



WEEKLY THOUGHTS - JULY 16, 2021

Dearly beloved,

Sunday July 18th, Eighth Sunday after Pentecost

Epistle Readings: 1 Peter 2:4-10, Hebrews 4:14-16, 5:1-5

Holy Gospel: St John 6:47-59

6.47 Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes has eternal life. 48 I am the bread of life. 49 Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died. 50 This is the bread which comes down from heaven, that a man may eat of it and not die. 51 I am the living bread[c] which came down from heaven; if any one eats of this bread, he will live forever; and the bread which I shall give for the life of the world is my flesh.”

52 The Jews then disputed among themselves, saying, “How can this man give us his flesh to eat?”

53 So Jesus said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink his blood, you have no life in you; 54 he who eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. 55 For my flesh is food indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. 56 He who eats my flesh and drinks my blood abides in me, and I in him. 57 As the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so he who eats me will live because of me. 58 This is the bread which came down from heaven, not such as the fathers ate and died; he who eats this bread will live forever.” 59 This he said in the synagogue, as he taught at Caper’na-um.

Reflection:

Faith has the most important role in experiencing eternal life. Through faith, both bread and wine become the body and blood of the Lord. However, eating the food of immortality while living without faith will never bring eternal life. He said that the bread of eternity that he gives is nothing but his flesh. He was ‘God in flesh’ and that the ‘Word became flesh’. Here the emphasis on the words, thoughts and ideas should be understood. Jn 6:45 says, “They all will be taught by God.” This is a reference to the Word of God. Jesus said to his Father in heaven that he had given to the people the words he received from God the Father (Jn 17:8). Here the bread that gives eternal life refers to living a life in complete obedience to his teachings. John’s gospel has special emphasis on the sacrament of Holy Communion through which the faithful are nourished. Regardless, it is not limited to sacramental consuming of bread, but it implies a deeper meaning of living within the Lord’s will. So to eat the sacramental bread means to live a life of absolute faith. It is not merely attendance on Sunday.

Feasts:

July 12, Pulikkottil Joseph Mar Dionysius II Metropolitan, 112nd anniversary, entombed at Pazhaya Seminary Kottayam.

He was the Malankara Metropolitan who had to obtain a court order after being challenged by the reformers over his position. The court verdict confirmed him as the Malankara Metropolitan, which gave way to the formation of the Marthoma Syrian Church. During his time, the historic Mulanthuruthy Synod was convened, deciding to form the Syrian Christian Association. The church was divided into seven dioceses for administrative convenience. The first consecration of Holy Myron in the Malankara church took place during his tenure. Parumala Thirumeni entered into eternal rest and Vattasseril Thirumeni was consecrated as bishop during this time.



July 15, Mar Kuriakose & Marth Yulithi

Mar Kuriakose and Marth Yulithi lived in the 3rd century A.D. Roman Empire where they had to flee into hiding to escape persecution. Christian faith was challenged and threatened throughout the empire. The faithful were put to death because they did not denounce their faith. Marth Yulithi and her 8-year-old son Kuriakose were put to trial. However, they stood up for their faith and they both got martyred. If our faith is challenged, how do we respond? We live in an era where professing faith is looked on as illogical. What is our response to those who might question your faith?

July 15, Mar Abhai

Mar Abhai was a monk who lived in the third century in Turkey whose monastic spiritual life enlightened the Christendom and whose name is remembered in the fifth diptych. He was entrusted by Emperor Theodosius II to defend the Nicene faith and the doctrinal position of the church. He denounced the pleasures of the world, gave all his possessions to the poor and needy and embraced a life of prayer and chastity.

Catholicose HH Baselios Marthoma Paulose II is mourned

HH Baselios Marthoma Paulose II entered eternal rest on Sunday, July 11th 2021 at 02:35 am IST at Parumala. He was the 91st Primate in succession to the Apostolic throne of St Thomas, the 21st Malankara Metropolitan, and the 8th Catholicose. His interment was conducted on Monday, July 12th at Devalokam Aramana Chapel where he is laid close to HH Baselios Geevarghese II, Augen I, Mathews I, and HG Thomas Mar Makarios Metropolitan of eternal memory.

His Holiness was a man of prayer, where he lived with true conviction. He was philanthropic in actions, delighting and reconciling in talks and speeches. He was also uncompromising in faith with a simple and genuine lifestyle. He was easily accessible to everyone and keen on extending his helping hands to reach out to the needy. There is a video of Thirumeni receiving two kids at a railway station, carrying the boy in his arms who suffers from cerebral palsy. He took them to Aramana and served them food. He has been supporting them since then. Parumala Cancer Centre was his initiative and he continued supporting the poor patients with the project called 'Snehasparsham'. During his time, the historic Supreme Court's final verdict on the age-old church disputes came out which would remain as the point of reconciliation and unity among the Malankara Orthodox Church and the Antiochene faction. Under his leadership, the church progressed much in the ecumenical, inter-church, international, and pan-religious relations. Thirumeni made visits to Egypt, Ethiopia, Russia, UK, Ireland, Rome, the USA, and the Middle Eastern countries which brought the churches closer together. He stood for the freedom and sovereignty of the Malankara Orthodox Church. His absolute reliance on God and intercession of Mother Mary with Parumala Thirumeni kept him strong in spirit. He was compassionate and a loving father to his flock.

Thirumeni visited our parish church for its consecration in 2015 on July 11th, exactly the date of his passing away. The consecration was on the 12th, the date of his burial on which we conducted the Holy Liturgy in his memory on the same Altar. Thirumeni had special care for our parish and always revealed his affection for us. Even after being diagnosed with cancer, he was pleasant and active, and busy with his ministry. His funeral service was proof of how much he was loved by the members of the church and all people of various faith and culture. Messages were pouring in from leaders of churches and countries on his parting. The Malankara Church will be ever thankful to God for giving us such a great leader and shepherd whose memory shall be eternal. May we pray for his soul and be sheltered through his continuing prayers.



ST. GREGORIOS ORTHODOX CHURCH OF TORONTO

(Since 1969)

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



Rev Augen Ramban passes away

Rev Augen Ramban was a monk, a member of Holy Trinity Asram Ranny, and a former Manager of Parumala Seminary. He passed away on Friday, July 16th, 2021. The funeral service will be conducted on Sunday, July 18th 2021 at 02:00 pm at Holy Trinity Asram. May his soul rejoice in the heavenly court.

Condolences

1) Our deepest condolence to Alex George, Sosamma Alex George (Jessy), and family (Directory Ref: A06) on the passing away of his eldest sister Mrs. Aleyamma Varughese (Kunjamma, 75 yrs). She was the wife of late M.P Varughese, Edamurickal, Anicadu, Mallappally. She passed away in Kerala on July 12, 2021. She was survived by four daughters – Sheeba (Calgary), Sheeja (Markham), Sheena (New Jersey), and Sheelu (Pickering).

2) Our deepest condolences to David Joseph (Mohan, Dir. Ref: D01), and Stanley Joseph (Dir. Ref: S11), and their families, on the passing away of their brother Mr. K. J. Simon (Shaji, 66 yrs) in Kolencherry, Kerala on July 14, 2021, at 9:15 am IST. The funeral was conducted on July 15, 2021, at 2.00 pm IST at St. Mary's Jacobite Church in Valamboor, Kerala. He was survived by his wife Moni Simon and one daughter Joicey (UK) and two sons - Sijo (UAE) and Seko (Kuwait) and grandchildren. May the God Almighty console the departed soul and comfort the family and friends during this time of bereavement.

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

Friday, July 16 – NEAD MMVS Friday Retreat, 12:00 – 01:00 pm

Saturday, July 17 – KCEF St Thomas Day observance, 06:00 pm

Thursday, July 22- Gregorian Seniors Forum

Church General Cleaning tomorrow (Saturday, July 17) at 09:00 am

There will be a general church cleaning tomorrow, July 17, starting at 09:00 am. All organizations are requested to participate. The cleaning areas include the church interior, sanctuary, shrines, basement, rooms, storerooms, parking area, garden, and the stone cross station. Acolytes, Choir, Senior Citizens Forum, OCYM, MMVS, MGOCSM, and Sunday School are requested to kindly assure their participation. Especially responsible members of organizations shall be expected to be there while cleaning specific areas where they have their office accessories and utilities kept. We request you to please join.

KCEF observance of St Thomas Day tomorrow at 06:00 pm

Kerala Christian Ecumenical Forum has scheduled a virtual meeting for tomorrow at 06:00 pm to observe St Thomas Day. A presentation from our parish shall be there in the program. We request all our members to join the meeting.

You can watch the program at: <https://youtu.be/76jtw7RGRTA>



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Town Hall Meeting cancelled

As we have entered 40 days of mourning on the falling asleep of our Beloved Bava Thirumeni, the scheduled Town Hall meeting shall not be conducted on Sunday, July 25th, 2021. We will be looking for a meeting date after the 41st day of Thirumeni's parting. We will also look for the possibility to conduct a Parish General Body instead of a Town Hall meeting. Updates shall be sent after checking with the Provincial COVID guidelines.

Weekly Choir Practice moved to Wednesday

We have rescheduled the choir practice for Wednesdays from 08:00 – 09:00 pm. We request choir members and Acolytes to ensure their participation. This applies especially to those who are scheduled to take part in Holy Liturgy on respective Sundays.

Liturgical Text for this Sunday

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

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

Fr Thomas P John

fr.thomaspjohn@gmail.com

+1 (416) 570 5610