



## WEEKLY THOUGHTS - MARCH 12, 2021

Dearly Beloved,

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

### **March 14, Kpiptho, Sunday of the Crippled Woman**

**Epistle Readings: 1 Peter 3:8-16, Romans 12:1-15**

**Gospel Reading, St Luke 13:10-17 RSV**

13:10 Now he was teaching in one of the synagogues on the Sabbath. 11 And there was a woman who had had a spirit of infirmity for eighteen years; she was bent over and could not fully straighten herself. 12 And when Jesus saw her, he called her and said to her, "Woman, you are freed from your infirmity." 13 And he laid his hands upon her, and immediately she was made straight, and she praised God. 14 But the ruler of the synagogue, indignant because Jesus had healed on the Sabbath, said to the people, "There are six days on which work ought to be done; come on those days and be healed, and not on the Sabbath day." 15 Then the Lord answered him, "You hypocrites! Does not each of you on the Sabbath untie his ox or his ass from the manger, and lead it away to water it? 16 And ought not this woman, a daughter of Abraham whom Satan bound for eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the Sabbath day?" 17 As he said this, all his adversaries were put to shame; and all the people rejoiced at all the glorious things that were done by him.

### **Reflections:**

Whoever came in contact with Christ, they all had changes in life. For Christ, every moment was potential, resourceful, useful and could bring transformation to situations and lives. He was always with people. Everywhere He made use of opportunities to reveal the possibilities and relevance of the Kingdom of God. For Him, Sabbath was the Day of God on which His Will had to be actualised and established. The gospel narrative occurred at a Synagogue. For the people, it was a place for common prayer. They thought actions were always done in the outer world. Coming to a worship place was only for spiritual renewal and socialising. Jesus, on spotting the crippled woman, healed her without waiting for anything.

Any place can be a place of healing. All worship places have this possibility. The so called 'religious people' always preferred to be in the comfort zone and all they wanted was to have some spiritual refreshing. For them it was just observing the Law and taking everything for granted. When Jesus healed the woman, the members of the community couldn't find it as a real act of spirituality, rather they tried to find fault with it.

Have we ever wondered, other than attending the worship and meetings, what Gospel we practice in the society? What input we offer in keeping the temple or any gathering occasions, a space for God to act? What ministry we could offer and what actually make us His disciples? As the ambassadors of the Kingdom of God, what a huge responsibility vested on us, which could be carried out only by using all our faculties! As St Paul said, we require to have the hot marks of Christ which always keep us vigilant and active in His ministry (Galatians 6:17).

### **Feasts**

**March 09, 40 Martyrs of Sebaste.** According to St Basil, forty soldiers who had openly confessed themselves Christians were condemned by the prefect to be exposed naked upon a frozen pond near Sebaste in Lesser Armenia, Turkey, on a bitterly cold night, that they might freeze to death. Among



# ST. GREGORIOS ORTHODOX CHURCH OF TORONTO

(Since 1969)

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



the confessors, one yielded and leaving his companions, sought the warm baths near the lake which had been prepared for any who might prove inconstant. Upon immersion into the cauldron, the one who yielded went into shock and immediately died. One of the guards, Aglaius, was set to keep watch over the martyrs, and beheld at this moment a supernatural brilliancy overshadowing them. He at once proclaimed himself a Christian, threw off his garments, and joined the remaining thirty-nine. Thus the number of forty remained complete. At daybreak, the stiffened bodies of the confessors, which still showed signs of life, were burned and the ashes cast into a river. Christians, however, collected the precious remains, and the relics were distributed throughout many cities; in this way, veneration of the Forty Martyrs became widespread and numerous churches were erected in their honour.

**March 09, Ambattu Gevarghese Mar Coorilos Metropolitan, 130<sup>th</sup> anniversary, entombed at Ankamaly Cheriya Pally.**

**March 10, King Abgar of Uraha (Edessa).** Abgar V is claimed to be one of the first Christian kings in history, having been converted to the faith. The church historian, Eusebius records that the Edessan archives contained a copy of a correspondence exchanged between Abgar of Edessa and Jesus. The correspondence consisted of Abgar's letter and the answer dictated by Jesus. King Abgar is considered a saint.

## Virtual Meetings

**Monday – Friday, 12:00 – 12:45, SGOCT Noon Prayer through WebEx**

Friday, March 12, NEAD MMVS Retreat, 12:00 - 01:00 pm

Saturday, March 13, NEAD Canada Region Lenten Retreat, 10:00 - 12:30, Zoom

Saturday, March 13, SGOCT Prayer Meeting, 07:00 - 08:30 pm, Webex

## Great Lent – Evening Prayer, Lenten Devotional Talk Series

1. We are glad to be conducting the Lenten Evening prayer at church. We have a commendable participation from our members. We 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 going really well, and every talk offers a lifting up to our souls. We do sincerely thank **Sheeba Sony, Philip Philips, Jessie Vaidhyan, Nidhi Mathew and Anand Joseph** 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 to follow the guidelines. Should 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 will be donated to a local charity.
5. **Noon Prayer through WebEx, Monday – Friday 12:00-12:30pm.** The WebEx link for noon prayer has been sent to our members. Whoever finds it convenient and useful, please join. There is no pressure.
6. Details of Great Lent / Passion Week services will be announced later.



# ST. GREGORIOS ORTHODOX CHURCH OF TORONTO

(Since 1969)

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



## **Mid Lent (Paathinompu) was on March 09, Cross Station installed**

The Holy Liturgy of Mid Lent has been conducted on Tuesday March 09<sup>th</sup> in the evening. Golgotha (Cross Station) has been installed at the centre (Aisle). Let us feel the closer presence of our Lord as we progress in the Great Lent.

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

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. This will be an opportunity for all the parishes, congregations and also members who are not organised as communities to come together as an extended family. Fr Abraham Thomas, Professor at Orthodox Theological Seminary Kottayam will be delivering the retreat 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, not limited to any particular category. We request our beloved members to block your diary and assure participation. The link shall be sent soon. Please find it attached in the new flyer.

[https://mcusercontent.com/4b0245a10b23c3826466d9a97/files/34908fdc-ab4e-4f9c-9cde-8dee96f91fa1/Lenten\\_Retreat\\_Poster.pdf](https://mcusercontent.com/4b0245a10b23c3826466d9a97/files/34908fdc-ab4e-4f9c-9cde-8dee96f91fa1/Lenten_Retreat_Poster.pdf)

## **International Women's Day 2021- March 08**

Women deserve an equal future free from stigma, stereotypes and violence; a future that's sustainable, peaceful, with equal rights and opportunities for all. This year, the theme for International Women's Day (8 March), "Women in leadership: Achieving an equal future in a COVID-19 world," celebrates the tremendous efforts by women and girls around the world in shaping a more equal future and recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic and highlights the gaps that remain. Women's full and effective participation and leadership in all areas of life drives progress for everyone. Women are Heads of State or Government in 22 countries, and only 24.9 per cent of national parliamentarians are women. At the current rate of progress, gender equality among Heads of Government will take another 130 years. Women are also at the forefront of the battle against COVID-19, as front-line and health sector workers, as scientists, doctors and caregivers, yet they get paid 11 per cent less globally than their male counterparts. An analysis of COVID-19 task teams from 87 countries found only 3.5 per cent of them had gender parity. This year's campaign will be 'Generation Equality', to act for an equal future for all. (Courtesy: UN Women) Salute to all Women! In God, we are purely humans and neither man or woman with any discrimination.

## **Remembering the departed souls lost to Covid 19- March 11**

March 11 has been observed in Canada as Remembrance Day in tribute to 2.6 million people around the world who died due to COVID-19 with more than 22,000 of them in Canada. The loss is unimaginable. The tears and pathos of families and communities worldwide could make an ocean. We offered incense yesterday at church after the evening prayer. Let us declare solidarity with all those who suffer from their loss and be resolute that we will try our best to never allow any infections through keeping the environment unpolluted and pure.

## **Canada Daylight Saving 2021- Sunday March 14**

The Time Change from Wintertime to Daylight Savings Time will take place in Canada on March 14, 2021 at 2:00 in the morning. The clock jumps forward from 2:00 to 3:00 am. Let us be ready to cope with one hour less of sleep!



# ST. GREGORIOS ORTHODOX CHURCH OF TORONTO

(Since 1969)

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



## **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 the 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 and how 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](mailto: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 as 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 Taksa of the Twelve Apostles. It will give a feeling that all the Apostles are there to conduct the Liturgy and the congregation takes part in their celebration.

## **Please find the Link for Live Streaming**

[https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCDT7tcyQw1yZ1\\_yCG9AWStA](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCDT7tcyQw1yZ1_yCG9AWStA)

## **COVID-19 Guidelines**

We are going grey with no change in the number of indoor gathering from existing 10. Let us maintain the safety measures and look for a hassle-free future soon with the finishing of vaccination program.

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

Yours in Christ,



# ST. GREGORIOS ORTHODOX CHURCH OF TORONTO

(Since 1969)

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



Thomas John Achen

Fr Thomas P John

[fr.thomaspjohn@gmail.com](mailto:fr.thomaspjohn@gmail.com)

+1 (416) 570 5610