

Dearly Beloved,

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

September 06, 2026, Fourth Sunday after the Feast of Assumption

Scriptural Readings:

- OT: Exodus 3:1-2, 11-14, Job 1:1-5, Isaiah 1:16-20
- NT: 1 Peter 2:1-5, 2 Corinthians 3:16-23, Holy Gospel St Mark 6:1-6

Holy Gospel: St Mark 6:1-6

6 He went away from there and came to his own country; and his disciples followed him. ²And on the sabbath he began to teach in the synagogue; and many who heard him were astonished, saying, “Where did this man get all this? What is the wisdom given to him? What mighty works are wrought by his hands! ³Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary and brother of James and Joses and Judas and Simon, and are not his sisters here with us?” And they took offense^[a] at him. ⁴And Jesus said to them, “A prophet is not without honor, except in his own country, and among his own kin, and in his own house.” ⁵And he could do no mighty work there, except that he laid his hands upon a few sick people and healed them. ⁶And he marveled because of their unbelief.

And he went about among the villages teaching.

Reflections:

Can we respect, honor and appreciate those with us? Jesus was the Son of God. He was a prophet too; He prophesied about the Kingdom of God and about himself. All prophets tried teaching about the Kingdom of God in their own social, religious, political and cultural settings. They revealed the will of God to the people within their community. Constitutions adopted by states and nations were often influenced by the teachings and values of local religions, even though they were drafted within secular settings.

Political ideologies can sometimes take their root in religious teachings. Prophets or leaders who were instrumental in transforming societies had to face challenges and rebellion from their own people. It is often seen that people may be honored more after their death than while they were alive and active in their mission.

When Jesus’ authority and power were revealed, the leaders could not accept His ideologies or teachings. ***They found fault in everything He did.*** When He healed people, it was treated as a grave error to heal on the Sabbath day. If He sat with lower class people, He was mocked at. If He spoke and dined with a rich man, they misunderstood Him. ***Nearly everything that He did amongst people was scrutinized and criticized.*** The leaders wanted to know what power He used – to be of such equal appeal to the rich and poor, sick and healthy, men and women, needy and wealthy. They disliked the acceptance that He had received among the multitude, hence they thought it necessary to turn the multitudes who received His mercy into a mob of madness against Him.

Christ had never done anything wrong. Rather He did only good to everyone. He helped and saved people. He did things that government or governmental agencies could not do. In that respect He supported the administrative system by bringing about peace, healing and harmony. So, they found Him to be a threat to their establishment. They had their own plans, ambitions, schemes, wishes and wills. They could not imagine losing their popularity to a carpenter’s son.

Respect is a great virtue that not everybody can practice. Only those who have self-respect and a mature mind can respect and honor others. Vested interests and selfish ambitions would

hinder the ability to respect others. ***If we cannot find our own value, dignity, honor and respect, we may find it hard to respect others.*** Any good in others may upset us. We might think we can't beat them. Are we so competitive that we need to surge ahead of everyone around us? Can't we have our good while others, have theirs? ***Why does anything appreciable in others cause upset in us?*** Such immature approach affects our friendship, relationship, community life and healthy living. In sleep and at work, the good that's seen in others bothers us and we become jealous, we start hating and we look for every opportunity to find fault with everyone we meet. Division, disintegration, enmity, argument, hatred, gossip, scandal, unrest would become part of our daily living.

Jesus the Son of God was walking with the people, but they could not find peace in life. They were disturbed; they couldn't benefit from his graces and miracles. ***When people cannot honor and respect the good of others, they will never enjoy peace.*** Even the most peaceful place, the temple and the Altar would then cease to be a place of peace and joy. Prayers may not bring any good where faith in their power doubts and dwindles. ***A society that cannot practice mutual respect would fail in respecting God too.*** Such a society or community may fail to sense the divine between them and within them. The command given by the Lord to love each other remains the best solution for all human problems. ***In love, there is respect, honor and endurance.*** Mutual respect and love would be the Kingdom preached by all prophets, especially our Lord. Let there be love and honor that the Lord be honored and the world be blessed!!!

FEASTS AND REMEMBRANCES:

August 31, HG Mathews Mar Ivanios Metropolitan of Paretu, 46th anniversary, entombed in Mar Kuriakose Dayara, Pampady September 02, HG Yuyakim Mar Coorilose Metropolitan, 152nd anniversary, entombed in Mulanthuruthy Church

Condolences:

We express our deepest condolences and join to share the grief of St Thomas Orthodox Parish community and of the family on the passing away of Dr. Joseph Kurian, who fell asleep in the Lord on August 26th at the age of 93. Dr. Kurian leaves behind a profound legacy as a pioneer of the Holy Orthodox faith in our region. Since 1970, his steadfast vision, deep faith, and dedication were instrumental in establishing a permanent foundation for Orthodox Christian beliefs and traditions in this area. The funeral service will be on Saturday, 05 September 2026 at 10:15 am at St. Philopateer Mercurius & St. Shenouda the Archimandrite Coptic Orthodox Church, 139 Bond Avenue, North York, ON, M3B 1M1. The interment will be at Mt Pleasant Cemetery, 375 Mount Pleasant Road, Toronto, M4T 2V8 at 12:45 pm.

We keep the departed soul and the family in our prayer. May the Lord comfort the departed soul and strengthen the family.

Upcoming Feasts & Events:

- September 08, Feast of the birth of Mother Mary, Holy Liturgy on Monday September 07th, evening prayer at 06:30 followed by Holy Qurbana, Intercession, Benediction, Nerchavilampu
- September 13, Sunday School Reopening, PTA Meeting. All students are requested to complete their registration for 2026-27 academic year before Sep 13.

- September 14, Feast of the Cross (Sleebe Perunnal)
- September 20, Parish Semi Annual GBM
- 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

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 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.

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.

WEEKLY IN-PERSON MEETINGS:

September 06, Sunday – in-person meetings/Events

All Spiritual Organizations to meet after the refreshments to plan and 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 Taksa of Holy Fathers 'Mkanastha' this Sunday.
May the Gracious Lord keep us from all evil and heal the entire world.

Next Week

September 13, Fourth Sunday after the Feast of Assumption

Scriptural Readings:

- OT: Leviticus 18:1-5, Joshua 22:4-6, Ezekiel 34:1-6
- NT: Acts 14:2-10, Romans 2:28-3:8, Holy Gospel St Luke 11:33-41

Yours in Christ

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