



WEEKLY THOUGHTS - JULY 03, 2020

Dearly Beloved,

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

Sunday 05th July, Fifth Sunday after Pentecost Gospel Reading, St Luke 9:10-17 RSV

10 On their return the apostles told him what they had done. And he took them and withdrew apart to a city called Beth-Saida. 11 When the crowds learned it, they followed him; and he welcomed them and spoke to them of the kingdom of God, and cured those who had need of healing. 12 Now the day began to wear away; and the twelve came and said to him, "Send the crowd away, to go into the villages and country round about, to lodge and get provisions; for we are here in a lonely place." 13 But he said to them, "You give them something to eat." They said, "We have no more than five loaves and two fish--unless we are to go and buy food for all these people." 14 For there were about five thousand men. And he said to his disciples, "Make them sit down in companies, about fifty each." 15 And they did so, and made them all sit down. 16 And taking the five loaves and the two fish he looked up to heaven, and blessed and broke them, and gave them to the disciples to set before the crowd. 17 And all ate and were satisfied. And they took up what was left over, twelve baskets of broken pieces.

Reflections:

Apostles were always accountable to their Master. Whenever the Lord sent them out on mission, on finishing, they came back and reported everything they had done and experienced. For banking or any services we use, we create our account with user id, secure with a passcode and access it for updating and refreshing. Regarding our faith and duty towards God, it would be nice to ask ourselves; how would we keep the accountability? Which account do we have with Him and with which user id and passcode? What appraisal can we expect? How we update Him on our work?

Gospel is the message of the Kingdom which conveys about kingdom life which is of higher quality and higher goal. Worldly life can keep only goals up to what it could conceive while Kingdom of God has goals which are not limited into a narrow frame. Human capacity can take us to space and assist us to land on moon, but when it fails to think beyond, it is too limited in itself.

Christ always looks for the needy and prefers to provide for their survival. Preaching is not only voicing out but also putting into action of what is preached. If we tell someone, 'believe in God and He would take care of everything' and taking no effort in God's scheme for giving assistance, that cannot be considered Gospel but only as escape from realities.

The task Christ gives would be hard. Providing food for multitudes without having anything in stock could be a thought beyond possibility. But Christ keeps a door open for getting it done. A shallow looking unto situations can only keep us discouraged from attempting. We need to develop lateral thinking and also need to look into possibilities yet to be revealed. We are familiar with reading between the lines. We would also need to think between realities, situations, and experiences of the



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past with a serious search for God's possibilities. Humans tend to say, we can't or we haven't at situations of needs. Though, Christ would ask us to try and look for options or alternatives. Human logic should never end up in front of closed doors. Faith should make us push forward. He has advised us to keep on searching, knocking and asking. All human success stories will have 'behind the curtain' tireless attempts. Have we ever tried this in attempts for establishing the Kingdom of God in our day to day life? Through Holy Baptism, we have also received the same authority of discipleship. When He breathed on His disciples, it was not a one-time act. It was His assurance to all who wish to take up His cross and to follow Him. Whatever He had done and said will have future implications. Discipleship is like a facility or a service portal we need to activate. Once it is activated, everything pertaining to it shall be availed.

St Thomas Day, 3rd July

St Thomas Day which falls on July 3rd is not the day of martyrdom of the Apostle. This day is there in connection with the Holy Relics of the Saint and also by the influence of Catholic Church (It is assumed that they had chosen July 3rd for St Thomas commemoration conveniently to move it from the feast of Nativity in December). There have been discussions and disputes over whether to celebrate or observe this day as we have his martyrdom celebrated on 18-21st December. Whatever be the reason behind, the Indian Christianity owes its patronage to St Thomas. It was Christ's command to go to the flock of Israel. There were already Jewish settlers in various parts of India. There was a live trade route between Persia and India. Apostle Thomas travelled to India and reached the Malabar coast in AD 52. With his coming, India had Church got established in the first century itself whereas Gospel reached England on a later stage. Malankara Church is as ancient as the Church of Rome, Alexandria and Persia. When the Portugese (1498), English (1600), Dutch (1602) and French (1664) traders came to India, they all got surprised to see an ancient Christianity already prevalent there. Since then, the Malankara Christians had to undergo hardships of foreign invasion, suppression and exploitation. The St Thomas Christians, like their Apostle, suffered under external forces but survived through years by the strong faith and tradition. Malankara church had to face feuds, splits, divisions, court cases and cultural threats. In 1599, Archbishop of Goa, Alexio de Menezes had convened a Synod at Diamper (Udayamperoor) and cunningly tried to bring the Malankara church under Roman Papacy to which church responded through the historical freedom declaration by taking the Koonan Cross Oath. This event gave way to the Church of Antioch to enter the scene and started claiming authority and ownership of Malankara Church and its properties. This has opened the age old court cases with the Jacobite faction. In 2017, on 3rd July, the Supreme Court of India, through a clear and remarkable verdict, ruled out any possibility of external claims on Malankara Church by any other denominations or factions.

Now the Malankara Church has her children in almost all parts of the world with parishes and congregations well established. They all contribute to the progress of the whole world and towards the Indian Church in particular. It is surprising to realise that the Malayalee community which claims the tradition of ancient Christianity has been ministering the Gospel here in Canada since 1950's onwards. See how God has been using us for His glory! We all say earth is round. See how the faith in Christ travelled through history from Persia to India and from there to various parts of the world!

Let us be proud of our tradition and heritage, let us continue the ministry of the Lord in preparing the world for God's salvation. May the remembrance of St Thomas illumine our hearts and souls!

Canada Day, 1st July

Canada has celebrated its 153rd Canada Day on Wednesday. This time, ever after it's establishing as a Confederation, the country had to celebrate the Day virtually. If not, there would have public demonstrations everywhere. The National Anthem 'O Canada' celebrates its 40th anniversary too. Canada accepted it's Constitution in 1982 which assures human dignity, citizen rights and freedom. Please find three clauses in the Constitution which reflect how this country has taken care of its people's welfare.

2. Everyone has the following fundamental freedoms: (a) freedom of conscience and religion; (b) freedom of thought, belief, opinion and expression, including freedom of the press and other media of communication; (c) freedom of peaceful assembly; and (d) freedom of association.

15. (1) Every individual is equal before and under the law and has the right to the equal protection and equal benefit of the law without discrimination and, in particular, without discrimination based on race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, sex, age or mental or physical disability.

20. (1) Any member of the public in Canada has the right to communicate with, and to receive available services from, any head or central office of an institution of the Parliament or government of Canada in English or French, and has the same right with respect to any other office of any such institution where (a) there is a significant demand for communications with and services from that office in such language; or (b) due to the nature of the office, it is reasonable that communications with and services from that office be available in both English and French.

Salute Canada! God bless this beautiful country and people!

Sad Parting:

With profound sadness, may it be informed that Mr Thomas Mathew, affectionately called Thomaskutty, senior member of St Thomas Orthodox Church Toronto has entered into eternal rest on Sunday, June 28, 2020. He was born in Kollam, Kerala, and moved to the United Arab Emirates where he served as an Electrical Engineer for 20 years prior to moving to Toronto, Canada in 2001 where he spent the remainder of his life. He is survived by his wife Mary, son Reuben, daughter Mariam (Rebecca), son-in-law, Alan and siblings Omana, Jolly, Daisy and George with their families. Visitation will be held on Friday, June 3rd at R.S Kane Funeral Home, (6150 Yonge Street, North York, ON, M2M 3W9) between 4:00 - 7:00pm. A private funeral will be held by the family on Saturday, July 4th, 2020 at 10:00am at R.S Kane Funeral Home.

Please keep the departed soul and family members in prayer. On behalf of our parish, I convey our prayers and spiritual support to them. May the Lord comfort everyone.

Peace Garden

We have started working on the design and layout of the Peace Garden. If the plan goes well, we will have a beautiful garden within the church premises. Whoever wishes to contribute towards this



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project, please contact the parish secretary Mr Manu on Mobile: (416) 953 9686, project Coordinator Mr G George on Mobile: (416) 738 7765 and discuss.

Parish Directory

May it be reminded again, please send the Directory update form ASAP. Even if nothing to be updated, please send the form back.

Virtual Meetings scheduled for this weekend:

Saturday 04 July, 04:00 pm, Sunday School's 'End of Year Goodbye Virtual Meet'.

Saturday 04 July, 07:00 – 08:30 pm, SGOCT Prayer Meeting.

Sunday 05 July, 05:00 pm, OCYM Meeting.

Liturgical Text for this Sunday:

We will use the Liturgical Text of Ksosthos for this Sunday. It is the shortest text available. Next two short texts are of Mkanastha (Liturgy of Holy Fathers) and of Dionysius Bar Sleebi. Liturgy of John Crysotom is also short. Please attend to the prayers.

Please wear Mask, please refrain from congregational singing and chanting:

Adhering to the Govt guidelines and for assuring health and safety, it is strongly recommended to wear mask within the church and refrain from singing and chanting till we get a clearance from possibility of infection.

Holding you all in prayer

Yours in Christ

Thomas John Achen

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