



WEEKLY THOUGHTS - MARCH 05, 2021

Dearly Beloved,

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

March 07, 'Cnanaitho', Sunday of the Canaanite Woman

Epistle Readings: Acts 4:1-12, Romans 7:14-25

Gospel Reading, St Matthew 5:21-31 RSV

21 And Jesus went away from there and withdrew to the district of Tyre and Sidon. 22 And behold, a Canaanite woman from that region came out and cried, "Have mercy on me, O Lord, Son of David; my daughter is severely possessed by a demon." 23 But he did not answer her a word. And his disciples came and begged him, saying, "Send her away, for she is crying after us." 24 He answered, "I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." 25 But she came and knelt before him, saying, "Lord, help me." 26 And he answered, "It is not fair to take the children's bread and throw it to the dogs." 27 She said, "Yes, Lord, yet even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their masters' table." 28 Then Jesus answered her, "O woman, great is your faith! Be it done for you as you desire." And her daughter was healed instantly. 29 And Jesus went on from there and passed along the Sea of Galilee. And he went up on the mountain, and sat down there. 30 And great crowds came to him, bringing with them the lame, the maimed, the blind, the dumb, and many others, and they put them at his feet, and he healed them, 31 so that the throng wondered, when they saw the dumb speaking, the maimed whole, the lame walking, and the blind seeing; and they glorified the God of Israel.

Reflections:

This Gospel text has been noted more for its seemingly offensive comments by Jesus which one would never anticipate from a loving and compassionate person like him. In response to the cry for help from the Canaanite woman, Jesus opened a conversation in between them. The Semitic practice of dialogical teaching (rhetoric) had its efficacy in communicating ideas. By asking questions, either an individual or a group could reach the truth. We are familiar with questionnaires and legal interrogations for taking correct datum and proving legal cases. We could see people coming to Jesus with asking questions: Nicodemus, the rich young man, Samaritan woman and so on... in a free society it is expected of freedom to ask/raise questions. When we were kids, if we asked questions, elders tend to discourage it by saying it is "stupidity" or "don't act too smart"! 'Prasna Upanishad', the ancient Indian Vedic scripture has the very title pointing to the importance of asking questions, Prasna means question.

For growing in faith, one should keep on asking questions to themselves and to the world around them. How we train ourselves and our children in voicing out doubts will decide who we become. We tend to be scared of asking questions. We may feel offended at times. For the Canaanite woman, she didn't give up after getting confronted by Jesus, rather she was clearer on asking further. The final comment by Jesus proves the session was successful. The woman proved herself and achieved her goal. Can we take courage to ask questions to ourselves truthfully and honestly? That will be the beginning of true success.

Feasts

March 01 - Mar Anthreyos Bava, entombed at St Mary's Orthodox Church Kallada.

March 02 - Konattu Abraham Malpan, 34th anniversary, entombed at Pampakuda Church



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Virtual Meetings

Friday, March 05, NEAD MMVS Retreat, 12:00 – 01:00 pm

Saturday, March 06, SGOCT Prayer Meeting, 07:00 – 08:30 pm

Great Lent – Evening Prayer, Lenten Devotional Talk Series

1. We are glad conducting the Lenten Evening prayer at church. We have a commendable participation from our members. We do highly appreciate the way our Altar Servers, Choir members, Technical Support team and Devotional speakers assist, support and complement to our community's spiritual journey.
2. The Lenten Devotional Talk Series is acquiring momentum and every talk offers a lifting up to our souls. We sincerely thank Soney M John, Tricia Vaidhyan, Kevin Vincent, Liza Thomas, Emil Mathew and Varghese Panicker for their spiritually enlightening talks. We pray that this initiative will bring in more fellowship and spiritual bliss to our community. For the future speakers, we request you to follow the guidelines. If you wish to attend the evening prayer at church, please contact the Vicar or the parish office. Please remember that the talks will be live-streamed.
3. On Saturdays, except during the Holy Week, our evening prayer will continue as usual through Webex.
4. As we are observing our fast, the money saved from the food expenses shall be collected and used for charity. We request our members to take this opportunity to help the needy and change their lives in whatever way we can. We will have a charity fund-raising towards the end of the Great Lent and the proceeds would be donated to a local charity.
5. Details of Great Lent / Passion Week services will be announced later.

Mid Lent (Paathinompu), Holy Liturgy on Tuesday March 09 at 06:00 pm

We, as a pilgrim community, have started the Lenten journey with prayer and fasting and we are approaching the middle part of it with completion of twenty five days. The Holy Liturgy of Mid Lent shall be conducted on Tuesday March 09th with evening prayer starting at 06:00 pm. Golgotha (Cross Station) shall be installed at the centre (Aisle) and the service includes celebration and installation of the Cross. Please assure your virtual participation. The Service shall be made accessible online through the parish live stream link.

NEAD Canada Region Lenten Retreat- Saturday March 13, 10:00am – 12:30pm

We are glad to announce the Regional Lenten Retreat scheduled to be on Saturday March 13, 2021 starting at 10:00 am to finish by 12:30 pm. Though we had planned for regional programs in the past years, due to the pandemic, we had to cancel the Family Conference and other meetings. We have been blessed by alternatives during the prolonged lockdown which helps in solving the issues of isolation and loneliness. A few occasions have been there at which various parishes in Canada could come together as an extended family of Christ. NEAD MMVS and Canada Region MMVS retreats and prayer meetings are two of the good examples. They were of specific organisational character. Now we are hoping to coordinate local parishes and congregations to feel the sense of oneness and unity in serving the Lord and witnessing Him in a wider world. For the upcoming Lenten Retreat, Rev Fr Abraham Thomas, Professor at Orthodox Theological Seminary Kottayam will be delivering the Divine message. Achen is a proven speaker and well acclaimed for his motivational talks. He is skilled at switching in both Malayalam and English. This retreat is meant for all members from our



parishes. We request our beloved members to assure participation. The link shall be sent soon. Please find the flyer

here: <https://mcusercontent.com/4b0245a10b23c3826466d9a97/images/f3aa3258-3ca7-4521-a75b-b9197f5d9025.jpg>

Mr M. G. George Muthoot, former Lay Trustee of the Indian Orthodox Church and Chairman of Muthoot Group passed away

Mr M. G. George Muthoot, Chairman of Muthoot Group of Companies passed away in Delhi today. The Muthoot Group was founded by his grandfather Mr. Ninan Mathai in 1887. The group is a business conglomerate comprising 20 diversified divisions with presence in India and overseas. Muthoot Finance, the Group's flagship company, is the largest gold financing company in India. Mr George became the Managing Director of the Muthoot Group in 1979 and its Chairman in 1993. Mr. George has been the guiding spirit in its transformation as a professionally run leading company with geographic presence across the country. Muthoot Finance flourished under his leadership with over 5,000 branches.

Born on November 2, 1949 in Kozhencherry, Pathanamthitta, Mr. George was one of Malayalees who made it to the Forbes Magazine's Rich List. Forbes Asia Magazine listed him as the 50th richest man in India in 2011 and his ranking climbed to 44th richest in India in 2019.

He was a Trustee of the Indian Orthodox Church in Kerala. He was also a member of the National Executive Committee of the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI).

Online streaming link for funeral service of Mr Abraham (Bose) Joseph

The viewing and prayer service for Mr Abraham (Bose) Joseph will be held on Sunday March 7, 2021. Due to the current Covid protocols, this will be a private event for in person visitation; however, it will be streamed online via ZOOM from 8:00 pm- 9:00pm (EST).

Please find below the online streaming link for the prayer service on Sunday March 7, 2021.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/8488076703?pwd=ZWxKUVDpUnh2VHJUaG4yVDQwUVpyZz09>

Meeting ID: 848 807 6703

Password: 1234

The family is very grateful for all the love and support and has requested that instead of flowers that the money go towards charity for mental health. The following link will take you to the obituary page for Demarco Funeral Home. You can scroll to the bottom to make donations if you wish.

[Abraham Joseph Obituary - Toronto, ON | DeMarco Funeral Home \(Keele Chapel\) Inc. \(demarcofuneralhomes.com\)](http://demarcofuneralhomes.com)

Please uphold his wife Meena and children Merina and Merlin in your prayers. May the God Almighty console the departed soul and comfort the family and friends during this time of bereavement.

Cheppad Church will be a Heritage Site

Cheppad St George Orthodox Church, one of the oldest temple structures in South India, will be a heritage site forever. The church has ancient mural paintings on the Sanctuary walls. There was an outcry to realign the National Highway expansion project which had the plan to measure out the structure and to acquire the land. There have been protests, public appeals, and submission of memorandums which led to this prestigious status for the church. Let us be proud of this achievement. When we visit India next time, please schedule a visit to the church if you have never visited.



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Support our Parish

It is important that all our members start to support our parish further, by making a monthly payment of \$100. We request our beloved members to set up a direct debit with the bank to parish account. We also require a good credit score for our bank account. We had collected about \$60,000/- from offertory in 2019 whereas we could collect only below \$25,000/- in 2020. This is a very significant difference, could we cover it without a new income provision? I request you to think about this seriously and respond at the earliest should you have any concerns.

‘Share Your Blessings’- A charity initiative of Gregorian Forum

Gregorian Seniors Forum is initiating a charity drive ‘Share Your Blessings’. God has blessed us abundantly. The Bible constantly teaches us to share what we have with those who are less fortunate than us. Also, sharing gives us an elevated sense of responsibility towards our society. Share what you have to show how much you care and remember when you care for others the Almighty Lord cares for you more. The fund collected shall be donated towards Mental Health Wellness in Peel Region. Our share can be transferred to treasurer@sgoctoronto.org.

*"Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God."
Hebrews 13:16.*

Articles required for the church

Most of the articles required for the church have arrived. We are waiting for the last item on the list to be delivered. Items received and list of donors will be announced soon. We sincerely thank all the contributors.

Names of the beloved departed members, a gentle reminder

We have started receiving emails from members with details of their beloved departed ones and have started adding them to our list. Please continue to let us know and we would like to keep this list going forward for remembrance prayers on the respective Sundays just like we do for Birthdays and Wedding Anniversaries.

Liturgical Text for this Sunday

We will be using the English Taksa of St Julius. It is more extensive compared to the rest. The beautiful prayers have the power to elevate our souls.

Please find the Link for Live Streaming

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

COVID-19 Guidelines

The government has announced a Provincial state of emergency effective from 14th January. Community and Worship centers can only go ahead with a maximum of 10-member participation. We hope that the current restrictions would help in bringing down the spread of infection to zero. Many of our members who are working with the Department of Health have received the vaccine, which gives us great relief. Let us continue praying for the world and that God shall protect each one of his children in his mighty hands.

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



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Yours in Christ,
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