



## WEEKLY THOUGHTS - MARCH 11, 2022

Dearly beloved,

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

**Sunday, March 13 Sunday, Msariyo (Healing of the Paralysed)**

**Epistle Readings: Acts 5:12-16, 19:8-12, Romans 5:1-11, 2 Corinthians 12:7-10**

**Holy Evangelion: St Mark 2:1-12**

2 And when he returned to Caper'na-um after some days, it was reported that he was at home. 2 And many were gathered together, so that there was no longer room for them, not even about the door; and he was preaching the word to them. 3 And they came, bringing to him a paralytic carried by four men. 4 And when they could not get near him because of the crowd, they removed the roof above him; and when they had made an opening, they let down the pallet on which the paralytic lay. 5 And when Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, "My son, your sins are forgiven." 6 Now some of the scribes were sitting there, questioning in their hearts, 7 "Why does this man speak thus? It is blasphemy! Who can forgive sins but God alone?" 8 And immediately Jesus, perceiving in his spirit that they thus questioned within themselves, said to them, "Why do you question thus in your hearts? 9 Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Rise, take up your pallet and walk'? 10 But that you may know that the Son of man has authority on earth to forgive sins"—he said to the paralytic— 11 "I say to you, rise, take up your pallet and go home." 12 And he rose, and immediately took up the pallet and went out before them all; so that they were all amazed and glorified God, saying, "We never saw anything like this!"

### Reflections:

It is quite amazing to know that forgiveness can enable us to walk free, either by forgiving or by being forgiven. Jesus as the Son of God teaches the best healing tool to us, seeking or giving pardon. Unforgiving behavior can give way to wars, bloodshed and destruction. Forgiving is an act of salvation. It is more effective than any other philanthropic services. We forgive not only for what we have suffered but also to see it as a vicarious act. Jesus carried the sins of others and pardoned everyone. Many of us work in the healing ministry (medical care). If we could forgive those we worked on for any offences they might have committed in life, it can accelerate the healing, theologically and spiritually. We can serve as vicars (act on behalf of somebody else). The sacrament of healing (anointing of oil) has confession included prior to anointing. The officiator may not be the one who suffered anything from that person but acting on behalf of both the Lord and the people around to give absolution. Christ the Healer calls us to heal by being compassionate!

### Feasts:

**March 09, 40 Martyrs of Sebestia**

They were members of the 4<sup>th</sup> century (307-323 AD) Turkish Army who formed a single group in the



fellowship of Christ. The Roman Empire wanted to eliminate Christians and identified this group as believers of Christ. They had to undergo systematic persecution which threw them to the freezing water of Sebaste. They survived the cold and then were guided to severe torture to die in prison. As they were getting ready for martyrdom, they shared the following conviction: "God so ordained that we made friends with each other in this temporary life; let us try not to separate even in eternity; just as we have been found pleasing to a mortal king, so let us strive to be worthy of the favour of the immortal King, Christ our God." Let their memory be glorified!

### **March 09, HG Geevarghese Mar Coorilos Metropolitan Ambattu, 131<sup>st</sup> anniversary, entombed at Angamaly Cheriyaapalli**

HG Ambattu Mar Coorilos was responsible for the initial growth and development of Angamaly Diocese. He was generous enough to share his ancestral properties for the development of the undeveloped churches. His leadership helped the church stand firm against the challenges of Protestantism.

### **Condolence**

### **Rev Fr George Joseph Kallapurackal, 85 yrs. Funeral service on Saturday at Karthikappally St. Thomas Cathedral**

We offer prayers for Rev George Joseph Achen, senior priest of Mavelikara Diocese, late lamented HG Dr Philipose Mar Theophilos Metropolitan's brother's son. Achen had served outside Kerala Dioceses. May the Lord comfort his soul.

### **International Women's Day – March 08**

The Government of Canada's theme for International Women's Day (IWD) 2022 is *Women Inspiring Women*. It celebrates all the women and girls who inspire us by demonstrating leadership in the choices they make in their day-to-day lives to contribute to the social, economic, cultural, and political spheres. In Canada, unlike in many other countries, women are free to study and be leaders in the field they choose, care and provide for their family, express who they are, and fight for their beliefs.

Women play various roles in the lives of everyone. They carry out various responsibilities as mother/grandmother, sister, wife/partner, friend, artist, leader - political/cultural/spiritual, teacher/mentor, scientist, activist and many more. Though they play pivotal roles in the society, not everywhere they are equally accepted, respected and rewarded. They can go underpaid, restricted, ill-treated, exploited and attacked. There are many movements and organisations working daringly to bring awareness and to raise voice for women rights. Women's Day is celebrated for them too to acknowledge their efforts to assure equality and rights of women.

Let us teach our children how to respect women and how to care for them. Even today, domestic violence and abuses are underreported. Many violations happen at home. In God, we all are one and equal. O women, you are 'Eve', the source and womb of all! You have dignity and quality. We assure you what you are entitled to have. Glorious Women's Day!



## **Mar 13, 2022 - Daylight Saving Time Starts**

When local standard time is about to reach Sunday, March 13, 2022, **2:00:00 am** clocks are turned **forward** 1 hour to **3:00:00 am** local daylight time instead.

We will have one hour less to enjoy sleep. Not to worry, we will manage next day onwards!

## **Sunday Service Timing Change, Morning Prayer at 08:30 am from Sunday March 20, 2022.**

### **Sunday School will be going in-person**

Please note that the Sunday Morning Prayer will start at 08:30 am from March 20 onwards. This is to help the Sunday School to be conducted at church in-person after the Holy Liturgy. We have more morning light now. The new timing will help us to start the Sunday School at 12:00 to finish by 01:00. We request everyone's cooperation.

Sunday School: Please send snack box on all Sundays to avoid any allergic hazards

## **RSVP to Cease**

We are stopping RSVP for Sunday participation. Please don't look for RSVP mail from the parish office from Sunday March 20, 2022 onwards. There will not be data collection at the entrance too. Members can come to church on all Sundays without taking pain to inform the parish office. Let us feel free!

## **Mid Lent and the Feast of Annunciation March 23<sup>rd</sup> and March 25<sup>th</sup>**

Please note the dates Holy Liturgy of Mid Lent and Feast of Annunciation:

Mid Lent Service - Tuesday March 22, 2022, starting with evening prayer at 06:30 pm followed by Holy Liturgy and Mid Lent service. Golgotha and the Holy Cross shall be installed in the Aisle.

Feast of Annunciation - Thursday March 24<sup>th</sup>, Evening Prayer at 06:30 followed by Holy Qurbana.

## **Great Lent, Evening Prayer, Devotional Talks**

We have progressed one week in the Great Lent. The passing week has given us a chance to evaluate how far we could sustain it. If we haven't started yet, let us begin now, no matter if a week is gone, we still have 6 weeks. If you have found a way to fast according to your capacity to endure, please continue. If you can't adjust properly, keep trying. We can do it. If it is a challenge, then take that challenge. You should set a goal for Lent. We will achieve it, say to ourselves every morning.

Noon Prayer at 12:00 – 12:30. The link has already been sent. Please join if possible. 40 kneeling down is an experience. Let us taste it.

The devotional talks at church every evening after Lenten prayer is going well. Imagine a 50 days convention organized by a parish in Kerala, the gatherings every evening, colour lighting, public sound system, various convention preachers of fame delivering talks each day, and many associated programs. Without any of these external colours, we are doing it. Our willing spirits are the colour we can have here. Let us come together in gratitude for God's divine providence. Lent is a call to action to reflect God and to open the windows to heaven. Fasting and prayer can do wonders in our life. Why can't we try?

Please join the evening prayer at 07:00 pm followed by a devotional talk. If possible, come to church.



Together we will celebrate the season of abundant grace!

### **Holy Confession every evening**

Lent is a time for deep cleansing of hearts. Let us take this opportunity to do Holy Confession. It gives way to a new start with new insights and goals. We can find time either before evening prayer or after the devotional talk. Please feel free to call on (416) 570 5610 to fix the time.

### **Parish GBM on Sunday, March 27**

Our Parish General Body meeting will be held on Sunday March 27th, 2022 after the Holy Liturgy. Details shall be announced on Sunday. Please keep the date in your calendar.

### **SGOCT Parish Library and Book Club**

SGOCT parish OCYM has planned to launch a Parish Library & Book Club project with the support of other organizations and our members. We will be starting the project by tracking current stock and receiving books from donors. Reference books and other required books shall be purchased in due course. There will be a google sheet open soon with a list of required books. Whoever finds it convenient can choose which books they could donate. If we don't have copies in hand, we can buy and give them.

We request our members who are fond of reading to support in setting up a useful library. We request our members who may be interested in donating books to look for the right books to donate, instead of using them to get rid of any books. Please feel free to contact the vicar at (416) 570 5610 for any clarifications or for expressing your willingness to support. We do believe that the library shall motivate our kids and youngsters to get equipped for their future through intense and voracious reading and it also helps our senior generation to get engaged in fruitful sharing time through the book club.

### **Parish Journal**

We used to have a parish Newsletter which was discontinued during the pandemic. OCYM will be initiating a parish journal expected to be published on the day of Easter. We wish our members to contribute articles, poems, cartoons, stories, or studies on the theme for each issue. The Easter issue will be based on 'Hope Resurrection and Victory'. Organizations will be coordinating the work. Please look for details. You can reach out to organization secretaries to discuss in what way you can be part of it.

### **Journal - Name it!**

We are inviting name suggestions for the journal. You can send the name to OCYM. The last date will be March 25. The name will continue for future issues too.

### **Journal - Draw Icon**

We are looking for Resurrection Icons drawn by Sunday School students to use on the Journal Cover. Students can send the icons on or before March 25th. The icon should be an orthodox presentation. It can be copied or newly drawn.



## **Spiritual Organisations and WhatsApp Groups**

All the spiritual organizations of our parish have created WhatsApp groups for regular communications and updates. We request all our members to join corresponding groups. If you are not already in, please reach out to organizational secretaries.

Gregorian Seniors Forum, G George: (416) 738 7765

MMVS, Beena Mathew: (647) 835 1521

OCYM, Suna Cherian: (647) 818 9376

Choir, Anand Joseph: (416) 276 5021

Acolytes, Cleemis Vaidhyan: (647) 308 2135, Anish Mathew: (647) 818 6125

MGOCSM, Emil Mathew: (647) 877 9272, Sandra Shaji: (647) 551 6563

Sunday School, Santhosh Varughese: (416) 258 2062

## **MGOCSM Alumni**

Our parish MGOCSM would like to reach all members who had any association with MGOCSM in India or elsewhere. Please inform whoever worked with MGOCSM. You can either send an email to [mgoesm.sgoc@gmail.com](mailto:mgoesm.sgoc@gmail.com) copying to the vicar at [fr.thomaspjohn@gmail.com](mailto:fr.thomaspjohn@gmail.com) or send a message/call to (416) 570 5610.

## **MGOCSM Toronto Lenten Retreat: March 12 Saturday at SGOCT**

MGOCSM Toronto will be hosting their annual Lenten Retreat as an in-person event on Saturday, March 12th at 9 AM, at St. Gregorios Orthodox Church of Toronto. Rev. Fr. Givargis Koshy will be the main speaker for this year's event. The theme for this year's retreat will be based on St. Luke 18:9-15. The event poster and registration link are attached to this email. Hoping to finally see you all in person.

## **40th Anniversary of the Diocesan MMVS in North America**

The Diocese has planned the following events to celebrate the 40th Anniversary of the MMVS in North America:

1. 40th-anniversary ceremony will be held on October 1, 2022, at St Thomas Indian Orthodox Church in Unruh, Philadelphia.
2. Women who were a part of the MMVS prior to 1982 are being honoured.
3. Provide educational assistance to 40 children for a year. A raffle voucher sale will be held for this purpose. Each family can purchase a raffle ticket for \$40. Please save a dollar every day during Great Lent and participate in the raffle coupon sale. There's also the option of sponsoring a child for a year. The expense for this is \$1500 US dollars.

The raffle coupon draw will take place on October 1st, 2022 during the anniversary ceremony.

1st Prize: iPhone 13 2nd Prize: iWatch

## **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



# ST. GREGORIOS ORTHODOX CHURCH OF TORONTO

(Since 1969)

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



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.

## **Meetings ahead, In-Person & Virtual**

March 12, Saturday, Choir/Acolytes joint practice, 05:00 – 07:00 pm

March 12, Saturday, Evening Prayer, 07:00 – 08:00 pm

March 13, Sunday, SGOCT Parish Choir Monthly Meeting at church after the Holy Qurbana

## **Liturgical Text for this Sunday**

This Sunday, we will be using the Taksa of Mar Ksosthos

## **Link to Sunday Holy Liturgy**

Please see below the Link for Live Streaming

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

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