



## WEEKLY THOUGHTS - JANUARY 01, 2021

Dearly Beloved,

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

### January 03, Second Sunday after Nativity

**Epistle Readings: 1 John 3:21-24, Hebrews 11:23-31**

**Gospel Reading, St Luke 2:40-52 RSV**

Now his parents went to Jerusalem every year at the feast of the Passover. And when he was twelve years old, they went up according to custom; and when the feast ended, they were returning while the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem. His parents did not know it, but supposing him to be in their company they went a day's journey, and they sought him among their kinsfolk and acquaintances; and when they did not find him, they returned to Jerusalem, seeking him. After three days they found him in the temple, sitting among the teachers, listening to them, and asking them questions; and all who heard him were amazed at his understanding and his answers. And when they saw him they were astonished; and his mother said to him, "Son, why have you treated us so? Behold, your father and I have been looking for you anxiously." And he said to them, "How is it that you sought me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house?" And they did not understand the saying which he spoke to them. And he went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was obedient to them; and his mother kept all these things in her heart. And Jesus increased in wisdom and in stature, and in favour with God and man.

### Reflections

As we are entering the New Year, here we have a good thought to ponder on. Jesus increased in wisdom and in stature (Luke 2:52). Kangaroo has a big stature but a small head. Humans are expected to grow balanced. Children of God grow both in wisdom and physic. Wisdom stands for Divine wisdom, not just intellect. It is the brilliance one should achieve to perceive the higher and deeper aspects of life. It is the deep areas of life which are hidden in everything--nature, environment, universe and in all beings. Humans tend to acquire knowledge for practical, successful living. So we have it now. During the Covid period, we have realised certain established practicalities have found some blocks which have not yet moved. We cannot go spiritually retarded. It is not the physical side of everything that brings success or accomplishments. There are some underlying facts which decide the destiny of everything. We had once thought that science would be the perfect and final tool to take everything to perfection. If it worked so, there would not have been poverty, unethical practices, wars, social injustice, political dilemma, and environmental issues. We need to look beyond our practical wisdom for a better survival in the changing world. Haven't we noticed, towards the end, the Bible reminds, 'Spirit and bride say, Come.' And it finishes with the prayer, Maranatha, Come Lord (Revelation 22:17, 20). It is the invocation of the Lord and inviting Him into everything. As Christ warned and St Paul also assured, without Him we can do nothing (John 15:5) and everything would be possible with the Lord (Matthew 19:26, Philippians 4:13). Hallelujah!

### Feasts

**January 01, Circumcision of the Lord.** He was circumcised according to their custom (St John 2:21). By doing it, they were obeying God's command as written in Leviticus 12:1-3. If Jesus could receive circumcision on the eight day, before becoming mature, there is nothing to suspect on the

practice of infant baptism kept by the church. Infants can observe traditions and receive spiritual blessings, no matter whether they are in infancy or in ignorance.

**Mar Baselios and Mar Gregorios (Cappadocian Fathers).** They were brothers. Their major contributions include their defence against heresies like Arianism, Christian theological affirmations against the popular Greek philosophical thoughts established by Plato and Aristotle and general interpretations of the Holy Scripture. Basil had established a monastic community and he constituted Monastic guidelines which are still used in the current era. Gregory Nyssa's writings 'On the Making of Man' and 'The life of Moses' are the most read among his many works.

**New Year Service**

The New Year's service was conducted on Thursday Dec 31 evening. We had the vigil conducted along with the Holy Liturgy. Sincere thanks to acolytes and choir members for leading the vigil. We do thank K T George, Amy Anand & Emil Mathew for translating the vigil prayers and litany to English. We do thank Soney M John for his apt New Year message.

**Sunday School Reopening**

Sunday School classes will resume this weekend. Please look for classes scheduled by the teachers. We wish all the teachers and students a fruitful year ahead!

**Virtual Meetings**

- Saturday January 02, SGOCT Prayer Meeting, 07:00 – 08:30 pm
- Sunday January 03, SGOCT Choir, 07:30 – 09:00 pm
- Monday January 04, Acolytes Meeting, 07:30 – 09:00 pm

**MGOCSM launches Custom Made Masks**

MGOCSM is bringing branded face masks as part of charity. The reusable/washable mask is black with the MGOCSM logo printed in three different colours: white, yellow and red. Each cost \$10/-. Please support this charity drive.



**Plaque of Contributors**

We have unveiled the plaque on Thursday Dec 24<sup>th</sup> after the Christmas Liturgy. Sincere thanks to all our beloved members for their contributions and support.



# ST. GREGORIOS ORTHODOX CHURCH OF TORONTO

(Since 1969)

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## Articles required for the church

Most of the articles required for the church have arrived. Items and donors shall be announced soon. Sincere thanks to all the contributors.

## Names of the beloved departed members, a gentle reminder

We request our members to send the names and dates of the parting of their beloved family members. We would like to keep the list of the departed for remembrance on respective Sundays as we do for Birthdays and Wedding Anniversary Days. Please respond.

## Election of new office bearers

We request all the spiritual organizations to elect new office bearers and send their list to the parish office. Please include the election of office-bearers in the next meeting agenda and do the needful.

## Support HTRC

Holy Trinity Transfiguration Retreat Centre is a prestigious meeting place of the Diocese of North East America. It requires our support, especially at this time of pandemic. Our holy father Bava Thirumeni has asked all the members of the Malankara Orthodox church to support this spiritual renewal centre. Please find the link to offer our support.

Join us, #GivingTuesday, December 1, 2020, in donating to Holy Transfiguration Retreat Centre, a ministry of the Northeast American Diocese. 10% of the funds raised will go to support the seminarians studying for the #NEDiocese. Give now: <https://bit.ly/Give2HTRC>  
#Give2HTRC #SupportOurSeminarians #SupportThisMinistry

## Liturgical Text for this Sunday

We will be using the Taksa of Mar Osthathéos. Please look for the prayers that are especially inspired by the Holy Spirit.

## Please find the Link for Live Streaming

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

## COVID-19 Guidelines

We continue Holy Liturgy with limited participation of 10 members. We hope that the current restrictions would help in bringing down the spread of infection to zero. News about the vaccine that is starting to be administered by the end of December gives us more peace at heart. Let us keep on praying for the whole world. God shall protect us, his children everywhere.

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

Yours in Christ

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