



## WEEKLY THOUGHTS - APRIL 01, 2022

Dearly beloved,

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

**Sunday, April 03 Sunday, 'Samiyo'- Healing of the Blind, Sabhadinam**

**Epistle Readings: 1 Peter 4:12-19, 2 Corinthians 9:6-15, Ephesians 5:1-14**

**Holy Evangelion: St John 9:1-41**

<sup>9</sup> As he passed by, he saw a man blind from his birth. <sup>2</sup> And his disciples asked him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" <sup>3</sup> Jesus answered, "It was not that this man sinned, or his parents, but that the works of God might be made manifest in him. <sup>4</sup> We must work the works of him who sent me, while it is day; night comes, when no one can work. <sup>5</sup> As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world." <sup>6</sup> As he said this, he spat on the ground and made clay of the spittle and anointed the man's eyes with the clay, <sup>7</sup> saying to him, "Go, wash in the pool of Silo'am" (which means Sent). So he went and washed and came back seeing. <sup>8</sup> The neighbours and those who had seen him before as a beggar, said, "Is not this the man who used to sit and beg?" <sup>9</sup> Some said, "It is he"; others said, "No, but he is like him." He said, "I am the man." <sup>10</sup> They said to him, "Then how were your eyes opened?" <sup>11</sup> He answered, "The man called Jesus made clay and anointed my eyes and said to me, 'Go to Silo'am and wash'; so I went and washed and received my sight." <sup>12</sup> They said to him, "Where is he?" He said, "I do not know."

<sup>13</sup> They brought to the Pharisees the man who had formerly been blind. <sup>14</sup> Now it was a Sabbath day when Jesus made the clay and opened his eyes. <sup>15</sup> The Pharisees again asked him how he had received his sight. And he said to them, "He put clay on my eyes, and I washed, and I see." <sup>16</sup> Some of the Pharisees said, "This man is not from God, for he does not keep the Sabbath." But others said, "How can a man who is a sinner do such signs?" There was a division among them. <sup>17</sup> So they again said to the blind man, "What do you say about him, since he has opened your eyes?" He said, "He is a prophet."

<sup>18</sup> The Jews did not believe that he had been blind and had received his sight, until they called the parents of the man who had received his sight, <sup>19</sup> and asked them, "Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then does he now see?" <sup>20</sup> His parents answered, "We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind; <sup>21</sup> but how he now sees we do not know, nor do we know who opened his eyes. Ask him; he is of age, he will speak for himself." <sup>22</sup> His parents said this because they feared the Jews, for the Jews had already agreed that if anyone should confess him to be Christ, he was to be put out of the synagogue. <sup>23</sup> Therefore his parents said, "He is of age, ask him."

<sup>24</sup> So for the second time they called the man who had been blind, and said to him, "Give God the praise; we know that this man is a sinner." <sup>25</sup> He answered, "Whether he is a sinner, I do not know; one thing I know, that though I was blind, now I see." <sup>26</sup> They said to him, "What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?" <sup>27</sup> He answered them, "I have told you already, and you would not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you too want to become his disciples?" <sup>28</sup> And they reviled him, saying, "You are his disciple, but we are disciples of Moses. <sup>29</sup> We know that God has spoken to Moses, but as for this man, we do not know where he comes from." <sup>30</sup> The man answered, "Why, this is a marvel! You do not know where he comes from, and yet he opened my eyes. <sup>31</sup> We know that God does not listen to sinners, but if anyone is a worshiper of God and does his will, God listens to him. <sup>32</sup> Never since the world began has it been heard that any one opened the eyes of a man born blind. <sup>33</sup> If this man were not from God, he could do nothing." <sup>34</sup> They answered him, "You were born in utter sin, and would you teach us?" And they cast him out.



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<sup>35</sup> Jesus heard that they had cast him out, and having found him he said, “Do you believe in the Son of man?” <sup>36</sup> He answered, “And who is he, sir, that I may believe in him?” <sup>37</sup> Jesus said to him, “You have seen him, and it is he who speaks to you.” <sup>38</sup> He said, “Lord, I believe”; and he worshiped him. <sup>39</sup> Jesus said, “For judgment I came into this world, that those who do not see may see, and that those who see may become blind.” <sup>40</sup> Some of the Pharisees near him heard this, and they said to him, “Are we also blind?” <sup>41</sup> Jesus said to them, “If you were blind, you would have no guilt; but now that you say, ‘We see,’ your guilt remains.

## Reflections:

Before creation, God created light by commanding “Let there be light”. The response expected was Amen (means ‘let it be so’) through which light came into being. Ecclesial space always keeps provisions to say Amen during prayers and blessings. It is the acceptance of the prayers offered by the church and answers given by God. There are prayers for light in all ancient religious traditions. ‘Tamaso Ma Jyotir Gamaya’ (Let darkness vanish and light come) is one of the most ancient prayers in the world. Why was light created before everything else? What kind of light was it? Wasn’t there any light existing before? Space science reveals about black holes which are dark inside and consume anything that comes within the field of attraction. If a glowing star is dragged in, it will disappear into the dark hole leaving no trace of light. God is light and within Him there is no darkness at all (1 John 1:5). God existed before all creation, and if He was, light already existed. Then what extra light was created? God is the Uncreated Light which is not visible to anyone. That is why God sits in the dark, divine dark which is not absence of light but too bright or dense for human eyes to see. When the Israelites sent Moses to speak with God on the mountain because they were afraid of Him (Ex 20:21). “Clouds and thick darkness are all around him;” (Psalm 97:2). “These words the Lord spoke to all your assembly at the mountain out of the midst of the fire, the cloud, and the thick darkness, with a loud voice; and he added no more. And he wrote them on two tablets of stone and gave them to me.”(Deuteronomy 5:22).

The visible light was created for the sake of humans and the rest of creation. We need light to see things. Without seeing, we miss things. When we can’t see, it is blindness. Too much light can also make us blind. Here Jesus was healing someone who was blind from birth. He had problem with vision, not absence of light. When he was healed he could see things. His healing made him believe in God the Eternal Light whereas the hypocritical leaders failed to recognise Him because they had no light in them. We need light inside to see. If not, we miss many things. We may miss our brothers and sisters, neighbours, truth, situations, needs and the needy, scope, purpose and goals. The Samaritan could see what the Priest or the Levite missed (Lk 10:31-33). Esther could see what Haman missed, the salvation of the oppressed (Esther 4:14-17, 7:6-10, 8:6). Elisa could see what his disciple missed (2 Kings 6:15-17). The Church asks us to pray ‘Christ the light of the Father, illuminate us through Your radiance for us to see ‘The Light’ which is God.’ Let there be light! Amen!

## Feasts:

### April 01, 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Very Rev Thomas P Mundukuzhy Cor Episcopa

Very Rev Thomas P Mundukuzhy Cor Episcopa was our vicar 1974-1990 after Rev Fr K C George (late Very Rev K C Gevarghese Ramban). Achen conducted service at Trinity College Chapel till we moved to Ballantrae in 1990. While serving our parish he was elevated to Cor Episcopa in 1981. Achen had taken the pain to travel from the US and to conduct worship and prayers, various meetings, initiate various projects which lead to the further growth and also acquiring of the current land at 6890 Professional Court in 1998. In the reflections written by Achen appeared in the Parish Souvenir - 1990, it concludes with: ‘We have already sowed the seeds. A little more hard work, sincerity, eagerness, openness, earnestness, coupled with reasonable and rational behavior by all



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would make it.' Let us think prayerfully how far we progressed and achieved. We gratefully acknowledge Achen's ministry and all the blessings brought to us. He was a writer and publisher, a good orator and an efficient administrator. May his memory be eternal.

## **H G Zachariah Mar Nicholovos Matropolitan, new President of the Rule Committee**

HG Zachariah Mar Nicholovos Metropolitan has been appointed as the President of the Rule Committee of the Malankara Orthodox Church. According to the Constitution of the Malankara Church, the Rule Committee proposes to make amendments to the constitution if required. We congratulate Thirumeni on this new appointment. May the Holy Spirit empower and guide His Grace.

## **Rev Fr George S Mathews (Sajeev Achen) from Texas will be celebrating Holy Liturgy this Sunday at SGOCT**

We are delighted to have Rev Fr George S Mathews (Sajeev Achen), Clergy Secretary of South West American Diocese, celebrating Holy Liturgy at our church this Sunday. Achen will be on his way from Edmonton to Houston Texas, transiting for a day. Achen is from Anandappally Adoor. We can meet and greet Achen after the service and to have a chat before he leaves.

## **Great Lent, Evening Prayer, Devotional Talks**

We are in the second half of Great Lent. We conduct Noon Prayer at 12:00 – 12:30 with 40 kneeling down. Whoever finds it convenient can access the link shared.

Evening prayer starts at 07:00 followed by devotional talks by our members. It is live streamed. We can join in person or virtually. Let us be together in prayer and fasting these days of Lent which was observed by our Lord. Prayer and fasting can bring abundant grace and miraculous results. Let us seek the showering of the Holy Spirit upon us all.

## **Holy Confession every evening**

Lent is a time for deep cleansing of hearts. Let us take this opportunity to do Holy Confession. It gives way to a new start with new insights and goals. We can find time either before evening prayer or after the devotional talk. Please feel free to call on (416) 570 5610 to fix the time.

## **40th Friday & Lazarus Saturday**

40<sup>th</sup> Friday will be on April 08. Holy Liturgy shall be celebrated on Thursday April 07 with Evening Prayer starting at 06:30 pm.

Holy Liturgy on Lazarus Saturday shall be celebrated on Saturday April 09 with Morning Prayer starting at 08:30 am

## **Holy Week: Palm Sunday April 10 – Easter Sunday April 17**

Detailed schedule for Holy Week shall be sent soon. Please look for the timing of Holy Week services. We request all our members to attend the liturgical services in person.

## **Parish GBM on Sunday, March 27**

Our Parish General Body meeting was held on Sunday, March 27th, 2022. Sincere thanks to all the members for their participation in person. Decisions shall be announced at church.



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## **Ordination of Acolytes**

We may have members that are willing to join the Altar Assistance Service. Whoever wishes to join the Acolytes, please feel free to reach out to the Vicar on (416) 570 5610. We will conduct the training sessions and fix a date for ordination.

## **New Comers WhatsApp Groups initiated by OCYM supported by volunteers from parish spiritual organisations**

Canada finds new immigrants and students from India. We receive new comers every week. To coordinate and organise them, our parish OCYM has started two WhatsApp Groups. We have volunteers representing various organisations to support. New comers are getting added to the group every day. We request our members to connect newcomers to both students and young couples we come across and we will be glad to offer them guidance and support. We will be organising various online and in-person meetings for them including spiritual sessions.

## **SGOCT Parish Library and Book Club**

We request our members who are fond of reading to support in setting up a useful library. We request our members who may be interested in donating books to contact the vicar at (416) 570 5610. We do believe that the library shall motivate our kids and youngsters to get equipped for their future through intense and voracious reading and it also helps our senior generation to get engaged in fruitful sharing time through the book club.

## **Parish Journal**

The Parish journal is in process and expected to be released on Easter. Our editorial board is working on it. Articles have been received. Name suggestions and cover icons are also already there on the editing desk. Thanks to all the contributors.

## **Spiritual Organisations and WhatsApp Groups**

All the spiritual organizations of our parish have created WhatsApp groups for regular communications and updates. We request all our members to join corresponding groups. If you are not already in, please reach out to organizational secretaries.

Gregorian Seniors Forum, G George: (416) 738 7765

MMVS, Beena Mathew: (647) 835 1521

OCYM, Suna Cherian: (647) 818 9376

Choir, Anand Joseph: (416) 276 5021

Acolytes, Cleemis Vaidhyan: (647) 308 2135, Anish Mathew: (647) 818 6125

MGOCSM, Emil Mathew: (647) 877 9272, Sandra Shaji: (647) 551 6563

Sunday School, Santhosh Varughese: (416) 258 2062

## **MGOCSM Alumni**

Our parish MGOCSM would like to reach all members who had any association with MGOCSM in India or elsewhere. Please inform whoever worked with MGOCSM. You can either send an email to [mgocsm.sgocst@gmail.com](mailto:mgocsm.sgocst@gmail.com) copying to the vicar at [fr.thomasjohn@gmail.com](mailto:fr.thomasjohn@gmail.com) or send a message/call to (416) 570 5610.



## **40th Anniversary of the Diocesan MMVS in North America**

The Diocese has planned the following events to celebrate the 40th Anniversary of the MMVS in North America:

1. 40th-anniversary ceremony will be held on October 1, 2022, at St Thomas Indian Orthodox Church in Unruh, Philadelphia.
2. Women who were a part of the MMVS prior to 1982 are being honored.
3. Provide educational assistance to 40 children for a year. A raffle voucher sale will be held for this purpose. Each family can purchase a raffle ticket for \$40. Please save a dollar every day during Great Lent and participate in the raffle coupon sale. There's also the option of sponsoring a child for a year. The expense for this is \$1500 US dollars.

The raffle coupon draw will take place on October 1st, 2022 during the anniversary ceremony.

1st Prize: iPhone 13                      2nd Prize: iWatch

## **Communicants Counting Machine, Wave your hand 'ONCE' please**

All Sunday participants are requested to register their names at the entrance and as we enter the church interior. Please wave your hand once between the sensor poles of the counting machine if you are to take Holy Communion. Please do not wave if you are not taking Holy Communion. Thanks to everyone for your cooperation.

## **Meetings ahead, In-Person & Virtual**

April 02, Saturday, Choir/Acolytes joint practice, 05:00 – 07:00 pm

April 02, Saturday, Evening Prayer, 07:00 – 08:00 pm

April 03, Sunday, Sunday School In Person at Church

## **Liturgical Text for this Sunday**

This Sunday, we will be using the Taksa of Mar Mathai Royo

## **Link to Sunday Holy Liturgy**

Please see below the Link for Live Streaming

[https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCDT7tcyQw1yZ1\\_yCG9AWStA](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCDT7tcyQw1yZ1_yCG9AWStA)

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

Yours in Christ,

Thomas John Achen

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