

Dearly Beloved,

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

May 03, 2026, Fourth Sunday after Easter

Scriptural Readings:

- OT: Exodus 34:4-12, 1 Kings 20:28-30, Micah 4:1-7, Zachariah 8:4-9, Isaiah 37:8-17
- NT: 1 John 4:19-5:15, Hebrews 11:3-6, Holy Gospel St John 4:31-38

Holy Gospel: St John 4:31-38

³¹Meanwhile the disciples besought him, saying, “Rabbi, eat.” ³²But he said to them, “I have food to eat of which you do not know.” ³³So the disciples said to one another, “Has anyone brought him food?” ³⁴Jesus said to them, “My food is to do the will of him who sent me, and to accomplish his work. ³⁵Do you not say, ‘There are yet four months, then comes the harvest’? I tell you, lift up your eyes, and see how the fields are already white for harvest. ³⁶He who reaps receives wages, and gathers fruit for eternal life, so that Sower and reaper may rejoice together. ³⁷For here the saying holds true, ‘One sows and another reaps.’ ³⁸I sent you to reap that for which you did not labour; others have laboured, and you have entered into their labour.”

Reflections:

Food is necessary for survival. When hungry, we eat to satiate and are not choosy about the taste then. For health reasons, some people may follow dietary disciplines. Because eating is core to our existence and we often turn to it for energy or comfort, faith communities made fasting and abstaining from eating several meals or food types as part of spiritual growth.

During lent, one would become more aware of the need and value of food. This awareness prevails among individuals of low economical settings, as financial scarcity or lack of income can cause one to suffer poverty with less access to food they need or crave for. The need for food can become a cause for riots, violence, inventions and developments. ‘Never used before’ items or ingredients can become the most used food after searches and research. In the early ages, people lived on uncooked roots and fruits. With the discovery of fire, cooking became essential and grains came into wide use. In a hi-tech world, in a global culture, where people travel much and live almost anywhere, food could be one of the most experimented and reinvented things with millions of recipes available. Food varieties thus become universal and can become mood changers or game changers often uniting people of different mindsets.

In a gospel reflection, why was food discussed so much? Because what everyone regarded as essential, the Lord had a different take on it.

When the disciples brought food to Jesus, and they had nothing in store, they thought that He would eat it. However, His response startled them. He spoke to them of a certain kind of food that they were ignorant about. How much food do we really need? And what is more important and essential? Christ placed ministry over food. He taught them that serving the Kingdom of God with true devotion—living according to spiritual values, faith, and purpose—should matter even more than basic physical needs like food and drink. ***Holy Gospel should become the regular feed with its unseen and impactful taste as we are to look for it with more craving.***

Christ’s command to His disciples was to go to the ends of the world and preach the gospel as this was His Father’s Will. It is the command given to all humans who are made in His Image and

Likeness. No one is exempt from this mission. It didn't mean that He was not physically hungry and was miraculously surviving without food because He was the Son of God. He ate and drank with people. He accepted invitations to dinners and banquets. He transformed a wedding feast into the most memorable dining through the miraculous serving of the best wine of the day. Here, Christ was revealing that He eats and drinks from His work for the Kingdom, and not from any other resources. There were plenty of opportunities for Christ to choose from among to earn his bread. But He was always immersed in His ministry, and all his relationships stemmed from that vineyard. There He found His disciples/friends, and foes. Within His gospel mission, He served the multitudes with His Word and bread.

The Word comes first. For the multitudes, they ate the bread and fish brought to them through the gospel. ***Here food is for survival and is to complement the gospel, not the other way around.***

Our calling is to serve the Kingdom, to share the gospel, and to survive with what God gives us. Our work, earning, resources and their use must be viewed as gifts given to the citizens of God's Kingdom who are also workers in His vineyard. Whatever we enjoy in life must be received respectfully and gratefully. We should join His ministry, not due to the lack of opportunities to work elsewhere, but out of our desire to offer Him our full potential. *We truly live when we dedicate our lives and abilities to the Gospel and to centre all our activities on the Lord.* This is the food that Christ was talking about. It will never sicken, deform or disfigure us, but it would only beautify our personality and presence. By doing so, the world would see that human presence is the best presence!

FEASTS AND REMEMBRANCES:

- **April 25**, St Mark the Evangelist
- **April 25**, Marthoma I, 356th anniversary, entombed at Angamaly Cheriapally
- **April 27**, Mar Gregorios Abdul Jaleel Bava, 355th anniversary, entombed at Vadakkan Paravoor Pally
- **April 29**, Mar Sabor & Mar Afroth, two Syrian bishops landed in Kerala in 823 AD and served the Malankara Church
- **May 01**, St James the son of Zebedee
- **May 03**, HH Baselios Paulose I Catholicose, 113rd anniversary, entombed at Pampakuda Cheriapally
- **April 23, 24, May 05, 06**, Feast of St George observed in various parishes. Our parish will be celebrating the feast on Sat May 09 & Sun May 10.

SDOF BBQ

SDOF BBQ on last Sunday was a grand success. Everything was tasty, delicious, fresh, crispy and healthy. All who worked behind the scenes, deserve high appreciation. There were wonderful teamwork and coordination.

The BBQ was the first event of SDOF since its formation as a spiritual organisation. Sincere thanks to all volunteers and those who have taken the lead in cooking. Thanks to the parish MC for their

support. Many thanks to our beloved parish members for their support and contributions. Thanks to SDOF office bearers and all members.

Food & Clothe Donation Drive

This year our church would be joining hands with the Coptic Orthodox Church for reaching out to the needy. We keep the drive open for the month of May. We may be able to visit our brethren in Toronto on the first Saturday of June. Details shall be announced soon. We request all our members to support this initiative by bringing clothes that are gently used/looking good, nonperishable food items and to be ready to go to the drop off venue. All are welcome. Please keep the drive in prayer.

Global Clergy Conference at Parumala: May 19-21

The Global Clergy Conference of the Malankara Orthodox Church will be held at Parumala from May 19-21. HH Baselios Marthoma Mathews III will inaugurate the meeting. The theme will be 'Guardians of the Apostolic Flame- Priestly Witnessing in a Changing World'. About thousand clergies from 32 dioceses across the world will be participating in the conference. We keep the meeting in prayer.

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

The first Diocesan Family & Youth Conference of Canada will be held at Georgian College, Barrie from July 02-04, 2026. Registration is open, the 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. The 'Ticket Sale Kickoff Ceremony' was held at St Thomas OC Toronto, Etobicoke on Sunday April 26 at 12:00 pm. HG Zachariah Mar Nicholovos Metropolitan inaugurated the launch of registrations. We keep the family conference in our daily prayers. Our families are encouraged to please assure full time participation in the event. Please reach out to Manu Abraham and Vivin Thomas Vettiyil (Diocesan Council Members) for any enquiries.

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 09-Sat, 10-Sun: The Feast of St George

Saturday- 06:30 pm Evening Prayer, Devotional Talk, Raza, Benediction, Nerchavilampu

Sunday- 09:00 am Morning Prayer, 10:00 am Holy Qurbana, Intercession of St George, Benediction, Nerchavilampu

2. May 10, Sunday: Mother's Day

3. Clothe & Food Donation Drive

4. May 14, Thursday: Feast of Ascension, Holy Qurbana on May 13, Wednesday starting with Evening Prayer at 06:30 pm, HQ at 07:30 pm

5. **May 14-May 24:** Days of Waiting
6. **May 24, Sunday:** The Feast of Pentecost

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 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:

- **May 03, Sunday – in-person meetings**
- Sunday School
- SDOF quick catch up of last Sunday's BBQ
- MGOCSM meeting
- Choir 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 St John Chrysostom this Sunday.

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

Next Week

May 10, Fifth Sunday after Easter

Scriptural Readings:

- OT: Deuteronomy 16:1-8, Joshua 8:30-33, Proverbs 9:1-11, Joel 3:16-21, Isaiah 26:1-8
- NT: 1 Peter 3:17-22, Hebrews 11:32-40, Holy Gospel St Luke 9:51-62

Yours in Christ

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