



## WEEKLY THOUGHTS - NOVEMBER 12, 2021

Dearly beloved,

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

### **Sunday, November 14, Angel's Visitation to Zachariah**

**Epistle Readings: 2 Peter 1:1-15, Ephesians 5:21-33, 6:1-4**

**Holy Evangelion: St Luke 1:1-25**

1.1 Inasmuch as many have undertaken to compile a narrative of the things which have been accomplished among us, 2 just as they were delivered to us by those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and ministers of the word, 3 it seemed good to me also, having followed all things closely for some time past, to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophylus, 4 that you may know the truth concerning the things of which you have been informed.

5 In the days of Herod, king of Judea, there was a priest named Zechari'ah, of the division of Abi'jah; and he had a wife of the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth. 6 And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless. 7 But they had no child, because Elizabeth was barren, and both were advanced in years.

8 Now while he was serving as priest before God when his division was on duty, 9 according to the custom of the priesthood, it fell to him by lot to enter the temple of the Lord and burn incense. 10 And the whole multitude of the people were praying outside at the hour of incense. 11 And there appeared to him an angel of the Lord standing on the right side of the altar of incense. 12 And Zechari'ah was troubled when he saw him, and fear fell upon him. 13 But the angel said to him, "Do not be afraid, Zechari'ah, for your prayer is heard, and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you shall call his name John.

14 And you will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth; 15 for he will be great before the Lord, and he shall drink no wine nor strong drink, and he will be filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his mother's womb. 16 And he will turn many of the sons of Israel to the Lord their God, 17 and he will go before him in the spirit and power of Eli'jah, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, to make ready for the Lord a people prepared."

18 And Zechari'ah said to the angel, "How shall I know this? For I am an old man, and my wife is advanced in years." 19 And the angel answered him, "I am Gabriel, who stand in the presence of God; and I was sent to speak to you, and to bring you this good news. 20 And behold, you will be silent and unable to speak until the day that these things come to pass, because you did not believe my words, which will be fulfilled in their time." 21 And the people were waiting for Zechari'ah, and they wondered at his delay in the temple. 22 And when he came out, he could not speak to them, and they perceived that he had seen a vision in the temple; and he made signs to them and remained dumb. 23 And when his time of service was ended, he went to his home.

24 After these days his wife Elizabeth conceived, and for five months she hid herself, saying, 25 "Thus the Lord has done to me in the days when he looked on me, to take away my reproach among men."

### **Reflections:**

In the introductory part (Luke 1:1-4), Luke gives a true picture of the background, intention, authenticity and need of writing the gospel by him. Like the book of Acts, this is addressed to Theophilus. There were already many gospel versions available. The Gospel shared by eyewitnesses affirmed the authority of the gospel. There was nothing of question or suspicion. It was a first-hand account of Christ and His



# ST. GREGORIOS ORTHODOX CHURCH OF TORONTO

(Since 1969)

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



life. Luke himself carefully investigated everything from the beginning and wanted to write an orderly account. In short, Luke's gospel could be viewed as well planned, perfectly organised, chronologically arranged, authentic, updated, concise, inclusive and theologically sound documentation of the life and person of Christ. Luke was skilled in painting and hence the narration turned to be more picturesque and lucid.

Here the visitation of Angel Gabriel is presented in a dramatic style which goes high to an epic quality. The narration brings in the sweet aroma of incense and the sanctuary of the temple is felt with its mystic atmosphere. The visitation happens during worship where the priest is inside the sanctuary and congregation is present in the temple. There, anything could happen, and it happened!

When there is a setting already, one should expect occurrences or incidents pertaining to it. The Temple of God is His dwelling. What one could and should expect there? Here is the answer. God's place is occupied by God, the Celestial hosts will be there, an appearance can happen anytime. A temple always keeps a possibility of direct or indirect encounter with God in a comprehensible way. God is everywhere and may not be comprehended to human perception always unless and until He reveals Himself.

Whenever we are in the temple, whenever we pray, can we be aware that anything could be expected? If God wants to tell us something, and He sends His messengers, would we be ready to acknowledge, welcome and accept? How trained are we to recognise God's messengers and messages? Ignorance and improper responses can cause missing or losing of certain graces and blessings which can change our destiny. Can we miss it!

## **Feasts:**

### **November 08, HH Baselios Marthoma Mathews I, 24<sup>th</sup> anniversary, entombed at Devalokam Asram Chapel Kottayam**

HH Baselios Marthoma Mathews I was one of the best administrators of the Malankara Orthodox Church. HH is also remembered for translating the Qurbana Kramam and Good Friday service to Malayalam, English translation of Holy Liturgy, initiating translation to Hindi and Tamil, starting 'Divyabodhanam' laity theological training program, former principal of Orthodox Theological Seminary, starting Malankara Orthodox Archives where ancient historical documents have been kept, starting Sruti School of Liturgical Music, consecrating 10 bishops, consecrating Holy Myron twice, receiving the title - Order of St Vladimir from the Russian Patriarch, Order of St George from Georgian Patriarch, and honorary doctorate from the Senate of Serampore.

### **November 08, Konatt Mathen Malpan, 93<sup>rd</sup> anniversary, entombed at Pampakuda Valiyapally**

Konatt Mathen malpan was a great scholar of Syriac language. He translated and compiled many prayer books among which 'Pampakuda Namaskaram' stands out with its wide inclusion of occasional prayers and canonical prayers. He was given a special cap which resembled that of bishops and was authorized to perform the rituals which a bishop does while present at a Eucharist celebrated by another priest. In 1926, the Church honoured Konatt Malpan by elevating him as 'Corepiscopa'. He was also authorized to conduct a foot washing ceremony on the Holy Thursday which he performed at Pampakuda in 1927. He also served as the priest trustee of the church for a period.

### **November 10, Philipose Ramban Kayamkulam, entombed at Kannamcode Cathedral Adoor**

Philipose Ramban from Kayamkulam was a Syriac scholar who translated the Holy Gospels to Malayalam for the first time. This was called the Ramban Bible.

### **November 13, St John Chrysostom**

St John Chrysostom was a 4<sup>th</sup> century monk and theologian who became Patriarch who enlightened the Christian world through his homilies and orations. He was an ardent devotee of Christ and his messages against social evils invited enmity of the queen which caused his exile. His many struggles caused him



# ST. GREGORIOS ORTHODOX CHURCH OF TORONTO

(Since 1969)

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



to become sick and die an early death. He is called 'Golden Tongued'. We will be using the Liturgical Text of John Chrysostom this Sunday.

## **November 14, St Philip the Apostle**

He was one among the twelve apostles who introduced Nathanael to Jesus (John 1:43-47). He preached in Greece, Phrygia and Syria and died a martyr.

## **Parumala Perunnal, Thanks to All**

We were really blessed with the celebration of the Feast of St Gregorios of Parumala, our Patron Saint and Intercessor. Thanking God for the good weather and all the grace showered upon us. Sincere thanks to Fr Sam Thankachen for the illumining message, for leading us in the evening prayer and Raza. Sincere thanks to managing committee members, all the spiritual organisations, all members who helped in arranging the pilot vehicle, packing and serving of food on both days, Choir for hymns, altar assistants for assisting in services, offering flowers, volunteers for providing/decorating vehicle for procession, Gijo Peter, Joju Thomas, Aleyamma Thomas, Binu Mathew and two other well-wishers for nercha food on Saturday and Sunday, all members who contributed towards perunnal. Sincere thanks to our parish members and friends and from other parishes for their prayerful presence and participation. Special mention and thanks to Binu Abraham and Varghese Daniel who make our technical support team. May the intercession of St Gregorios be our beam of guiding light and shelter forever!

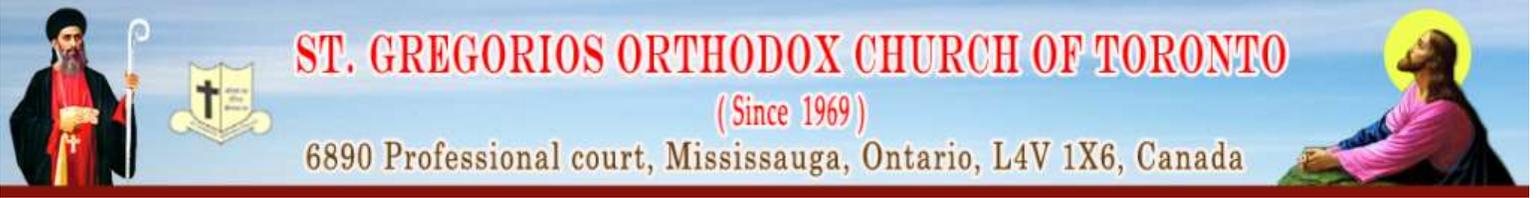
## **Look at the Poppies! Remember those who died for us...**

Look at the Poppies, they carry the thrilling memories of the sacrifices of soldiers who offered their lives for the people and for the land. They fought for a future and for the generations to come. The day is observed with two minutes of silence at 11:00AM on November 11 as it marks the anniversary of the end of the First World War. The Poppy flowers, which grew in many of the battlefields of the war, inspired a poem, 'In Flanders Fields...' by Canadian doctor Lieutenant Colonel John McCrae. The flower is also associated with a charity founded by the Royal British Legion, war veterans. While red poppies, which signify the people who lost their lives in the war, are worn the most, other colours, especially purple poppies are worn to remember the animals who have been the victims of war. Black poppies symbolise the contribution of the black, African and Caribbean communities to the First World War while white poppies are used to commemorate the lives lost in the war as well as the hope of achieving peace. In 2018, the saffron marigold flower joined the poppy to signify India's contribution to the First World War. The First World War saw an estimated 1.3 million Indian soldiers serving in the war, deployed in faraway fields like France and Belgium and their contributions are also remembered with respect and reverence.

## **GBM 2021 on Sunday November 21, 2021**

The Parish Assembly (General Body meeting GBM) has been scheduled to be conducted on Sunday Nov 21, 2021. Please fulfil both confession and payment requirements to attend the GBM. The time for holy confession can be arranged with the vicar by reaching out to Mob: (416) 570 5610.

Preliminary list for GBM was posted on the notice board in the church basement on Sunday November 07, 2021. Please check your names to confirm your eligibility to attend the GBM. We have only one more day (Saturday Nov 13) to officiate Holy Confession. Agenda of GBM has been announced at church and it will continue this Sunday too.



### **Holy Confession Arrangement**

When you wait for your scheduled time for confession, please wait at the basement. You can come forward only after the confessing person leaves the church main hall.

### **How to come for Holy Communion**

For receiving Holy Communion, please come in an orderly manner (bench by bench) to avoid crowding and to keep physical distance. If you need to leave church early, please come to the front through the side aisles (not middle aisle) to receive Holy Communion.

### **Gregorian Seniors Forum initiating charity fund towards Mental Health Wellness Program**

Please contribute towards Mental Health Wellness Program initiated by our Seniors, Contributions shall be accepted till Nov 08.

### **Luncheon Meeting on November 18**

Gregorian Seniors Forum is arranging Luncheon Meeting on Nov 18, 12:00 – 03:00 pm in the church basement. Welcome all 60+ members. Contact Ben Varghese or James Vaidhyan or G George by Wednesday Nov 10 for confirming participation. Food shall be ordered.

### **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 4:30-6:00 pm**

This is a reminder to all our choir members and Acolytes to attend the weekly choir practice currently conducted virtually on Saturdays 04:30 – 06:00 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**

November 13, Saturday, SGOCT Choir & Acolytes weekly practice, 05:00 – 06:30 pm In-person & virtual.

November 13, Saturday, Evening Prayer at Church, 07:00 – 07:45 pm, live-streamed

November 14, Sunday, SGOCT MMVS meeting, 06:00 – 07:30 pm

### **Liturgical Text for this Sunday**

This Sunday, we will be using the Taksa of Mar John Chrysostom

### **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)



# ST. GREGORIOS ORTHODOX CHURCH OF TORONTO

(Since 1969)

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



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