



WEEKLY THOUGHTS - OCTOBER 02, 2020

Dearly Beloved,

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

October 04, 3rd Sunday after the Feast of the Cross

Gospel Reading, St Mark 2:23-28 RSV

23 One sabbath he was going through the grainfields; and as they made their way his disciples began to pluck heads of grain. 24 And the Pharisees said to him, "Look, why are they doing what is not lawful on the sabbath?" 25 And he said to them, "Have you never read what David did, when he was in need and was hungry, he and those who were with him: 26 how he entered the house of God, when Abi'athar was high priest, and ate the bread of the Presence, which it is not lawful for any but the priests to eat, and also gave it to those who were with him?" 27 And he said to them, "The sabbath was made for man, not man for the sabbath; 28 so the Son of man is lord even of the sabbath."

Reflections

Too much criticism can be unhealthy and even destructive. For bringing in the best results and contributions, people would need encouragement and support. Jesus was always a target for the Pharisees and leaders. He always engaged himself in good work. He was doing only good to others without taking any profit for himself. They had to think about what they were looking for while carrying out their duties and responsibilities. They had to realise how they would be feeling while getting bombarded with blames and allegations? Sabbath was meant to be holy for them to worship and to say thanks to God. Most often, they used Sabbath to criticise Jesus for his compassionate actions for the needy. They were religious, but failed in reflecting the virtues of God. It was nothing but love, care and healing. Leaders of the community were in distress for their inability to reveal God's love to the poor. They were more inclined to formal observations of rites and ceremonies rather than putting any effort to transform the lives of people. Charity as revealed by the Lord is nothing but worship and devotion put into compassionate actions. Here we have two aspects of criticism to think about. Jesus had set an example on how to respond to criticisms. He never retaliated or cursed anyone. He was cool and went on with his ministry. He never criticised anyone for human failures even though he was perfect in everything. He showed only mercy and compassion towards people. He could understand the human frailty and fragility. On the other hand, there were leaders in position who did nothing for uplifting the downtrodden but developed only arrogance against Christ and tried to instigate hatred and suspicion among the people against Jesus. All their actions summed up in the end to kill him. The world had lost Christ. Being responsible members of the church, we should encourage all good thoughts and deeds and if any blames come upon us, keep ourselves cool and calm. We are the followers of the one who did only good, suffered, died and was resurrected. May He resurrect in us every day, every moment.



ST. GREGORIOS ORTHODOX CHURCH OF TORONTO

(Since 1969)

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Feasts

September 28, H G Philipose Mar Theophilos, 23rd anniversary, entombed at Thrikkunnath Seminary Chapel, Alwaye

October 01, Mar Adai the Evangelist, Mar Abhai the Martyr, Mar Malke

October 02, Mar Simeon Dionysius, 134th anniversary, entombed at Kadungamangalam

October 03, St Yeldo Mar Baselios, 335th anniversary, entombed at Kothamangalam Cheriyaapally

Gandhi Jayanti – October 02

M K Gandhi (Mohandas Karam Chand Gandhi) called by the world reverentially Mahatma (great soul), respectfully Gandhiji and fondly Bapuji was born on October 2nd. He practiced love through caring for the poor and dedicating his life for those whom he loved. He was a Hindu who reflected the love of God revealed by Christ. He was inspired by the Sermon on the Mount (Beatitudes) and proved the practicality of love through freeing the people from bondage and slavery. He started his liberation activities in South Africa and after coming back to India, he had to lead the freedom movement to victory. India got independence on August 15, 1947. Gandhi was elevated to the honour of 'Father of the Nation' in the hearts of millions of people. Western freedom movements were highly influenced by Bapuji's 'Satyagraha' through Non Violence and Non Cooperation. There is no one in history who could stride over the path to liberation without bloodshed and militancy. He was not only a national leader but also a universal spiritual guru who offered himself for peace and social justice. His autobiography, 'The Story of My Experiments with Truth' is considered classic and read by millions all over the globe. His philosophy of life was, "Whenever we plan to do something, we should think how it would be beneficial for the poorest person in this world." He practiced greatest virtues of forgiveness and reconciliation. There was an incident when he was beaten on face by a racist; he showed him the best example of compassion to ask the beater whether it had hurt him! Was it not the same Christ had taught us?! Gandhiji has set an example that a simple spiritual person who doesn't have any physical power or material wealth can lead the world to liberation and prosperity. Salute to you Mahatma! The world needs to put into practice your example!

Seminary Day, October 04 (OTS- Orthodox Theological Seminary Kottayam & STOTS- St Thomas Seminary Nagpur)

Church observes the first Sunday of October as Seminary Day. It was started for seeking support from church members through financial collection. Church has two Theological Seminaries, Pazhaya Seminary at Kottayam and St Thomas Seminary at Nagpur. Pazhaya Seminary was started in 1815 and Nagpur Seminary in 1995. Pazhaya Seminary was the historic place where the first English general education in the State of Travancore began. Seminary was also the seat of major events happened in the Malankara Church which decided the future of the Indian Christianity in general. The first printing press in Kerala started there. One of the Principals of Seminary was the legendary Paulose Mar Gregorios Metropolitan. Fr Dr V C Samuel, one of the greatest Christologists of 20th century, HG Mathews Mar Barnabas (former Diocesan Metropolitan of America), Fr Dr T J Joshua were professor at Pazhaya Seminary.

Into its credit, there are Sruti School of Liturgical Music, Divyabodhanam Lay Training Program, Prathyasha Counselling Centre, Saroopya School of Sacred Arts and Sophia Centre (It is the venue of conferences and seminars local, national and international of various themes and interests including Ecumenism, Ecological Concerns, Inter Faith Dialogues and Relationship, Orientation Programs and Career Guidance for Students, Scientific and Technological Advancements and Impacts, Art and



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Culture, Theology and Philosophy etc.). Most of the books and articles produced by the church have seminary professors worked on it and contributed the most. Every faithful member of the church is obliged to the Seminary for the pastoral and ecclesial service they receive through Bishops and Priests. It is requested that please support the Seminary through your kind contributions. Those who are willing could help through becoming Friends of Seminary and continue supporting for a longer time.

Virtual Meetings

Wednesday September 30, MGOCSM, 07:30pm (Conducted)

Friday October 02, NE American Diocese MMVS Retreat, 12:00 -01:00 pm

Friday 02 October, SGOCT Sunday School Liturgical Session for seniors, 06:00 pm

Friday 02 October, MMVS Canada Region, 08:30 -09:30pm

Saturday October 03, SGOCT Prayer Meeting, 07:00-08:30 pm

Sunday October 04, SGOCT Choir, 07:00 pm

Friday October 09, SGOCT OCYM, 07:30 pm

Parish Directory

The Parish Directory is expected to be printed out soon. We have made a provision for commercial advertisements. Our members could also choose space for memorial tribute or compliments. Whoever wish to include photos of beloved departed ones, or of couples on their wedding anniversary, or to wish someone on their achievements, please contact the parish office (Treasurer or Secretary). Tariff: Full page \$300, half page \$200 for non-commercial and \$400 for full page for commercial. Please make use of this opportunity and support our parish.

Thanksgiving

October is the month of thanksgiving. We used to raise fund for both our parish needs and for charity. We had the concept that every member family keep aside one dollar each day and contribute the sum towards thanksgiving. Out of the total collection half will be for the parish and half for charity spending. Because of Pandemic, we are affected badly regarding finance and community building up programs. We are approaching the end of financial year. There are payment dues pending. Please participate and make it a grand success.

We have enough and more reasons to thank the Lord. He has been keeping us safe in the midst of dreadful infection possibilities. St Paul has advised us: ‘Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to bless you abundantly, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work. As it is written: “They have freely scattered their gifts to the poor; their righteousness endures forever.” (2 Corinthians 9:6-9).

Plaque of Contributors

As planned, the names of contributors towards the Church Renovation Project shall be exhibited on plaques in the church, in the basement area. We have different categories based on the total amount given, starting with \$5000 contribution. Those who wish to upgrade, they could make rest of payment corresponding to the category they wish to be in. For those who haven't made a contribution yet, there is still time to contribute and have their names inscribed on the plaque. 2020 November 30 will



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be the deadline for finishing the payment. It will be a great support to our parish especially at this prolonged Pandemic period. Each dollar will be carefully used for the best of purposes. Please make use of this opportunity to declare our love, dedication and solidarity towards our Parish.

Articles required for the church

Our church requires a few articles for its use. Baptismal Fond, Silver Paten and Chalice (Church doesn't encourage using plated grail and paten for health reasons), Candle Stands, Candle Wick Holder, Crystal Containers for keeping Holy oils -Holy Myron, Saith and Olive Oil, Wooden Box for keeping the crystal jars, Taksa Stand, Reliqueries - 'Arulikka' with space for keeping icons or relics which we carry during Perunnal Processions, Candle table with offertory box, etc. There will be options available. Prices can vary depending on our selection. Those who wish to donate, please inform the parish office or send me a text or call on (416) 570 5610.

Monthly Schedule of Parish Organisations and their Meetings:

All Saturdays, SGOCT Prayer Meeting, 07:00-08:30pm

First Sunday, SGOCT Choir Meeting, 07:00-08:30pm

Second Sunday, SGOCT MMVS, 06:00-07:30pm

Third Sunday, SGOCT Sunday School Teachers Meeting, 07:30-09:00pm

Fourth Sunday, SGOCT MGOCSM, 07:30-09:00pm

First Monday, SGOCT Acolytes Meeting, 07:30-09:00pm

Fourth Thursday, Gregorian Seniors Forum, 07:00-08:30pm

First and Third Fridays, SGOCT Sunday School Liturgical Session for Seniors, 06:00- 07:30pm

Second Friday, SGOCT OCYM, 07:30-09:00

Fourth Friday, SGOCT Divyabodhanam, 07:00-09:00pm

Please keep these days in our diary for respective meetings. It would be highly appreciable if we could follow the monthly schedule to avoid confusion, clash, overlapping or overbooking. All the Secretaries of organisations are requested to make sure that all the meetings shall be entered in the Google Sheet and also inform the Parish Secretary and update the meetings.

Two Sad Demises

Dr Justin Georgekutty MD (Cardiologist at Long Island Hospital) , a young member of the church, a dedicated Altar server, highly involved and active, skilled and dedicated, a faithful son of the church has passed away in New York. Funeral service has been conducted on Friday October 02nd. It is a great loss for the family and for the society in general. He is survived by his beloved wife Rami and children Reya (4) and Jonah (2). Please keep the departed soul in prayer. We request to keep the grieving family too in our prayer.

Dr PM Mathew Vellore, one of the leading psychologists in India, also a columnist and writer who popularised psychology among the common public has passed away. He was from Karipuzha, Mavelikara and a member of the Malankara Orthodox Church. His service to the Kerala Community was highly appreciable and worth. His talks and writings have raised general awareness on mental health and also prompted and helped people in addressing many issues and problems in families. May his soul rest in peace. Our sincere prayers for him.

Liturgical Text for this Sunday

We will be using the Taksa of Mar Julius. It has elaborate prayers for God's mercy and Grace. Please listen to it.



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Please find the Link of Live Streaming

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCDT7tcyQw1yZ1_yCG9AWStA

Covid Guidelines

As the cases are rising in high pace worldwide, we too need to take precautions. We have been practicing social distancing and other protocol in the church, it would be our responsibility to take all safety measures possible to rule out any further spread. Please look for guidelines sending out from the parish office tomorrow. Please make sure, we read it carefully and respond accordingly.

Holding you in prayer

May the Gracious Lord keep us safe and heal the whole world

Yours in Christ

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