



WEEKLY THOUGHTS - MAY 14, 2021

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

Sunday May 16th, Sunday prior to the Feast of Pentecost

Epistle Readings: Acts 21:7-9, 1 Corinthians 7:1-2, 25-34, 9:1-10

Holy Gospel: St John 17:13-26

17. 13 But now I am coming to you, and I speak these things in the world so that they may have my joy made complete in themselves.[a] 14 I have given them your word, and the world has hated them because they do not belong to the world, just as I do not belong to the world. 15 I am not asking you to take them out of the world, but I ask you to protect them from the evil one.[b] 16 They do not belong to the world, just as I do not belong to the world. 17 Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth. 18 As you have sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world. 19 And for their sakes I sanctify myself, so that they also may be sanctified in truth.

20 "I ask not only on behalf of these, but also on behalf of those who will believe in me through their word, 21 that they may all be one. As you, Father, are in me and I am in you, may they also be in us,[c] so that the world may believe that you have sent me. 22 The glory that you have given me I have given them, so that they may be one, as we are one, 23 I in them and you in me, that they may become completely one, so that the world may know that you have sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me. 24 Father, I desire that those also, whom you have given me, may be with me where I am, to see my glory, which you have given me because you loved me before the foundation of the world.

25 "Righteous Father, the world does not know you, but I know you; and these know that you have sent me. 26 I made your name known to them, and I will make it known, so that the love with which you have loved me may be in them, and I in them."

Reflection:

This text is part of a long prayer offered by Jesus to the heavenly Father the day before his crucifixion. This prayer acknowledges the authority given to him over the whole creation (17:2). It also says that the very process of knowing the Son himself is eternal life. Knowing happens through familiarising, acquainting, associating and involving. Whatever belongs to the Son belongs to the Father and vice versa (17:10). Knowing becomes experience ('Arivu' becomes 'Anubhavam'). He has given the 'Word' to the human race as the key to higher life and salvation. This long prayer is called High-Priestly Prayer of Christ the eternal Priest.

This prayer ends with Jesus pleading for the unity of the whole world in the Holy Trinity. The unity He envisioned was the unity of creation with the Creator as well as unity and reconciliation among the creation. God always does His part. Humans fail in promoting unity among them. We might tend to respond to any suggestion or critical comment by saying, 'before making comments, one should stand in our shoes.' If we still think that establishing peace and unity is impossible, we should realise that Christ had stood in our shoes by incarnating. He had passed through whatever human life could hold. After fulfilling His mission through total identification with human nature, He still commanded to love each other and to reconcile with everyone. While praying for unity, He knew exactly what He was asking for and He knew it would not be impossible for us. The faithful are taken from the world to live as those who are not of the world. It means to have a different perspective, a higher view of everything. Promoting unity would be of prime importance in a differing world.



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Every word, every interaction, every message, every involvement and every action should cater towards unity within our reach. The fuel would be love revealed by the Lord. Let it overflow! May there be outpouring of the Holy Spirit!

Feasts:

May 10, St Simon the Apostle.

Simon, the Zealot, is called as Simon the Canaanite (Kanaaios) in Matt. 10: 4 and Mk. 3: 18 and as Simon the Zealot (Zelotes) in Lk. 6: 15 and Acts 1: 13. Simon may have been called the Zealot because of his great and burning zeal for the Savior and His Gospel (Lk. 6: 15). The book of Acts reveals that he was committed along with other disciples to spreading the message of Jesus.

After receiving the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, he might have travelled and served in Africa, Edessa, Egypt, Libya and also believed to have preached with St. Jude in Persia, where they were both martyred. It is said that they established a church with a good number of believers in the region. It is also believed that they eventually came to Suanir where they drove out demons. This act made the pagan priests furious which eventually led to the execution of them. At this time, a calm and serene sky suddenly became so full of lightning that the temple was split into three segments. The king of the country rescued the bodies of the disciples and built a Church in their honour. Simon had left everything to follow Jesus and lived true to the Great Commission after Jesus' ascension.

May 10, Mar Thoma V, 256th anniversary, entombed at Niranom Valiyapally

Mar Thoma V was born to the Pakalomattom family, one of the oldest Christian families in Kerala.

Despite the colonial interventions in the affairs of the Church, he succeeded in preserving the autonomy and autocephalous nature of the Church. The Dutch East India Company arrested him and threatened to send him into exile. This dispute was later settled by the Government of Travancore.

The Antiochian church was not in approval of his ordination and their bishops tried hard to re-ordain him to bring him under the Patriarch of Antioch. But he refused to yield as he was strongly convinced that the Indian Church is autonomous and autocephalous in all respects and it doesn't need any external intervention in its affairs. To reinforce this, he himself ordained Mar Thoma VI as his successor in 1761 at Niranam Church without the participation or assistance of any foreign bishops.

This could be considered a milestone in the establishing of autocephaly of the Malankara Church. During his long tenure spanning 37 years, Mar Thoma V successfully defended the disruptive activities of foreign powers.

Prayerful Tributes to Ouseph Pathickal Cor Episcopa

Very Rev Ouseph Pathickal Cor Episcopa had served our parish from 2003 till 2006. While he was in India, Achen was in the frontline of peace dialogues between the Malankara Orthodox and Jacobite churches. He had very much wished for establishing peace among the Indian Orthodox Community.

We do remember and gratefully acknowledge beloved Achen's service and leadership during his tenure at St Gregorios Parish Toronto. We offer prayers for his soul. May the lord accept his life and ministry and be pleased with him. We do believe that his continuing intercession for us in the heavenly court shall be a shelter for us. May the Lord console and strengthen the family members who are in grief. The funeral service has been conducted in India. There will be a memorial prayer offered during the Holy Liturgy this Sunday at our church.

Watch the funeral service here: <https://youtu.be/J8YYAqgaeUM>



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Virtual Meetings ahead

Friday May 14, NEAD MMVS Retreat, 12:00 – 01:00 pm

Friday May 14, SGOCT OCYM, 07:30- 09:00 pm

Saturday May 15, SGOCT Choir, 04:30 – 06:30 pm

Saturday May 15, SGOCT Prayer, 07:00 – 08:30 pm

Sunday May 16, SS Common Session, 05:30 – 06:30 pm, Teachers Meeting, 06:30 – 07:30 pm

International Nurses Day- May 12

Dear Nurses all over the world, you denote kindness, empathy, and endless love. It is one of the toughest jobs as well as the largest health care service. Especially during this pandemic, you have taken the front rows in the battles as true warriors all over the world. Our utmost gratitude, respect, and love to all of you for your diligence and sacrifice.

The theme for International Nurses Day 2021 is ‘Nurses as a Voice to Lead, a vision for future healthcare’. Various activities like a variety of community events, educational seminars, debates, discussions, competitions, etc will be carried out worldwide. This observance aims to promote health as a basic human right internationally. Those who are in service have been working round the clock and a majority of them suffer from an absence of sleep, restless schedules, work pressure, depression and vulnerability to infections due to continuous exposure. We salute you for your selfless ministry. You are the apostles of healing. May God empower you and guard you all under his protective wings. With profound sadness and shock, we do remember Saumya, the health care worker who has passed away in Tel Aviv in the missile attack. It is so unfortunate that such acts occur and especially it happened close to the International Nurses Day. We offer prayers for her soul and for all the victims. May her soul find eternal rest and joy in the Heavenly Court. Let us keep in prayer those who are in the terror stricken area. May God intervene and re-establish peace.

Eid Mubarak!

Eid- ul-Fitr was initiated by Prophet Muhammad and is one of the biggest festivals observed by the Muslim community across the globe. Ramadan is considered the holiest month of the year in which Muslims observe fasting from dawn to dusk, increase charity and social work and prayers to please Allah.

The Eid prayer is performed by the congregation followed by the sermon and then a supplication asking for Allah's forgiveness, mercy, peace and blessings for all living beings across the world. Giving ‘Zakat’ which is intended to help the needy, is an inevitable part of this feast. After the prayers, they visit their relatives, friends, and acquaintances or hold large communal celebrations. Eid Mubarak to all our Muslim brothers and sisters in the world!

Tributes to Smt K R Gouri Amma

K R Gouri Amma was an Indian politician and the first revenue minister of Kerala state. She was a Marxist revolutionary, advocate, author and diplomat. She was also one of the founding leaders of the Communist movement in Kerala. She was the first female law student coming from the Ezhava community. She was the first woman from the marginalized community to ascend to the office of minister in the first elected communist government in the world. She raised her voice for equality of women, initiated public marriage ceremonies for the poor, fought against the oppression of Dalits and class struggles, brought into reality the land reforms through government order and was instrumental in many social and political reforms. She will be remembered for her brevity, independence, open approaches, care for the poor, and for her political conviction. She never compromised her role for



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any personal benefits. She was a real lioness in a male-dominated socio-political culture. Salute to her!

Liturgical Text for this Sunday

This Sunday, we will be using the Taksa of Holy Fathers (M'kanastho). Short and sweet, please listen to the prayers.

Please see below the Link for Live Streaming

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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