



## WEEKLY THOUGHTS - OCTOBER 16, 2020

Dearly Beloved,

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

### October 18, 5th Sunday after the Feast of the Cross

#### Gospel Reading, St Matthew 23:1-12 RSV

1 Then said Jesus to the crowds and to his disciples, 2 "The scribes and the Pharisees sit on Moses' seat; 3 so practice and observe whatever they tell you, but not what they do; for they preach, but do not practice. 4 They bind heavy burdens, hard to bear, and lay them on men's shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with their finger. 5 They do all their deeds to be seen by men; for they make their phylacteries broad and their fringes long, 6 and they love the place of honour at feasts and the best seats in the synagogues, 7 and salutations in the market places, and being called rabbi by men. 8 But you are not to be called rabbi, for you have one teacher, and you are all brethren. 9 And call no man your father on earth, for you have one Father, who is in heaven. 10 Neither be called masters, for you have one master, the Christ. 11 He who is greatest among you shall be your servant; 12 whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted.

#### Reflections

The Son of God came to the world for revealing how humans could live the highest and perfect life. To achieve great things, there might not be too many examples available. One will have to explore the virtues by living it. Advices can help to some extent. There will be situations where advice wouldn't help or may not be enough. If we look at the life of Christ, he had no examples but only prophecies. Prophecies could be viewed as dreams, wishes, or plans of the 'ideal'. Jesus was well versed in Law and Scripture. But he had to live it by himself. What he said, what he did, what he lived, people got surprised, because they hadn't seen such in real life.

Leaders were in a responsible position to teach the people how to live an ideal life. They had the ideas in the scripture. Giving theoretical discourses and living as examples are two different things. For the people, they lacked in examples. This was the reason for the Son of God had to come in person to the world by risking his life. What here Jesus wanted to say is never look for examples but we set one for us and or the future generations. It is a huge responsibility. Let us take it!

#### Feasts

**October 12, Philipose Mar Dionysius IV.** 165th anniversary, entombed at Cheppad Pally. There are certain people whose timely decisions and approaches become decisive of the future of a nation, community, or people. The ancient Church of India had to undergo severe threats and suppression in the past. There were attempts of colonial invasion and oppression. There were times and situations when the church yielded to foreign rule if it had allowed certain acts of intrusion. Leaders like Mar Dionysius, by diligently taking a stand against such actions, guarded the church. They had to suffer for their standings. It was a time of lesser facilities, technologies, communications, and support. They had to rely mostly on their own readings and intuitions. They relied absolutely on the Lord and found strength only in Him. They had more spiritual strength and wisdom than physical or material. When we acknowledge their life and remember what they did, it will inspire us in taking up challenges with conviction and faith.



# ST. GREGORIOS ORTHODOX CHURCH OF TORONTO

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**October 12, HG Yuhanon Mar Athanasius Metropolitan.** 40th anniversary, entombed at Bethany Asram, Perunad, Ranny. He was Abo Yuhanon, well recognised by all for his wonderful retreat talks. After assuming bishopric, due to health issues he couldn't live and work longer. Bethany Ashram always kept its environment keen on keeping spiritual enthusiasm and discipline. The community has been potential enough to bring up leaders like Mar Athanasius and Paulose Mar Pachomios. May his memory be eternal.

**October 14, St Athanasius of Alexandria.** He was called 'Pillar of the Church' by Gregory Nazianzus. Athanasius was a great Theologian, Christologian, and profuse writer. He was instrumental in solving the Arian heretic problem. He could clarify the church's doctrinal position against heresies and he was there in the Council of Nicaea convened by Emperor Constantine which gave form to the Nicene Creed. He also said about incarnation, 'God became man to make man God'. His major works include 'Against Gentiles on Incarnation', 'Life of St Anthony', and 'Works on the Spirit'. He has said, "The grace of being in the image was sufficient to know the God, the Word and through him the Father." It reveals the possibility of all humans just by being human that they all could know God. It was not just a suggestion but his strong conviction and experience.

**October 15, St Osio the Ascetic.** He was a 4<sup>th</sup> century saint of the Syrian church. He had chosen ascetic life for the love of the Lord. There is only one church in Malankara under his patronage, St Osio Orthodox Church, Naranganam, Thumpamon.

**October 18, St Luke the Evangelist.** He is the author of two books, 'Gospel according to Luke' and 'Acts of the Apostles'. When "One Hundred Years of Solitude" by Gabriel Garcia Marquez came to stores, there were unending queues. Certain books have changed the face of history. If we look at the two books by Luke, incredible and magnificent they are! The change they have brought to history, the influence they have on generations, the hope and positivity brought to human minds and hearts, they are of no comparison! Luke was not a direct disciple of Christ. But, the picturesque narration of the life of Christ and the ministry of the apostles give any reader the feeling of just being there! He used his literary talent with theological understanding and cultural awareness while writing the gospel. Thus it turned out to be the best of narrations in the world! He has set an example of how to use one's talents for transforming the world through the right choice of words and themes. He has done it perfectly!

## Virtual Meetings

Friday, October 16, NE American Diocese MMVS Retreat, 12:00-01:00pm

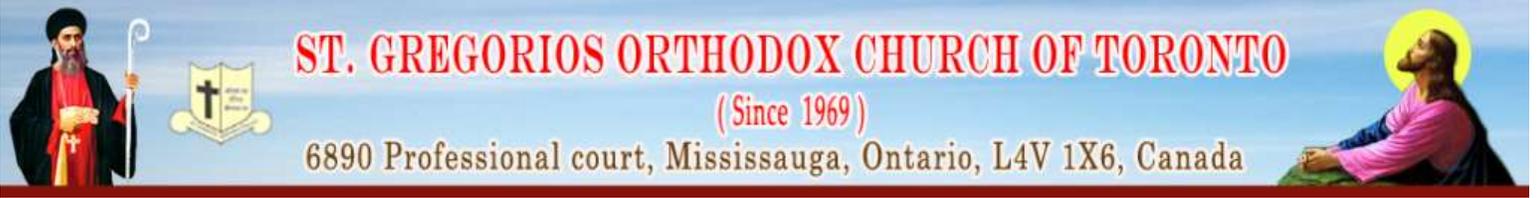
Friday, October 16, SGOCT Sunday School Liturgical Session for Seniors  
06:00pm

Saturday, October 17, SGOCT Prayer Meeting, 07:00-08:30pm

Sunday, October 18, Sunday School Teachers Meeting, Common session at 05:30-06:30pm and  
Teachers session at 06:30-07:30pm.

## MMVS Annual conference

The North American Diocese annual MMVS conference was held virtually on October 10<sup>th</sup>. Many MMVS members from our church participated in the conference. Congratulations to the SGOCT MMVS quiz team on securing the first place (shared with St. Gregorios Orthodox Church Jackson Heights, NY) in the quiz competition held at the diocesan level. The quiz was held virtually on



October 3<sup>rd</sup> and the results were announced in the annual conference on October 10th. There were 30 teams in the quiz competition.

The Canada Region MMVS presented a recorded skit in the North American Diocese annual MMVS conference. The skit was based on the life of Deborah. It was recorded in our church basement and was well appreciated. Our MMVS team participated in the skit along with other MMVS teams from sister orthodox churches in the Greater Toronto area.

### **Parish Directory**

The main work on the new Parish Directory is almost finished. For those who willing to support this project, please make use of the complementary option. Please find the Tariff: Full page \$300, half-page \$200 for non-commercial, and \$400 for full page for commercial. Please make use of this opportunity and support our parish.

### **Thanksgiving**

I do hope that you had a wonderful Thanksgiving Day at home. May it be reminded that you could, if not yet, contribute towards 'Thanksgiving' and support our parish at this time of need and constraints. Our Lord has given us a beautiful life here on earth. Let it be for His glory and the benefit of the needy.

### **Plaque of Contributors**

As we have planned earlier, the names of those who have contributed towards the Church Renovation Project shall be exhibited on plaques in the church basement area. We have different categories based on the total amount given, starting with a \$5000 contribution. It might be feasible for those who have already made a contribution below \$5,000/- and if they could pay the rest and get into the list. Those who wish to upgrade could make the rest of the payment corresponding to the category they wish to be in. For those who haven't contributed yet, there is still time to contribute and have their names inscribed on the plaque. 2020 November 30 will be the deadline for finishing the payment. It will be a great support to our parish especially during this prolonged Pandemic period. Each dollar will be carefully used for the best of purposes. Please make use of this opportunity to declare our love, dedication, and solidarity towards our Parish.

The list of eligible members whose names will be inscribed on the plaque has been posted on the parish notice board in the basement. For any clarification, please check and contact the Treasurer on (647) 887 4010.

### **Articles required for the church**

I am really glad about enquiries made by a few of our members after sending the request for buying church articles. We need a Baptismal Font, Silver Paten and Chalice (Church doesn't encourage using plated grail and paten for health reasons), Candle Stands, Candle Wick Holder, Crystal Containers for keeping Holy oils - Holy Myron, Saith and Olive Oil, Wooden Box for keeping the crystal jars, Taksa Stand, Reliqueries - 'Arulikka' with space for keeping icons or relics which we carry during Perunnal Processions, Candle table with offertory box, etc. There will be options available. Prices can vary depending on our selection. Those who wish to donate, please call to choose which way you could contribute. Please text or call on (416) 570 5610.



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## **Altar Servers**

I request our Altar Servers to please inform of your availability. Please call or text Santhosh Varghese on (416) 258 2062 or post it in the group.

## **Condolence**

The funeral service of Mr. Varghese Cherian, 63 years, beloved father of Renin and father-in-law of Reena Philip has been conducted yesterday at St Mary's Orthodox Valiyapally, Aala, Chengannur. Please keep the departed soul and family members in prayer.

## **Liturgical Text for this Sunday**

We will be using the Taksa of St John Chrysostom this Sunday. Please try to find where we hear this prayer: 'O Great King, Sovereign Ruler of all, before whose sceptre of authority all creation bows its head.' Challenge?!

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

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

## **Covid-19 Guidelines**

As the cases are rising at a high pace worldwide, we too need to take precautions. We have been practicing social distancing and other protocol in the church, it would be our responsibility to take all safety measures possible to rule out any further spread. Please keep the covid away. Holding you in prayer

May the Gracious Lord keep us safe and heal the whole World.

Yours in Christ

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