mary's Church, Goa
- September 24, St Dimeth
- September 25, HH Mar Ignatius Peter III, Patriarch of Antioch, 132nd anniversary

Condolences:

With deep grief and sadness, we join the family of Libu Varghese (Dir: L 05) on the passing away of his beloved mother Lissy Varghese, aged 69 years, on September 21 Monday. The funeral service shall be solemnized on September 26 Saturday with prayers starting at home at 10:00 am followed by the service at Immanuel Orthodox Church, Nariyapuram at 11:00 am.

Libu was with her for the past few weeks and was able to serve his mom during the days of her leaving this world.

We keep Libu, Shainy, Christina, Alan, Libu's father and all members in the family at this time of bereavement. May the Lord comfort the departed soul and give strength and hope to all beloved ones.

Time Change: Sunday Morning Prayer starts at 08:30 am.

According to the Semi Annual GBM decision, morning prayer will start at 08:30 am on Sundays until a new decision is made.

MMVS Regional Conference went well:

The Regional conference of MMVS at Norval SGIOC was well organized and well attended. The talk by HG Zachariah Mar Severios Metropolitan on the theme 'Worship in a secular age' was spiritually nourishing and elevating. Participation from our unit was highly appreciated. We thank Rev Fr Mathew Thomas and the MMVS leaders for organizing the meeting. Sincere thanks to all participants from our parish unit.

KCEF Rev Fr P K Mathew Memorial Annual Quiz Competition: Congrats to SGOCT team!

The KCEF Annual Quiz had 15 teams from various parishes in Toronto. The quiz was exciting. The session was led by Rev Fr Paul T Varghese. Till the end it was well engaging. SGOCT team won the first place after a few years. Hearty congrats to Beena Baby Mathew, Reeba Ann Thomas & Santy

Binu Koshy. We thank the team members for their hard work and dedication. Sincere thanks to KCEF leaders, the quiz master and all participants.

SGOCT Parish Semi Annual GBM went well, sincerely thanks to all participants.

We thank all the members for attending the meeting, for their suggestions and comments and for their prayerful presence.

UPCOMING FEASTS & EVENTS:

- 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.

AREA 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.

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:

September 27, Sunday – in-person meetings/Events

- Sunday School
- Harvest Festival, Auction
- All Spiritual Organizations to meet after the auction 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 English Taksal of Holy Fathers this Sunday.

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

Next Week

October 04, Third Sunday after the Feast of the Cross

Scriptural Readings:

- OT: Genesis 42:18-21, Proverbs 1:2-9, Jeremiah 31:7-9, Isaiah 54:1-4
- NT: Acts 7:2-5, Romans 8:9-17, Holy Gospel St Luke 16:1-13

Yours in Christ

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