

## **Dearly Beloved,**

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

**May 31, 2026**, First 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

### **Holy Gospel: St Luke 7:27-35**

**27** This is he of whom it is written,

‘Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, who shall prepare thy way before thee.’

**28** I tell you, among those born of women none is greater than John; yet he who is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he.” **29** (When they heard this all the people and the tax collectors justified God, having been baptized with the baptism of John; **30** but the Pharisees and the lawyers rejected the purpose of God for themselves, not having been baptized by him.)

**31** “To what then shall I compare the men of this generation, and what are they like? **32** They are like children sitting in the market place and calling to one another,

‘We piped to you, and you did not dance; we wailed, and you did not weep.’

**33** For John the Baptist has come eating no bread and drinking no wine; and you say, ‘He has a demon.’ **34** The Son of man has come eating and drinking; and you say, ‘Behold, a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!’ **35** Yet wisdom is justified by all her children.”

### **Reflections:**

We are in the season of the Holy Spirit. Spirit, as we heard in the prayers of the liturgy of the feast of Pentecost, is the guide and Counsellor, sent to the world to follow his guidance. After the showering of the Holy Spirit, the church transformed to become the most dynamic establishment as far as the ministry of the Holy Gospel was concerned. Spreading of the word was rapid and extensive. The word of God reached all corners of the world. New churches were formed. Apostles and preachers travelled to cities and villages to reach out to all people. Initially, the focus was more on the ‘people of God’. St. Paul and his co-workers later expanded their ministry to people of other faiths. Peter, too, primarily focused on the Jewish community until he received the vision of the basket descending from heaven containing all kinds of animals. Through this vision, he came to understand that God’s message and salvation were meant for all people. With this new understanding, the mission of the Church became more inclusive.

During His earthly ministry, Jesus consistently connected with people to transform their lives. They were able to taste the Kingdom of God through His saving words and actions. He treated everyone equally. For the people, the temple was a place where they could feel a clear divide among the ‘haves’ and ‘have nots’. With Christ, that divide disappeared. He desired that those who called themselves ministers and preachers of God would recognize God’s presence and allow it to be reflected in their Gospel ministry. He wanted the love of the Heavenly Father to be felt through their actions. But the expected ones did nothing about it. The religious leaders, who were meant to proclaim the message of salvation, were often judgmental in their attitude toward others. It was their assigned responsibility to be equalisers in the society, to bring and spread the love of God

among everyone, to reveal the salvation to the whole creation. However, due to their self-righteous and exclusive attitude, they could not treat everyone with care and compassion. They offered expensive sacrifices in the temple, but they did not live lives of sacrifice. They failed in their divine responsibilities and rejected the prophets sent by God. They could see the Spirit of God at work in John the Baptist, yet they were reluctant to respond to his call to repentance. They were not receptive to his ministry of baptism, which was a sign of repentance. When the Lord Himself moved among them in the synagogue, the temple, and the villages, they failed to recognize Him. When the Messiah spoke to them, they found more reason to blame Him. Jesus compared them to street children who would sit idle and blame each other.

As believers, our responsibility is to work for the Kingdom of God. This is not limited to attending church; rather, it involves actively engaging in the spread of the Word of God with enthusiasm and commitment, just as Peter, John, and the other disciples did when they were filled with the Holy Spirit. They paved the way for others to embrace Christ, not by offering silver or gold, but through the message of salvation.

If we wait for others to carry out the ministry and remain passive onlookers, we too may end up finding fault with the Church, its practices, traditions, sacraments, one another, and everything around us. Therefore, whoever keeping themselves as onlookers move forward by leaving their comfort to become active field workers and peacemakers.

As Christ said, while there is light, we must do the works of light. When we go, the light will remain. We live the gospel, we live this light, and may we become His light!!!

#### **FEASTS AND REMEMBRANCES:**

- **May 25, Mar Aaron the Ascetic**
- **May 26, HH Baselios Marthoma Didymus I Catholicose, 12th anniversary, entombed at Mount Tabore Dayara, Pathanapuram**
- **May 29, Golden Friday (Acts 3:1-10)**

#### **THE WEEK THAT WAS.**

##### **Diocese of Canada Sunday School Bible Quiz**

Hearty congrats to SGOCT Sunday School team for winning the first place Gold Medal. Team members: Ethan Simon John, Nanma Susan Siju, Joshua Baiju John, Allen Jacob George and Gian Thomas George. We thank the parents, teachers and trainers for their support.

##### **Consecration of St Mary's Orthodox Church, Calgary: 29-30 May 2026**

The newly constructed church in Calgary will be consecrated on Friday, 29 May and Saturday, 30 May. His Holiness Baselios Marthoma Mathews III, assisted by bishops and clergy, will lead the service.

Owning land and constructing a church is an achievement that reflects the progress and development of a community. A place of worship is a symbol of the spiritual presence of a congregation. The church stands as a spiritual powerhouse for a generation and continues to serve generations to come.

In the Sedra of the Feast of Pentecost, it is said that the Holy Spirit builds temples for Himself—temples for worship and temples for His dwelling. In this sense, two temples are consecrated in the world: the temple made of bricks and cement, and the temple made of flesh and blood. Both are

built by the Rooha Kudisa, the Holy Spirit.

While we extend our prayers and best wishes to the Calgary parish, may we also be reminded that every human being is to be acknowledged, recognized, and lived as the temple of God.

### **Eid Al Adha: Last week of May 2026**

This year, the Islamic “Festival of Sacrifice” (Eid Al-Adha) was observed in the last week of May. The festival commemorates the sacrifice of Abraham as described in the sacred scriptures of the Qur’an, the Tanakh, and the Bible.

According to the tradition, instead of requiring Abraham to sacrifice his son Isaac (Ishmael), God, seeing his complete obedience, provided a ram caught in the bushes as a substitute. Faith, obedience, and sacrifice are three key themes closely associated with this festival.

Eid Mubarak to all brothers and sisters around the world.

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

- May 31, Sunday, MMVS Bake Sale
- Within the month of May: Food & Clothe Donation Drive
- Jun 07, Sunday: OCYM Sports Tournament
- June 13, Saturday: MGOCSM Canada 5K Walk
- June 16-29: Feast of the Apostles
- July 02-04 (Thu-Sat): 1st Diocesan Family & Youth Conference of Canada

### **DETAILS:**

#### **MMVS Bake Sale - ‘Made with Love’ : Sunday, May 31**

On Sunday, 31 May, MMVS will organize a bake sale themed “Made with Love.” Please note that no other food will be served on the day due to the bake sale.

We request everyone to support the initiative by purchasing items from all counters.

#### **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 of 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.

#### **OCYM Sports Tournament: Sunday, Jun 07**

Please join the sports day organised by OCYM Toronto on June 07, Sunday after the Holy Liturgy. Please register online at the earliest.

#### **MGOCSM Canada 5K Walk: Saturday, June 13**

Please join the Fund Raiser Race/Walk scheduled to be on June 13, Saturday, at 11:00 am. Venue: Lake Aquitaine Park, 6655 Glen Erin Dr, Mississauga

#### **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 too. For any enquiries, kindly reach out to Diocesan Council Members Manu Abraham and Vivin Thomas Vettiyl.

### **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.

### **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 31, Sunday – in-person meetings/Events**

- **Sunday School**
- **MGOCSM Sale of Prayer Beeds**
- **MGOCSM Monthly Meeting**
- **SDOF 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 English Taksas of St James this Sunday.

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

### **Next Week**

June 07, Second Sunday after the Feast of Pentecost

Scriptural Readings:

- OT: Leviticus 19:1-8, 2 Samuel 5:1-10, Song of Songs 2:15-3:6, Sirach 46:1-6, Daniel 6:25-28, Isaiah 61:10-11
- NT: Acts 4:24-28, Ephesians 2:11-18, Holy Gospel St Matthew 10:34-11:1

Yours in Christ

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