



## WEEKLY THOUGHTS - AUGUST 13, 2021

Dearly beloved,

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

### **Sunday, August 15th, Feast of Dormition of Theotokos (Soonoyo- Vangippu)**

**Epistle Readings: Acts 1:12-14, 7:44-53, Galatians 4:1-7**

**Holy Gospel: St Matthew 12:46-50, St John 19:25-27, 2:1-11**

**St Matthew 12.** 46 While he was still speaking to the people, behold, his mother and his brothers stood outside, asking to speak to him. 48 But he replied to the man who told him, "Who is my mother, and who are my brothers?" 49 And stretching out his hand toward his disciples, he said, "Here are my mother and my brothers! 50 For whoever does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother, and sister, and mother."

**St John 19.** 25 So the soldiers did this. But standing by the cross of Jesus were his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Mag'dalene. 26 When Jesus saw his mother, and the disciple whom he loved standing near, he said to his mother, "Woman, behold, your son!" 27 Then he said to the disciple, "Behold, your mother!" And from that hour the disciple took her to his own home.

**St John 2.1** On the third day there was a marriage at Cana in Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there; 2 Jesus also was invited to the marriage, with his disciples. 3 When the wine gave out, the mother of Jesus said to him, "They have no wine." 4 And Jesus said to her, "O woman, what have you to do with me? My hour has not yet come." 5 His mother said to the servants, "Do whatever he tells you." 6 Now six stone jars were standing there, for the Jewish rites of purification, each holding twenty or thirty gallons. 7 Jesus said to them, "Fill the jars with water." And they filled them up to the brim. 8 He said to them, "Now draw some out, and take it to the steward of the feast." So they took it. 9 When the steward of the feast tasted the water now become wine, and did not know where it came from (though the servants who had drawn the water knew), the steward of the feast called the bridegroom 10 and said to him, "Every man serves the good wine first; and when men have drunk freely, then the poor wine; but you have kept the good wine until now." 11 This, the first of his signs, Jesus did at Cana in Galilee, and manifested his glory; and his disciples believed in him.

### **Reflection:**

The parting of Mother Mary has not been mentioned either in the Gospel or in the book of Acts of the Apostles. We might wonder why such an omission was made. Was it because she was a woman, or was there an attempt to keep her profile low, or was it an intentional play to discourage her growing popularity. In a closer observation, it can be assumed that Mary was alive even after the Gospel and Acts were written. By the time of the Council of Ephesus in 431, the intercession of Mother Mary and observing of her feast days were already in popular practice.

In 1973, the National Conference of Catholic Bishops in their letter Behold Your Mother stated, "Christ has risen from the dead; we need no further assurance of our faith. Mary assumed into Heaven serves rather as a gracious reminder to the Church that our Lord wishes all whom the Father has given Him to be raised with Him. In Mary taken to glory, to union with Christ, the Church sees herself answering the invitation of the heavenly Bridegroom."

Mary was a courageous woman, wife, mother, companion and a true disciple who offered her life for Christ and always stood with the church for witnessing the Kingdom of God and announcing



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salvation to the whole world. She received the word of God, let it grow in her and given to the world as God incarnate accessible by all. She encountered many challenges for what she believed. She stood strong with the community and remained even after her Son's passing away to witness the Resurrection and receive the Holy Spirit on the Feast of Pentecost. She lived and died as a faithful whose soul received to heaven by her Son and Saviour. She lived for Christ and Christ rewarded her for what she did through offering her womb. She remains as the greatest and the most powerful intercessor. May her prayers be a fortress for us.

## **Feasts:**

### **Feast of Dormition of Theotokos**

#### **Saturday, August 14**

**Retreat at 09:30 am:** MMVS retreat will be starting at 09:30 am led by Mrs Merlin T Mathew followed by intercession and noon prayer. All our members are requested to join virtually.

#### **Evening Prayer, Devotional Talk & Procession starts at 06:30 pm**

Evening prayer shall be conducted at church at 06:30 pm followed by devotional talk by Rev Fr Mathew Thomas and procession to St Mary's stone shrine. Please join either at church or virtually.

#### **Sunday, August 15**

Morning Prayer will start at 08:00 am followed by Holy Qurbana and intercession.

#### **30th Memorial Day of beloved Bava Thirumeni observed by Canada Region**

The 30th Day memorial observance of beloved HH Baselios Marthoma Paulose II Bava Thirumeni was conducted on Monday, August 09, 2021, at St Thomas Orthodox Church Toronto. Since the Covid lockdown, this was the first event conducted regionally with offering of Holy Liturgy involving all the regional parishes. The Commemoration meeting was a memorable experience. Choir was excellent. Church dignitaries and Ecumenical leaders participated in-person/virtually. Our Diocesan bishop HG Zachariah Mar Nicholovos Metropolitan blessed us with his message. HE Most Rev Dr Philipose Mar Stephanos Metropolitan, Bishop of Syro-Malankara Catholic Eparchy delivered the keynote address. HE Metropolitan Archbishop Soterios Athanassoulas, Archbishop of Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of Canada's message was read. Rev Sunil Chacko, vicar of St Mathews MTC Toronto and Rev Anish M George, vicar of CSI Church Toronto shared their reflections. NEA Diocesan Secretary Fr Dr Mathai Daniel Varghese joined virtually and shared his memories with Bava Thirumeni. Fr Philipose Philip, Fr Dr Daniel Thomas and Fr Philipose Philip delivered messages. Parish and regional organisational representatives also shared their thoughts. Sincere thanks to our parish Management Committee, Trustee, Secretary, Organisations, technical support team and choir for their participation and support. Special thanks are due to Susan Benjamin for excellent compeering and Jason Varghese for brilliant photographic coverage of the event. Sincere thanks to the vicar Fr Thomas George and members of St Thomas OC Toronto for hosting the event. We do highly appreciate the leadership by Fr Blessan Varghese, Fr Sam Thankachen and Fr Mathew Thomas in arranging, organising, coordinating the event excellently. The technical support team did an awesome job. We look forward to more events organised regionally with the involvement of all the local parishes and members.

#### **40<sup>th</sup> Day Memorial Observance of Bava Thirumeni at our Parish church**

Our parish will be remembering our beloved Bava Thirumeni on the 40<sup>th</sup> day of his passing away. Holy Liturgy shall be conducted on Thursday August 19 with evening prayer starting at 06:30 pm followed by Holy Qurbana and a brief commemorative meeting at church. All our beloved members are requested to participate either at church or virtually.

#### **August 09, St Mathias the Apostle**



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St Mathias was the apostle chosen to cover the absence of Judas. He was chosen by lot as recorded in Acts 1:21-26. The criterion for choosing him was based on his experience with Christ and his resurrection. It is the same with all the disciples and faithful. The wedding sacrament hymn 'Edan thottam nattone, is followed by 'I am blessed when I witness and announce that my bridegroom, my lord has risen from the tomb' which reveals what role is expected of any faithful.

## **August 09, Archdeacon Geevarghese the Great, entombed at Angamaly Cheriapally**

The title Archdeacon of India, in the native language, was usually called 'Jathikku Karthavyan'. The Archdeacon of the community was the unquestioned social and political leader and he even got local soldiers under his command to protect himself and protect the interest of the community.

Archdeacons were leading the community till the inception of Marthoma I.

## **August 15, Patriarch Mar Ignatios Abded Meshiha, 106<sup>th</sup> anniversary, entombed at Kurkuma Dayara.**

HH Ignatius Abded Meshiha was the Antiochene Patriarch who helped the Malankara church during it's hard times. When another patriarch intruded the church affairs by ordaining bishops without the consent of the Malankara church, Vattasseril Gevarghese Mar Dionysius invited HH Abded Meshiha to Malankara. HH came and sorted the issues for the good of Malankara church.

## **August 15, Indian Independence Day**

On August 15 1947, India declared independence from colonial rule. Under the national leadership of Mahatma Gandhi and leaders like Sardar Vallabhai Patel, Goplakrishna Gokhle, Jawaharlal Nehru, Chandra Shekhar Azad, Bal Gangadhar Tilak and joined by many regional leaders, India's freedom struggle grew into a national movement which attracted international attention. India's liberation movement eventually inspired many countries to fight for freedom. Hundreds and thousands of citizens had to sacrifice their lives. It was a time when every citizen of India had to live either a fighter to risk their life or to live a compromise doing nothing towards liberation. Though it was not a religious movement, all religious communities had their involvement which integrated all peoples and clashing communities getting united for a single cause with a strong feeling of a 'Nation'. Certain intrusions, internal struggles, chaos, confusion and unrest can give way to creative and progressive unities which could play their role for a better future.

## **Saturdays in August - Evening Prayer conducted at Church at 06:30 pm**

We have been on a virtual platform with our Saturday evening prayers since the Covid lockdown began. In August, we will be conducting the Saturday evening prayers at church starting at 06:30 pm. Our members, whoever finds it convenient, please come to church. The evening prayer might not be live-streamed.

## **MMVS Diocesan Programs**

**Bible Quiz:** Saturday, October 02

**Annual Conference:** Saturday, October 09

**Bible Study:** Every Thursday 8.30 - 9.30 pm. The study is based on the books Amos – Malachi led by Rev Fr VM Shibu (Vicar, St Gregorios Orthodox Church Bensalem)

## **Virtual Meetings ahead**

**Choir meetings will be on Wednesdays 08:00-09:00 pm.**

**No other meetings of organizations are scheduled for August except the parish virtual 'Soonoyo' retreat on Saturday, August 14, 2021, 09:30- 12:00 noon**



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## **OVBS 2021 –August 18-22**

This year's OVBS will begin on August 18 with its valedictory function on Sunday, August 22. Theme for this year will be 'Discern the Will of God.'(1 Thessalonians 5:18). Various sessions have been scheduled, teachers and trainers are ready, children are enrolled, everything is set, all are prayerfully preparing. We look for God's Grace guiding and leading us for the benefit of our kids. We expect all our kids to join. Please keep the OVBS program in our prayers and offer all possible support.

## **Hearty Congrats Alvina !**

Hearty Congrats to Alvina Samson on winning the logo competition for the Diocesan Sunday School initiated in the Diocesan SS newsletter Ma'altho. The logo design and the talent behind were highly appreciated by the Sunday School jury. This logo will be used by the Diocesan Sunday School now onwards. Alvina will receive a gift cheque from the Diocese. It is indeed a proud moment for our parish and Sunday School. We have other kids who also participated in the competition and revealed their talents. We do express our sincere appreciation to them too for their attempt and showing off their skill. God bless our kids.

## **Liturgical Text for this Sunday**

This Sunday, we will be using the Taksa of Mar Ksothos.

## **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,

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