



WEEKLY THOUGHTS - DECEMBER 03, 2021

Dearly beloved,

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

Sunday, December 05, Birth of John the Baptist

Epistle Readings: 1 John 3:1-3, Ephesians 6:1-4, Colossians 3:20-21

Holy Evangelion: St Luke 1:57-80

57 Now the time came for Elizabeth to be delivered, and she gave birth to a son. 58 And her neighbours and kinsfolk heard that the Lord had shown great mercy to her, and they rejoiced with her. 59 And on the eighth day they came to circumcise the child; and they would have named him Zechariah after his father, 60 but his mother said, "Not so; he shall be called John." 61 And they said to her, "None of your kindred is called by this name." 62 And they made signs to his father, inquiring what he would have him called. 63 And he asked for a writing tablet, and wrote, "His name is John." And they all marvelled. 64 And immediately his mouth was opened and his tongue loosed, and he spoke, blessing God. 65 And fear came on all their neighbours. And all these things were talked about through all the hill country of Judea; 66 and all who heard them laid them up in their hearts, saying, "What then will this child be?" For the hand of the Lord was with him.

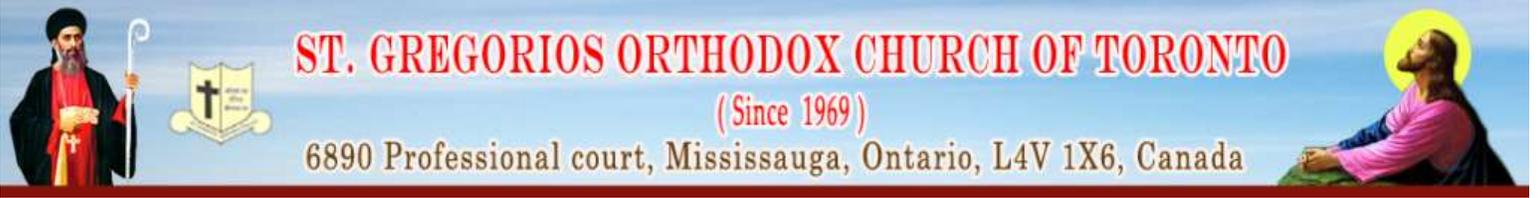
67 And his father Zechariah was filled with the Holy Spirit, and prophesied, saying,

68 "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for he has visited and redeemed his people, 69 and has raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David, 70 as he spoke by the mouth of his holy prophets from of old, 71 that we should be saved from our enemies, and from the hand of all who hate us; 72 to perform the mercy promised to our fathers, and to remember his holy covenant, 73 the oath which he swore to our father Abraham, 74 to grant us that we, being delivered from the hand of our enemies, might serve him without fear, 75 in holiness and righteousness before him all the days of our life. 76 And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Most High; for you will go before the Lord to prepare his ways, 77 to give knowledge of salvation to his people

in the forgiveness of their sins, 78 through the tender mercy of our God, when the day shall dawn upon us from on high 79 to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace." 80 And the child grew and became strong in spirit, and he was in the wilderness till the day of his manifestation to Israel.

Reflections:

Zachariah, being a priest, expected to speak on behalf of God. When he was put into a situation, unfortunately he couldn't see God's miraculous hands working in their life. His reasoning prevented him from realising God's possibilities. When God makes impossible things possible in life, can humans speak on behalf of God? When God wants His people to believe and reveal His salvation, Can humans dare to accept and disclose to the world? We believe children are gifts from God. How many times our attitudes and laziness made our parents go silent? We have prayed for children, and when we have them, how many occasions have we suspected God's genuine care and provisions for us? How many times have we failed in witnessing God's salvation by looking down on ourselves? We are God's precious children. He has something great to do with us. Can we recognise that God is truly with us!



Feasts:

November 29, Mar Jacob of Serugh

Mar Jacob of Serugh was a 5th century Syrian Christian monk who contributed to theological literary resources through his enormous writings of homilies in verse and many letters. He is considered second in rank after Ephrem the Syrian regarding theological literary contributions.

November 30, St Andrew the Apostle

Apostle Andrew was the brother of Simon Peter, among the first called, a Galilean, met his end witnessing his Lord and Master Jesus Christ, suffering the same way on the cross.

December 03, HG Thoma Mar Dionysius Metropolitan, 48th anniversary, entombed at Mt Tabor Dayara Pathanapuram

HG Thoma Mar Dionysius Metropolitan was an Oxford Alumni with Dr S Radhakrishnan, founded the Mount Tabor Monastery of Resurrection at Pathanapuram, initiated educational institutions and was a great leader in various capacities.

December 04, St Barbara, St Juliana & St John the Solitary

Barbara was a Christian convert and Juliana was her bystander who followed her faith. A hymn reveals their life of strong conviction, "Meeting the glorious end of your martyrdom under the sword, O Barbara, and vouchsafed crowns of martyrdoms with Juliana, you heard the voice of God, which filled you with power."

They are depicted in icons, carrying a palm branch as a symbol of their entry into Heavenly Jerusalem. Barbara is adorned by a crown of martyrdom and a peacock that sheds its feathers periodically is also present symbolizing eternity.

Christmas Carol and Area Prayer Groups

Sincere thanks to families and members of St Paul's Prayer Group for joining the carol. Thanks to members in the area for contributing towards refreshment.

Please find the prayer groups for coming Sundays for which the carolling will be dedicated.

b) Sunday, Dec 05- St Mary's Prayer Group

c) Sunday, Dec 12- St George's Prayer Group

d) Saturday, Dec 18- Christmas Celebration jointly by Organizations – SS, MMVS, Gregorian Seniors Forum, OCYM, MGOCSM, Acolytes, Parish Choir. Please look for the date and time and please arrange to be at church in-person to perform, or to watch on-line and to support. We need all families to take part. It will be a parish program involving all our members.

GBM 2021 on Sunday November 21, 2021. Congrats to the newly elected Office Bearers

Hearty congrats and prayerful wishes to the New Managing Committee elected for the year 2022. We sincerely express our gratitude to our Diocesan Metropolitan HG Zachariah Mar Nicholovos for graciously blessing us with the Kalpana of approval.

Treasurer: Thomas Joshua, Secretary: Gijo Peter

MC Members: George M George, John Mathen, Omana John, Sony Pappachan, Thomas Abraham and Varghese Daniel

Auditors: Binu Joshua and Dennis Jacob John

We do sincerely thank MC Members 2020-21 Secretary Manu Abraham, Committee Members: Shibu Cherian, Alex P Chandy, Jeebo Mathews, Lejin Chacko, and Auditors: Varghese Daniel and Binu Koshy for their dedicated service. Sincere thanks to all our members for their prayerful participation and support.



Deepest Condolences

Mrs Kamalam, beloved mother of Surangani (Dir Ref: S 20)

Mrs Kamalam was residing with her eldest daughter Subashini and family in Nagercoil. She was ill for a time and Surangani managed to reach home a few days prior to her passing away. The funeral service was conducted on Monday November 29th. May the lord comfort her soul and strengthen the family members and friends in their grief.

Mariam Susan Mathew, 18yrs

She lost her life in an unforeseen and unfortunate incident that happened in Alabama, USA on Monday November 29, 2021. Her parents Boban Mathew and Bincy, her siblings Bimal and Basil have been residing in Oman and active members of St Gregorios Orthodox Parish Muscat. This news has shocked everyone. The family needs our prayer at this time of great loss and trauma. We do believe that God is compassionate and tender to receive her soul into His heavenly court and she will eternally rejoice in the company of angels and saints.

Greetings of Hanukkah! (November 28 - December 06)

Let us greet our Jewish brothers and sisters on the festival of Hanukkah. It is the festival of lights as mentioned in the book of Maccabees 1 & 2. The temple of God was attacked by invaders many times in history. Whenever it was attacked, people suffered humiliation. After every attack, they tried to rebuild too. Because their life was too temple centred, whatever happened in or with the temple, they did connect it to their life, which either made them repenting or led them to overjoy. The Maccabean declaration of cleansing and rededication of the temple was the expression of their gratitude and joy towards God for empowering them against their enemies and equipping them to rebuild. Attitudes and approaches can either make or mar a spiritual place or a community. As faithful, we are accountable and responsible to God for the way we keep the temple and the community.

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.

Choir & Acolytes joint practice- Saturdays 05:00-07:00 pm

This is a reminder to all our choir members and Acolytes to attend the weekly choir practice currently conducted virtually on Saturdays 05:00 – 07:00 pm. We would wish our choir members and acolytes who will be taking turns on the upcoming Sunday or feast days to join the practice session for better coordination and harmonious chanting. The link shall be sent before the meeting.

Meetings ahead, In-Person & Virtual

December 04, Saturday, SGOCT Choir & Acolytes weekly practice – 05:00 – 07:00 pm In-person & virtual

December 04, Saturday, Evening Prayer at Church, 07:00 – 07:45 pm

December 05, Sunday, Area Carol – St Mary's Prayer Group

December 05, Sunday, SGOCT Choir monthly meeting after the Holy Liturgy & Refreshment.

Liturgical Text for this Sunday

This Sunday, we will be using the Taksa of Mar Ksothos.



ST. GREGORIOS ORTHODOX CHURCH OF TORONTO

(Since 1969)

6890 Professional court, Mississauga, Ontario, L4V 1X6, Canada



Link to Sunday Holy Liturgy

Please see below the Link for Live Streaming

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

fr.thomaspjohn@gmail.com

Mobile: (416) 570 5610